



Notice of Availability

Date: December 4, 2023

To: State Clearinghouse, Public Agencies, Interested Parties

Subject: Notice of Availability of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the City of Montebello General Plan Update and Downtown Montebello Specific Plan

State Clearinghouse Number: 2023050665

Lead Agency: City of Montebello
Planning and Community Development Department
1600 West Beverly Boulevard
Montebello, California, 90640

Location: The Plan Area for the proposed Project includes all land within Montebello City limits

General Plan Designations: All within the Plan Area

Zoning Designations All within the Plan Area. State law requires a city's Zoning Ordinance to be consistent with the City's General Plan and the Zoning Ordinance to be revised to reflect the adopted General plan within a reasonable time from its adoption, which is typically one year

Project Contact: Joseph Palombi, Director of Planning and Community Development
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Office: (323) 887-1200

Notice is hereby given that the City of Montebello (City) is the lead agency and has prepared an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the City of Montebello General Plan Update and Downtown Montebello Specific Plan (the proposed Project).

Project Description

The proposed Project includes a comprehensive update of the City's General Plan. The City's General Plan currently has twelve elements: Circulation, Conservation, Land Use, Noise, Open Space, Parks and Recreation, Population, Redevelopment, Safety, Scenic Highways, Seismic Safety, and Housing Element. The proposed General Plan Update includes an update of the City's Housing Element (6th Cycle, 2021-

2029), which was adopted by the City Council in June 2022 and subsequently certified by HCD on July 11, 2022. While an Initial Study/Negative Declaration (IS-ND) was prepared and adopted concurrently with the Housing Element, the 6th Cycle Housing Element is a component of the General Plan and is also analyzed in the EIR. The rest of the proposed General Plan Update consists of eight chapters: Our Natural Community, our Prosperous Community, Our Well Planned Community, Our Accessible Community, Our Healthy Community, Our Safe Community, Our Active Community, and Our Creative Community.

The Downtown Montebello Specific Plan is a component of the proposed General Plan Update. It focuses on Downtown Montebello, which is roughly bounded by Greenwood Avenue on the west, Los Angeles Avenue on the south, the Rio Hondo Channel on the east, and Cleveland Avenue on the north. The boundaries of the Downtown Montebello Specific Plan area are shown with the red line on the map shown in Attachment 1. The Specific Plan area includes a walkable core area around the Montebello Boulevard/Whittier Boulevard intersection. The Downtown Montebello Specific Plan is an integrated plan that implements the community driven vision, direction, and policy guidance set in the proposed Montebello General Plan Update.

The City has performed a comprehensive evaluation of the potential impacts of the proposed Project in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines and has determined that the proposed Project would have potentially significant impacts, described below.

Draft EIR Findings

The Draft EIR is a program EIR. According to Section 15168 of the State CEQA Guidelines, a program EIR is an EIR that may be prepared on a series of actions that can be characterized as one large project. The purpose of a program EIR is to allow the lead agency to consider broad policy alternatives and program-wide mitigation measures at an early time when the agency has greater flexibility to deal with basic problems or cumulative impacts.

The Draft EIR, in addition to the CEQA-required “no project” alternative, examines a reduced growth alternative in terms of its impacts in each environmental impact area relative to those of the proposed Project. The Draft EIR, while finding the Reduced Growth Alternative to be the environmentally superior alternative, also finds that this alternative would generally achieve the proposed Project objectives, but in some cases to a lesser degree than the proposed Project. It also finds that this alternative would not achieve the goal of the *Our Prosperous Community* chapter of the proposed Project to retain high-wage and high value enterprises and diversify and increase the local tax base to as great a degree as the proposed Project because it would not attract or create as many jobs, create as much economic growth nor increase the local tax base to the same extent as the growth accommodated by the proposed Project.

The Draft EIR also considered a Relocated Focus Areas alternative and a No Growth alternative, but ultimately rejected them for environmental impact comparison to the proposed Project because they either did not meet the proposed Project objectives, would not be feasible, or would not avoid or substantially lessen one or more significant effects of the proposed Project.

