2. Introduction

2.1 PURPOSE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that all state and local governmental agencies consider the environmental consequences of projects over which they have discretionary authority prior to taking action on those projects. Because approval of the revised Precise Plan and site plan (revised project) is a discretionary action by a public agency, the City of Monterey Park, as the first public agency to act on the revised project, becomes the lead agency for the project. Pursuant to CEQA Section 21067, the lead agency means "the public agency which has the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving a project which may have a significant effect upon the environment." As the CEQA lead agency, the City of Monterey Park has the responsibility for determining the method of CEQA compliance, preparing and certifying the EIR that describes potential environmental impacts of the revised project, providing a Statement of Overriding Considerations for all environmental impacts that cannot be mitigated to a less than significant level, and adopting a Mitigation Monitoring Program to ensure that all required mitigation measures are implemented during the course of the revised project.

This document has been prepared as a supplement to a previous Environmental Impact Report as defined by the State CEQA Guidelines (Section 15163, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3). Specifically, this document is a supplement to the certified EIR prepared for the 2000 Monterey Park Towne Plaza (SCH No. 1999051058). The overall purpose of this SEIR is to inform the lead agency, responsible agencies, decision makers, and the general public of the environmental effects of the development and operation of the revised project. This SEIR addresses the potential environmental effects of the revised project, including effects that might be significant and adverse; discloses effects not found to be significant; discloses significant cumulative impacts of all past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects; evaluates a number of alternatives to the revised project; and identifies mitigation measures to reduce or avoid adverse effects. This SEIR also contains information necessary to supplement the 2000 Monterey Park Towne Plaza (MPTP) EIR (CEQA Guidelines Section 15163).

The intent of this SEIR is to provide sufficient information on the potential environmental impacts of the revised project to allow the City of Monterey Park to make an informed decision regarding approval of the project. Specific discretionary actions to be reviewed by the City and potential project permits and approvals required from other regulatory agencies are described in Section 3.5, *Project Approvals*.

This SEIR has been prepared in accordance with requirements of the:

- California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as amended (Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq.)

- State Guidelines for the Implementation of the CEQA of 1970 (herein referenced as CEQA Guidelines), as amended (California Code of Regulations Sections 15000 et seq.)

2.2 NOTICE OF PREPARATION AND INITIAL STUDY

The City of Monterey Park determined that an EIR would be required for this project and issued a Notice of Preparation (NOP) and Initial Study on June 16, 2010 (See Appendix A). Comments received during the public review period, which extended from June 16 to July 16, 2010, are contained in Appendix B.

The NOP process is used to help determine the scope of the environmental issues to be addressed in the SEIR. Based on this process and the Initial Study for the project, certain environmental categories were identified as having the potential to result in significant impacts. Issues considered Potentially Significant are addressed in this SEIR. Issues identified as Less Than Significant or No Impact are not addressed beyond the discussion in the Initial Study. Refer to the Initial Study in Appendix A for discussion of how these initial determinations were made.

Table 2-1 summarizes the comments received from public agencies and the general public during the public review period and indicates where they are addressed in the SEIR.

Table 2-1
NOP Comment Summary

Commenting Agency/Person	Comment Type	Comment Summary	Issue Addressed In:
California Department of Transportation (7/16/2010)	Traffic Analysis/ Methodology	• Caltrans requests a traffic study be prepared meeting the criteria found in their traffic study guide. • Caltrans requests the traffic study and DEIR for review when they are available.	Section 5.4, *Transportation and Traffic*
Los Angeles County Department of Public Works (6/15/2010)	Traffic/Geology/ Recyclables/ Underground Storage Tanks	• LACDPW requests that a traffic study be prepared in compliance with the County's methodology. • LACDPW comments that the geology/soils issues in the Initial Study should be discussed in the SEIR, accompanied by the geotechnical reports. • LACDPW requests that adequate storage space for recycling be provided onsite and the standards should be discussed in the SEIR. • If any underground storage tanks are constructed, installed, modified, or removed on the project site, the LACDPW Environmental Programs Division must be contacted.	Sections 5.4, *Transportation and Traffic*, and 5.5, *Utilities and Services Systems* Geotechnical reports were completed for the previous 2000 MPTP EIR. The findings and recommendations of these reports would be used for the proposed project. For these reasons, this issue is not being discussed in the SEIR.
Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County (7/2/2010)	Wastewater Generation	• LACSD provided technical statistics for the existing infrastructure and an estimated effluent flow. • Details about the connection fee program are provided and should be followed by the project applicant. • LACSD coordinates their regional growth with the Southern California Associated Governments (SCAG); their regional capacity growth depends on SCAG forecasts.	Section 5.5, *Utilities and Service Systems*

Table 2-1
NOP Comment Summary

Commenting Agency/Person	Comment Type	Comment Summary	Issue Addressed In:
City of Montebello (7/16/2010)	Clarification of Information in the IS and SEIR	• The City of Montebello has provided suggestions to make the information that will be included in SEIR more clear. • The City of Montebello is requesting more information on approvals needed for entrance sign placement on Montebello property adjacent to the eastern portion of the project site.	The City of Montebello's suggestions will be incorporated into the appropriate sections of the SEIR.
City of Rosemead (7/14/2010)	Transportation and Traffic (bike facilities)/ Aesthetics	• The City of Rosemead has requested that four intersections in Rosemead be included in the traffic study: o Potrero Grande Avenue & Rush Street/San Gabriel Boulevard o Rush Street & Walnut Grove Avenue o Del Mar Avenue & Graves Avenue o Del Mar Avenue & Garvey Avenue • The City of Rosemead has requested that bike facilities be included on the project site to meet the needs for 70 bikes (3 percent of the total number of parking spaces) and that public transportation facilities be discussed in the SEIR. • Since the proposed project would be adjacent to the City of Rosemead's boundaries, they have included suggested lighting standards for parking lot lights.	Two of the requested intersections were analyzed in the previous 2000 MPTP EIR and they had less than significant impacts. The proposed project trip distribution and generation rates would result in 3 percent less traffic through those intersections compared to the previously proposed project. For this reason, these intersections were not included in the SEIR. The Monterey Park Market Place (MPMP) Precise Plan would incorporate the City of Rosemead's suggestions for lighting and aesthetic standards. CEQA requires that an EIR discuss the proposed project's impacts to plans, policies, and infrastructure for existing public transportation facilities. To this extent, existing public transportation facilities, plans, or programs would not be affected by the proposed project, as concluded in the Initial Study. In addition, the MPMP includes provisions to accommodate bicyclists.

