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DATE: September 29, 2023

TO: Public Agencies, Property Owners, Residents, and Interested Parties

FROM: City of San Juan Capistrano
32400 Paseo Adelanto
San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675
Contact: Paul Garcia, Principal Planner

SUBJECT: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report and Scoping Meeting for the El Camino Specific Plan Amendment

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the City of San Juan Capistrano ("City"), in its capacity as lead agency for the El Camino Specific Plan Amendment Project ("Project" or "Specific Plan Amendment"), has determined that a Draft Environmental Impact Report ("DEIR") should be prepared for the Project. The City will prepare a DEIR to analyze the impacts of the Project in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (Pub. Resources Code, Section 21166 et seq.; "CEQA").

PROJECT LOCATION: The Project site encompasses approximately 5.61 acres of land in the downtown area of the City of San Juan Capistrano. The Forster & El Camino Mixed Use Project portion of the Project site is located at 31878 Camino Capistrano on a 3.15-acre property (Assessor's Parcel Numbers: 124-160-37, -51, and -52). The central portion of the Project site includes the Blas Aguilar Adobe and Historic Town Center (HTC) Park (Assessor's Parcel Numbers: 124-160-08, -09, -10, -11, -12, and -27). The Project site is located south of Old Mission Road, east of El Camino Real, and both west and north of Del Obispo Street. Local access to the Project site would be provided by Forster Street and Camino Capistrano. Regional access to the site would be provided by Interstate 5 (I-5), which is located approximately 568 feet northwest of the Project site. See Figure 1, *Regional Map*, and Figure 2, *Vicinity Map*.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The Project will require the following discretionary approvals from the City: a General Plan Amendment, a Code Amendment, and a Rezone to allow for adoptions of the El Camino Specific Plan (Specific Plan). Additional discretionary approvals are required to approve two projects covered by the Specific Plan, described in further detail below.

Overview

The Project Applicant (Camino Capistrano OZ, LLC) is seeking to expand the previously approved El Camino Specific Plan. Approved in October 2022, the El Camino Specific Plan consisted of a development of 27,457 square feet (sf) of commercial uses and a four-level parking structure with 2,607 sf retail space on a 1.68-acre site. The proposed Specific Plan Amendment would expand the Specific Plan Area to a total of 7.3 acres for the development of mixed-use community and performing arts center. As shown in Figure 3, *Specific Plan Boundary Map*, the Project consists of two proposed developments: 1) the Forster & El Camino Mixed-Use Project at the intersection of Forster Street and El Camino Real on the 3.15-acre vacant site; and 2) a performing arts center on a 1.5-acre site located at eastern portion of the City-owned Historic Town Center Park. No development will occur on the 1.0-

acre Blas Aguilar Adobe Museum property. The Project would also include various street and utility improvements to complement the area and provide for future uses.

Forster & El Camino Mixed Use Project

This Project will be a mixed-use community, incorporating both commercial and residential uses, and will require the following discretionary approvals: Architectural Control (AC) 23-001, Grading Plan Modification (GPM) 23-013, Sign Program (SP) 23-006, Tentative Tract Map (TTM) 23-001, and Tree Removal Permit (TRP) 23-012. The development will be situated on nearly 3.15 acres of land at the intersection of Forster Street and El Camino Real.

As shown in Figure 4, *Forster & El Camino Site Plan*, the commercial element of the Project will include a free-standing 4,294 square foot restaurant and a 3,100 square foot fitness center attached to the residential building. The two commercial buildings will be located on opposite corners of the Project entrance. The buildings will each feature a prominent entry with tile accents and enhanced paving, which will help differentiate the commercial and residential elements of the Project. The restaurant building will have a spacious courtyard for outdoor seating, while the fitness center will feature high ceilings and state of the art design to accommodate a variety of training and fitness applications. Ample bicycle parking will also be provided.

