

# Everything you need to know about the three beautification projects planned for the Olympic Boulevard and Normandie Avenue intersection

The three projects have an estimated total cost of \$3 million and are expected to start construction in late 2014 or early 2015

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Multiple projects are underway to beautify the intersection of Olympic Boulevard and Normandie Avenue as well as the area just north of the intersection, which is the site of the pocket park containing Da Wool Jung, an eye-catching traditional Korean gazebo. The projects are still in their conceptualization phase, and members of the public are being invited to submit comments and questions. Here is a detailed look at each of the three projects.

Plans for the projects developed under the auspices of the now defunct Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) of Los Angeles. According to Anna Apostolos, Senior Program Manager at the Los Angeles Neighborhood Initiative (LANI), the CRA and the Los Angeles City Council wanted community involvement in the planning process so they enlisted the help of LANI, a non-profit organization that focuses on neighborhood revitalizations. LANI and the City Council set up a Steering Committee made up of about a dozen community, business, and religious leaders.

The Steering Committee's first meeting was held in February 2012, but the Committee ceased planning activities shortly after when the CRA was dissolved by the state. More than a year later in early 2013, plans for the projects resumed and the bidding process for design firms was started. The open bid for the Gateway project alone drew applications from 27 architects, according to Apostolos. The winning firms were selected in April; they are SQA inc for the Madang project, and John Friedman Alice Kimm Architects for the Gateway projects.

LANI also played a key role in the planning for the Bus Shelter Project. The organization helped secure the \$250,000 that was needed for the project in the form of appropriations from Congressman

## Quick Facts

### Madang Open Space Project

- Summary: The Madang Open Space project will close off the small street just above the existing pocket park and expand the park to the north, adding additional foliage and sitting areas.
- Budget: \$1.5 million (LA City/Community Redevelopment Agency funding)

### Koreatown Cultural Gateway Project

- Summary: The Koreatown Cultural Gateway Project will install a structure that stretches over and across the Olympic Boulevard and Normandie Avenue intersection. Current proposed designs consist of steel poles and LED lights strung over the intersection.
- Budget: \$1.3 million (LA City/Community Redevelopment Agency funding)

### Bus Shelter Project

- Summary: The Bus Shelter Project will include new seats for the bus stop near the park and a brick wall behind the seats displaying traditional flower designs.
- Budget: \$250k (State funding, Congressman Becerra appropriations)

Xavier Becerra. SQA inc also provided the designs for the Bus Shelter Project.

A Community Planning Workshop was held on site on October 12 to inform the public about the projects and to generate feedback. Models and displays of the proposed projects were set up, and representatives from both design firms were present to answer the questions of attendees. Attendees were also treated to a performance by Oaxacan dancers and an authentic Oaxacan meal.

According to Apostolos, a total of 118 people signed in, with many of them submitting comments. A survey was also conducted online and via smartphone for several weeks



February 2012	Early 2013	April 2013	October 12, 2013	November 2013	January 2014	Late 2014/ Early 2015
The Steering Committee for the projects holds its first meeting, but ceases all planning activities shortly after due to the dissolution of the City Redevelopment Agency.	The Steering Committee reconvenes and initiates the bidding process for the design firms. 27 architect firms submit bids for the Gateway project alone.	The design firms for the projects are selected.	A Community Planning Workshop is held to solicit comments on the proposed designs from members of the public.	The design firms will submit revised designs to the Steering Committee, incorporating the comments received.	A workshop will be held to solicit comments on the revised designs. The firms will then conclude the conceptualization phase and begin the design implementation phase.	Construction will begin.



Left: a map and rendering of the proposed developments at Normandie and Olympic.

Bottom/Left: Timeline of events.

Above and right: Residents meet with project planners to look at the proposed development and discuss options.



PHOTOS provided by LANI

after the event. Each firm is currently reviewing the comments that were submitted and will report back to the Steering Committee with any proposed revisions. The Steering Committee will review the revisions at a meeting within the next 30 days, and another workshop for community feedback will be held after that, in approximately 90 days. The projects will then conclude the conceptualization phase and enter the design implementation phase. Construction is anticipated to begin at the end of 2014 or early 2015.

One outstanding question is who will maintain the sites going

forward. Apostolos said that the maintenance costs will ultimately depend on the final designs, but the Gateway project in its current form will cost about \$1,500 per month to maintain. One option is for private companies to sponsor the ongoing maintenance. Another option is the creation of an Olympic business improvement district, which will be able to work on other improvements in addition to maintaining the sites.

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