The Draft EIR examines each of the issue areas on the City’s environmental checklist. It finds that the proposed Project would result in the following significant and unavoidable environmental effects:

- **Air Quality Impact AQ-1:** Individual development projects carried out under the proposed Project would generate construction and operational-related emissions. Such emissions may conflict with or obstruct implementation of SCAQMD's Air Quality Management Plan. Implementation of policies in the proposed General Plan Update, compliance with existing regulations, and implementation of mitigation would reduce construction and operational emissions, but not always to a less than significant level. This impact would be significant and unavoidable.
- **Air Quality Impact AQ-2:** Individual development projects carried out under the proposed Project would generate construction and operational-related emissions. Such emissions may result in adverse impacts to regional air quality. Implementation of policies in the proposed General Plan Update, compliance with existing regulations, and implementation of mitigation would reduce construction and operational emissions, but not always to a less than significant level. This impact would be significant and unavoidable.
- **Air Quality Impact AQ-3:** Individual development projects carried out under the proposed Project would generate construction- and operational-related emissions. Such emissions may result in adverse impacts to local air quality. Implementation of policies of the proposed General Plan Update, compliance with existing regulations, and implementation of mitigation would reduce construction and operational emissions, but not always to a less than significant level. This impact would be significant and unavoidable.
- **Cultural Resources Impact CUL-1:** Development carried out under the proposed Project may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of historical resources that have already been identified or may be identified in the Plan Area. This impact would be significant and unavoidable.
- **Noise Impact N-1:** Construction of individual projects carried out under the proposed Project would temporarily increase noise levels, potentially affecting nearby noise-sensitive land uses. Development carried out under the proposed Project would also introduce new noise sources and contribute to increases in operational noise. Implementation of Mitigation Measure NOI-1 and the continued regulation of noise, consistent with the City Code and implementation of policies from the proposed General Plan Update would minimize disturbance to adjacent land uses. Stationary operational and mobile noise would not exceed standards. However, construction noise impacts would be significant and unavoidable even with mitigation.

The Draft EIR also found that the proposed Project would result in impacts that would be less than significant with incorporation of mitigation measures described in the Draft EIR in the following areas: Biological Resources (special-status, locally important species, sensitive habitats, and nesting birds); Cultural Resources (archaeological resources); Noise (construction vibration); and Tribal Cultural Resources (unanticipated discovery of tribal cultural resources). A summary of all impacts and mitigation measures is shown in Table ES-3 of the Draft EIR.

Public Review of Draft EIR

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15082, the Draft EIR is being circulated for a 45-day comment period. The 45-day public review period for the NOA will begin Monday December 4, 2023 and end Wednesday January 17, 2024. The Draft EIR and all documents referenced in the Draft EIR are available for public review through the following means:

- Project website: <https://planmontebello.com/>
- City of Montebello CEQA documents website: https://www.montebelloca.gov/departments/planning_community_development/planning_division/ceqa_documents
- City of Montebello Planning Division, 1600 W. Beverly Blvd., Montebello, CA 90640
- Chet Holifield Public Library, 1060 S. Greenwood Avenue, Montebello, CA 90640
- Montebello Library, 1550 W. Beverly Boulevard, Montebello, CA 90640
- Montebello Senior Center – City Park, 1301 W. Whittier Boulevard, Montebello, CA 90640

Submittal of Written Comments

The public is encouraged to submit written comments regarding the Draft EIR. The City of Montebello requests that written comments be provided at the earliest possible date, but no later than 5:00 p.m. on January 17, 2024. Please send written/typed comments (including a name, email, telephone number, and/or other contact information) electronically or by mail to the following:

City of Montebello, Planning and Community Development Department
RE: City of Montebello General Plan Update and Downtown Montebello Specific Plan Project
ATTN: Joseph Palombi, Director of Planning and Community Development
1600 West Beverly Boulevard
Montebello, California, 90640
Email: jpalombi@montebelloca.gov

Signature:



Joseph Palombi

Title:

Director of Planning and Community Development

City of Montebello

Telephone:

(323) 887-1200

Date:

December 4, 2023

Attachments:

Attachment 1: Regional Location Map

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