The residential element of the Project will contain ninety-five (95) apartments with a gross area of 107,499 square feet surrounding a resort-style pool and recreational facility. A 3,271 square foot clubhouse building will be located at the entrance to the residences and will serve as a central focal point for the community. The clubhouse building will contain meeting and recreation space for the private use of the community's residents. A California room will open on to the pool deck and provide indoor/outdoor recreation space for those using the facilities. A total of 21,920 sf of common open space would be provided at the Project site.

The central residential buildings will be designed in the Spanish Revival Vernacular. The design includes architectural details, fenestrations, and offsets to accentuate the building's design. Similarly, a team of three independent design consultants have collaborated on the project's color palette, with the intent of complementing the City's mission and ranch heritage.

Performing Arts Center

The Camino Real Playhouse has provided the community with a venue to support local theater and events. As shown in Figure 5, *Performing Arts Center Floor Plan*, the Performing Arts Center will consist of approximately 45,000 sf and include a total of 452 seats: 352 seats in the main theater and 100 seats in the studio theater.

The architectural style of the Performing Arts Center would be representative of contemporary California Mission. The building design features include a Spanish tile roof, board formed concrete with terracotta screen, exterior wood slat siding, and complimentary wood mullions as part of a glass partition wall. The front and lobby of the building would open out onto HTC park to allow for outdoor performances, community events, and other experiences.

This Project will require the following discretionary approvals: Architectural Control (AC) 23-004, Grading Plan Modification (GPM) 23-012, Historical & Cultural Landmark Site Plan Review (SPR) 23-002, and Tree Removal Permit (TRP) 23-015.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED: Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15063, the City has determined that an EIR will clearly be required for this Project, and that preparation of an Initial Study will not be prepared. The DEIR will evaluate the probable environmental effects of the Project, including the following:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology/Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards & Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology/Water Quality
- Land Use/Planning
- Noise
- Population/Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities/Service Systems

The following topics are anticipated to be less than significant or no impact and do not warrant an in-depth analysis in the EIR: Agricultural & Forestry Resources, Mineral Resources, and Wildfire.¹

PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING: The City will hold a scoping meeting from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on **Thursday, October 12, 2023** at the San Juan Capistrano City Council Chambers at the Nydegger Building, located at 31421 La Matanza Street, San Juan Capistrano. The purpose of the scoping meeting is to present the proposed Project, describe the DEIR process and receive public comments. The City invites interested parties to participate in the scoping meeting to learn more about the Project, ask questions, and submit comments.

DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY: This Notice of Preparation (“NOP”) is also available for review at the following locations:

