

June 5, 2023

NOTICE OF PREPARATION

From: City of Diamond Bar
Attn: Greg Gubman, Community Development Director
21810 Copley Drive
Diamond Bar, CA 91765
Phone: (909) 839-7031

SUBJECT: Notice of Preparation of a Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SIR) for the Diamond Bar Town Center Specific Plan

The City of Diamond Bar (City), as the Lead Agency pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), intends to prepare a Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SIR) to the December 17, 2019, certified Diamond Bar General Plan Update (Diamond Bar General Plan 2040) and Climate Action Plan Program EIR (Certified EIR) (State Clearinghouse No. 2018051066), as amended on August 11, 2022, with adoption of the 2021-2029 Housing Element Update, for the proposed Diamond Bar Town Center Specific Plan (proposed project). The Diamond Bar General Plan 2040 established a new vision for a pedestrian-oriented “Town Center” that provided housing opportunities, food-oriented retail, restaurants, and entertainment. The proposed Specific Plan would guide the development of the Diamond Bar Town Center, implementing the goals and policies related to reestablishing the Town Center as a mixed-use civic area promoting walkability, through the planning horizon of the Diamond Bar General Plan 2040. A General Plan Amendment and a Zoning Amendment would be required to increase the maximum density and floor area ratio (FAR) allowed within the Specific Plan’s Planning Area to allow the Specific Plan’s proposed density, to establish development and design standards for development within the Planning Area, and to rezone the Planning Area parcels for the Specific Plan’s proposed uses. An SIR is needed to address changes to the Town Center not discussed in the certified EIR to evaluate the degree to which there would be any new significant impacts or substantially more adverse impacts caused by adoption of the Diamond Bar Town Center Specific Plan than have already been evaluated in the certified EIR.

In accordance with §15082 of the State CEQA Guidelines, the City has prepared this Notice of Preparation (NOP) to provide Responsible Agencies and other interested parties with information describing the proposed project and to identify its potential environmental effects pursuant to State requirements. The NOP and related documents can be reviewed on the City website at: www.diamondbarca.gov/towncenter.

Project Location:

The Planning Area for the Specific Plan is defined as the land addressed by the Specific Plan’s policies and land use designations (Figure 1, *Planning Area*). The Planning Area is approximately 45 acres. The Planning Area is bounded on the west by the Fall Creek private condominium community, on the north by the Pomona Freeway (SR-60), on the east by a neighborhood of single-family homes, and on the south by Lorbeer Middle School and Mount Cavalry Lutheran Church and School. The Planning Area is composed of approximately 37 individual parcels with 23 unique property owners within a suburban-style commercial district. The Planning Area is in the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute San Dimas topographic quadrangle. The Planning Area is centered around Diamond Bar Boulevard, a six-lane thoroughfare with painted bike lanes that bisects the Town Center. It is bounded on the south by Golden Springs Drive and on the north by the SR-60 Freeway. Access to the Town Center is provided by both SR-60 and SR-57. Travelling on SR-60, access to the Town Center can be attained by Diamond Bar Boulevard (Exit 26). Major thoroughfares providing access to the Town Center area include Diamond Bar Boulevard and Golden Springs Drive. It is within view of the San Gabriel Mountains (approximately 7 miles from the foot of the mountain range).

