
1. INTRODUCTION

The City of Burlingame (Lead Agency) has completed updates to all elements of its General Plan, except for the Housing Element, which was updated in 2015. The updates are intended to refine policies regarding long-term growth in the community and to ensure that the General Plan reflects current State law. The project, referred to as the “2040 General Plan,” is the subject of this Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

The adoption and implementation of the 2040 General Plan is defined as a “project” and is subject to review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) 1970 (Public Resources Code, Section 21000 et seq.) and the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Section 15000 et seq.). Accordingly, the City has prepared this EIR to assess the long-range and cumulative environmental consequences that could result from adoption and implementation of the proposed 2040 General Plan, including any updates to land use regulatory documents used to implement the 2040 General Plan, including but not limited to the Zoning Code (Title 25 of the Municipal Code) and specific plans. This EIR has been prepared in accordance with the CEQA Statutes and Guidelines and with the City of Burlingame’s local rules and procedures for implementing CEQA. This document has been prepared by professional planning consultants under contract to the City of Burlingame.

The City of Burlingame is the Lead Agency for preparation of this EIR, as defined by CEQA (Public Resources Code, Section 21067, as amended) because the City has primary discretionary authority with respect to adoption, amendment, and implementation of the proposed 2040 General Plan. The content of this document reflects the independent judgment of the City.

The body of State law known as “CEQA” was originally enacted in 1970 and has been amended since. The legislative intent of these regulations is established in Section 21000 of the California Public Resources Code, as follows:

“The Legislature finds and declares as follows:

- a. The maintenance of a quality environment for the people of this state now and in the future is a matter of statewide concern.
- b. It is necessary to provide a high-quality environment that at all times is healthful and pleasing to the senses and intellect of man.
- c. There is a need to understand the relationship between the maintenance of high-quality ecological systems and the general welfare of the people of the state, including their enjoyment of the natural resources of the state.
- d. The capacity of the environment is limited, and it is the intent of the Legislature that the government of the State take immediate steps to identify any critical thresholds for the health and safety of the people of the state and take all coordinated actions necessary to prevent such thresholds being reached.

- e. Every citizen has a responsibility to contribute to the preservation and enhancement of the environment.
- f. The interrelationship of policies and practices in the management of natural resources and waste disposal requires systematic and concerted efforts by public and private interests to enhance environmental quality and to control environmental pollution.
- g. It is the intent of the Legislature that all agencies of the state government which regulate activities of private individuals, corporations, and public agencies which are found to affect the quality of the environment, shall regulate such activities so that major consideration is given to preventing environmental damage, while providing a decent home and satisfying living environment for every Californian.

The Legislature further finds and declares that it is the policy of the State to:

- h. Develop and maintain a high-quality environment now and in the future, and take all action necessary to protect, rehabilitate, and enhance the environmental quality of the State.
- i. Take all action necessary to provide the people of this state with clean air and water, enjoyment of aesthetic, natural, scenic, and historic environmental qualities, and freedom from excessive noise.
- j. Prevent the elimination of fish or wildlife species due to man's activities, ensure that fish and wildlife populations do not drop below self-perpetuating levels, and preserve for future generations representations of all plant and animal communities and examples of the major periods of California history.
- k. Ensure that the long-term protection of the environment, consistent with the provision of a decent home and suitable living environment for every Californian, shall be the guiding criterion in public decisions.
- l. Create and maintain conditions under which man and nature can exist in productive harmony to fulfill the social and economic requirements of present and future generations.
- m. Require governmental agencies at all levels to develop standards and procedures necessary to protect environmental quality.
- n. Require governmental agencies at all levels to consider qualitative factors as well as economic and technical factors and long-term benefits and costs, in addition to short-term benefits and costs and to consider alternatives to proposed actions affecting the environment.”

A concise statement of legislative policy, with respect to public agency consideration of projects for some form of approval, is found in Section 21002, quoted below.

“The Legislature finds and declares that it is the policy of the state that public agencies should not approve projects as proposed if there are feasible alternatives or feasible

mitigation measures available which would substantially lessen the significant environmental effects of such projects, and that the procedures required by this division are intended to assist public agencies in systematically identifying both the significant effects of proposed projects and the feasible alternatives or feasible mitigation measures which will avoid or substantially lessen such significant effects. The Legislature further finds and declares that in the event specific economic, social, or other conditions make infeasible such project alternatives or such mitigation measures, individual projects may be approved in spite of one or more significant effects thereof.”

1.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Burlingame 2040 General Plan is a long-range planning program that guides the orderly growth and development within the Burlingame planning area, which is defined to be all properties within the Burlingame corporate limits and properties within its so-called sphere of influence. The 2040 General Plan communicates the community’s vision for its future and establishes a policy framework to govern decision-making concerning the physical development of the community, including assurances that the community at large will be supported by an adequate range of public services and infrastructure systems. The 2040 General Plan analyzed in this EIR has been tailored to address revised land use policy direction for defined “focus areas,” to update maps and policies to reflect current State law, and to reflect the vision regarding circulation and mobility improvements, public health and safety, sustainability, and education.