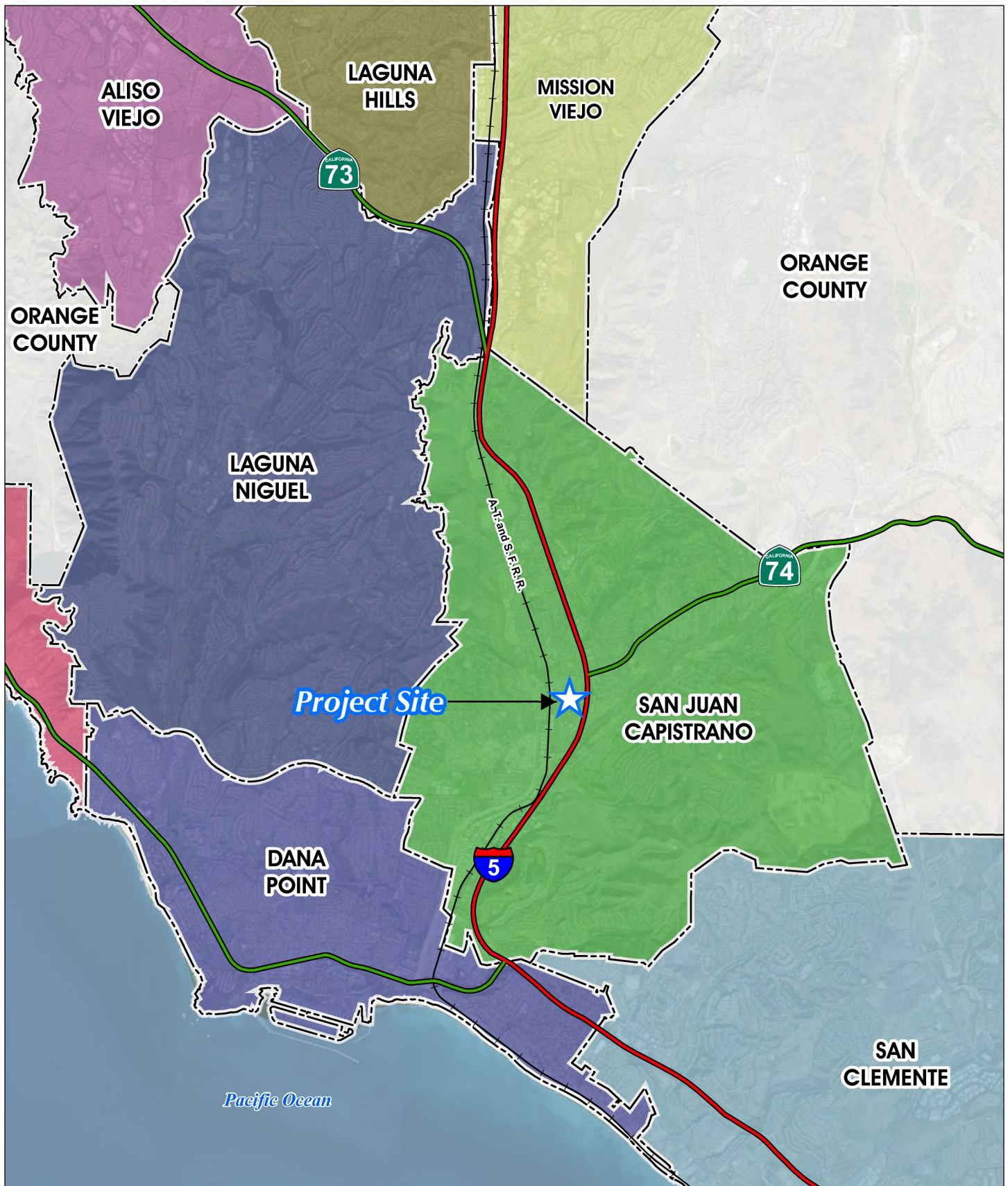
- City of San Juan Capistrano, Development Services Department, 30448 Rancho Viejo Road, San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675
- San Juan Capistrano Library, 31495 El Camino Real, San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675

The NOP can also be viewed on the City's website at the following address:
<http://sanjuancapistrano.org/Departments/Development-Services/Planning-Zoning/Environmental-Documents>

WRITTEN COMMENTS: All interested parties, including the public, responsible agencies, and trustee agencies, are invited to provide comments and input on the scope and content of the environmental analysis to be addressed in the DEIR. Responsible and trustee agencies should provide comments and input related to the agencies' respective areas of statutory responsibility. Comments received during the scoping period will be considered during preparation of the DEIR. The NOP comment period begins on Tuesday, October 3, 2023, and ends on Thursday, November 2, 2023. Written comments must be submitted to the City of San Juan Capistrano by **Thursday, November 2, 2023 at 5:30 p.m.**, to be timely for consideration in the preparation of the EIR. Please direct your comments by e-mail or U.S. mail to:

Paul Garcia, Principal Planner
City of San Juan Capistrano
30448 Rancho Viejo Road
San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675
(949) 443-6327
E-Mail: pgarcia@SanJuanCapistrano.org

¹ The Project site is not designated for significant farmland or forest land, does not contain a known mineral resource with regional or local value, and is not on lands classified as a very high fire hazard severity zone.

