

**NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF A
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE
ALMADEN OFFICE PROJECT**

FILE NO: H19-004
PROJECT APPLICANT: BOSTON PROPERTIES
APN: 264-28-019, -022, -023, -024, -025, -028, -149, -152, -
153, -160, -167, -168, -169, -172, -173, -174, -175, and -
176

Project Description: Site Development Permit to allow for the demolition of on an existing parking lot and the construction of an up to 17-story, approximately 2.6 million-square foot building on a 3.67-gross acre site. As proposed, the project would include approximately 2,111,000 square feet of office space in two towers (North Tower and South Tower), 35,200 square feet of ground floor commercial space, and up to 1,815 below-grade parking spaces. Both towers would be connected via a podium building on floors one to five. **Location:** Northwest corner of South Almaden Boulevard and Woz Way

As the Lead Agency, the City of San José will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the project referenced above. The City welcomes your input regarding the scope and content of the environmental information that is relevant to your area of interest, or to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. If you are affiliated with a public agency, this EIR may be used by your agency when considering subsequent approvals related to the project.

A joint community and environmental public scoping meeting for this project will be held:

When: Monday, June 10, 2019 from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Where: The Lee and Diane Brandenburg Theatre, Children's Discovery Museum at 180 Woz Way, San Jose, CA 95110

The project description, location, and probable environmental effects that will be analyzed in the EIR for the project can be found on the City's Active EIRs website at www.sanjoseca.gov/activeeirs, including the EIR Scoping Meeting information. According to State law, the deadline for your response is 30 days after receipt of this notice. However, responses earlier than 30 days are always welcome. If you have comments on this Notice of Preparation, please identify a contact person from your organization, and send your response to:

City of San José
Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement
Attn: Kara Hawkins, Environmental Project Manager
200 East Santa Clara Street, 3rd Floor Tower
San José CA 95113-1905
Phone: (408) 535-7852, e-mail: Kara.Hawkins@sanjoseca.gov

Rosalynn Hughey, Director
Planning, Building and Code Enforcement

5/24/19

Deputy

Date

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May 2019

Introduction

The purpose of an EIR is to inform decision makers and the general public of the environmental effects of the proposed project that an agency may implement or approve. The EIR process is intended to provide information sufficient to evaluate a project and its potential for significant impacts on the environment; to examine methods of reducing adverse impacts; and to consider alternatives to the project.

