



City of Montclair 2020 General Plan Update and Arrow Highway Mixed-Use District (AHMUD) Specific Plan



Notice of Availability (NOA) of a Draft Environmental Impact Report

The City of Montclair has reviewed the following proposed project, conducted an environmental review, and prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR). The Draft EIR is being circulated for public review:

1. **Project Name:** City of Montclair 2020 General Plan Update and Arrow Highway Mixed-Use District (AHMUD) Specific Plan.
2. **Lead Agency:** City of Montclair.
3. **Location:** The Planning Area for the proposed project includes all land within Montclair City Limits and its Sphere of Influence (SOI), including several unincorporated San Bernardino County 'islands.'
6. **General Plan Designations:** All within the Planning Area. Existing land use designations are shown on Figure 4.11-1 of the Draft EIR, and proposed land use designations are shown on Figure 2-3 of the Draft EIR.
7. **Zoning Designations:** All within the Planning Area. Existing zoning designations are shown on Figure 4.11-2 of the Draft EIR. State law requires a City's Zoning Ordinance to be consistent with the City's General Plan and the Zoning Ordinance to be revised to reflect the adopted General Plan within a reasonable time from its adoption, which is typically one year.
8. **Responsible and/or Trustee Agencies:**
Responsible Agencies: None.
Trustee Agencies: California Department of Fish and Wildlife.
9. **Project Description:**

The proposed project is described below. More information on the 2020 General Plan Update and the AHMUD Specific Plan, including the Draft EIR, are available on the project website at: <https://www.montclairplan.org/>.

2020 General Plan Update (the Plan)

The proposed project includes a comprehensive update of the City's General Plan, which has not been comprehensively updated since 1999. The Plan has been reorganized and reformatted, with updated goals and policies that reflect the community's vision of Montclair that the Plan seeks to achieve. The General Plan Land Use Map has also been updated. The City plans to process any zoning amendments required to bring zoning into conformance with the Plan's land use recommendations concurrently with approval of the Plan.

The Plan includes eight chapters:

- Our Natural Community
- Our Prosperous Community
- Our Well Planned Community
- Our Accessible Community
- Our Resilient Community
- Our Healthy and Safe Community
- Our Active Community
- Our Creative Community

An updated Housing Element for the City of Montclair is included in the Plan and analyzed in this EIR. All proposed population and housing growth relative to the updated Housing Element and the rest of the Plan is accounted for and analyzed in the Draft EIR. The City plans to adopt and then submit the updated Housing Element to the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) for review, comment, and certification prior to adoption of the rest of the Plan to comply with State guidance related to required and recommended deadlines for submissions of Housing Elements, as described in the Housing Element.

A Climate Action Plan (CAP) has also been prepared and relevant portions of the CAP have been integrated into Plan goals, policies, and implementation programs throughout the relevant Plan elements and sections. The Plan will act as the comprehensive policy document and the CAP will provide mechanisms to implement and monitor the GHG reduction opportunities associated with City planning policies. Additionally, in this format the Plan has been prepared to meet the criteria of a "qualified plan for the reduction of greenhouse gases" according to the criteria specified in the CEQA Guidelines, which provides a mechanism for tiering and streamlining of GHG emissions analysis for projects that are consistent with such a plan.

The Plan includes the following key concepts/objectives:

- Create a green network for the City, mainly through the San Antonio Channel Creek connecting the western portion of the City from south to north with open parks, public space, and more to increase amenities and ecology.
- Use City streets for increased green and transit infrastructure for the public, with particular focus on the four main street corridors of Central Avenue, Holt Boulevard, Arrow Highway, and Mission Boulevard.
- For most of the City, preserve the existing pattern of uses and establishes improvements, polices, and protection for long-term maintenance of established neighborhoods.

- Create a transit-oriented downtown incorporating a new downtown north of the I-10 freeway.
- Transform the mall into a town center.
- Preserve and enhance the current industrial areas.

These key concepts/objectives will help fulfill the vision of the City of Montclair.

Based on its objectives and input from the community, the Plan includes the overarching purposes listed below to guide Plan policies and City decision-making. Each purpose is a vision statement that provides general direction for the chapter. The goals in each chapter specify ends that help achieve the overarching purpose of the Plan. The policies are specific statements that guide decision-making.

- *Our Natural Community.* Promote and ensure equitable access to clean air and water, parks and open space, and develop an integrated green infrastructure.
- *Our Prosperous Community.* Attract and retain jobs within growth industries; nurture small entrepreneurial businesses; redevelop underutilized properties along key corridors and districts; and build the City's fiscal capacity.
- *Our Well Planned Community.* Conserve and enhance stable areas, promote contextual infill, and direct new growth to downtown, Arrow Highway Mixed-Use District, and corridors.
- *Our Accessible Community.* Transportation networks support and encourage mobility and broader community goals of safety, health, economic development, and environmental sustainability.
- *Our Healthy Community.* Promote health and well-being for all through inclusive approaches where healthy habits are encouraged.
- *Our Safe Community.* Promote a safer community by minimizing threats to life from natural and man-caused hazards.
- *Our Active Community.* Promote and ensure inclusive and equitable access to a range of opportunities for physical activities including parks, open space, and recreation.
- *Our Creative Community.* Enhance our creative community through strengthening partnerships, integrating public art, creating and enhancing venues; and leveraging our creative economy.

