



## **1.0 Introduction and Purpose**

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

### 1.1 PURPOSE OF THE EIR

The City of Huntington Beach (City) is the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and has determined that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is required for the Brookhurst Street/Adams Avenue Intersection Improvements Project (project) (State Clearinghouse No. 2013011057). This EIR has been prepared in conformance with CEQA (California Public Resources Code [PRC] Section 21000 et seq.); *CEQA Guidelines* (California Code of Regulations [CCR], Title 14, Section 15000 et seq.); and the rules, regulations, and procedures for implementation of CEQA, as adopted by the City of Huntington Beach. The principle *CEQA Guidelines* sections governing content of this document are Sections 15120 through 15132 (Contents of Environmental Impact Reports) and Section 15161 (Project EIR).

The purpose of this EIR is to review the existing conditions, analyze potential environmental impacts, and identify feasible mitigation measures to reduce potentially significant effects of the proposed project, located at the intersection of Brookhurst Street and Adams Avenue, in the southeastern portion of the City of Huntington Beach. For more detailed information regarding the proposal, refer to Section 3.0, *Project Description*.

This EIR addresses the environmental effects of the project, in accordance with Section 15161 of the *CEQA Guidelines*. In accordance with Section 15121 of the *CEQA Guidelines*, the main purposes of this EIR are to:

- Provide decision-makers and the public with specific information regarding the environmental effects associated with the proposed project;
- Identify ways to minimize the significant effects of the project; and
- Describe reasonable alternatives to the project.

Mitigation measures are provided to minimize the significance of impacts resulting from the project. In addition, this EIR is the primary reference document in the formulation and implementation of a mitigation monitoring program for the proposed project.

The City of Huntington Beach (which has the principal responsibility of processing and approving the project) and other public (i.e., responsible and trustee) agencies that may use this EIR in the decision-making or permit process will consider the information in this EIR, along with other information that may be presented during the CEQA process. Environmental impacts are not always mitigatable to a level considered less than significant; in those cases, impacts are considered significant unavoidable impacts. In accordance with Section 15093(b) of the *CEQA Guidelines*, if a public agency approves a project that has significant impacts that are not substantially mitigated (i.e., significant unavoidable impacts), the agency shall state in writing the specific reasons for approving the project, based on the Final EIR and any other information in the public record for the project. This is termed, per Section 15093 of the *CEQA Guidelines*, a “statement of overriding considerations.”



This document analyzes the environmental effects of the project to the degree of specificity appropriate to the current proposed actions, as required by Section 15146 of the *CEQA Guidelines*. The analysis considers the activities associated with the project to determine the short-term and long-term effects associated with their implementation. This EIR discusses both the direct and indirect impacts of this project, as well as the cumulative impacts associated with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects.

## 1.2 COMPLIANCE WITH CEQA

### PUBLIC REVIEW OF DRAFT EIR

The Draft EIR is subject to a 45-day review period by responsible and trustee agencies and interested parties. Section 15087 of the *CEQA Guidelines* lists optional procedures for noticing, including publication in a newspaper, posting on-site, or mailing to owners of a property or properties contiguous to the site. In accordance with the provision of Sections 15085(a) and 15087(a)(1) of the *CEQA Guidelines*, as amended, the City of Huntington Beach, serving as the Lead Agency, will: 1) publish a Notice of Availability of a Draft EIR in a newspaper of general circulation for the project area; and 2) will prepare and transmit a Notice of Availability (NOA) and Notice of Completion (NOC) to the State Clearinghouse. Proof of publication is available at the offices of the Lead Agency.

Any public agency or members of the public desiring to comment on the Draft EIR must submit their comments in writing to the lead agency at the address indicated on the document's NOA/NOC prior to the end of the public review period. The Lead Agency will evaluate and prepare responses to all relevant written comments received from both citizens and public agencies during the public review period.

### FINAL EIR

The Final EIR will consist of the Draft EIR, revisions to the Draft EIR (if any), and responses to all written comments addressing environmental concerns raised in the comments of responsible agencies, the public, and any other reviewing parties. After the Final EIR is completed, and at least ten days prior to the certification hearing, a copy of the response to comments made by public agencies on the Draft EIR will be provided to the commenting agencies.

## 1.3 EIR SCOPING PROCESS

In compliance with the *CEQA Guidelines*, the City of Huntington Beach has maximized opportunities for the public to participate in the environmental review process. During preparation of the Draft EIR, efforts were made to contact various Federal, State, regional, and local government agencies and other interested parties to solicit comments on the proposed project. This included the distribution of an IS/NOP to various responsible agencies, trustee agencies, and interested parties.



## INITIAL STUDY/NOTICE OF PREPARATION

Pursuant to the provision of Section 15082 of the *CEQA Guidelines*, as amended, the City of Huntington Beach circulated an IS/NOP directly to public agencies (including the State Clearinghouse Office of Planning and Research), special districts, and members of the public who had requested such notice for a 30-day period. The IS/NOP was distributed on January 31, 2013, with the 30-day public review period concluding on March 1, 2013.