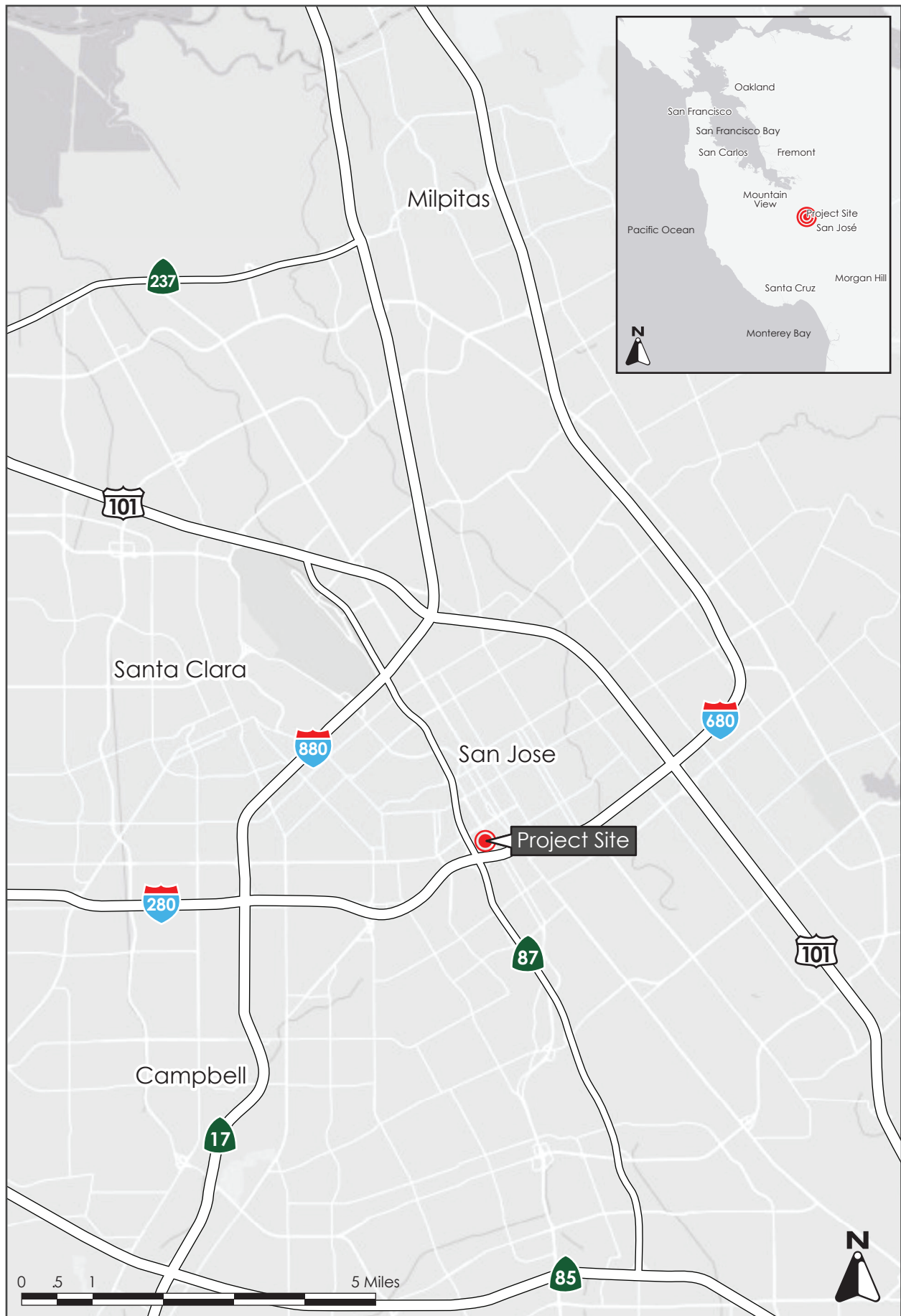
An SEIR is prepared when it is determined by the discretionary authority that changes proposed in an approved project will require revisions to the previous EIR because of possible new impacts or an increase in severity of previously identified impacts. As the Lead Agency, the City of San José will prepare an SEIR to the Downtown Strategy 2040 Final EIR to address the environmental effects of the proposed Almaden Office project.

The SEIR for the proposed project will be prepared and processed in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as amended. An Initial Study (IS) will be prepared (which will be incorporated into the SEIR as an appendix) to focus the SEIR on potentially significant issues pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15178. In accordance with the requirements of CEQA, the SEIR will include the following:

- A summary of the project;
- A project description;
- A description of the existing environmental setting, environmental impacts, and mitigation measures for the project;
- Alternatives to the project as proposed; and
- Environmental consequences, including (a) any significant environmental effects which cannot be avoided if the project is implemented; (b) any significant irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources; (c) the growth inducing impacts of the proposed project; and (d) cumulative impacts

