

1.0 PROJECT SUMMARY

1.1 PURPOSE

An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is required to contain a brief summary of the proposed project and its consequences, in conformance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the state *CEQA Guidelines*. This Introduction and Project Description section is intended to provide a clear summary description of the proposed project and its potential environmental effects, pursuant to CEQA and the *CEQA Guidelines*.

1.2 INTRODUCTION

This Final EIR (State Clearinghouse No. 2005071048) has been prepared by the City of Alhambra, Development Services Department, to address the potential significant environmental effects associated with the adoption and subsequent implementation of the West Main Street Corridor Master Plan (Master Plan or proposed project). The Master Plan encompasses the West Main Street Corridor and four specific development sites located in the central portion of the City of Alhambra.

The West Main Street Corridor Master Plan is proposed as a framework for the redevelopment of a portion Downtown Alhambra. In 1981, the City of Alhambra established the “Industrial Added Area A” project area that encompassed Main Street, the City’s primary commercial corridor. Since 1994, the City of Alhambra has undertaken a comprehensive redevelopment of West Main Street in the City’s Downtown that has resulted in the establishment of a retail, restaurant, and entertainment district between Garfield Avenue and Second Street. The City now seeks to continue the revitalization of Alhambra’s Downtown and complement new development through further redevelopment of West Main Street between Second Street and Atlantic Boulevard.

The West Main Street Corridor Master Plan would redevelop four specific development sites along the West Main Street corridor between Downtown and “Auto Row,” west of Atlantic Boulevard, through the establishment of a mixed-use/financial district; introduction of housing and professional office space; pedestrian circulation improvements; creation of an identifiable visual character for West Main Street; and public infrastructure improvements.

1.3 THE ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

CEQA requires that an environmental review be conducted for activities and approvals that involve discretionary actions. CEQA applies to all California government agencies at all levels, including local agencies; regional agencies; and state agencies, boards, and commissions. An Environmental Impact

Report (EIR) is an informational document required by CEQA when substantial evidence exists that a project may have a significant physical environmental effect. The EIR is intended to provide information to decision makers, agency staff and the public about (1) the potential environmental impacts of a proposed project; (2) ways in which the significant effects of a project might be minimized or avoided; and (3) alternatives to the project which could reduce or avoid the significant impacts associated with the project.

CEQA applies to projects for which a governmental agency can use its judgment or discretion in deciding whether to carry out or approve the project. The public agency that has the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving the project is termed the "Lead Agency." For the purpose of this EIR, the City of Alhambra is the Lead Agency. Responsible Agencies include any public agencies, other than the Lead Agency, that have discretionary approval power over the project. Trustee Agencies are those state agencies that have jurisdiction by law over natural resources held in trust for the people of the State of California. Additionally, Reviewing Agencies include those agencies that do not have discretionary power over the project but that are expected to review the EIR for adequacy and accuracy.

The initial steps of the environmental review process are to determine whether CEQA applies and whether an EIR is required. For this project, the Development Services Department determined that CEQA did apply and, after review of the project indicated the possibility of significant environmental impacts, the preparation of an EIR was determined to be necessary.

As a first step of the EIR process, the Lead Agency distributes a Notice of Preparation (NOP). The NOP is intended to solicit input from responsible agencies and other interested parties. The City of Alhambra Development Services Department circulated an NOP for the proposed project on July 11, 2005, beginning a 30-day review period. Written comments were received from agencies and received from interested individuals and community groups in writing and as public statements at a scoping meeting held by the Development Services Department on July 20, 2005.

Subsequent to the NOP review period, the Draft EIR was prepared. The Draft EIR was circulated for a 45-day public review period as required by CEQA. The public review period began on July 13, 2006 and ended on August 28, 2006. The Draft EIR was available for public review during the 45-day comment period at the following locations:

- Alhambra Public Library, 410 W. Main Street, Alhambra, CA 91801
- Development Services Department, Alhambra City Hall, 111 South First Street, Alhambra, CA 91801

The EIR was also available for review on the Internet at <http://www.cityofalhambra.org/>.

