

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Environmental Impact Report

1.1.1 California Environmental Quality Act Compliance

This Environmental Impact Report (EIR) has been prepared to evaluate the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed The Cubes at Placentia Industrial Project (referred to in this EIR as the Proposed Project or Project), as required under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), as amended (California Public Resources Code, Section 21000 et seq.) and the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA Guidelines) (Title 14, California Code of Regulations, Chapter 3, Section 15000 et seq.).

CEQA requires that all state and local governmental agencies consider the potential environmental consequences of projects over which they have discretionary authority before taking action on those projects. This EIR has been prepared to satisfy CEQA including, but not limited to, the CEQA Guidelines. This EIR is the public document designed to provide decision-makers and the public with an analysis of the potential environmental effects of the Proposed Project, to indicate possible ways to reduce or avoid significant environmental impacts, and to identify alternatives to reduce or avoid significant environmental impacts of the Proposed Project. The EIR must also disclose significant environmental impacts that cannot be avoided; growth inducing impacts; effects not found to be significant; and significant cumulative impacts of all past, present and reasonably foreseeable future projects.

The intent of this EIR is to provide sufficient information on the potential environmental impacts of the Proposed Project, to allow the City of Perris to consider the potential environmental consequences, and make an informed decision to approve, modify, or deny the Proposed Project. This EIR also serves to inform the public and responsible, and other public agencies on the Proposed Project. Specific discretionary actions to be considered by the City and other agencies are described in Section 2.9, Required Permits and Actions.

This EIR addresses the potential environmental effects of the Proposed Project, including effects that may be significant and adverse; evaluates a range of alternatives to the Proposed Project; and identifies mitigation measures to reduce or avoid significant adverse effects.

1.1.2 Lead Agency and Responsible Agencies

Pursuant to CEQA Section 21067 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15051, the lead agency means “the public agency which has the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving a project which may have a significant effect upon the environment.” Since the City of Perris has approval authority over the Proposed Project, it is serving as the lead agency under CEQA and is responsible for complying with CEQA, including the requisite environmental review process for the Proposed

Project. The City will be reviewing and considering the determinations of the Final EIR prior to exercising its independent judgment to approve, modify, or reject recommendations related to implementing the Proposed Project.

A “responsible agency” is the public agency which proposes to carry out or approve a project for which a lead agency is preparing or has prepared an environmental document. For the purposes of CEQA, the term “responsible agency” includes all public agencies other than the lead agency which have discretionary approval power over some aspect of the Proposed Project.

1.2 Environmental Procedures

This EIR has been prepared pursuant to CEQA to assess the potential environmental effects associated with implementation of the Proposed Project, as well as anticipated future discretionary actions and approvals. The six main purposes of this document as established by CEQA are listed below:

1. To disclose to decision makers and the public the significant environmental effects of proposed activities.
2. To identify ways to avoid or reduce significant environmental damage.
3. To prevent significant environmental damage by requiring implementation of feasible alternatives or mitigation measures.
4. To disclose to the public reasons for agency approval of projects with significant environmental effects.
5. To foster interagency coordination in the review of projects.
6. To enhance public participation in the planning process.

An EIR is the most comprehensive form of environmental documentation identified in CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines to provide the information needed to assess the environmental consequences of a proposed project. EIRs are intended to provide an objective, factually supported analysis and full disclosure the environmental consequences of a proposed project with the potential to result in significant adverse environmental impacts.

An EIR is also one of various decision-making tools used by a lead agency to consider the merits and disadvantages of a project that is subject to its discretionary authority. Before approving a proposed project, the lead agency must consider the information in the EIR; determine if the EIR was properly prepared in accordance with CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines; determine that it reflects the independent judgment of the lead agency; adopt findings concerning the proposed project’s significant environmental impacts and alternatives; and adopt a Statement of Overriding Considerations if the proposed project would result in significant environmental impacts even after incorporation of feasible mitigation measures, but there are, on balance, overriding benefits which outweigh the remaining adverse impacts.