AHMUD Specific Plan

The AHMUD Specific Plan is a component of the General Plan and focuses on the northwest and northeast corners of Montclair, along the Arrow Highway Corridor. Community engagement is a core part of this Specific Plan. The AHMUD Specific Plan builds off the previous specific plans of increased pedestrian and a transit oriented downtown and is organized into two areas: AHMUD West and AHUMD east. The focus in AHMUD West is on Arrow Highway enhancements and new residential development west and south of San Antonio Channel Creek. The focus in AHMUD East is on Arrow Highway enhancements, a new public park, new development on the north and south side of Arrow Highway, and new development facing Central Avenue. The AHMUD Specific Plan incorporates public areas, such as greenways, a central park, private and public open spaces. It also increases mobility through updated streetways, transit, sidewalks, bike lanes, and more. The AHMUD Specific Plan includes phasing of public infrastructure such as improvements to streetscapes, San Antonio Channel Creek, and parks.

Draft EIR Findings

The Draft EIR is a program EIR. According to Section 15168 of the State *CEQA Guidelines*, a program EIR is an EIR that may be prepared on a series of actions that can be characterized as one large project. The purpose of a program EIR is to allow the lead agency to consider broad policy alternatives and program-wide mitigation measures at an early time when the agency has greater flexibility to deal with basic problems or cumulative impacts.

The Draft EIR, in addition to the CEQA-required “no project” alternative, examines a reduced growth alternative in terms of its impacts in each environmental impact area relative to those of the Plan. The Draft EIR, while finding the Reduced Growth Alternative to be the environmentally superior alternative, also finds that this alternative would generally achieve the Plan objectives, but in some cases to a lesser degree than the Plan. It also finds that this alternative would not achieve the goal of the *Our Prosperous Community* chapter of the Plan to retain high-wage and high value enterprises and diversify and increase the local tax base to as great a degree as the Plan because it would not attract or create as many jobs, create as much economic growth nor increase the local tax base to the same extent as the growth accommodated by the Plan. The Draft EIR also considered a *Relocated Focus Areas* alternative and a *No Growth* alternative, but ultimately rejected them for environmental impact comparison to the Plan because they either did not meet the Plan objectives, would not be feasible, or would not avoid or substantially lessen one or more significant effects of the Plan.

The Draft EIR examines each of the issue areas on the City’s environmental checklist. It finds that the Plan would result in the following significant and unavoidable environmental effects:

- Air Quality Impact AQ-1. Individual development projects carried out under the Plan would generate construction and operational-related emissions. Such emissions may conflict with or obstruct the implementation of the SCAQMD’s Air Quality Management Plan. Implementation of Plan policies, compliance with existing regulations, and

implementation of mitigation would reduce construction- and operational emissions, but not necessarily to a less than significant level.

- Air Quality Impact AQ-2. Individual development projects carried out under the Plan would generate construction and operational-related emissions. Such emissions may result in adverse impacts to regional air quality. Implementation of Plan policies, compliance with existing regulations, and implementation of mitigation would reduce construction and operational emissions, but not always to a less than significant level.
- Air Quality Impact AQ-3. Individual development projects carried out under the Plan would generate construction- and operational-related emissions. Such emissions may result in adverse impacts to local air quality. Implementation of Plan policies, compliance with existing regulations, and implementation of mitigation would reduce construction and operational emissions, but not necessarily to a less than significant level.
- Cultural Resources Impact CUL-1. The Plan has the potential to result in a significant impact if development carried out under the Plan would cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource. Mitigation Measure CUL-1 would help avoid or reduce this impact, but not necessarily to a less than significant level in all cases.

The Draft EIR also found that the Plan would result in impacts that would be less than significant with incorporation of mitigation measures described in the Draft EIR in the following areas: Biological Resources (nesting birds and associated habitat); Cultural Resources (archaeological resources); Geology and Soils (subsidence and ground collapse, paleontological resources); Noise (pile driving and operational activities); and Tribal Cultural Resources (unidentified tribal cultural resources). A summary of all impacts and mitigation measures is shown in Table ES-1 of the Draft EIR.

Public Review of Draft EIR

The public review period for the Draft EIR runs from Tuesday July 26, 2022 to Thursday September 8, 2022. The Draft EIR and all documents referenced in the Draft EIR are available for public review on the project website (<https://www.montclairplan.org/plans/>) or the following locations:

- City of Montclair Planning Division, 5111 Benito Street, Montclair, CA 91763 Monday through Thursday, during normal Counter Hours from 7:00 am to 9:00 am and 4:00 pm to 5:30 pm (please call the Planning Division at (909) 625-9432 to make an appointment outside of these hours).

The public is encouraged to submit written comments to Michael Diaz, Community Development Director/City Planner, City of Montclair Planning Division, 5111 Benito Street Montclair, California 91763 no later than 5:00 p.m. on September 8, 2022. Alternatively, you may call Mr. Diaz at (909) 625-9432 or e-mail him your comments at mdiaz@cityofmontclair.org. When responding to this NOA, please provide contact information that will allow us to respond to your comment.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Diaz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and "D".

Michael Diaz, Community Development Director/City Planner

7/21/2022

Date