During this review period, the Development Services Department again accepted written comments from agencies and the public. After the close of the public review period, written responses were prepared to all comments received on the Draft EIR. Written responses to all public comments received concerning environmental issues addressed in the Draft EIR are compiled in the Final EIR. As required by CEQA, written responses to comments submitted by public agencies were provided to those agencies for review at least 10 days prior to the City Council's consideration of certification of the Final EIR. These comments and responses, in combination with the text of the Draft EIR, constitute this Final EIR. This Final EIR will now be presented to the decision makers and must be certified as adequate and complete before any discretionary actions may be taken to implement the West Main Street Corridor Master Plan project.

1.4 INTRODUCTION TO THE PROJECT

The proposed project and subject of this EIR is adoption and subsequent implementation of the West Main Street Corridor Master Plan (Master Plan) in downtown Alhambra. The Master Plan is a comprehensive framework intended to configure and guide future private development and public domain improvements and ensure they contribute to the effective redevelopment of downtown Alhambra. To accomplish this, the Master Plan identifies key redevelopment opportunity sites and public domain improvements that will result in the creation of a mixed-use district along the West Main Street Corridor that complements recent redevelopment in the vicinity. This EIR evaluates the Master Plan at a programmatic level as well as four site-specific development proposals for which project-level detail is available.

In 1969, the City of Alhambra adopted the Original Industrial Area Redevelopment Plan ("original redevelopment plan"), which encompassed an irregular area extending from West Main Street south to Mission Road and from Marengo Avenue west along Mission Road. In 1976, the City established the Central Business District, located predominantly east of the West Main Street Corridor Master Plan project site. In 1981, the original redevelopment plan was amended to include the separate "Industrial Added Area A," which encompassed Main Street between Fremont Avenue and the eastern City border. Since 1994, Alhambra has undertaken a comprehensive redevelopment of West Main Street that has resulted in the establishment of a retail, restaurant, and entertainment district between Garfield Avenue and Second Street. The City now seeks to continue the revitalization of Alhambra's downtown and extend economic development from the heart of the Central Business District through the continued redevelopment of West Main Street between Second Street and Atlantic Boulevard.

The West Main Street Corridor Master Plan encompasses the five blocks of West Main Street between downtown Alhambra, east of Garfield Avenue, and "Auto Row," west of Atlantic Boulevard, within the existing "Industrial Added Area A" redevelopment project area, and would initially be implemented

through the redevelopment of four selected “development sites.” The four sites (Sites 4, 5, 6, and 7) range in size from 1.20 to 3.40 acres and collectively total approximately 8.30 acres. With the exception of Site 5, which is occupied by the City’s public library, each site comprises multiple parcels. Redevelopment of the four sites would result in the construction of approximately 568 dwelling units and 72,969 square feet of commercial space. Site 5 currently houses the City’s public library; therefore, relocation of the library to a temporary facility and subsequent library operations at that location are also evaluated as part of the project. A new, permanent library facility to be built adjacent to City Hall is the subject of separate environmental review and is not part of this project.

1.4.1 Project Location

The City of Alhambra is located in the western San Gabriel Valley, 8 miles northeast of downtown Los Angeles. Alhambra is bordered by the cities of South Pasadena and San Marino on the north, Monterey Park on the south, San Gabriel on the east, and the Los Angeles communities of Monterey Hills and El Sereno on the west. Major regional access to Alhambra is provided by the San Bernardino Freeway (I-10), the Pasadena Freeway (CA 110), and the Long Beach Freeway (I-710). Major roadways accessing the project area include Main Street, Las Tunas Drive, Huntington Drive, Mission Road, Valley Boulevard, Garfield Avenue, Atlantic Boulevard, and Fremont Avenue.

The Master Plan project site encompasses West Main Street between Second Street on the east and Atlantic Boulevard on the west, and includes the public street right-of-way as well as the properties lining West Main Street. The four sites proposed for redevelopment at this time are located within this Master Plan project site. West Main Street is centrally located in Alhambra’s traditional downtown and is the City’s primary commercial corridor. The entire Master Plan project site, including the four development sites, is located within the City’s designated “Industrial Added Area A” redevelopment plan area, which encompasses Main Street from the City boundary with San Gabriel on the east (Las Tunas Drive) to Fremont Avenue on the west.

Site 4 encompasses the properties on the north side of West Main Street between Fourth and Fifth Streets. Site 5 encompasses the parcels on the south side of West Main Street between Fourth and Fifth Streets, directly opposite Site 4. The redevelopment of Site 5 would necessitate the temporary relocation of the public library to the gymnasium at Granada Park, located at the southeast corner of Hellman Avenue and Park Avenue. Site 6 generally occupies the northeast corner of the intersection of West Main Street and Third Street. Site 7 is located on the south side of West Main Street between Second and Fourth Streets.