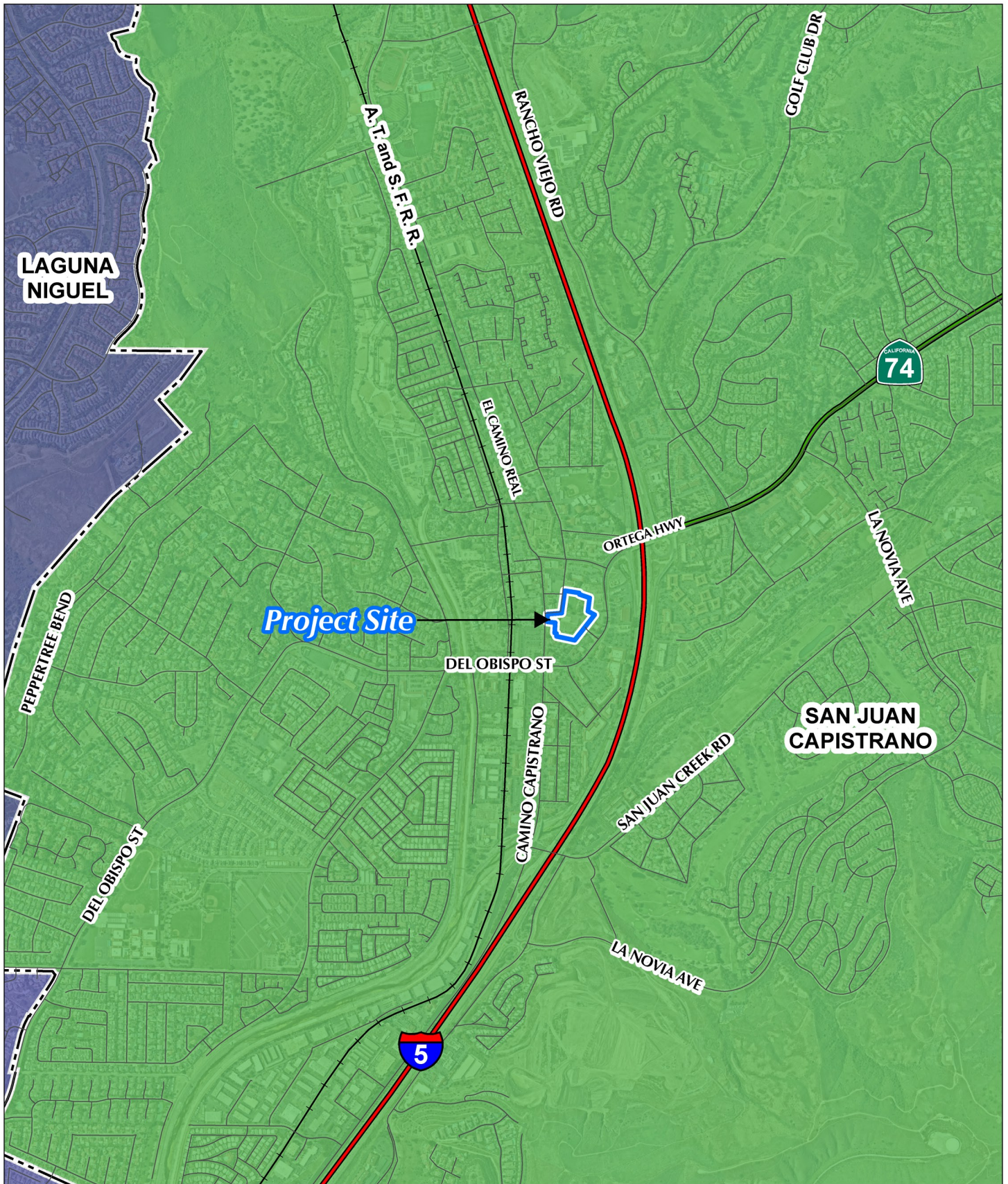


Source(s): ESRI, Orange County (2023)

Figure 1



Regional Map



Source(s): ESRI, NearMap Imagery (August 2023), Orange County (2023)

