

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 - Overview, Purpose, and Authority of the EIR

This Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) is prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to evaluate the potential environmental impacts associated with the implementation of the MacArthur Park Improvements Project (State Clearinghouse No. 2007121152). This document is prepared in conformance with CEQA (California Public Resources Code, Section 21000, et seq.) and the CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15000, et seq.), and the City of Los Angeles rules and regulations. This DEIR is intended to serve as an informational document for the public agency decision makers and the public regarding the MacArthur Park Improvements Project.

The purpose of an EIR is to disclose information to the public and to decision makers about the potential environmental effects of a proposed project. An EIR does not recommend either approval or denial of a proposed project; rather, it is intended to provide a source of independent and impartial analysis of the foreseeable environmental impacts of a proposed course of action. This DEIR describes the proposed project, analyzes its environmental effects, and discusses reasonable alternatives that would avoid, reduce, or minimize environmental impacts.

The City of Los Angeles is the lead agency for the proposed project. The City of Los Angeles, Board of Recreation and Park Commissioners, will consider the information presented in this document in making an informed decision regarding the approval, conditions of approval, or denial of the proposed project.

1.1.1 - Overview

The proposed project involves improvements to MacArthur Park, a local public park that was designated as a Historic Cultural Monument (#100) by the City in 1972. The 40-acre park straddles Wilshire Boulevard between Park View Street and Alvarado Street. Funds for improvements at the Park have come from a grant application written by the Los Angeles Police Department in an effort to improve safety in the Park. As a result, improvements anticipated within the scope of the project include:

1. Reconstruction of an existing dirt soccer field to install artificial turf;
2. Removal and/or relocation of existing trees and palms to renovate the soccer field;
3. Installation of up to six light poles with a maximum height of 40 feet for the soccer field and up to 8 security light poles with a maximum height of 30 feet;
4. Reconstruction and new construction related to a new children's play area;
5. Interior renovations to the existing Signal Building (approximately 14,500 square feet);
6. Replacement of the existing Boathouse (approximately 2,100 square feet); and
7. Installation of a new monument honoring Oscar Romero, a San Salvadorean catholic priest.

1.1.2 - Purpose and Authority

This DEIR provides a project-level analysis of the environmental effects of the proposed project. The environmental impacts of the proposed project are analyzed in the DEIR to the degree of specificity appropriate, in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15146 and Section 15162. This document addresses the potentially significant adverse environmental impacts that may be associated with the planning, construction, or operation of the project. It also identifies appropriate and feasible mitigation measures and alternatives that may be adopted to significantly reduce or avoid these impacts.

CEQA requires that an EIR contain, at a minimum, certain specific elements. These elements are contained in this Draft EIR and include:

- Table of Contents;
- Introduction;
- Executive Summary;
- Project Description;
- Environmental Setting, Significant Environmental Impacts, and Mitigation Measures;
- Cumulative Impacts;
- Significant Unavoidable Adverse Impacts;
- Alternatives to the Proposed Project;
- Growth-Inducing Impacts;
- Effects Found Not To Be Significant; and
- Areas of Known Controversy.

1.1.3 - Lead Agency Determination

The City of Los Angeles is designated as the lead agency for the project. CEQA Guidelines Section 15367 defines the lead agency as “. . . the public agency, which has the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving a project.” Other public agencies may use this DEIR in the decision-making or permit process and consider the information in this DEIR along with other information that may be presented during the CEQA process.

This DEIR was prepared by a consultant, Michael Brandman Associates (MBA), under contract to the City. However, this DEIR has been reviewed by and revised by the Department of Recreation and Parks staff, and will be reviewed and considered by the Board of Recreation and Parks Commissioners, that reflects the independent judgment and analysis of the City as required by CEQA. Lists of organizations and persons consulted and the report preparation personnel are provided in Sections 8 and 9 of this DEIR, respectively.

1.2 - Scope of the EIR

This DEIR addresses the potential environmental effects of the proposed project. The City issued a Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the proposed project on August 9, 2007 but it was not filed with the State Clearinghouse. Therefore, another NOP was filed with the state on December 27, 2007, which circulated for the statutory 30-day period. The scope of this DEIR includes the potential environmental impacts identified in the NOP, comments obtained during a public scoping meeting held on August 20, 2007 at MacArthur Park, Signal Building, as well as issues raised by agencies and the public in response to the NOP. The NOP is contained in Appendix A of this DEIR.

Two comment letters were received in response to the NOP. They are listed in Table 1-1 and provided in Appendix A of this DEIR.

Table 1-1: NOP Comments

Public Agencies		
Agency	Author	Date
Governor's Office of Planning and Research (State Clearinghouse)	Scott Morgan, Project Analyst	December 27, 2007
Native American Heritage Commission	Dave Singleton, Program Analyst	January 2, 2008
Private Parties and Organizations		
Organization	Author	Date
None		
Source: City of Los Angeles, 2007.		