1.4.2 Project Information

Project Title

West Main Street Corridor Master Plan Project

Lead Agency

The City of Alhambra
Development Services Department
111 South First Street
Alhambra, California 91801-3704
(626) 570-5030

Contact Person

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111 South First Street
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1.5 EXISTING CONDITIONS

Master Plan Project Site

The Master Plan project site encompasses the blocks between Second Street on the east and Atlantic Boulevard on the west. The Master Plan project site is presently developed with a mix of land uses, including multi-family residential dwellings, commercial businesses, professional offices, public uses, and surface parking lots.

The Master Plan project site overlaps slightly with the City's General Plan-designated downtown core or Central Business District, which encompasses the area generally located from Woodward Avenue south to Commonwealth Avenue and from Chapel Avenue west to Third Street. The Master Plan area west of Third Street is designated General Commercial. Main Street west of the Master Plan area is known as "Auto Row" and supports a collection of automobile dealerships and other commercial businesses.

The neighborhoods immediately bordering the Master Plan project site, north and south of West Main Street, are predominantly developed as multi-family residential neighborhoods and Alhambra High

School. Beyond those, single-family residential neighborhoods lie to the north; a mix of commercial uses and designated Open Space, including the Alhambra High School campus to the south; the recently redeveloped retail/entertainment district within the Central Business District to the east; and “Auto Row” to the west.

Within the Master Plan project site, the existing land uses on the four development sites are defined below.

Development Site 4 (401–419 W. Main St./5–11 N. Fourth St.; 425, 435–437, and 445 W. Main St.)

Site 4 encompasses eight parcels, including a City-owned surface parking lot and vacant City-owned lot, and a public alley. Designated in the General Plan for commercial uses along Main Street, it is developed with a collection of one-story and two-story commercial buildings dating from between 1915 and 1989 and occupied by commercial businesses and offices.

Development Site 5: Library Site (410 W. Main St.)

Site 5 is located south of Site 4 across West Main Street. Comprising a single City-owned parcel of 2.10 acres and designated for institutional use, it is the site of the Alhambra Public Library. The library is housed in a circa 1975 building; the remainder of the site is developed with public parking for library patrons and landscaped grounds.

The proposed site of the temporary library facilities is Granada Park, located on the southeast corner of Hellman Avenue and Palm Avenue, 3.25 miles southwest of the present library site on West Main Street. The library would relocate to the Granada Park Gymnasium, a 10,000-square-foot building currently closed for renovation. The remainder of the park would remain in use for recreational purposes, and the gymnasium would be renovated and returned to recreational use when the planned new library is completed by summer of 2008.

Development Site 6 (229, 239, and 249 W. Main St.; 301 and 317 West Main Street)

Site 6, totaling 1.20 acres and comprising five parcels and a public alley, is designated for commercial use and houses a collection of commercial buildings dating from 1911. A U-shaped complex of commercial operations is set back from Main Street at the corner of Third Street and occupies the site of a former filling station and related automobile services facility. Surface parking for the on-site businesses as well as for the office building at 301 West Main Street is located in the interior of the site in public and private lots.

Development Site 7 (208–214, 218, 222–236, 240, and 300 W. Main Street)

Site 7 is 3.40 acres and comprises nine parcels on two blocks, a portion of the Third Street right-of-way, and public alleys. Designated in the General Plan for commercial use, it is developed with a collection of one- and two-story buildings occupied by commercial businesses and residential uses (on the second floor of 212 W. Main Street). The Super A market and associated parking occupy the property at 300 West Main Street.

1.6 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Within the framework of the proposed Master Plan, the City seeks to further support the revitalization of Downtown Alhambra and establish an upscale, mixed-use district encompassing commercial, professional, and financial uses accompanied by housing.

The objectives of the proposed Master Plan program are to:

- support revitalization of Downtown Alhambra and, in particular, complement the burgeoning retail and entertainment district centered on Main and Garfield;
- establish a mixed-use district that introduces additional residents and professional employees, and further activates the Downtown area;
- promote housing and small-scale professional/financial offices;
- encourage housing as an appropriate upper story use;
- extend pedestrian activity and commercial vitality west along Main Street;
- accommodate retail along the ground floor;
- provide the West Main Corridor with an identifiable visual character;
- pursue high-quality developments and build an attractive, coherent streetscape; and
- ensure that suitable public infrastructure is provided in concert with new development.