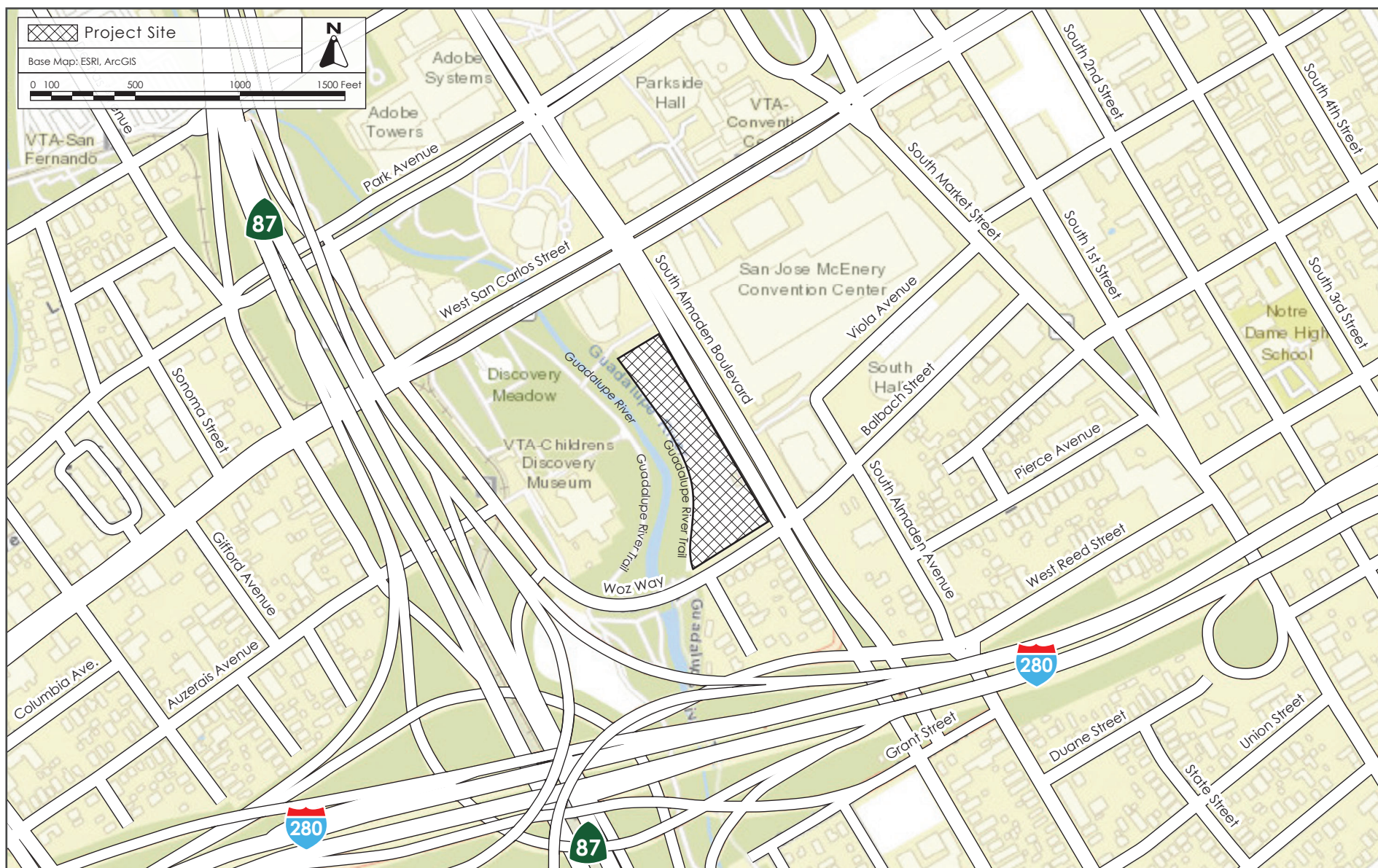
Project Location

The approximately 3.57-acre project site is located at the northwest corner of South Almaden Boulevard and Woz Way/Balbach Street in downtown San José (APNs 264-28-019, -022, -023, -024, -025, -028, -149, -152, -153, -160, -167, -168, -169, -172, -173, -174, -175, and -176). Regional and vicinity maps of the project site are shown in Figure 1 and Figure 2, respectively.



