

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Purpose and Scope

The Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) assess the potential environmental effects of the adoption and implementation of the General Plan Update (Beaumont 2040 Plan), the adoption and implementation of the revised Zoning Code and Zoning Map which are all proposed by the City of Beaumont (City) (herein collectively referred to as “Project” or “proposed Project”).

This Program EIR has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970 (Public Resources Code (PRC), Section 21000 et seq.) and the *Guidelines for Implementation of CEQA Guidelines* published by the Public Resources Agency of the State of California (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15000 et seq.), and in accordance with the City’s *CEQA Guidelines*.

The PEIR was prepared by professional environmental consultants under contract to the City. The City is the lead agency for the preparation of this EIR as defined by the *CEQA Guidelines* (PRC Section 21067 as amended), and the content of the document reflects the independent judgment of the City.

This PEIR is intended to provide information to public agencies, the general public, and decision makers regarding potential environmental impacts related to the three components of the proposed Project:

- 1) Adoption and implementation of the General Plan Update (Beaumont 2040 Plan), and
- 2) Adoption and implementation of the revised Zoning Code and Zoning Map, and

The purpose of an EIR, under the provisions of CEQA, is “to identify the significant effects on the environment of a project, to identify the alternatives to the project, and to indicate the manner in which those significant effects can be mitigated or avoided.” (PRC Section 21002.1[a].)

According to the *CEQA Guidelines* (Section 15168), a Program EIR may be prepared on a series of actions that can be characterized as one large project, are related geographically, and as logical parts in the chain of contemplated actions in connection with issuance of rules, regulations, or plans. The Program EIR allows for a more exhaustive consideration of effects and alternatives that would be practical in an EIR on separate individual actions, and ensures consideration of cumulative impacts that might be slighted on a case-by-case basis.

This Draft PEIR provides a first-tier analysis of the potential environmental effects of the proposed Project. Section 15152 of the *CEQA Guidelines* indicates that tiering is appropriate when the sequence of analysis is from an EIR prepared for a general plan, policy, or program to an EIR or negative declaration for another plan, policy, or program of lesser scope, or to a site specific EIR or negative declaration if additional analysis is necessary. Subsequent activities in accordance with the proposed Project examined in light of this Draft PEIR to determine whether an additional environmental document must be prepared. If a subsequent project or later activity would have effects that were not examined in this Draft PEIR, or not examined at an appropriate level of detail to be used for the later activity, an initial study would need to be prepared to determine the appropriate environmental document. If the City finds that pursuant to Section 15152 of the *CEQA Guidelines*, no new effects could occur or new mitigation measures would be required on a subsequent project, the City can approve the activity as being within the scope of the Project covered by this Draft PEIR, and no new environmental document would be required. In addition, the standards related to subsequent EIRs at *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15162 to 15164 and PRC Section 21166 are applicable to this Draft PEIR.

This Draft PEIR serves as an information document for use by public agencies, the general public, and decisions makers. This PEIR is not a City policy document; it does, however, discuss the impacts of development pursuant to the proposed Beaumont 2040 Plan and related components, and analyzes Project alternatives.

2.2 Background

The Draft PEIR serves as the basis for environmental review and impact mitigation for adoption and implementation of the Beaumont 2040 Plan, Zoning Code and Zoning Map Revisions, and the Downtown Specific Plan. The City will review subsequent projects for consistency with the Draft PEIR and prepare appropriate environmental documentation pursuant to CEQA provisions for Draft PEIRs and subsequent projects. Subsequent projects under the Draft PEIR may include but, are not necessarily limited to the following implementation activities:

- Rezoning of properties
- Approval of Specific Plans
- Approval of development plans, including tentative maps, variances, conditional use permits, and other land use permits
- Approval of development agreements
- Approval of facility and service master plans and financing plans
- Approval and funding of public improvement projects
- Approval of resource management plans
- Issuance of municipal bonds
- Issuance of permits and other approval necessary for implementation of the General Plan
- Acquisition of property by purchase or eminent domain
- Annexations into the City

