



Notice of Availability

TO: Agencies, Organizations, and Interested Parties

FROM: City of Long Beach
Development Services Department
Planning Bureau
333 West Ocean Boulevard, 5th Floor
Long Beach, CA 90802
Contact: Craig Chalfant, Planner

SUBJECT: Midtown Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report (SCH No. 2015031034)

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the City of Long Beach (City) has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Midtown Specific Plan. Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21165 and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15050, the City is the Lead Agency responsible for preparation of the DEIR addressing potential impacts associated with the proposed project. The purpose of this notice is to: (1) serve as a Notice of Availability (NOA) of a DEIR pursuant to the CEQA Guidelines Section 15087 and (2) advise and solicit comments regarding the content of the DEIR.

PROJECT TITLE: Midtown Specific Plan

PROJECT LOCATION: The Project Site (generally situated east of Pacific Avenue, west of Atlantic Avenue, north of Anaheim Street, and south of Wardlow Road) is a corridor along Long Beach Boulevard just north of downtown Long Beach and consists of two areas: the Midtown Specific Plan area and an area outside of, but adjacent to the Midtown Specific Plan. The Midtown Specific Plan area spans approximately 369 acres from Anaheim Street to Wardlow Road along Long Beach Boulevard. The area outside the Midtown Specific Plan covers approximately four acres around Officer Black Park (west of Pasadena Avenue between 21st Street and 20th Street). Both areas make up the Project Site and together, comprise 373 acres spanning from Anaheim Street to Wardlow Road.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The Proposed Project analyzed in the DEIR consists of adoption of the Midtown Specific Plan (Midtown Specific Plan area) and extraction of the two residential blocks around Officer Black Park from PD-29 (area outside the Midtown Specific Plan) and retention of the underlying conventional zoning designations already in place for these two residential blocks. The Proposed Project also includes the closure of a few roadway segments that intersect with Long Beach Boulevard. Each of the project areas and components is described below.

Midtown Specific Plan Area

The Midtown Specific Plan provides a framework for the development and improvement of a 369-acre corridor along Long Beach Boulevard. The Specific Plan acts as a bridge between the Long Beach General Plan and development that would occur within the Midtown Specific Plan area. The Midtown Specific Plan area currently contains just under 1,900 residential units and a little over 2.6 million square feet of commercial and employment uses, as well as medical facilities with over 950 licensed hospital beds and three hotels with approximately 200 hotel rooms. The Midtown Specific Plan would increase the number of permitted residential units within the Midtown Specific Plan area to just over 3,600 units—approximately 1,700 more than existing conditions but about 2,200 less than would be allowed under the current PD-29 zoning.

The Midtown Specific Plan would also increase potential commercial and employment building square footage to just over 2.9 million square feet (a net increase of almost 369,000 square feet over existing conditions), concentrating and intensifying development at key transit and employment nodes. The buildout projections also assume a small increase in the number of licensed hospital beds (27 beds) and the addition of a business hotel with up to 81 hotel rooms.

Area Outside the Midtown Specific Plan

As stated above, the Proposed Project includes an area outside of, but adjacent to the Midtown Specific Plan boundary; the area comprises approximately four acres around Officer Black Park. Existing land uses within this area consists of 76 dwelling units and 11,346 square feet associated with the existing church; this area also contains Office Black Park.

Under the Proposed Project, the two residential blocks around Officer Black Park would be extracted from PD 29 and retain its underlying conventional zoning designations, which include Single-Family Residential, standard lot (R-1-N); Three-Family Residential (R-3-S); and Park (P). The proposed extraction would not require an amendment to the City's zoning map, as the underlying conventional zoning designations are already in place. With the exception of the zoning designation revisions that would be undertaken, no physical change (e.g., additional development intensity, redevelopment) is expected to occur within this area and all existing uses are expected to remain.

Overall Development for Proposed Project (Midtown Specific Plan and Area Outside the Midtown Specific Plan)

Overall, the Proposed Project would increase the number of permitted residential units to just under 3,700 dwelling units—roughly 1,700 more than existing conditions. The Proposed Project also increases potential commercial and employment building square footage to approximately 3 million square feet (a net increase of approximately 369,000 square feet over existing conditions), concentrating and intensifying development at key transit and employment nodes. The buildout projections also assume a small increase in the number of licensed hospital beds (27 beds) and the addition of a business hotel with up to 81 hotel rooms. The commercial and employment square footage would be substantially less under the Proposed Project compared to what would be allowed under the current PD-29 and conventional zoning, as would the number of dwelling units.

Roadway Segment Closures

The Proposed Project also includes the closure of the following roadway segments to vehicular traffic in order to create parklets (small street parks): 25th Street west of Long Beach Boulevard; 25th Street east of Long Beach Boulevard; 23rd Street west of Long Beach Boulevard; 23rd Street east of Long Beach Boulevard; 21st Street west of Long Beach Boulevard; 21st Street east of Long Beach Boulevard; Rhea Street east of Long Beach Boulevard; Esther Street east of Long Beach Boulevard; 15th Street west of Long Beach Boulevard; 15th Street east of Long Beach Boulevard; and 14th Street east of Long Beach Boulevard.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES: Based on the analysis in the DEIR and comment letters received in response to the Notice of Preparation (NOP) and Public Scoping Meeting, the City determined that the following environmental issues would be further analyzed in the DEIR:

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

The DEIR addresses the short- and long-term effects of the Proposed Project on the environment. For example and in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15087(c), the Hazards and Hazardous Materials section of the DEIR includes a discussion on whether any properties within the Project Site are included in any list of sites enumerated under Government Code Section 65962.5. Mitigation measures are proposed in the DEIR for impacts that are determined to be potentially significant.

PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD: Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21091 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15105, the DEIR will be available for a 45-day public review beginning on Wednesday, January 13, 2016, through Friday, February 26, 2016. The City, as Lead Agency, requests that responsible and trustee agencies and other interested parties, including members of the public, respond in a manner consistent with Section 15204 of the CEQA Guidelines.

Copies of the DEIR and supporting documents are available for review at the following locations:

- City of Long Beach Development Services, 333 West Ocean Boulevard, Long Beach, CA 90802
- Main Library, 101 Pacific Avenue, Long Beach, CA 90822
- Burnett Neighborhood Library, 560 East Hill Street, Long Beach, CA 90806
- Dana Neighborhood Library, 3680 Atlantic Avenue, Long Beach, CA 90807
- Mark Twain Neighborhood Library, 1401 East Anaheim Street, Long Beach, CA 90813

The DEIR can also be viewed on the City of Long Beach website at the following address: http://www.lbds.info/planning/environmental_planning/environmental_reports.asp. Additionally, a copy of this NOA was published in the Long Beach Press Telegram.

RESPONDING TO THIS NOTICE: All comments on the DEIR should be submitted in writing to Craig Chalfant, Planner, at the City address noted above. The City will also accept responses to this notice received via e-mail through the close of business at 4:30 p.m. on Friday, February 26, 2016. E-mail responses to this notice may be sent to Craig.Chalfant@longbeach.gov.

For additional information or any questions regarding the Proposed Project, please contact Craig Chalfant at (562) 570-6368 or at the aforementioned e-mail.