The purpose of the IS/NOP was to formally announce the preparation of a Draft EIR for the proposed project, and that, as the Lead Agency, the City was soliciting input regarding the scope and content of the environmental information to be included in the EIR. The IS/NOP provided preliminary information regarding the anticipated range of impacts to be analyzed within the EIR. The IS/NOP is provided as Appendix 13.1 of this EIR, and IS/NOP comments are provided as Appendix 13.2.

A total of 23 comment letters were received from State, regional, and local public agencies, as well as residents and property owners. A summary of environmental concerns expressed by these agencies and individuals is provided below. The section of the EIR where these comments are addressed is provided in parentheses.

- Concern over safety associated with additional capacity at the intersection (Section 5.2, *Traffic and Circulation*);
- Impacts to the loss of property (Section 5.1, *Land Use and Relevant Planning*);
- Air quality impacts related to all phases of the project (Section 5.3, *Air Quality*);
- Mobile noise impacts from the widening of the intersection (Section 5.5, *Noise*);
- Noise and vibration impacts from construction activities (Section 5.5, *Noise*);
- Impacts to emergency access (Section 10, *Effects Found Not To Be Significant*);
- Impacts to historical and archaeological resources (Section 10.0, *Effects Found Not To Be Significant*);
- Transportation-related impacts and the request for a traffic study (Section 5.8, *Traffic and Circulation*, and Appendix 13.3, *Traffic Impact Analysis*);
- Impacts to pedestrians and bicyclists in the project area resources (Section 10.0, *Effects Found Not To Be Significant*);
- Construction and operational traffic impacts to surrounding residential areas (Section 5.2, *Traffic and Circulation*);
- Impacts regarding the relocation of utilities (Section 10.0, *Effects Found Not To Be Significant*);



- Increased flooding impacts in the project area (Section 10.0, *Effects Found Not To Be Significant*);
- Impacts from the increase in lighting in the project area (Section 10.0, *Effects Found Not To Be Significant*);
- Aesthetic impacts of the proposed project (Section 10.0, *Effects Found Not To Be Significant*); and
- Physical areas of temporary and permanent property impacts (Section 3.0, *Project Description*).

In addition, during the required 30-day NOP circulation period, the City conducted a public scoping meeting at the Huntington Central Library (7111 Talbert Avenue) on February 21, 2013, to solicit input regarding the scope and content of the EIR. A summary of environmental concerns expressed at the public scoping meeting is provided below. The section of the EIR where these comments are addressed is provided in parentheses.

- Impacts to medians/roadway geometrics (Section 3.0, *Project Description*, and Section 5.2, *Traffic and Circulation*);
- Purpose and need for the proposed project (Section 3.0, *Project Description*);
- Air quality and noise impacts associated with the project (Section 5.3, *Air Quality*, and Section 5.5, *Noise*);
- Safety concerns to nearby residents associated with additional capacity at the intersection (Section 5.2, *Traffic and Circulation*);
- Safety impacts to nearby school (Section 5.2, *Traffic and Circulation*);
- Land use consistency impacts (Section 5.1, *Land Use and Relevant Planning*);
- Concerns regarding flooding impacts on Piccadilly Lane (Section 10.0, *Effects Found Not To Be Significant*);
- Vehicle and bicycle access impacts (Section 5.2, *Traffic and Circulation* and Section 10.0, *Effects Found Not To Be Significant*);
- General impacts associated with both construction and long-term operations of the project (Section 5.0, *Environmental Analysis*);
- Safety concerns over increasing crosswalk distances and adding a second right-turn lane (Section 5.2, *Traffic and Circulation*); and
- Impacts to existing utilities (Section 10.0, *Effects Found Not To Be Significant*).



## 1.4 FORMAT OF THE EIR

The Draft EIR is organized into 13 sections, as follows:

- Section 1.0, *Introduction and Purpose*, provides CEQA compliance information.
- Section 2.0, *Executive Summary*, provides a brief project description and summary of the environmental impacts and mitigation measures.
- Section 3.0, *Project Description*, provides a detailed project description indicating project location, background, and history; project characteristics, phasing, and objectives; as well as associated discretionary actions required.
- Section 4.0, *Basis for the Cumulative Analysis*, describes the approach and methodology for the cumulative analysis.
- Section 5.0, *Environmental Analysis*, contains a detailed environmental analysis of the existing conditions, project impacts, recommended mitigation measures, and unavoidable adverse impacts for a number of environmental topic areas.
- Section 6.0, *Long-Term Implications of the Proposed Project*, discusses significant environmental changes that would be involved in the proposed action, should it be implemented. The project's growth-inducing impacts, including the potential for population growth, are also discussed.
- Section 7.0, *Alternatives to the Proposed Project*, describes a reasonable range of alternatives to the project or to the location of the project that could avoid or substantially lessen the significant impact of the project and still feasibly attain the basic project objectives.
- Section 8.0, *Inventory of Mitigation Measures*, lists mitigation measures proposed to minimize the significant impacts.
- Section 9.0, *Level of Significance After Mitigation*, describes those impacts that remain significant following mitigation.
- Section 10.0, *Effects Found Not to be Significant*, provides an explanation of potential impacts that have been determined not to be significant.
- Section 11.0, *Organizations and Persons Consulted*, identifies all Federal, State, or local agencies, other organizations, and individuals consulted.
- Section 12.0, *Bibliography*, identifies reference sources for the EIR.
- Section 13.0, *Appendices*, contains technical documentation for the project.