The 2040 General Plan would not authorize the construction of any specific development project or other form of land use approval or any kind of public facilities or capital facilities expenditures or improvements. As such, a Program EIR is the appropriate type of document to identify the geographic extent of sensitive resources and hazards, along with existing and planned services and infrastructure support systems that occur in the planning area. Further, the Program EIR is described in Section 15168 of the CEQA Guidelines as the appropriate analytical framework to assess the cumulative environmental effects of the full plan in a first-tier level of analysis, to identify broad concerns and sets of impacts, and to define/develop regulatory standards and programmatic procedures that reduce impacts and help achieve environmental goals and objectives.

Later activities proposed pursuant to the goals and policies of the 2040 General Plan will be reviewed in light of this EIR and may focus on those site-specific and localized environmental issues that could not be examined in sufficient detail as part of this EIR. As with all projects proposed in the City, projects contained in specific focus areas where land use changes are proposed will be subject to CEQA compliance at such time the City receives a permit application for the project. At that time, the CEQA analysis would specifically address impacts of the project on localized traffic; the ability of service providers to serve the project; consistency with 2040 General Plan policies; consistency with building and engineering regulations of the City; site-specific biological, cultural resource, and visual effects; and impacts on on-site and off-site drainage.

The advantages of a Program EIR include consideration of effects and alternatives that cannot practically be reviewed at the project-level, consideration of cumulative impacts that may not be apparent on a project-by-project basis, the ability to enact citywide mitigation measures, and subsequent reduction in paperwork.

1.2 ORGANIZATION OF THE PROGRAM EIR

The Draft EIR is divided into two volumes. Volume 1 contains the primary analysis of potential environmental impacts discussed in the following nine sections:

Chapter 1.0: Introduction

Chapter 2.0: Executive Summary

A brief project description and summarizes project impacts and mitigation measures

Chapter 3.0: Project Description

Provides detailed description of the proposed project

Chapters 4.0 through 20.0: Environmental Impact Analysis

Considers project impacts and identifies mitigation measures designed to reduce significant impacts for each issue of concern.

Chapter 21.0: Alternatives

Provides an analysis of alternatives to the proposed project

Chapter 22.0: CEQA Mandated Sections

Provides an analysis of cumulative impacts, growth-inducing impacts, and significant irreversible environmental impacts and Identifies areas of no significant impact

Chapter 23.0: Preparation Team and Organizations and Persons Consulted

Lists the preparers of this analysis. Also contains reference information on people and organizations consulted during the preparation of the EIR

Included as part of Volume 1 is the extensive General Plan Existing Conditions Report (City of Burlingame, 2015). For most of the EIR disciplines the environmental setting sections summarize existing conditions taken from the Existing Conditions Report (ECR). These are disciplines where there has been no significant change in conditions from the time the ECR was prepared to the time the DEIR was prepared. These disciplines are: aesthetics, agriculture, biology, cultural resources, geology and soils, hydrology and water quality, hazards, land use, population and housing, public services, tribal cultural resources, and utilities. For the other disciplines, air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, noise, and traffic, the environmental setting sections may include both information from the ECR, as well as new information gathered from 2016-2018. Those specific sections have referenced where the new information comes from if not from the ECR.

Pursuant to section 15150 of the State CEQA Guidelines, the Existing Conditions Report is incorporated into the Draft Program EIR by reference. The Existing Conditions Report is available at the City of Burlingame 2040 General Plan website at:

<http://www.Burlingame.org/GENERALPLAN/>

Copies of the Existing Conditions Report may be viewed during regular business hours (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.), Monday through Friday, at the City of Burlingame Planning Division, 501 Primrose Road, Burlingame, CA 94010.

Volume 2 includes the EIR appendices, including documentation of the scoping process and Notice of Preparation (NOP). The appendices include:

- Appendix A: Notice of Preparation
- Appendix B: NOP Distribution List, Comment Letters, and Scoping Meeting Notes
- Appendix C: Air Quality and Climate Change Report
- Appendix D: Noise Study
- Appendix E: Traffic Impact Analysis

In compliance with Public Resources Code Section 21081.6, a mitigation monitoring reporting program (MMRP) will be prepared as a separately bound document that will be adopted in conjunction with the certification of the Final EIR. The MMRP, responses to public comments, any revisions to the Draft EIR, and findings will be identified as Volume 3.

1.3 APPROACH TO EIR ANALYSIS

The approach to the analysis presented in this EIR is programmatic in nature given the broad scope of the 2040 General Plan. Each environmental issue is analyzed in the same manner, starting with a discussion of the existing environmental setting, including physical conditions and pertinent planning and regulatory framework. Thresholds of significance are then defined and are used to measure the proposed 2040 General Plan potential impact to the environment. Thresholds of significance are based on a broad list of questions and impact topics set forth in Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines. The impact analysis section examines the broad, long-term environmental effects resulting from implementation of the goals and policies contained in each of the 2040 General Plan elements. The assessment of impacts focuses on how the impact in question could occur and whether some aspect of the proposed 2040 General Plan would trigger or somehow induce those sets of conditions due to the unique effects of the proposed policies, rather than a generalized consideration of growth as the primary force behind potential impacts. The presence of sensitive environmental resources, hazards in specific areas, and the broad implications of the 2040 General Plan throughout the planning area are considered in the determination of impact significance. If the analysis indicates that a significant impact could occur, even with the benefits of any proposed planning policies, mitigation measures are provided.