1.2.1 EIR Format

This EIR is organized into three volumes. Volume I addresses the potential environmental impacts of the physical development of the Proposed Project. Associated technical appendices are contained in Volume II. When the EIR is finalized, Volume III will contain the public, organization, and public agency comments received on the Draft EIR, the City's responses to those comments, a summary of revisions or enhancements to the Draft EIR, and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Proposed Project.

Volume I of this EIR includes the following:

Chapter ES, Executive Summary. Summarizes the background and description of the Proposed Project, significant impacts, Project alternatives, areas of controversy known to the City and those raised by the public or by other agencies, any issues remaining to be resolved including the choice among alternatives, and the potential environmental impacts and mitigation measures identified for any significant effects of the Proposed Project.

Chapter 1, Introduction. Describes the purpose of this EIR, background on the Proposed Project, the format of this EIR, the Notice of Preparation, and Final EIR certification.

Chapter 2, Project Description. A description of the Proposed Project, the objectives and underlying purpose of the Proposed Project, the Proposed Project area and location, approvals anticipated to be included as part of the Proposed Project, the necessary environmental clearances for the Proposed Project, and the intended uses of this EIR.

Chapter 3, Environmental Setting. A description of the physical environmental conditions in the vicinity of the Proposed Project as they existed at the time the Notice of Preparation was published, from both a local and regional perspective. The environmental setting provides baseline physical conditions from which the lead agency determines the significance of environmental impacts resulting from the Proposed Project.

Chapter 4, Environmental Analysis. For each environmental topic analyzed, provides a description of the thresholds used to determine if a significant impact would occur; the methodology to identify and evaluate the potential impacts of the Proposed Project; the existing environmental setting; Regulatory Requirements; the potential adverse and beneficial effects of the Proposed Project; the level of impact significance before mitigation; the mitigation measures for the Proposed Project; the level of significance of the adverse impacts of the Proposed Project after mitigation is incorporated; and the potential cumulative impacts associated with the Proposed Project and other existing, approved, and proposed development in the area.

Chapter 5, Alternatives. Describes a reasonable range of alternatives to the Proposed Project, and the impacts of the alternatives compared to the Proposed Project, including the No Project Alternative, Reduced Intensity Alternative, and an Alternative Site Plan.

Chapter 6, Other CEQA Considerations. Provides information required by CEQA regarding impacts that would result from the Proposed Project, including the significant unavoidable adverse impacts, impacts found not to be significant, significant, irreversible changes to the environment, and potential impacts resulting from growth inducement.

Chapter 7, List of EIR Preparers. Lists the lead agency and consultants who provided technical assistance and the agencies consulted in the preparation and review of this EIR.

Chapter 8, References. Provides a list of references used in preparation of the analysis presented in this EIR.

Appendices. Includes various documents and data that support the analysis presented in this EIR.

1.2.2 Type and Purpose of This EIR

The Project Site and surrounding properties to the west, north and east are located within the Perris Valley Commerce Center area of the City of Perris. The Perris Valley Commerce Center Specific Plan (PVCCSP) was adopted by the City of Perris on January 12, 2012 (Ordinance No. 1284) and has been subsequently amended 14 times prior to the publication of this EIR. The environmental impacts resulting from implementation of allowed development under the PVCCSP have been evaluated in the Perris Valley Commerce Center Specific Plan Final Environmental Impact Report (PVCCSP EIR) (State Clearinghouse No. 2009081086), which was certified by the City of Perris in January 2012. The PVCCSP EIR is a program EIR and was prepared in accordance with CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines. Project-specific evaluation in a later-tier environmental document for individual development projects within the PVCCSP area was anticipated. As stated in Section 15168(d)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, the program EIR can “focus an EIR on a later activity to permit discussion solely of new effects which had not been considered before.” As such, the environmental analysis for the Proposed Project presented in this Draft EIR is based on, or “tiered” from, the analysis presented in the PVCCSP EIR, when applicable, and the PVCCSP EIR is incorporated by reference (refer to Section 1.6, Documents Incorporated by Reference).

