NOTICE OF PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF A DRAFT PROGRAM ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT AND NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING FOR INDIO DOWNTOWN SPECIFIC PLAN

Date: April 23, 2017
To: Reviewing Agencies and Interested Parties
Subject: Notice of Availability of a Draft Program Environmental Impact Report for the City of Indio Downtown Specific Plan

State Clearinghouse (SCH) No.: 2015031057

Public Review Period: April 24, 2017 to June 7, 2017

Notice is hereby given that the City of Indio has prepared a Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (Program EIR) for the proposed City of Indio Downtown Specific Plan Project (Project). Pursuant to the California Public Resources Code Section 21165 and the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines (CEQA Guidelines) Section 15050, the City of Indio is the Lead Agency for the Downtown Specific Plan Project. The Notice of Availability (NOA) identifies that a Draft Program EIR is available for review and comment pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15087.

Project Location and Setting: The City of Indio is within the Coachella Valley, west of the San Bernardino Mountains in Riverside County, California. Interstate 10 (I-10) runs east-west through the City. California State Route 111 (Highway 111) is the main state highway and retail corridor running through the Coachella Valley including central Indio. The approximately 117-acre Project site is in the southeast part of the City, and includes the historic Downtown area and Civic Center. The site is generally bordered by Marshall Street to the southeast; the Indio Transportation Center to the northeast; Highway 111 to the south; Deglet Noor Street to the northwest; and Indio Boulevard to the north.

Project Description: The Project is the adoption of the Indio Downtown Specific Plan (Specific Plan). The Specific Plan describes the goals and policies, development standards, design guidelines, infrastructure improvements, and implementation strategies for the Specific Plan area. The standards and provisions of the proposed Specific Plan constitute the primary land use and development guidance for the Specific Plan area. The Specific Plan’s standards and provisions would be applied in addition to the regulations set forth in the City of Indio Municipal Code. As part of the Project, Title XV, Land Usage of the City of Indio Municipal Code would be amended to include the Specific Plan area (Downtown area) zoning district.

The Specific Plan’s estimated build out potential is 940,000 square feet (sf) of non-residential development and 500 residential dwelling units (dus). The Indio City Council will be responsible for certification of the Final EIR as set forth in the CEQA Guidelines § 15090 based on the standards for adequacy for an EIR (CEQA Guidelines § 15151). Certification of the Final EIR would precede consideration of the discretionary actions by the City:

- **Indio Downtown Specific Plan.** Adoption of the Specific Plan by the City Council by Ordinance; adoption of the Specific Plan Design Guidelines by Resolution.

- **General Plan Amendment.** Amendment to the General Plan by the City Council to change the boundaries of the Specific Plan; amendment by Resolution.
- **Zone Change.** Approval by the City Council to change the Specific Plan area boundaries on the Indio Zoning Map; approval by Ordinance.

**Environmental Determination:** In accordance with the State CEQA Guidelines Section 15168, the City of Indio has prepared Draft Program EIR SCH 2015031057 for the Specific Plan. The purpose of a Program EIR is to inform decision-makers and the general public of potential environmental effects associated with implementation of the Specific Plan. The Program EIR does not identify or evaluate impacts of individual projects. This Program EIR serves as a “first tier” analysis. A Program EIR is prepared for a series of actions that can be characterized as one large project (State CEQA Guidelines § 15168). The Program EIR evaluates the Project for potential impacts on the environment and analyzes proposed policies and program and identifies potential environmental impacts.

Subsequent activities must be examined in light of the Program EIR to determine if additional environmental analysis is warranted. Later activities which have been adequately analyzed under the Program EIR would not require additional environmental documentation. If an activity may result in additional effects, or new mitigation measures are needed, a subsequent or supplemental EIR, or negative declaration must be prepared (CEQA Guidelines §§ 15162 and 15163). In addition, the Draft Program EIR evaluates three project alternatives: No Project/Existing Specific Plan Alternative, No Project/No Development Alternative, and a Reduced Density Alternative.

The Draft Program EIR finds that implementation of the Project could result in significant unavoidable impacts to the following issue areas: Air Quality (construction and cumulative impacts), Greenhouse Gas Emissions (cumulative), and Water (cumulative impacts).

**Notice of Public Hearing:** Notice is hereby given that the Planning Commission will hold a public hearing to consider input from the public on the Draft Program EIR. The meeting is scheduled for:

- **Date:** Wednesday, May 24th, 2017
- **Time:** 6:00 PM
- **Place:** City of Indio Council Chambers  
  100 Civic Center Mall  
  Indio, CA 92201

**Notice of Availability:** Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21083 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15087, the Draft Program EIR is available for a 45-day public review from April 10 to May 25, 2017. The City, as the Lead Agency, requests that responsible and trustee agencies respond in a manner consistent with Section 15082(b) of the CEQA Guidelines. All comments and responses to this Notice of Availability should be submitted in writing to Juan Rodriguez, Development Analyst (address below).

Copies of the Draft Program EIR are available for review at the following locations:

- City of Indio  
  100 Civic Center Mall  
  Indio, CA 92201


The City of Indio will also accept responses to this notice by e-mail received through the close of business on May 25, 2017. If e-mail comments are submitted with attachments, it is recommended that the attachments be delivered in writing to the address specified above. Virus protection measures and variety of formats for attachments can limit the ability for the attachments to be delivered. E-mail responses to this notice may be sent to [jrodriguez@indio.org](mailto:jrodriguez@indio.org).