1.7 PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

1.7.1 West Main Street Corridor Master Plan

The West Main Street Corridor Master Plan is intended to facilitate redevelopment of Alhambra's West Main Street through the establishment of goals, objectives, guidelines, and implementation strategies to ensure that public and private development proposals contribute to the effective redevelopment of downtown. The Master Plan is focused on identifying key redevelopment opportunity sites and public

domain improvements that will create a complementary mixed-use district along the West Main Corridor. Housing and office/financial uses were identified as the most appropriate land uses for the area, complementing the retail/entertainment uses at the core of downtown and extending pedestrian activity west along West Main Street.

The Master Plan consists of four parts, described in detail below: District Planning Concepts; Public Domain Improvement Strategy and Design Guidelines; Private Domain Improvement Strategy and Design Guidelines; and an Implementation Plan. Collectively, the concepts are intended to provide general direction for public and private domain improvements and ensure a comprehensive, consistent approach to improving the district.

The Land Use Concept is intended to contribute to the creation of a more active district that complements Alhambra's Central Business District. The Circulation and Parking Concept was developed to transform the primarily vehicular-oriented West Main Street Corridor into a multimodal corridor shared by autos, public transit, and pedestrians. The Open Space Concept is intended to improve the character, identity, safety, and function of the district through the creation of a network of walkable streets and functional outdoor spaces such as public plazas. The Master Plan's Urban Design Concept addresses both public and private development, to ensure that development proposals for specific sites within the district work together to create an engaging public domain.

The Master Plan includes specific proposals for streetscape enhancement, with an emphasis on improving streets and sidewalks from a pedestrian point of view, within the Public Domain Improvement Strategy and Design Guidelines section. A third section of the Master Plan, the Private Domain Improvement Strategy and Design Guidelines section, presents specific proposals for redevelopment of four development sites along West Main Street. Each development site proposal emphasizes mixed use, including upper floor residential uses, and has been designed in accordance with urban design guidelines for new development along the corridor. Also within the Master Plan is an action plan for the redevelopment of the entire Master Plan project site, including recommended phasing of the public and private domain improvements. The Master Plan also sets forth the proposed entitlements for each of the four development sites as well as a design review process.

1.7.2 Development Sites

The West Main Street Corridor Master Plan would be initially implemented through development of four development sites along West Main Street: Sites 4, 5, 6, and 7. The sites are proposed for redevelopment in accordance with the Master Plan's District Planning Concepts and Private and Public Domain Improvement Strategies and Design Guidelines. Build out of the sites is planned for completion by 2010.

Proposed redevelopment of the four sites is summarized in **Table 1.0-1**, below. Detailed descriptions of the site proposals are provided after the table.

**Table 1.0-1
Summary of Proposed Redevelopment of Sites 4, 5, 6, and 7**

Proposed Uses	Site 4	Site 5 (Library Site)	Site 6	Site 7	Totals
Residential					
1-bedroom units	20	31	81	71	203
2-bedroom units	43	113	-	169	325
3-bedroom units	-	-	13	-	13
2-bedroom with den	27	-	-	-	27
Total Residential Units	90	144	94	240	568
Office Condominium	6,080	-	-	-	72,969
Retail/Office (s.f.)	16,599	9,190	5,000	36,100	
Parking Stalls	398	399	253	789	1,839
Number of Stories	5	5	4	5	-

Source: City of Alhambra Development Services Department, June 2006.

s.f. = square feet.

Development Site 4

Site 4 is proposed for redevelopment as a five-story, mixed-use residential, retail, and office project. The street level would be occupied by leased retail space fronting on West Main Street and office condominiums fronting on Fourth and Fifth Streets. A total of 90 for-sale condominium units are proposed for the second through the fifth levels, including 20 one-bedroom units, 43 two-bedroom units, and 27 two-bedroom-plus-den units. All condominium units would be for sale at market rate.

A total of 398 parking spaces would be provided for residents, guests, employees, and the public.