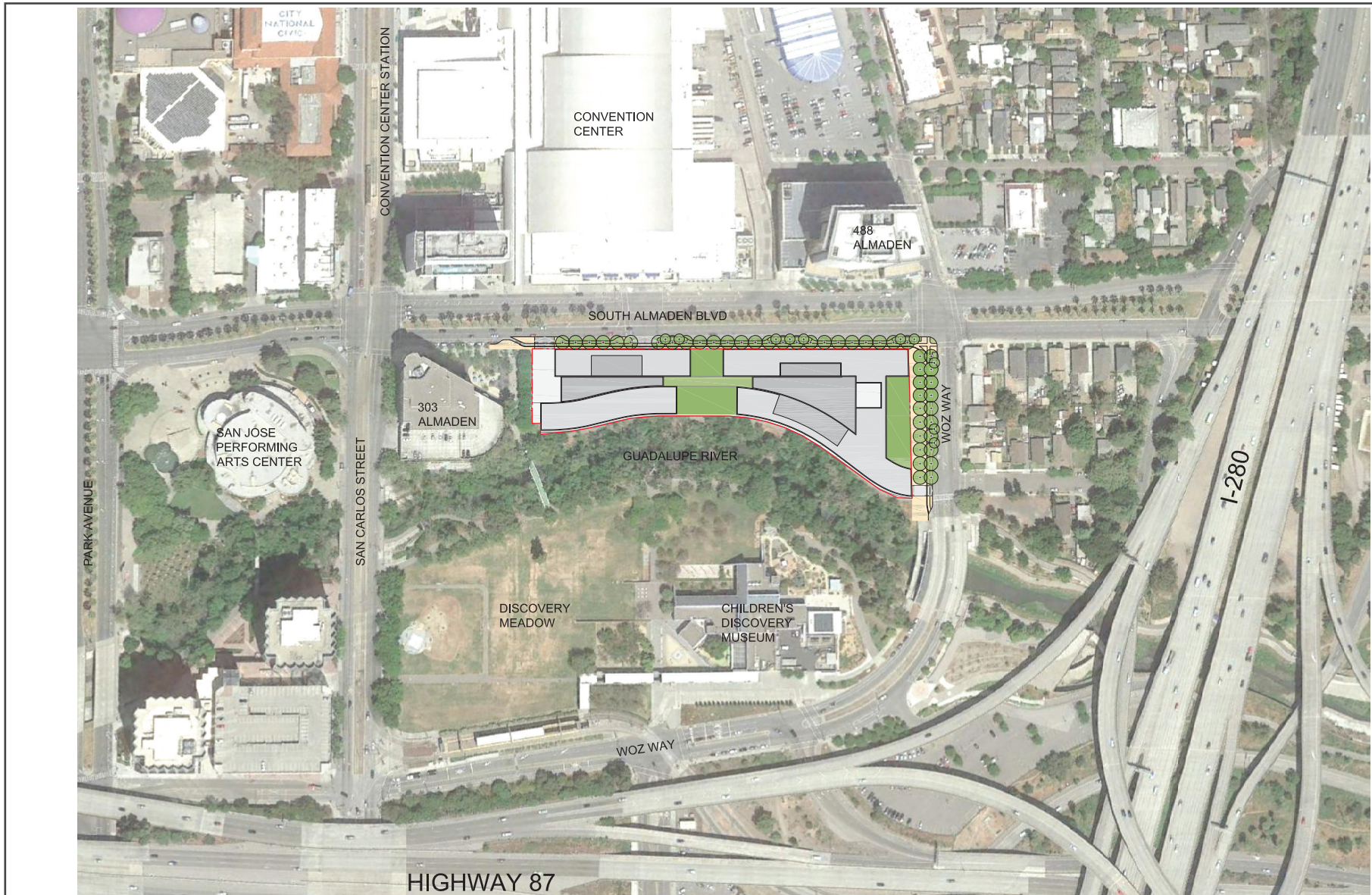
REGIONAL MAP

FIGURE 2.4-1



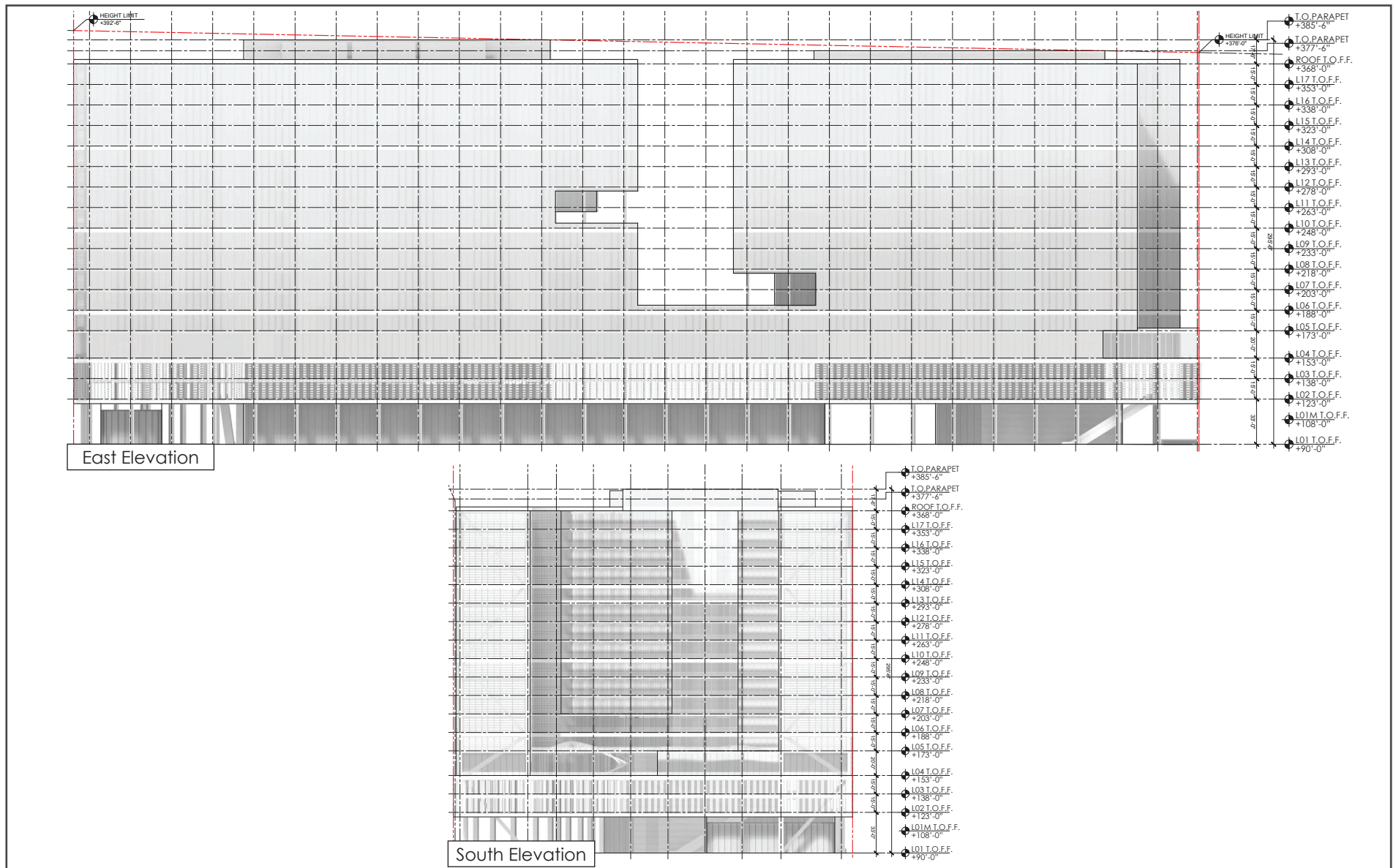
VICINITY MAP

FIGURE 2.4-2



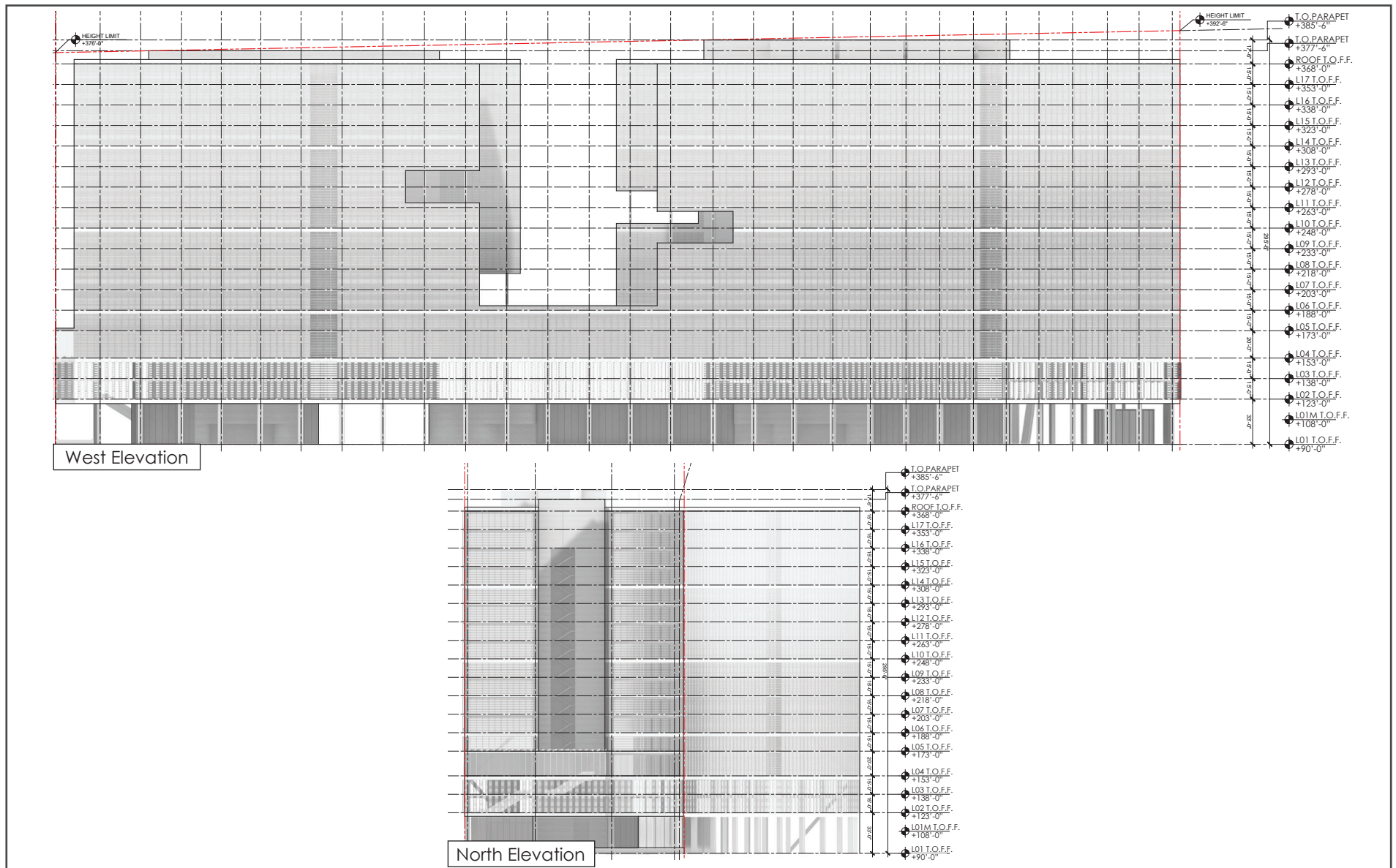
SITE PLAN

FIGURE 3



EAST & SOUTH ELEVATIONS

FIGURE 4



WEST & NORTH ELEVATIONS

FIGURE 5



AERIAL VIEW FROM SOUTHWEST FACING DOWNTOWN SAN JOSE

FIGURE 6



VIEW FROM WOZ WAY LOOKING NORTH

FIGURE 7



VIEW OF GUADALUPE FROM DISCOVERY MEADOW

FIGURE 8

Project Description

The project site is currently developed with a public parking lot. As proposed, the project would remove the existing parking lot and develop an approximately 2.6 million square foot building with approximately 2,111,000 square feet of office space in two towers (North Tower and South Tower). The North Tower (approximately 860,000 square feet) would have a maximum height of 289 feet to the parapet (up to 17 stories) with approximately 11,110 square feet of ground floor amenity/food and beverage space. The South Tower (approximately 1,251,000) would have a maximum height of 296 to the parapet (up to 17 stories) with approximately 24,100 square feet of ground floor amenity/food and beverage space. The project would include privately-owned/publicly accessible open space