For each environmental issue area examined in Chapter 4.0, the discussion concludes with a statement regarding the level of impact significance remaining with imposition of the mitigation measures.

1.4 SCOPING AND PUBLIC REVIEW

To define the scope of the investigation of the Program EIR, the City of Burlingame distributed a Notice of Preparation (NOP) (included in Volume 2) to city, county, and state agencies; other public agencies; and interested private organizations and individuals. The NOP review period ran from August 2, 2017 through September 1, 2017. The City also held a public scoping meeting on August 14, 2017 at the City Hall Council Chambers. The purpose of the NOP was to identify agency and public concerns regarding potential impacts of the proposed project, and to request suggestions concerning ways to avoid significant impacts (Section 15082, CEQA Guidelines).

Five written comments were received during the 30-day public review period for the NOP (from Caltrans, the Native American Heritage Commission, the City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County, Jennifer Pfaff, and Derek Brindle). They are included in Volume 2 of this EIR. Oral comments were received from two people during the meeting, as well as from Planning Commission members. The scoping comments addressed in this Program EIR are summarized in Table 1-1 (Summary of Scoping Comments).

Table 1-1 Summary of Scoping Comments

Commenting Entity	Summary of Comment	Section in EIR where Addressed	Comments
Agencies			
Caltrans	Provide a VMT analysis in the EIR; address increasing transit service; GP policies should promote greater non-automotive access and mobility; identify travel demand impact fees	Chapter 18	The traffic study adheres to the City's standards for traffic impact analyses (see discussion in Chapter 18). Transit services that serve the planning area are also addressed in Chapter 18. The General Plan Mobility Element includes policies that promote greater use of mass transit and other non-automotive transit, walking, bicycles. Travel demand impact fees are addressed in Chapter 18.
Native American Heritage Commission	Adhere to Tribal Consultation laws	Chapters 12 and 19	Letters to five tribes that are active in San Mateo County were sent the NOP for the General Plan EIR by City staff. No tribes responded to the NOP. Affiliated tribes within the planning area will be notified by the City when specific development proposals are submitted to the City for permitting.
City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County	Discuss potential impacts of new land uses on the SF Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan	Chapter 14	The 2040 General Plan Public Safety Element includes policies that ensure new land uses do not affect air traffic at San Francisco International Airport.
Individuals			
Jennifer Pfaff	Concerned about implications of growth on transportation systems; want to see a robust network of public transportation options	Chapter 18	Non-automotive transit options are addressed in Chapter 18. Additionally, this chapter of the EIR addresses how General Plan growth would impact traffic and transportation systems in the Planning Area and on the Peninsula.
Derek Brindle	Would like to see the City consider increasing high density category to 140 du/acre from 120 du/acre	Chapter 21	The alternative of increasing allowable densities in the North Burlingame planning area is an alternative.

Notice of Completion

Pursuant to Section 15085 of the State CEQA Guidelines, a Notice of Completion (NOC) will be filed with the State Office of Planning and Research (OPR) and the DEIR will be circulated for public and agency review for a period of 45 days. A copy of the DEIR will be posted at the Burlingame Library and at City Hall. Copies of the DEIR will be sent to responsible agencies, local agencies, and concerned agencies and individuals, as requested. Public hearings will be held in conjunction with the review of the project.

Response to Comments on DEIR

Comments from all agencies and individuals are invited regarding the information contained in the Draft Program EIR. Such comments should explain any perceived deficiencies in the assessment of impacts, provide the information that is purportedly lacking in the Draft Program EIR or indicate where the information may be found. All comments on the Draft Program EIR are to be submitted to:

Kevin Gardiner, Planning Manager
City of Burlingame Planning Division
501 Primrose Road
Burlingame, CA 94010
kgardiner@burlingame.org

Following a 45-day period of circulation and review of the Draft Program EIR, all comments and the City's responses to the comments will be incorporated into a Final Program EIR prior to certification of the document by the City of Burlingame.

Availability of EIR Materials

All materials related to the Preparation of this Program EIR are available for public review. To request an appointment to review these materials, please contact:

Kevin Gardiner, Planning Manager
City of Burlingame Planning Division
501 Primrose Road
Burlingame, CA 94010
kgardiner@burlingame.org

1.5 CITATION

Preparation of this Program EIR and the 2040 General Plan rely on information from many sources, including the appendix materials previously listed and numerous other references. Pursuant to Section 15148 of the State CEQA Guidelines, citations from the appendix materials and other sources are provided throughout the EIR. Citations are provided in parenthesis when used and are inclusive to each environmental impact topic (Sections 4.1 through 4.12). References cited are located at the end of each environmental impact section.