To define the scope of the investigation of the Draft PEIR, the City distributed a Notice of Preparation (NOP) on March 9, 2018, to the State Clearinghouse, State agencies, Cities, and Riverside County; other public agencies; and interested private organizations and individuals, in accordance with the requirements of the California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Sections 15082(a), 15103, and 15375. Pursuant to Section 15082 of the *CEQA Guidelines*, recipients of the NOP were requested to provide responses within 30 days after their receipt of the NOP. An initial study was not prepared with the NOP; *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15063(a) permits a lead agency to omit an initial study if it determines that an EIR is clearly required. The purpose of the NOP was to identify agency and public concerns regarding potential impacts of the proposed Project. **Table 2-A – Summary of Written Comments Received in Response to the Notice of Preparation** provides a list of the comment letters received during the NOP public comment period, a brief summary of the issues raised, and reference to where the issues are discussed in the EIR. The NOP comment letters are included in Appendix A of this EIR.

**Table 2-A – Summary of Written Comments Received
 in Response to the Notice of Preparation**

Commenting Party (Date of Letter/Email)	Summary of Comment	Addressed in Section(s) of the Draft PEIR
<p>Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) (March 14, 2018)</p>	<p>The NAHC’s letter summarizes cultural and tribal cultural resources requirements, and compliance with Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52) and Senate Bill 18 (SB 18). The NAHC requests that the Draft PEIR references California Natural Resources Agency (2016) “Final Text for tribal cultural resources update to Appendix G: Environmental Checklist form”. The NAHC recommends lead agencies consult with all California Native tribes that are affiliated with the geographic area of the proposed Project as early as possible, and consult legal counsel on complying with AB 52 and SB 18. The comment letter also summarizes some requirements of AB 52 and SB 18. NAHC makes specific recommendations for preparing cultural resources assessments, including the archaeological records search and final report, contacting NAHC for a Sacred Lands File search and Native American Tribal Consultation List, and mitigation monitoring and reporting program.</p>	<p>Section 5.5 – Cultural Resources, Section 5.17 – Tribal Cultural Resources, and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.</p>
<p>Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians (March 15, 2018)</p>	<p>The Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians note that the proposed Project is not located within the Tribe’s Traditional Use Area, and thus they defer to other tribes in the area and conclude their tribal consultation.</p>	<p>Section 5.17 – Tribal Cultural Resources.</p>

Commenting Party (Date of Letter/Email)	Summary of Comment	Addressed in Section(s) of the Draft PEIR
<p>California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) (March 26, 2018)</p>	<p>Caltrans provided comments related to traffic and alternative modes of transportation, encouraging mixed-use projects near transit services, planning for mixed-density, mixed-income housing, senior housing, and student housing; consideration of 40 dwelling units per acre in the Downtown Mixed-Use (DMX) and Urban Village (UV) areas; addressing SB 1000; and provisions for noise mitigation measures along railroad tracks in residential neighborhoods. Caltrans requests to be kept informed of future developments that could potentially impact State Transportation Facilities.</p>	<p>Section 5.10 – Land Use and Planning, Section 5.12 – Noise, Section 5.13 – Population and Housing, Section 5.15 – Recreation, and Section 5.16 – Transportation/Traffic</p>
<p>Riverside County Department of Waste Resources (March 26, 2018)</p>	<p>Riverside County Department of Waste Resources makes recommendations on how to address the Project's potential impacts on solid waste facilities, provides information to assist in the analysis of solid waste impacts, notes that the Projects should consider land use compatibility issues and development constraints related to the Beaumont Landfill and Lamb Canyon Landfill, and recommends specific measures to reduce the Projects solid waste impacts. The commenter also requests a copy of the Draft PEIR on CD for review and comment when available.</p>	<p>Section 5.8 – Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Section 5.18 – Utilities and Service Systems., and Section 5.10 – Land Use and Planning</p>
<p>South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) (April 4, 2018)</p>	<p>The SCAQMD makes recommendations regarding the analysis of potential air quality impacts from the proposed Project, mitigation measures, alternatives, permits, and data sources for the Draft PEIR. The SCAQMD also requests that a copy of the Draft PEIR be sent directly to SCAQMD upon its completion, with all appendices and technical documents related to air quality, health risk, and greenhouse gas analysis, including electronic versions of all emission calculations spreadsheets, modeling input and output files, air quality monitoring and health risk assessment files.</p>	<p>Section 5.3 – Air Quality, and Section 5.7 – Greenhouse Gas Emissions.</p>