and proposes improvements in the public right-of-way along the Guadalupe River. Both buildings would be connected via a podium building on floors one to five and would have a combined total floor area ratio (FAR) of approximately 13.6.¹ Please refer to Figures 3 to 8 above for the site plan, elevations, and renderings.

The project proposes three levels of below-grade parking with up to 1,815 parking spaces. Vehicular access to the site is proposed via two driveways on South Almaden Boulevard and one driveway along Woz Way. The proposed driveway on Woz Way would be located adjacent to the Guadalupe River trail.

The City's Riparian Corridor Policy typically requires new development to have a 100-foot set-back from the top of bank of an adjacent waterway. Due to the size of the project site, the project is proposing a reduced setback.

The project site is designated *Downtown* under the City's General Plan and is zoned *DC – Downtown Primary Commercial*.

Possible Required Project Approvals:

1. Site Development Permit
2. Tentative Map
3. Tree Removal Permit
4. Demolition Permit
5. Building Permit
6. Grading Permit

Potential Environmental Impacts of the Project

The SEIR will identify the significant environmental effects anticipated to result from development of the project as proposed. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted. The SEIR will include the following specific environmental categories as related to the proposed project:

¹ 2,111,000 combined square footage of both towers / 155,509 square feet of site area = 13.6 FAR

1. Aesthetics

The proposed development will replace a public surface parking lot with two office towers on a podium in the downtown area of San José. The SEIR will include a shade and shadow diagram and a discussion of any shade and shadow impacts that may occur. The SEIR will describe the existing visual setting of the project area and the visual changes that are anticipated to occur as a result of the proposed project. The SEIR will also discuss possible light and glare issues from the development.

2. Air Quality

The SEIR will address the regional air quality conditions in the Bay Area and discuss the proposed project's construction and operational emissions impacts to local and regional air quality in accordance with the 2017 Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) CEQA guidelines and thresholds.

3. Biological Resources

The project site is located adjacent to the Guadalupe River riparian corridor. The SEIR will address the loss of trees on and adjacent to the site and will identify and discuss potential biological impacts on the riparian corridor and the wildlife that utilizes the riparian habitat resulting from construction and operation of the project.

4. Cultural Resources

Due to the site's proximity to Guadalupe River and the Second Pueblo de San José de Guadalupe, subsurface resources may be located on-site. The project site is located approximately 0.08 miles northwest of the Market-Almaden Conservation Area. In addition, the project site is located approximately 0.06 mile north of a residence located at 533 Locust Street, which is currently listed as a Structure of Merit in the City's Historic Resources Inventory. There are no historic structures on or immediately adjacent to the project site. The SEIR will address the impacts to known and unknown buried archaeological resources on-site, as well as impacts to potential historic structures near the site.

5. Energy

Implementation of the proposed project would result in an increased demand for energy on-site. The SEIR will address the increase in energy usage on-site and proposed design measures to reduce energy consumption.