1.2.1 - Environmental Issues Determined To Be Not Significant

The following six topical areas were determined to be not significant mainly due to the nature of the Proposed Project and/or the nature of the project site. An explanation of why each area is determined to be not significant is provided in Section 7, Effects Found Not To Be Significant. These topical areas are as follows:

- Agriculture Resources;
- Mineral Resources;
- Land Use;
- Population and Housing;
- Urban Decay; and
- Utility Systems.

In addition, the following topics within specific issues were also identified as having no potential for environmental impacts:

- Cultural Resources (archaeology and paleontology);
- Public Services (schools, library, and other public services); and
- Traffic and Circulation (air traffic patterns).

1.2.2 - Potentially Significant Environmental Topics

The following topical areas may contain potentially significant environmental issues that will require further analysis in the EIR:

- Aesthetics, Light, and Glare - Section 4.1;
- Air Quality - Section 4.2;
- Biological Resources – Section 4.3;
- Cultural Resources (historical resources) – Section 4.4;
- Geology, Soils, and Seismicity - Section 4.5;
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials - Section 4.6;
- Hydrology and Water Quality - Section 4.7;
- Noise - Section 4.8;
- Public Services (police, fire, and recreation) - Section 4.9; and
- Transportation and Circulation - Section 4.10.

1.3 - Organization of the EIR

This DEIR is organized into the following main sections:

- **Section 1: Executive Summary.** This section includes a summary of the proposed MacArthur Park Improvements Project and alternatives to be addressed in the DEIR. A brief description of the areas of controversy and issues to be resolved and an overview of the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program—in addition to a table that summarizes the impacts, mitigation measures, and level of significance after mitigation—also are included in this section.
- **Section 2: Introduction.** This section provides an introduction and overview describing the purpose of this Draft EIR, its scope and components, and its review and certification process.
- **Section 3: Project Description.** This section includes a detailed description of the proposed project, including its location, site, and project characteristics. A discussion of the project objectives, intended uses of the DEIR, responsible agencies, and approvals that are needed for the proposed project are provided.
- **Section 4: Environmental Impact Analysis.** This section analyzes the environmental impacts of the proposed project. Impacts are organized into major topic areas. Each topic area includes a description of the environmental setting, methodology, significance criteria, impacts, mitigation measures, and significance after mitigation. The following specific environmental topics are addressed within Section 4.

- **Section 4.1 - Aesthetics, Light, and Glare:** Addresses the visual impacts of development intensification and the overall increase in illumination produced by the project.
 - **Section 4.2 - Air Quality:** Addresses the local and regional air quality impacts associated with project implementation as well as consistency with the Bay Area Air Quality Management District Ozone Strategy plan.
 - **Section 4.3 - Biological Resources:** Addresses the project's impacts on habitat, vegetation, and wildlife; the potential degradation or elimination of important habitat; and impacts on listed, proposed, and candidate threatened and endangered species.
 - **Section 4.4 – Cultural Resources:** Addresses the project's impacts on various historical resources within the park that may be affected by reconstruction of existing facilities or construction of new facilities adjacent to existing resources.
 - **Section 4.5 - Geology, Soils, and Seismicity:** Addresses the potential impacts the project may have on soils, and assesses the effects of project development in relation to geologic and seismic conditions.
 - **Section 4.6 - Hazards and Hazardous Materials:** Addresses the likelihood of the presence of hazardous materials or conditions on the project site and in the project area that may have the potential to impact human health.
 - **Section 4.7 - Hydrology and Water Quality:** Addresses the impacts of the project on local hydrological conditions, including drainage areas, and changes in the flow rates.
 - **Section 4.8 - Noise:** Addresses the noise impacts during construction and at project buildout from mobile and stationary sources. The section also addresses the impact of noise generation on neighboring uses.
 - **Section 4.9 - Public Services:** Addresses the impacts upon public service providers including fire, police, parks, and other recreational facilities.
 - **Section 4.10 – Transportation and Circulation:** Addresses the impacts on the local and regional roadway system, parking, emergency access, public transportation, bicycle, and pedestrian access.
- **Section 5: Alternatives to the Proposed Project.** This section compares the impacts of the proposed project with three project alternatives: the No Project Alternative and two Modified Improvement Plan Alternatives. An environmentally superior alternative was not identified (i.e., the Proposed Project was determined to be environmentally superior to the alternatives).
 - **Section 6: Other CEQA Required Sections.** This section provides a summary of significant environmental impacts, including unavoidable and growth-inducing impacts, and the project's irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources. This section discusses the areas of

known controversy as well as the cumulative impacts associated with the proposed project, including the impacts of planned growth in this portion of the City.