Commenting Party (Date of Letter/Email)	Summary of Comment	Addressed in Section(s) of the Draft PEIR
<p>County of Riverside Transportation and Land Management Agency (TLMA) (April 5, 2018)</p>	<p>The TLMA requests that the City coordinate with them on changes to its Circulation Element to address inter-jurisdictional roadway connections and classification transitions, and to meet to resolve any inconsistencies between TLMA and the City’s proposed Circulation Element prior to the General Plan Update’s approval.</p>	<p>Section 5.16 – Transportation/Traffic</p>
<p>Morongo Band of Mission Indians (April 6, 2018)</p>	<p>The Morongo Band of Mission Indians provides recommendations on what to include in the scope and methods of the Cultural Resources (technical) Report (used for the Cultural Resources section of the Draft PEIR), and requests that the Cultural Resources Report scope and methods be made available to them in advance of the public commenting period of the Draft PEIR to help avoid and minimize impacts to tribal cultural resources. The commenter notes that the City should distinguish between compliance efforts for SB 18 versus AB 52, which have different requirements. The commenter notes that the City’s Sphere of Influence includes areas with recorded and unrecorded tribal cultural resources that needs to be analyzed in the Cultural Report and Draft PEIR.</p>	<p>Section 5.5 – Cultural Resources and Section 5.17 – Tribal Cultural Resources</p>
<p>Ron Roy (April 9, 2018)</p>	<p>The commenter opposes the proposed Project because of impacts to scenic views from the proposed building heights and proposed location of commercial/retail land uses that would not protect open space and rural areas. The commenter proposes to eliminate certain land uses from the proposed Project, including the Urban Village overlay and employment district, concentrate new development in existing non-residential and mixed use land use designated areas, and revise the industrial zoning designations to require retail outlets for all warehouses. The commenter recommends a focus on active and</p>	<p>Section 5.1 – Aesthetics, Section 5.3 – Air Quality, Section 5.4 – Biological Resources, Section 5.7 – Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Section 5.10 – Land Use and Planning, Section 5.15 – Recreation, and Section 5.16 – Transportation/Traffic.</p>

Commenting Party (Date of Letter/Email)	Summary of Comment	Addressed in Section(s) of the Draft PEIR
	<p>multimodal transportation, including the inclusion of a transit center/transit hub, alternative energy refueling stations, and maps indicating the transit and bike paths throughout the City. The commenter states that the City has not adequately identified how it will mitigate or reduce greenhouse gas, climate change, and air quality impacts.</p>	
<p>California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) (April 9, 2018)</p>	<p>The CDFW identifies itself as a Trustee Agency for fish and wildlife resources and as a Responsible Agency regarding any discretionary actions. The CDFW provides recommendations for identifying and mitigating the Project's potential impacts on biological resources. The CDFW noted required compliance with the California Endangered Species Act, Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan, and Lake and Streambed Alteration Program.</p>	<p>Section 5.4 – Biological Resources.</p>
<p>Southwest Regional Council of Carpenters (April 9, 2018)</p>	<p>The law firm of Wittwer Parkin LLP submitted this comment letter on behalf of the Southwest Regional Council of Carpenters. The commenter notes that the proposed Project may have significant impacts for the following environmental issues: Agriculture, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Greenhouse Gases, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Parks and Recreation, Public Services, Transportation and Traffic, and Utilities. The commenter discusses the existing conditions of these environmental issues within the City (and/or the City's Sphere of Influence), and makes recommendations on what the Draft PEIR needs to incorporate to address potentially significant impacts in these areas.</p>	<p>Section 5.2 – Agricultural and Forestry Resources, Section 5.3 – Air Quality, Section 5.4 – Biological Resources, Section 5.7 – Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Section 5.8 – Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Section 5.14 – Public Services, Section 5.15 – Recreation, Section 5.16 – Transportation/Traffic, and Section 5.18 – Utilities and Service Systems.</p>
<p>Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) (April 9, 2018)</p>	<p>SCAG describes how the goals included in SCAG's 2016 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Community Strategies (RTP/SCS) can be used as guidance for</p>	<p>Section 6 – Consistency with Regional Plans</p>