6. Geology

The project site is located in the most seismically active region in the United States. The SEIR will discuss the possible geological impacts associated with seismic activity and the existing soil conditions on-site.

7. *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*

The SEIR will address the project's contribution to regional and global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions based on BAAQMD thresholds and consistency with policies for reducing GHG emissions adopted by the City of San José. Proposed design measures to reduce energy consumption, which in turn would reduce GHG emissions, will be discussed.

8. *Hazards and Hazardous Materials*

Development in the project area consists of single-family residences, offices, a hotel, a parking garage, and the Guadalupe River and the Guadalupe River Trail. The SEIR will summarize known hazardous materials conditions on and adjacent to the project site and will address the potential for hazardous materials impacts to result from implementation of the proposed project.

9. *Hydrology and Water Quality*

Based on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood insurance rate maps, the SEIR will address the possible flooding issues of the site as well as the effectiveness of the storm drainage system and the project's effect on storm water quality consistent with the requirements of the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB).

10. *Land Use*

The project site is located in a developed urbanized area surrounded by a variety of land uses. The SEIR will describe the existing land uses adjacent to and within the project area. Land use impacts that will occur as a result of the proposed project will be analyzed, including the consistency of the project with the City's General Plan and zoning code and compatibility of the proposed and existing land uses in the project area.

11. *Noise and Vibration*

The SEIR will discuss noise that will result from operation of the proposed project, as well as temporary construction noise. Noise levels will be evaluated for consistency with applicable standards and guidelines in the City of San José.

Due to the size of the proposed building, it is reasonable to assume that construction of the project would require the use of other heavy equipment. The SEIR will evaluate the effects of vibration during project construction on nearby structures.

12. *Public Services*

Implementation of the proposed project would increase the employee population of the City which will result in an increased demand on police and fire protection and recreational facilities. The SEIR will address the availability of public facilities and service systems and the potential for the project to require the construction of new facilities.

13. Transportation

The project site is located within the Downtown Core. As a result, transportation impacts in the project area were previously evaluated in the Downtown Strategy 2040 Final EIR and a full transportation impact analysis is not necessary. A traffic operations analysis will be completed to evaluate the proposed site access/circulation and intersections in the project area to identify any necessary improvements.

14. Tribal Cultural Resources

The SEIR will discuss the project's potential for impacts to tribal cultural resources.

15. Utilities

Implementation of the proposed project will result in an increased demand on utilities and public facilities compared to existing conditions. The SEIR will examine the impacts of the project on public services, including utilities such as sanitary sewer and storm drains, water supply/demand, and solid waste management.

16. Wildfire

The proposed project is located within a developed area of downtown San José. The SEIR will discuss project impacts on wildfire.

17. Alternatives

The SEIR will examine alternatives to the proposed project including a "No Project" alternative and one or more alternative development scenarios depending on the impacts identified. Other alternatives that may be discussed could include reduced development alternatives (e.g., smaller project), alternative land uses, and/or alternative locations. Alternatives discussed will be chosen based on their ability to reduce or avoid identified significant impacts of the proposed project while achieving most of the identified objectives of the project.

18. Significant Unavoidable Impacts

The SEIR will identify those significant impacts that cannot be avoided, if the project is implemented as proposed.

19. Cumulative Impacts

The SEIR will include a Cumulative Impacts section that will address the potentially significant cumulative impacts of the project when considered with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects in the development area, including Invicta Towers, Garden Gate, Gateway Tower, development in the SoFa district, and build out of the Downtown Strategy 2040 Plan.

In conformance with the CEQA Guidelines, the SEIR will also include the following sections: 1) consistency with local and regional plans and policies, 2) growth inducing impacts, 3) significant irreversible environmental changes, 4) references and organizations/persons consulted, and 5) EIR authors.

An IS will be prepared and provided as an appendix to the SEIR. The IS will include an analysis of the resource areas that have no new significant impacts or no increase in previously identified impacts.