Table 2-1
NOP Comment Summary

Commenting Agency/Person	Comment Type	Comment Summary	Issue Addressed In:
South Coast Air Quality Management District (6/24/2010)	Air Quality	• SCAQMD provides recommendations and suggestions for air quality analysis in the SEIR, including information on: o Using the 1993 *CEQA Air Quality Handbook* o Identifying air quality impacts for all phases of development o Using methodology for determining $PM_{2.5}$ emissions o Analyzing air quality impacts to localized significance thresholds o Performing a mobile source health risk assessment when necessary o Developing effective mitigation measures	The suggestions and recommendations of SCAQMD will be taken into account in the preparation of the SEIR.

2.3 SCOPE OF THIS SEIR

Based upon the Initial Study and Environmental Checklist Form, the City of Monterey Park staff determined that an SEIR should be prepared for the proposed project. The scope of the SEIR was determined based upon the City's Initial Study, comments received in response to the NOP, and comments received at the scoping meeting conducted by the City. Pursuant to Sections 15126.2 and 15126.4 of the State CEQA Guidelines, the SEIR should identify any potentially significant adverse impacts and recommend mitigation that would reduce or eliminate these impacts to levels of insignificance.

The information in the project description (Chapter 3) establishes the basis for analyzing future project-related environmental impacts. However, further environmental review by the City may be required as more detailed information and plans are submitted on a project-by-project basis.

2.3.1 Impacts Considered Less Than Significant

Eleven environmental impact categories are identified here as not being significantly affected by or affecting the proposed Monterey Park Market Place project, or impacts were adequately addressed in the certified MPTP EIR and therefore are not discussed in detail in this SEIR. This determination was made by the City of Monterey Park in its preparation of the Initial Study. The following topical issues are not addressed in the SEIR:

- Agriculture and Forest Resources
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Population and Housing

- Public Services
- Recreation

2.3.2 Potentially Significant Adverse Impacts

Six environmental factors have been identified as having potentially significant impacts if the proposed project is implemented. Although the Initial Study determined impacts to aesthetics to be less than significant, new information regarding a proposed sign program was added to the project description after the release of the NOP. Aesthetics has been added to the list of environmental topics that will be addressed in the SEIR.

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Noise
- Transportation and Traffic
- Utilities and Service Systems

2.3.3 Unavoidable Significant Adverse Impacts

This SEIR identifies three significant and unavoidable adverse impacts, as defined by CEQA, that would result from implementation of the proposed project. Unavoidable adverse impacts may be considered significant on a project-specific basis, cumulatively significant, and/or potentially significant. If the City, as the lead agency, determines that unavoidable significant adverse impacts will result from the project, the City must prepare a Statement of Overriding Considerations before it can approve the project. A Statement of Overriding Considerations states that the decision-making body has balanced the benefits of the proposed project against its unavoidable significant environmental effects and has determined that the benefits of the project outweigh the adverse effects and, therefore, the adverse effects are considered to be acceptable. The impacts that were found in the SEIR to be significant and unavoidable are:

- Air Quality
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Transportation and Traffic

2.4 INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE

The following documents are incorporated by reference in this SEIR, consistent with Section 15150 of the State CEQA Guidelines, and are available for review at the City of Monterey Park.

- *Environmental Impact Report for the Monterey Park Towne Plaza*, prepared by Christopher A. Joseph and Associates, March 2000.

- *City of Monterey Park General Plan Update*, City of Monterey Park, 2001.

2.5 FINAL EIR CERTIFICATION

This SEIR is being circulated for public review for a period of 45 days. Interested agencies and members of the public are invited to provide written comments on the SEIR to the City address shown on the title page of this document. Upon completion of the 45-day review period, the City of Monterey Park will review all written comments received and prepare written responses for each comment. A Final EIR (FEIR) will then be

prepared incorporating all of the comments received, responses to the comments, and any changes to the SEIR that result from the comments received. This FEIR will then be presented to the City of Monterey Park for potential certification as the environmental document for the project. All persons who commented on the SEIR will be notified of the availability of the FEIR and the date of the public hearing before the City.

The SEIR is available to the general public for review at the following locations:

- City of Monterey Park
  Development Services Department
  320 West Newmark Avenue
  Monterey Park, CA 91754-2896

- Monterey Park Bruggemeyer Library
  318 S. Ramona Avenue
  Monterey Park, CA 91754

2.6 MITIGATION MONITORING

Public Resources Code Section 21081.6 requires that agencies adopt a monitoring or reporting program for any project for which it has made findings pursuant to Public Resources Code 21081 or adopted a Negative Declaration pursuant to 21080(c). Such a program is intended to ensure the implementation of all mitigation measures adopted through the preparation of an EIR or Negative Declaration.

The Mitigation Monitoring Program for the Monterey Park Market Place will be completed as part of the Final EIR prior to consideration of the project by the City of Monterey Park City Council.