- **Section 7: Effects Found Not to be Significant.** This section contains analysis of the topical issues not addressed in Sections 4.1 through 4.10 because their impacts were found to be not significant.
- **Section 8: Summary of Mitigation Measures.** This section contains a full list of all measures recommended to mitigate the various potentially significant impacts of the Proposed Project.
- **Section 9: Organizations and Persons Consulted.** This section lists all the persons and organizations consulted during the preparation of the DEIR, by name and affiliation.
- **Section 10: References.** This section contains a full list of references that were used in the preparation of this DEIR.
- **Appendices:** This section includes all notices and other procedural documents pertinent to the DEIR, as well as all technical material prepared to support the analysis.

1.4 - Documents Incorporated by Reference

As permitted by CEQA Guidelines Section 15150, this DEIR has referenced several technical studies, analyses, and previously certified environmental documentation. Information from the documents, which have been incorporated by reference, has been briefly summarized in the appropriate sections(s). The relationship between the incorporated part of the referenced document and the DEIR has also been described. The documents and other sources that have been used in the preparation of this DEIR include, but are not limited to:

- City of Los Angeles General Plan Framework (August 2001); and
- MacArthur Park Band Shell Renovation Project (ND-RP-1003-06).

These documents are identified in Section 10, References, of this DEIR. In accordance with Section 15150(b) of the CEQA Guidelines, the referenced documents and other sources used in the preparation of the DEIR are available for review at the address shown below:

City of Los Angeles
Recreation & Parks Department
1200 W. 7th Street, Suite 700
Los Angeles, CA 90017
Hours: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday

The General Plan documents can also be found online at the following website:

City of Los Angeles General Plan and EIR: <http://www.ci.la.ca.us/PLN/Cwd/GnlPln/>

1.5 - Documents Prepared for the Project

Due to the nature of the project and project site, the only stand-alone technical study that was prepared for the Proposed Project was air quality (Appendix B). In addition, a hazardous materials database search was conducted (Appendix C), and a “Historical Resources Impact Assessment” prepared by Greenwood and Associates in June of 1999 for the band shell renovation project is included in Appendix D of this document. Detailed technical analyses of the following impacts are included in their respective sections, Biological Resources (Section 4.3), and Noise (Section 4.8).

1.6 - Lead Agency, Sponsor, and Consultant

The City of Los Angeles is the lead agency in the preparation of the DEIR. The City of Los Angeles, Department of Recreation and Parks is the project manager of the proposed project. MBA is the environmental consultant under contract to the City of Los Angeles to prepare the EIR for the proposed project.

1.7 - Review of the Draft EIR

Upon completion of the DEIR, the City of Los Angeles will file a Notice of Completion (NOC) with the State Office of Planning and Research to begin the public review period (Public Resources Code, Section 21161). Concurrent with the NOC, this DEIR has been distributed to responsible and trustee agencies, other affected agencies, surrounding cities, and interested parties, as well as all parties requesting a copy of the DEIR in accordance with Public Resources Code 21092(b)(3). During the public review period, the DEIR, including the technical appendices, is available for review at the City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks or at the Los Angeles City Library. The addresses for each location are provided below:

City of Los Angeles
Recreation & Parks Department
1200 W. 7th Street, Suite 700
Los Angeles, CA 90017
Hours: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday

Los Angeles Central Library
630 W. 5th St., Los Angeles, CA 90071
(213) 228-7000
Mon. 10-8, Tue. 10-8, Wed. 10-8, Thu. 10-8,
Fri. 10-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 1-5

Felipe de Neve Branch Library
2820 W. 6th Street
Los Angeles, 90057
(213) 384-7676
Mon. 10:00 – 8:00, Tue. 12– 8:00,
Wed. 10:00– 8:00, Thu. 12– 8:00, Fri. 10:00 –
6:00, Sat. 10:00– 6:00, Sun. CLOSED

Agencies, organizations, and interested parties not previously contacted, or who did not respond to the NOP, currently have the opportunity to comment on the DEIR during the 45-day public review period. Written comments on this DEIR should be addressed to:

Paul Davis, Environmental Specialist
City of Los Angeles
Recreation & Parks Department
1200 W. 7th Street, Suite 700
Los Angeles, CA 90017
Phone: (213) 928-9137
Fax: (213) 928-9180
Email: Paul.J.Davis@lacity.org

Submittal of electronic comments in Microsoft Word format is encouraged. Upon completion of the public review period, written responses to all significant environmental issues raised will be prepared and made available for review by the public agencies that submitted comments at least 10 days prior to the public hearing before the City of Los Angeles Board of Recreation and Park Commissioners on the project, at which time the certification of the Final EIR will be considered. Comments received and the responses to comments will be included as part of the record for consideration by decision makers for the project.