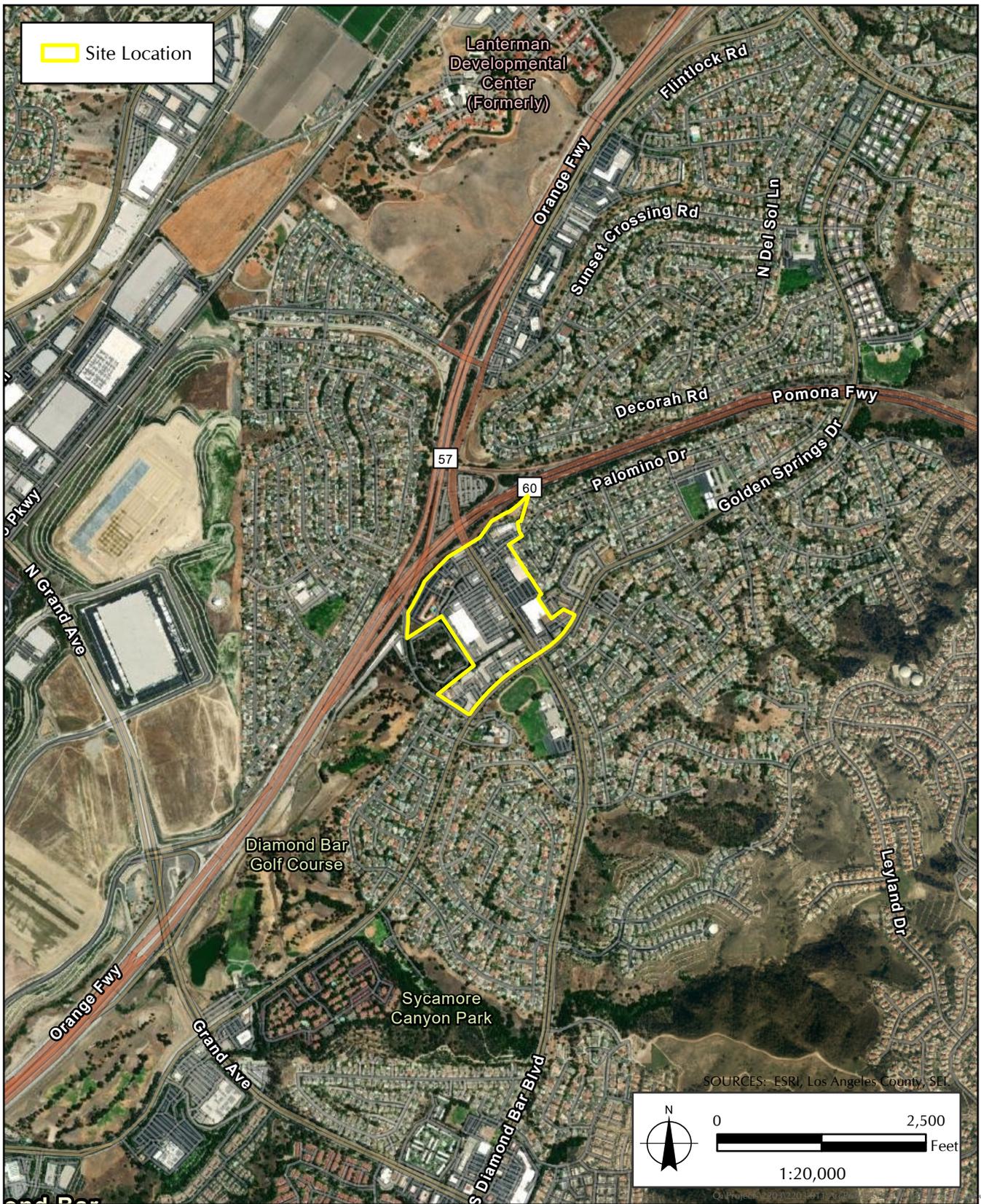


FIGURE 1
Planning Area Map

Project Description

The Specific Plan would serve as both a policy and regulatory document to guide the transformation of the Town Center area from a nondescript suburban-style neighborhood commercial area into a vibrant, pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use district that serves the community, adding to the identity and quality of life in Diamond Bar. The Specific Plan involves the phased redevelopment of approximately 45 acres of existing suburban-style retail shopping centers along Diamond Bar Boulevard between Golden Springs Drive and the SR-60 overpass.

