

1 INTRODUCTION

This Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) for the proposed City of Encinitas Mobility Element Update (MEU; Project) has been prepared on behalf of the City of Encinitas (City) in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Statute and Guidelines (Public Resources Code, Section 21000 et seq. and California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15000, et seq.).

The City is updating the Mobility Element of its General Plan to set a long-term vision for regional mobility by establishing goals, multimodal networks, and supporting policies. The Project would accommodate future growth by providing a long-term blueprint that guides transportation decision making, plans for diverse modes and mobility options including vehicular, envisions future mobility improvements, and includes updated goals, policies, and multimodal networks. The MEU would revise the City's existing Circulation Element to account for changes made to state law and best practices, to create a single cohesive mobility framework. The MEU would also include changes to the City's roadway classifications to better accommodate all modes of travel.

1.1 Purpose of the PEIR

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15121, the purpose of this PEIR is to provide public agency decision-makers and members of the public with general information about the potential significant environmental effects of the Project, possible ways to minimize its significant effects, and reasonable alternatives that would reduce or avoid any identified significant effects. The PEIR includes recommended mitigation measures that, when implemented, would lessen the Project's impacts and provide the City, which is the lead agency as defined in Article 4 of the CEQA Guidelines (Sections 15050 through 15051), with ways to substantially lessen or avoid the significant effects of the Project on the environment, whenever feasible. Alternatives to the Project are presented to evaluate alternative land use scenarios, policies, and/or regulations that would further reduce or avoid significant impacts associated with the Project.

1.1.1 Type of Environmental Impact Report

This environmental impact report (EIR) has been prepared as a PEIR, as defined in Section 15168 of the CEQA Guidelines. A PEIR is recommended for a series of actions that are related geographically, as logical parts in a chain of contemplated actions, or in connection with the issuance of plans that govern the conduct of a continuing program [per CEQA Guidelines, Section 15168(a)].

1.2 Legal Authority

1.2.1 Lead Agency

The City is the lead agency for the Project, pursuant to Article 4 (Sections 15050 and 15051) of the CEQA Guidelines. The lead agency, as defined by CEQA Guidelines Section 15367, is the public agency that has the principal responsibility and authority for carrying out or approving a proposed project. As the lead agency, the City conducted a preliminary review of the Project and determined that a PEIR was required. The analysis and findings in this PEIR reflect the independent, impartial conclusions of the City.

1.2.2 Responsible and Trustee Agencies

State law requires that all EIRs be reviewed by responsible and trustee agencies. The term “responsible agency,” defined pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15381, includes all public agencies other than the lead agency that have discretionary approval authority over one or more actions involved with project implementation. A trustee agency is defined in Section 15386 of the CEQA Guidelines as a state agency having jurisdiction by law over natural resources that are held in trust for the people of the state of California and that may be affected by a project.

Responsible/trustee agencies for the MEU include the following:

- California Coastal Commission
- San Diego County Air Pollution Control District
- San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board
- California Department of Transportation

1.3 Notice of Preparation

The scope of analysis for this PEIR was determined by the City as a result of an initial review of the Project and consideration of comments received in response to the Notice of Preparation (NOP) issued on September 1, 2022. A public scoping meeting was held on September 19, 2022, from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. at City Hall, located at 505 S. Vulcan Ave., Encinitas, CA 92024. Public outreach for the NOP included distribution using the following methods:

- The NOP was published on September 2, 2022, in the Coast News.
- The NOP was posted at the office of the San Diego County Assessor-County Clerk-Recorder.
- The NOP was distributed to state agencies through the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research, State Clearinghouse.
- The NOP was made available to the public for review at the following web location: encinitasca.gov/mobility element.

The NOP and comments received during the NOP public review period are provided in Appendix A.