Figure 2



Vicinity Map

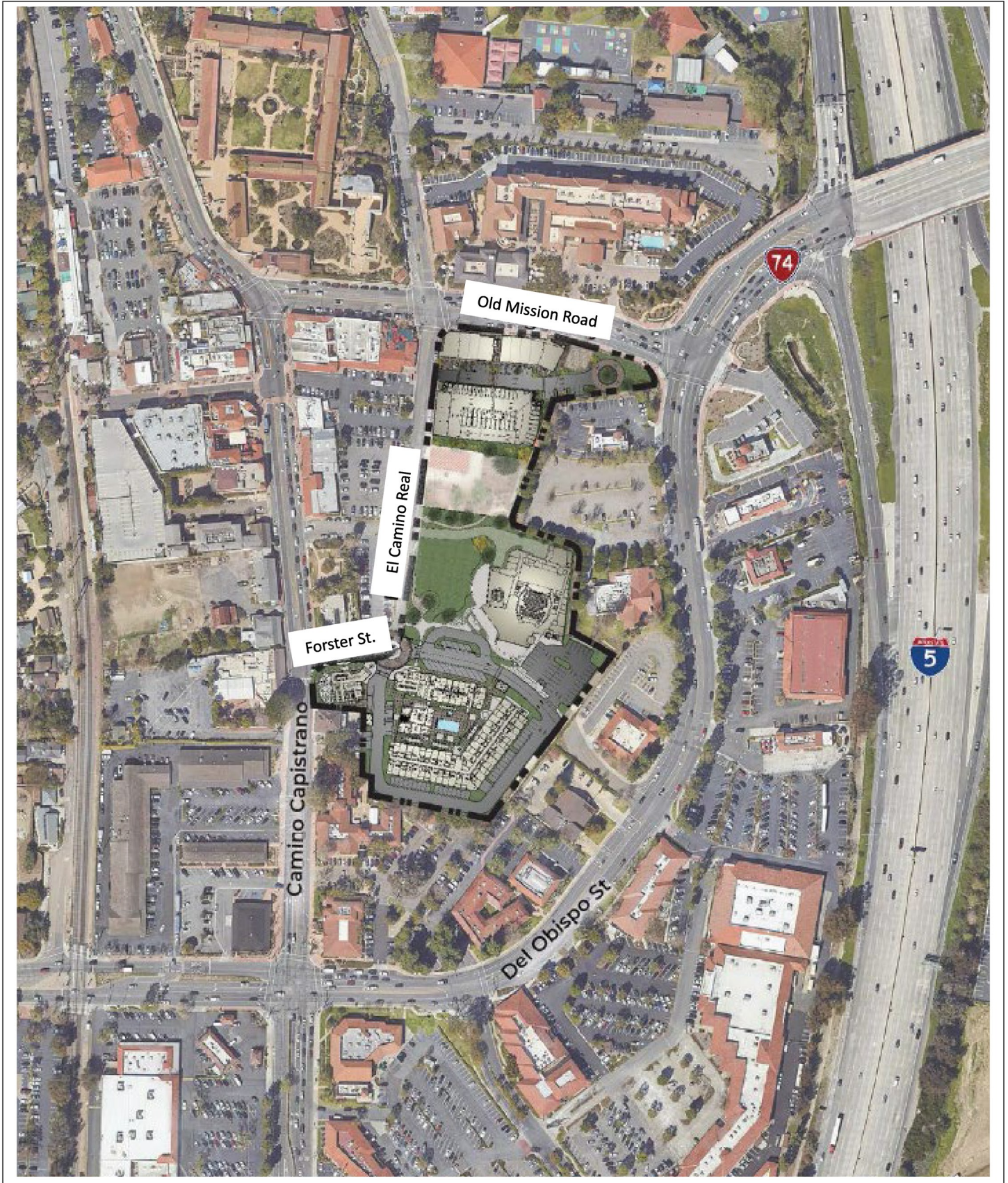


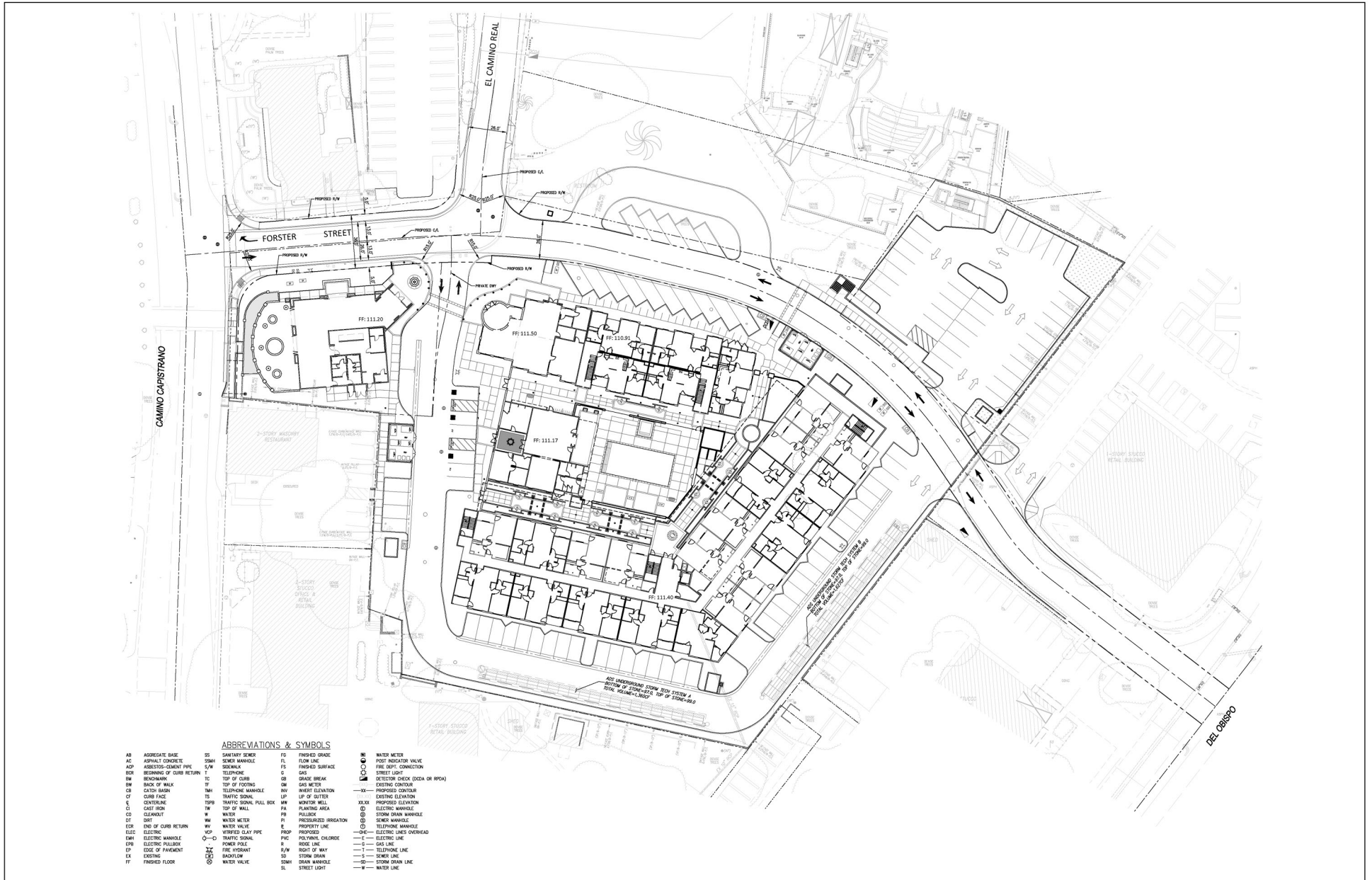
Figure 3



Not to Scale



Specific Plan Boundary Map



Source(s): C3 Civil Engineering (09-19-2023)