Development Site 5: Library Site

Site 5, the present library site, would be developed with a five-story, mixed-use residential, retail, and office project. The street level would be occupied by approximately 9,190 square feet of leased retail space fronting on West Main Street. The second, or podium, level through the fifth level would house 144 for-sale two-bedroom and two-bedroom-plus-den residential condominium units. All units would be for sale at market rate. A total of 113 two-bedroom units would be constructed and the remaining 31 units would have one bedroom.

A total of 399 parking spaces would be provided for residents, guests, employees, and the public and would occupy a single subterranean level (residents only) and a portion of the street level (at grade).

Temporary Library Site

The Alhambra Public Library will be housed in a temporary facility between summer 2006, prior to demolition of the present library at Site 5, and the planned summer 2008 completion of the new library planned for the site north of City Hall. The temporary library will be located to the 10,000-square-foot gymnasium at Granada Park, 3.25 miles southwest of its current location. Minor renovation of the gymnasium is required to accommodate the library, including the installation of air conditioning, computer and telephone wiring, lighting, and bookshelves. Restrooms will be upgraded to comply with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. No alteration of the building exterior is planned.

Upon completion of the new library, the gymnasium would be returned to recreational use. No other modification of the park is planned, and the park will remain open for recreational use.

Development Site 6

Site 6 is proposed for development with a four-story, mixed-use residential and retail project. The street level would be occupied by approximately 5,000 square feet of retail space fronting Main Street. The second, third, and fourth levels would house 94 for-sale, residential condominiums, including 81 one-bedroom units and 13 three-bedroom units. All units would be for sale at market rate.

The proposal for Site 6 would provide 253 parking spaces for residents, guests, and the public within two subterranean levels. No parking would be provided at street level (i.e., at grade).

Development Site 7

Site 7 would be developed as a five-story, mixed-use residential, retail, and office project. The street level would be occupied by approximately 36,100 square feet of retail and office space fronting on West Main Street; one of the anchor tenants would be a 14,300-square-foot market at the corner of West Main and Fourth Streets. The second, third, fourth and fifth levels would house 240 for-sale residential condominium units, including 71 one-bedroom units and 169 two-bedroom units. All units would be for sale at market rate.

A total of 789 parking spaces for residents, guests, and the public would be provided in two subterranean lots and would also occupy portions of the street level (at-grade and mezzanine levels).

1.8 EIR INTENDED USES/PROJECT ACTIONS AND APPROVALS

1.8.1 Intended Uses

This EIR will be used by the Alhambra Planning Commission and City Council to evaluate the potential impacts associated with adoption of the proposed West Main Street Corridor Master Plan, and will serve as the primary source of environmental information for the discretionary actions and approvals needed to allow development of the project. In accordance with Section 21002.1 of *CEQA Guidelines*, this EIR is intended to provide public agencies and the general public with information on any significant environmental effects of the project; potential alternatives to the project; and feasible mitigation measures that may reduce or avoid any potentially significant effects.

Once certified, this EIR may also be used to tier subsequent environmental analysis for future Master Plan development projects. The EIR may also be relied upon by responsible agencies with permitting or approval authority over project-specific actions to be implemented in the future.

1.8.2 Requested Project Approvals

The following approvals are anticipated to be required for implementation of the West Main Street Corridor Master Plan and redevelopment of Sites 4, 5, 6, and 7:

- Specific Plans
- Tentative Tract Maps
- General Plan Amendment
- Residential and Commercial Planned Development Permits
- Approval of project-specific schematic design drawings for project components
- Certification of the EIR
- Approval and adoption of the West Main Street Corridor Master Plan

In addition, implementation of certain aspects of the Master Plan may require a permit or approval from a public agency other than the City of Alhambra, such as:

- the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits;
- the Southern California Air Quality Management District: Authority to construct and/or permits to operate; and

- water, wastewater, and sanitation special district approvals, if any.

1.8.3 Responsible Agency

Under CEQA, state and local agencies (other than the Lead Agency) that have discretionary approval over some portion of the proposed project are considered responsible agencies (*CEQA Guidelines* Section 15381). In the case of this project, no public agencies other than the City of Alhambra have discretionary approval over the West Main Street Corridor Master Plan.

Trustee agencies are those state agencies with jurisdiction by law over natural resources held in trust for the people of the state of California and which may be affected by the proposed project. There are no state agencies with jurisdiction by law over natural resources potentially affected by the proposed project.