1.4 Scope of This PEIR

Through planning and scoping activities, it was determined that the Project could result in potentially significant environmental impacts in the following environmental areas:

- Air Quality
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change
- Land Use and Planning
- Noise and Vibration
- Public Services and Facilities
- Transportation and Circulation

This PEIR has been organized in accordance with the most recent CEQA Guidelines. Its organization and content are summarized below:

- **Executive Summary** provides a brief description of the Project, identification of areas of controversy, a summary of the PEIR analysis, and a summary table identifying significant impacts, proposed mitigation measures, and impact level after mitigation. It also includes a summary of the Project alternatives and a comparison of the potential impacts of the alternatives with those of the Project.
- **Chapter 1.0 Introduction** contains an overview of the legal authority, purpose, and intended uses of the PEIR, as well as its scope and organization. It also includes a discussion of the CEQA environmental review process, including opportunities for public involvement.
- **Chapter 2.0 Project Description** provides a detailed description of the Project, including background on its development, its main objectives, and key features. It also describes the discretionary actions required to fully adopt and implement the Project.
- **Chapter 3.0 Environmental Analysis** contains an evaluation of potential impacts related to the environmental issues identified in the PEIR scope. Each issue evaluation includes discussion of the existing conditions, including the existing regulatory framework, identification of the thresholds and methodology for determining the significance of impacts, assessment of potential impacts, and evaluation of the significance of the impacts considering the existing regulatory framework and/or new standards proposed in conjunction with the MEU. Where analysis demonstrates that potentially significant impacts could occur, mitigation is provided.
- **Chapter 4.0 Other CEQA Required Topics:**
 - **Effects Found Not to Be Significant Impacts** identifies all of the issues determined in the scoping and preliminary environmental review process to be not significant based on CEQA criteria, and briefly summarizes the basis for these determinations.
 - **Significant Unavoidable Environmental Effects/Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes** discusses the significant unavoidable or irreversible impacts that would occur with implementation of the Project. This section describes the potentially

significant irreversible changes that may be expected to result from the Project and addresses the use of nonrenewable resources during the Project’s construction and operational life.

- **Growth Inducement** evaluates the potential for the Project to induce economic or population growth, either directly or indirectly, within the Project Area and region.
- **Chapter 5.0 Cumulative Impacts** identifies the cumulative impacts of the project when viewed in connection with the effects of past, current, and probable future projects.
- **Chapter 6.0 Alternatives** provides a description and comparative analysis of the Project alternatives, including the Alternatives Considered but Rejected. It includes both summaries and tabular comparison of the alternatives is included. As required by CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)(2), the PEIR identifies the environmentally superior alternative.
- **Chapter 7.0 List of Acronyms** lists the acronyms used in the PEIR.
- **Chapter 8.0 List of References** lists the reference materials cited in the PEIR.
- **Chapter 9.0 List of Preparers** lists the preparers who contributed to the preparation of the PEIR.

1.5 Review Process

1.5.1 Draft PEIR

In accordance with Sections 15085 and 15087 (a) (1) of the CEQA Guidelines and the City’s CEQA Supplemental Regulations, upon completion of the Draft PEIR a Notice of Completion is filed with the State Office of Planning and Research, and a Notice of Availability of the Draft PEIR is issued in a newspaper of general circulation in the area.

The Draft PEIR is distributed for review to the public and interested and affected agencies for the purpose of providing comments “on the sufficiency of the document in identifying and analyzing the possible impacts on the environment and ways in which the significant effects of the project might be avoided or mitigated” (Section 15204, CEQA Guidelines).

The Draft PEIR and all related technical studies are available for review during the public review period at the following locations:

City of Encinitas Planning and Building Department
505 South Vulcan Avenue
Encinitas, California 92024

Encinitas Branch Library
540 Cornish Drive
Encinitas, California 92024

The Draft PEIR can be downloaded from the City’s website at:

<https://www.encinitasca.gov/government/public-notice/development-services>

1.5.2 Final PEIR

Following public review of the Draft PEIR, the City will provide written responses to comments per CEQA Guidelines Section 15088 and will consider all relevant comments in making its decision to certify the Final PEIR. Responses to the comments received during public review, associated revisions to the Draft PEIR sections, and the CEQA Findings of Fact, will be prepared and compiled as part of the Final PEIR.

The culmination of this process is a public hearing where the City Council would determine whether to certify the Final PEIR as being complete and in accordance with CEQA. The Final PEIR will be available for public review at least 10 days before the decision-making bodies make a recommendation or final determination, in order to provide commenters the opportunity to review the City's written responses to their comment letters.