Currently, the Planning Area has 510,000 square feet of existing commercial space comprised of retail, dining, and medical office, as well as 97 existing hotel rooms. The Specific Plan would have a maximum buildout of:

- 2,055 housing units (805 more units than adopted General Plan; 2,055 more units than existing land use);
- 150 hotel rooms (53 more hotel rooms than existing land use);
- 40,000 square feet of public open space (40,000 square feet more open space than existing land use); and
- 415,000 square feet of commercial space including retail, dining, entertainment, office, community, and cultural uses (95,000 square feet less commercial space than existing land use).

The actual rate and amount of development as a result of the Specific Plan may differ but would be within the maximum allowed. Actual buildout of the Specific Plan would involve the development of new roads within the Planning Area in addition to the development associated with housing, hotels, and commercial space.

The proposed Specific Plan also includes supporting infrastructure through the adoption of the Specific Plan and associated entitlements. As part of the infrastructure improvements, the Specific Plan would implement a “road diet” to narrow Diamond Bar Boulevard by decreasing lane widths from an existing 12-foot width to 11 feet for travel lanes and 10 feet for left turn pockets. The changes to Diamond Bar Boulevard would also remove the right lane in each direction to create right turn pockets and add a protected bike lane. The Specific Plan proposes to reduce the number of through lanes on Diamond Bar Boulevard between Gentle Springs Lane / Palomino Drive and Golden Springs Drive. This road diet would eliminate one through lane in each direction (from three to two), remove the center median, and narrow the remaining lanes. The direct benefits of a road diet include shorter pedestrian crossing distances and more space on the existing public right-of-way for alternative use such as bicycle lanes, wider sidewalks, bus turnouts, and additional landscaping. The SIR will address potential impacts of the proposed road diet.

Probable Environmental Effects: In accordance with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15063(a), the City determined that an SIR would be required for this project. The Initial Study prepared for the project identified the following 11 environmental issue areas that are anticipated to have less than significant impacts based on the existing information, or could be reduced to a less than significant level with implementation of the Certified EIR mitigation:

1. Agriculture and Forestry Resources
2. Biological Resources
3. Cultural Resources
4. Energy
5. Geology / Soils
6. Hazards and Hazardous Materials
7. Land Use and Planning
8. Mineral Resources
9. Population / Housing
10. Tribal Cultural Resources
11. Wildfire

The Initial Study found that nine (9) environmental issue areas would have the potential to result in significant impacts requiring further analysis:

1. Aesthetics
2. Air Quality
3. Greenhouse Gas Emissions
4. Hydrology/Water Quality
5. Noise
6. Public Services
7. Recreation
8. Transportation
9. Utilities/Service Systems.

The NOP and Initial Study are available for review online and at the following locations:

Diamond Bar City Hall, 21810 Copley Drive, Diamond Bar, CA 91765

Open to the public Monday through Thursday, 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Diamond Bar Community Library, 21800 Copley Drive, Diamond Bar, CA 91765

Open Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

City's website: www.diamondbarca.gov/towncenter

Project website: www.downtown4db.com

Responses: The City requests interested parties provide written comments as to the scope and content of the environmental information to be included in the Draft Supplemental EIR, in connection with the proposed project. **The 30-day NOP review period starts on June 5, 2023, and ends on July 5, 2023.** Due to the time limits mandated by State law, please send your written response to the City at the address below at the earliest possible date but no later than **July 5, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.** Please include your name and address for all written correspondence.

Lead Agency Contact:

Grace S. Lee, Senior Planner
21810 Copley Drive
Diamond Bar, CA 91765
GLee@DiamondBarCa.Gov
(909) 839-7032

Scoping Meeting: A public scoping meeting will be conducted on June 8, 2023, to collect oral comments from agencies and members of the public regarding the scope and content of the SIR.

Scoping Meeting on the Town Center Specific Plan Supplemental EIR

June 8, 2023 | 6:00 to 7:00 PM
Windmill Room, Diamond Bar City Hall
21810 Copley Drive
Diamond Bar, CA 91765

If you have any questions regarding this NOP or the scoping meeting, please contact Senior Planner Grace Lee at the phone number or email address provided above.