## 1.5 RESPONSIBLE AND TRUSTEE AGENCIES

Certain projects or actions undertaken by a Lead Agency require subsequent oversight, approvals, or permits from other public agencies in order to be implemented. Such other agencies are referred to as Responsible Agencies and Trustee Agencies. Pursuant to Sections 15381 and 15386 of the *CEQA Guidelines*, as amended, Responsible Agencies and Trustee Agencies are respectively defined as follows:

*“Responsible Agency” means a public agency, which proposes to carry out or approve a project, for which [a] Lead Agency is preparing or has prepared an EIR or Negative Declaration. For the purposes of CEQA, the term “responsible agency” includes all public agencies other than the Lead Agency, which have discretionary approval power over the project. (Section 15381)*

*“Trustee Agency” means a state agency having jurisdiction by law over natural resources affected by a project, which are held in trust for the people of the State of California. Trustee Agencies include; The California Department of Fish and Game, The State Lands Commission; The State Department of Parks and Recreation and The University of California with regard to sites within the Natural Land and Water Reserves System. (Section 15386)*

Responsible and Trustee Agencies and other entities that may use this EIR in their decision-making process or for informational purposes include, but may not be limited to, the California Regional Water Quality Control Board (Santa Ana) and the South Coast Air Quality Management District.

## 1.6 INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE

Pertinent documents relating to this EIR have been cited in accordance with Section 15150 of the *CEQA Guidelines*, which encourages incorporation by reference as a means of reducing redundancy and length of environmental reports. The following documents are hereby incorporated by reference into this EIR. Information contained within these documents has been utilized for each section of this EIR. These documents are available for review at the City of Huntington Beach Planning and Building Department (located at 2000 Main Street, Huntington Beach, California).

- *City of Huntington Beach General Plan EIR, (1995).* This document addresses the potential environmental impacts associated with implementation of the *City of Huntington Beach General Plan*. The purpose of this EIR is to identify the *General Plan’s* significant effects on the environment, to indicate the manner in which significant effects can be mitigated or avoided, and to identify alternatives to the proposed project which could avoid or reduce these impacts. The document also provides objective planning and environmental information for the City of Huntington Beach.
- *City of Huntington Beach General Plan, (1996).* The *City of Huntington Beach General Plan* is a policy planning document which provides the framework for management and utilization of the City’s physical, economic and human resources. This document guides civic decisions regarding land use, the design and/or character of buildings and open spaces, the conservation of existing housing and the provision of new dwelling units, the provisions of supporting infrastructure and public services, the protection of environmental resources, the allocation of fiscal resources, and the protection of residents from natural and human-caused hazards.



- *City of Huntington Beach General Plan Circulation Element Update Final EIR*, (November 2012). The *City of Huntington Beach General Plan Circulation Element Update Final EIR* considers the environmental impacts associated with the City's *General Plan Circulation Element Update*. The purpose of the Circulation Element Update is to evaluate the long-term transportation needs of the City and present a comprehensive plan to accommodate those needs. The proposed Circulation Element covers various circulation issues such as regional mobility; roadway circulation; neighborhood traffic management; public transportation; transportation demand management; parking; pedestrian, bicycle, and equestrian paths; waterway facilities; and scenic corridors. The entire Circulation Element was updated including goals, policies, and objectives pertaining to the issues above and Level of Service standards. The Citywide traffic model was also updated. The traffic model identifies year 2030 projected average daily traffic volumes on the City's *Arterial Highway Plan* including nineteen intersections that require long-term improvements to accommodate projected traffic volumes. Several roadway segments are proposed for classification change and changes are proposed to the *Master Plan of Arterial Highways*.
- *City of Huntington Beach Municipal Code*. The *City of Huntington Beach Municipal Code (Municipal Code)* consists of all the regulatory and penal ordinances and administrative ordinances of the City of Huntington Beach. It is the method the City uses to implement control of land uses, in accordance with *General Plan* goals and policies. The City of Huntington Beach Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance, Titles 20 through 25, of the *Municipal Code* identifies land uses permitted and prohibited according to the zoning category of particular parcels. The Buildings and Construction Ordinance, Title 17, specifies rules and regulations for construction, alteration, and building for uses of human habitation.



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