Commenting Party (Date of Letter/Email)	Summary of Comment	Addressed in Section(s) of the Draft PEIR
	considering the proposed Project within the context of regional goals and policies. In particular, SCAG suggests that RTP/SCS goals G1-G9 may be relevant. SCAG also describes strategies and mitigation to be used as guidance and includes the applicable regional growth forecasts for the region and the City. The SCAG requests that future environmental documentation be sent to them regarding this Project.	

A public scoping meeting was held on March 13, 2018 at the Beaumont Civic Center. No oral comments were made by the public. The City Planning Commissioners provided oral comments in regard to hazardous materials, water supply, fire hazards, light pollution, public services and facilities, wildlife corridor, recycling and waste diversion, and land use changes, all of which are addressed throughout the Draft PEIR (refer to Sections 5.1 through 5.20 of the Draft PEIR). Technical documents prepared for the proposed Project are also included in **Appendices B through F.2**. These documents were used as reference material in the analysis of the environmental impacts.

2.3 Scope of the PEIR

In accordance with PRC Section 21002.1, the purpose of this EIR is to address the potential environmental impacts resulting from the construction and operation of the proposed Project, proposed mitigation measures to reduce potentially significant environmental impacts, and identify and evaluate alternatives, which could reduce or avoid the significant effects of the proposed Project. Although most of the Project components involve “paper” projects, meaning that the Zoning Code, DSP, and Hillside Development Ordinance are really policy documents that do not have direct physical impacts to the land and are tools that will be used by the City to implement the General Plan, most of the analysis in this EIR will be addressing when applicable, the foreseeable physical impacts of implementing the General Plan, as this document creates the blueprint of future development in the City. The Zoning Map will be consistent with the change in land uses identified in the General Plan Update. The other aspects of the Project are analyzed as appropriate within each issue area. The EIR process provides an opportunity for the public to review and comment upon the potential environmental impacts of the proposed Project.

The City Planning Commission will make a recommendation on the proposed Project to the City Council which is the decision making body in the City with authority to take action on the Project. Both the Planning Commission and City Council will consider the information in this EIR as part of their evaluation of the proposed Project. The findings and conclusions presented in the EIR regarding environmental impacts do not control the City’s discretion to approve, deny, or modify the Project, but instead are presented as information to aid the decision-making process.

As set forth in Section 15021 of the *CEQA Guidelines*, as lead agency, the City has the duty to avoid or minimize environmental damage where feasible. Furthermore, Section 15021(d) of the *CEQA Guidelines* states that, “CEQA recognizes that in determining whether and how a project should be approved, a

public agency has an obligation to balance a variety of public objectives, including economic, environmental, and social factors, and in particular the goal of providing a decent home and satisfying living environment for every Californian.” In accordance with CEQA, the City will be required to make findings for each environmental impact of the proposed Project that cannot be mitigated to below a level of significance. If the City determines that the benefits of the proposed Project outweigh unmitigated significant environmental effects, the City will be required to adopt a statement of overriding considerations stating the reasons supporting their action notwithstanding the proposed Project’s significant environmental effects.

