

I. INTRODUCTION

1. PURPOSE OF THIS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (California Public Resources Code [PRC] Sections 21000, et seq.), and its implementing guidelines (14 CCR 15000 et seq., hereinafter “CEQA Guidelines”), requires that lead agencies consider the potential environmental consequences of projects over which they have discretionary approval authority prior to taking approval action on such projects.

The subject of this Draft EIR is the proposed River Park Residential Project in the City of Long Beach. The proposed development and its associated approval actions constitutes a “Project” as defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15378.

CEQA defines “Lead Agency” as the public agency with primary responsibility for approving a project and thus has primary responsibility for ensuring compliance with the CEQA process. The City of Long Beach (City) is the “Lead Agency” for this document.

A lead agency may prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for any project that may have a significant impact on the environment. As described in CEQA Guidelines Sections 15121, an EIR is an informational document that will inform public agency decision-makers and the public of the significant environmental effects of a project, identify possible ways to minimize any significant effects, and describe reasonable project alternatives. Public agencies shall consider the information in the EIR, along with other information that may be presented to the agency, prior to approving the Project.

Therefore, the purpose of this Draft EIR is to focus the discussion on the Project’s potential environmental effects that the City of Long Beach (City), as the Lead Agency, has determined to be or potentially may be significant. In addition, feasible mitigation measures are recommended, when applicable, that could reduce or avoid the Project’s significant environmental impacts.

This Draft EIR serves as the environmental document for all actions associated with the Project. This EIR is a “Project EIR” as defined by CEQA Guidelines Section 15161 and, as such, serves as an informational document for the general public and Project decision-makers. This Draft EIR is also intended to cover all state, regional, and local government discretionary approvals that may be required to construct or implement the Project.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

The CEQA Guidelines define a process for environmental review that includes a series of steps that must be completed prior to any action taken by the Lead Agency on a project.

Scoping Process

An Initial Study was prepared for the proposed Project and released with a Notice of Preparation (NOP) for a 30-day public review period during February and March 2021. The Initial Study, NOP, and comment letters are included in **Appendix I** of this Draft EIR.

The City determined through the Initial Study that the proposed Project would result in less than significant impacts with respect to Aesthetics, Agriculture and Forestry, Energy, Land Use and Planning, Mineral Resources, Population and Housing, Public Services, Tribal Cultural Resources, Utilities, and Wildfire. These areas are not analyzed further in this Draft EIR except that, based on comment received during the scoping process, it was determined to including evaluation of Land Use and Planning in the Draft EIR. For a discussion of the environmental issues that were scoped out of this Draft EIR, refer to **Section 6.0: Other Environmental Issues**.

Review and Comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Report

CEQA requires that the Lead Agency provide the public and agencies the opportunity to review and comment on the Draft EIR. This Draft EIR has been published and distributed for a 60-day review period starting January 18, 2022 and ending March 21, 2022. Copies of this Draft EIR have been sent to the State Clearinghouse, responsible agencies, other agencies that have commented on the NOP, and to all interested parties that have requested notice and copies of the Draft EIR.

The Draft EIR is also available for review at the following locations:

- City of Long Beach, Department of Development Services, Permit Center
411 W. Ocean Boulevard, 2nd floor Long Beach, CA 90802;
- Billie Jean King Main Library
200 W. Broadway
Long Beach CA 90802; and
- Online at <https://www.longbeach.gov/lbds/planning/environmental/reports/>

Interested individuals, organizations, responsible agencies, and other agencies can provide written comments about the Draft EIR addressed to:

Amy Harbin, Planner
Development Services Department
City of Long Beach
411 W. Ocean Boulevard
Long Beach, CA 90802

or by e-mail at LBDS-EIR-Comments@longbeach.gov

Comments received via other means or addressed to other recipients, including but not limited to social media, will not be included or considered. After completion of the review period, a Final EIR will be prepared that includes responses to comments submitted on the Draft EIR and any necessary corrections or additions to the Draft EIR. The Final EIR will be made available to agencies and the public prior to the City's determination on the Project. Once the Final EIR is complete, the City may certify the Final EIR, prepare Findings, adopt a mitigation monitoring and reporting program, and issue a Notice of Determination, which is the final step in the CEQA process.

3. ORGANIZATION OF THE DRAFT EIR

As stated, a principal objective of CEQA is to ensure that the environmental review process be a public one. In meeting this objective, an EIR informs members of the public, reviewing agencies, and decision-makers of the physical impacts associated with a project. Sections of the Draft EIR are organized as follows:

Executive Summary provides a summary of the Project, impacts, mitigation measures and alternatives.

Section I: Introduction reviews the purpose, scope, and organization of the document.

Section II: Project Description presents a description of the proposed Project including the objectives, locations, components, and characteristics.

Section III: Environmental Setting provides a summary of the context within which the Project would occur.

Section IV: Environmental Impact Analysis presents the existing conditions, Project impact analysis, mitigation measures, and conclusions regarding the level of significance after mitigation.

Section V: Alternatives discusses alternatives to the proposed Project that have been developed and analyzed to provide additional information on ways to avoid or lessen the impacts of the Project.

Section VI: Other Environmental Considerations discusses other topics required by CEQA, including Significant Irreversible Change, Growth-Inducing Impacts and Impacts Found Not to Be Significant.

Section VII: References lists the principal documents, reports, maps, and other information sources referenced in this Draft EIR.

Section VIII: Preparers of the EIR and Persons Consulted lists persons involved in the preparation of this Draft EIR or who contributed information incorporated into this Draft EIR.

Appendices to this Draft EIR include the Initial Study, NOP, and written comments, as well as technical reports and data used and referenced in the Draft EIR.