

1.0 INTRODUCTION

SUMMARY

This introduction provides information on the contents of this Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed Riverwalk Marketplace Phase II Project. This information is provided to assist the reader in understanding the relationship of this document to the environmental review process being conducted by the City of Porterville for the proposed project.

1.1 ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

As defined by Section 15050 of the *California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines (State CEQA Guidelines)*, the City of Porterville is serving as the Lead Agency responsible for preparing the EIR for the proposed project.

1.1.1 Environmental Processing

In accordance with CEQA requirements, the City of Porterville conducted a preliminary review of the application for the proposed project and determined that an environmental impact report (EIR) should be prepared to analyze the potential impacts associated with approval and implementation of the project.

A Notice of Preparation (NOP) was prepared by the City in September 2008 and sent to public agencies and other parties stating that an EIR was going to be prepared by the City. In accordance with CEQA requirements, a 30-day period was provided for responses to the NOP. This review period began on September 29, 2008 and ended on October 28, 2008. A second NOP was published in December 2008 when the applicant reduced the project size by approximately 25,000 square feet.

Based on a review of the proposed project and the responses received on the NOP, the City determined that the EIR should address the following topics:

- Air Quality
- Biology
- Cultural Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use (Urban Decay)
- Noise
- Fire Protection
- Police Protection
- Traffic and Circulation
- Water Supply
- Sewer
- Solid Waste
- Energy

Subsequently a Draft EIR was prepared and circulated for a 45-day public review period as required by state law between April 1, 2010, and May 17, 2010. When the project was again reduced in size, this time by approximately 20,000 square feet of commercial space, a Revised Draft EIR was circulated from February 22, 2011 through April 8, 2011. Henceforth the Revised Draft EIR supersedes the first circulated Draft EIR. All references to the Draft EIR in this document refer to the Revised Draft EIR unless otherwise noted.

Section 15088 of the *State CEQA Guidelines* requires that the Lead Agency evaluate comments on environmental issues received from parties on the Draft EIR and prepare a written response to each comment. The responses to comments may take the form of a separate section in the Final EIR. In conformance with the requirements of Section 15088 of the *State CEQA Guidelines*, the City, as the Lead Agency for the project, prepared written responses to all written comments on the Revised Draft EIR.

1.2 ORGANIZATION OF THE FINAL EIR

This Final EIR contains all the elements required by Section 15132 of the *State CEQA Guidelines*. This section states that a Final EIR shall consist of the Draft EIR; comments received on the Draft EIR, either verbatim or in summary; a list of persons, organizations, and public agencies commenting on the Draft EIR; and the written responses of the Lead Agency to the comments received on the Draft EIR.

This Final EIR incorporates the Revised Draft EIR, dated February 2011 including all appendices, by reference. The complete Revised Draft EIR is available for review at the City of Porterville, 291 Main Street, Porterville, California 93257. In addition, the Revised Draft EIR is available on the City's Web site: <http://www.ci.porterville.ca.us/>. A complete listing of the parties commenting on both the Draft EIR and the Revised Draft EIR is provided in the Table of Contents of this Final EIR and at the beginning of **Section 2.0, Responses to Comments**.

The organization of this Final EIR and the general contents of the sections following this introduction are:

Section 2.0, Responses to Comments contains the comments received on the Draft EIR and the responses to these comments.

Section 3.0, Additions and Corrections to Draft EIR contains revised pages from the Draft EIR. Additions are indicated by underlining, and deletions are indicated by ~~striketrough~~. All changes are indicated with a line along the right margin.

Section 4.0, Mitigation Monitoring Plan contains the mitigation measures identified in the Draft EIR along with the appropriate monitoring phase and agency.