2.4 Format of the PEIR Document

This PEIR is organized into nine sections:

- **Table of Contents** to assist readers in locating the analysis of different subjects and issues as required by Section 15122 of the *CEQA Guidelines*. A list of acronyms used in the Draft PEIR is included in the table of contents.
- **Section 1.0 – Executive Summary** covers the summary requirements of CEQA as required by Section 15123 of the *CEQA Guidelines* and includes: Project location, a brief Project description, a matrix containing a summary of environmental impacts and mitigation measures, Project objectives, approvals related to the proposed Project, areas of controversy, and a brief description of the Project alternatives.
- **Section 2.0 – Introduction** describes the scope and purpose of the EIR document, identifies the lead agency, provides a brief summary of the CEQA process to date, and establishes the format of the document.
- **Section 3.0 – Project Description** contains the information required by Section 15124 of the *CEQA Guidelines* including: a detailed description of the proposed Project, the Project objectives, a general description of the Project’s environmental setting, the approvals needed to implement the Project, and a list of agencies expected to use the Draft PEIR.
- **Section 4.0 – Environmental Setting** satisfies requirements of Section 15125 of the *CEQA Guidelines* and provides a brief environmental setting discussion.
- **Section 5.0 – Environmental Impact Analysis** satisfies the requirements of Sections 15125, 15126, 15126.2, and 15126.4 of the *CEQA Guidelines* and analyzes Project impacts and identifies mitigation measures designed to reduce significant impacts by issue area. For each issue area analyzed, this section includes a discussion of the setting to which each issue area is analyzed against, defines the related regulations affecting the proposed Project, identifies the thresholds used to determine significance, describes any Project design features that would reduce impacts, analyzes the proposed Project’s potential impacts, provides a description of the applicable mitigation measures used to reduce or lessen potential impacts, and discusses the Project’s impacts after implementation of mitigation. The following environmental issue areas are discussed in the corresponding sections:
 - Section 5.1 – Aesthetics
 - Section 5.2 – Agricultural and Forestry Resources
 - Section 5.3 – Air Quality
 - Section 5.4 – Biological Resources
 - Section 5.5 – Cultural Resources

- Section 5.6 – Geology and Soils
 - Section 5.7 – Greenhouse Gas Emissions
 - Section 5.8 – Hazards and Hazardous Materials
 - Section 5.9 – Hydrology and Water Quality
 - Section 5.10 – Land Use and Planning
 - Section 5.11 – Mineral Resources
 - Section 5.12 – Noise
 - Section 5.13 – Population and Housing
 - Section 5.14 – Public Services
 - Section 5.15 – Recreation
 - Section 5.16 – Transportation and Traffic
 - Section 5.17 – Tribal Cultural Resources
 - Section 5.18 – Utilities and Service Systems
 - Section 5.19 – Energy
 - Section 5.20 - Wildfire
- **Section 6.0 – Consistency with Regional Plans** provides an analysis of the Project's consistency the regional and local growth forecasts prepared by the Southern California Association of Government's *2016-2040 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy*.
 - **Section 7.0 – Other CEQA Topics** provides an analysis of cumulative impacts, growth inducing impacts, significant irreversible environmental impacts, and areas of no significant impact.
 - **Section 8.0 – Alternatives** satisfies the requirements of Section 15126.6 of the *CEQA Guidelines* by identifying and discussing the No Project Alternative in addition to alternatives to the proposed Project that lessen the severity of significant impacts and identifying the environmentally superior alternative.
 - **Section 9.0 – References** includes a listing of all reference materials, the organizations and persons contacted in preparing the Draft PEIR, and a list of preparers as required by Section 15129 of the *CEQA Guidelines*.

In compliance with PRC Section 21081.6, a mitigation monitoring and reporting program will be prepared that will be adopted in conjunction with certification of the Final PEIR and Project approval.