

1.0 INTRODUCTION TO THE FINAL EIR

1.1 PURPOSE

This document, along with the Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) and the Recirculated Environmental Impact Report represents the Final Environmental Impact Report (Final EIR) for the Beverly Hilton Revitalization Project (Project). It has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources Code Sections 21000 et seq.), and its implementing guidelines (Title 14, California Code Regulations, Sections 15000 et seq., [CEQA Guidelines]) as amended. The City of Beverly Hills (City) will consider this Final EIR in its capacity as Lead Agency before it approves or denies the Project. The Findings of Fact and any Statement of Overriding Consideration would be made after the City has considered the information contained in this Final EIR. Likewise, the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) would be adopted at the time the findings are adopted and would also be included in the public record.

As required by Section 15132 of the CEQA Guidelines, a Final EIR shall consist of the following:

- The Draft EIR or a revision of the Draft EIR;*
- Comments received on the Draft EIR either verbatim or in summary;*
- A list of persons, organizations, and public agencies commenting on the Draft EIR;*
- The responses of the Lead Agency to significant environmental points raised in the review process; and*
- Any other information added deemed necessary by the Lead Agency.*

The evaluation and response to public comments is an important part of the CEQA process as it allows for (1) the opportunity to review and comment on the methods of analysis contained within the Draft EIR, (2) the ability to detect any omissions which may have occurred during preparation of the Draft EIR, (3) the ability to check for accuracy of the analysis contained within the Draft EIR, (4) the ability to share expertise, and (5) the ability to discover public concerns.

1.2 PROCESS

As defined by Section 15050 of CEQA Guidelines, the City is serving as Lead Agency, and is responsible for preparing the EIR for this Project. As such, the City is responsible for ensuring that the EIR satisfies the procedural and informational requirements of CEQA and for the consideration and certification of the adequacy of the EIR prior to making any decision regarding the Project.

The City determined that an EIR should be prepared for the proposed Beverly Hilton Revitalization Project. As a result, a Notice of Preparation (NOP) was prepared and circulated between July 21, 2006 and August 21, 2006 for the required 30-day review period. The purpose of the NOP was to solicit early comments from members of the public and public agencies with expertise in subjects that will be discussed in the Draft EIR. The City of Beverly Hills also held a public scoping meeting on the proposed project to solicit oral and written comments from the public and public agencies. The public scoping meeting was held on August 3, 2006. The NOP and written responses to the NOP are included within Appendix 1.0 of the Draft EIR.

The City circulated the Draft EIR and related Appendices to affected agencies, the public and other interested persons on August 8, 2007. In response to requests by the public, the review period was extended an additional seven days to September 28, 2007. Therefore, the Draft EIR was circulated for an extended 52-day comment period, which exceeds the 45-day public-comment period required by *CEQA Guidelines* Sections 15087(c) and 15105.

In order to provide the public with a meaningful opportunity to comment upon potential impacts related to traffic, air quality and noise, the Lead Agency determined that certain sections of the Beverly Hilton Revitalization EIR should be revised because another Draft EIR currently under consideration by the City used different baseline information in the existing conditions portion of the traffic section of that EIR.¹ Sections 4.11, Transportation, Traffic, Parking and Circulation, 4.2, Air Quality, and 4.8, Noise, were revised and recirculated with a shortened 30-day public review period beginning October 16 and ending November 13, 2007.

In addition, the Beverly Hills Planning Commission (Planning Commission) held public hearings on August 22, September 10, October 3, November 1, November 8, and December 13, 2007, and January 31, 2008, to receive testimony, both written and oral, regarding the project and the Draft EIR.

The Draft EIR was made available at the following locations:

- City of Beverly Hills City Hall
Community Development Department (Planning Division)
455 North Rexford Drive, Room G-40 (until October 21, 2007)
9357 West Third Street (temporary offices as of October 22, 2007)
Beverly Hills, CA 90210

¹ The other project is the William Morris project, is one of several projects currently undergoing environmental review by the City. The William Morris project is also known as the 231 – 265 North Beverly Drive Project (State Clearinghouse No. 2006081074). The Draft EIR for this project was released for public review in May 2007.

- City off Beverly Hills City Hall
Office of the City Clerk
455 North Rexford Drive, Room 190
Beverly Hills, CA 90210
- Beverly Hills Public Library
444 North Rexford Drive
Beverly Hills, CA 90210
- The City's website: www.BeverlyHills.org

1.3 CONTENTS OF THE FINAL EIR

As discussed above, the primary intent of the Final EIR is to provide a forum to raise and address comments pertaining to the analysis contained within the Draft EIR. Pursuant to Section 15088 of the *State CEQA Guidelines*, the City, as the Lead Agency for this Project, has reviewed and addressed all comments received on the Draft EIR prepared for the Beverly Hilton Revitalization Project that were submitted during the required public review periods for the Draft and Recirculated Draft EIRs. In addition, all written and oral comments received between August 7, 2007, and January 10, 2008, are being considered and responded to within this Final EIR.

In order to adequately address the comments provided by interested agencies and the public in an organized manner, this Final EIR has been prepared in four parts.

Section 1.0, Introduction to the Final EIR, describes the purpose, process, and contents of the Final EIR.

Section 2.0, Executive Summary, contains the Executive Summary from the Draft EIR which has been revised to reflect changes made based upon comments received on the Draft EIR.

Section 3.0, Comments and Responses to Comments, on the Draft EIR, provides a list of commenters who provided comments in writing and orally at public hearings for the project, copies of written comments (coded for reference), and the responses to those written and oral comments.

Section 4.0, Corrections and Additions to the Draft EIR, consists of minor text changes made to the Draft EIR as a result of comments raised during the public review process or by City staff.

Section 5.0, Alternative Variations, describes two variations on project alternatives, and their associated environmental impacts, considered and evaluated during the public comment period for the Draft and Recirculated EIR.