Figure 4

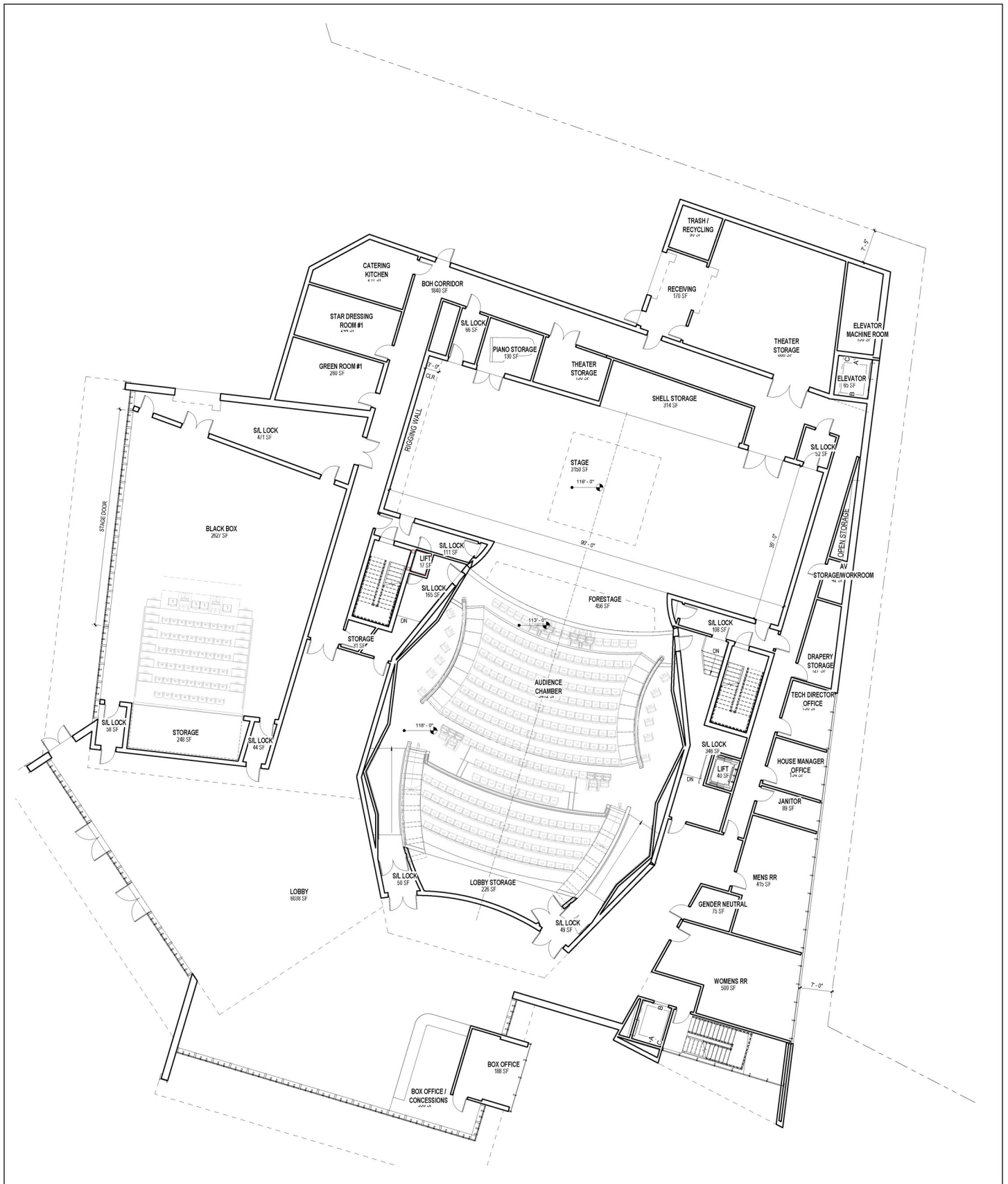


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Forster & El Camino Site Plan

El Camino Specific Plan Amendment



Source(s): Pfeiffer (05-24-2023)

Figure 5



Not to Scale



Performing Arts Center Site Plan