Section 15152 of the CEQA Guidelines states, “Tiering refers to using the analysis of general matters contained in a broader EIR (such as one prepared for a general plan or policy statement) with later EIRs and negative declarations on narrower projects; incorporating by reference the general discussions from the broader EIR; and concentrating the later EIR or Negative Declaration solely on issues specific to the later project.” CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines encourage the use of tiered environmental documents to eliminate repetitive discussions of the same issues.

The PVCCSP EIR analyzes the direct and indirect impacts resulting from implementation of the allowed development under the PVCCSP. Section 15152(f) of the CEQA Guidelines instructs that, when tiering, a later EIR or Negative Declaration shall be prepared when the later project may cause significant effects on the environment that were not adequately addressed in the prior EIR. Significant environmental effects are considered to have been “adequately addressed” if the lead agency determines that:

- A. they have been mitigated or avoided as a result of the prior environmental impact report and findings adopted in connection with that prior environmental report; or,
- B. they have been examined at a sufficient level of detail in the prior environmental impact report to enable those effects to be mitigated or avoided by site specific revisions, the imposition of conditions, or by other means in connection with the approval of the later project.

Following review of the Proposed Project and the analysis presented in the PVCCSP EIR, the City of Peris, as lead agency, has determined that the Proposed Project is a “project” under CEQA that was not fully addressed in the PVCCSP EIR. Therefore, this EIR has been prepared as a “Project EIR” as defined by CEQA Guidelines Section 15161. This type of EIR examines the environmental impacts of a specific development project and should focus primarily on the changes in the environment that would result from the development of the Proposed Project. This EIR examines all phases of the Proposed Project, including planning, construction, and operation.

1.3 Scoping Process

1.3.1 Notice of Preparation

The City complied with CEQA Guidelines Sections 15082 and 15083 by providing opportunities for early responsible and trustee agency participation in the environmental review process as well as opportunity for early public consultation with interested organizations and individuals. Specifically, the Notice of Preparation providing notice of a Draft EIR Scoping Meeting was distributed on October 20, 2023, to federal, state, regional, and local government agencies and interested parties to solicit comments and to inform agencies and the public of the Proposed Project during a 30-day public review period that extended from December 1, 2023, to January 2, 2024 (included as Appendix A). The purpose of the Notice of Preparation is to provide notification that an EIR for the Proposed Project is being prepared and to solicit guidance on the scope and content of the document.

Table 1-1, Notice of Preparation Written Comments Summary, provides a summary of the Notice of Preparation responses and issues raised. A copy of the Notice of Preparation and responses received are included in Appendix A to this Draft EIR.

Table 1-1. Notice of Preparation Written Comments Summary

Commenting Agency/Person	Letter Dated	Summary of Comments	Issue Addressed In:
State Agencies			
Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC)	December 4, 2023	The NAHC summarizes requirements for Native American consultation pursuant to Senate Bill (SB) 18 and Assembly Bill (AB) 52, and provides standard guidance on the scope of the analysis of potential impacts to Native American resources and recommendations for mitigation.	Section 4.13, Tribal Cultural Resources
Regional Agencies			
Eastern Municipal Water District (EMWD)	December 18, 2023	The EMWD requested that consultation with the EMWD's Development Services Department occur to compare proposed and existing water demands and sewer flows, and prepare a Design Conditions report, to detail all pertinent facilities necessary to serve such implementing development projects. The proper steps in the Design Conditions process should be followed with dialogue starting at an early stage.	Section 4.14, Utilities and Service Systems
Riverside County Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC)	December 19, 2023	The Riverside Airport Land Use Commission acknowledges that the Proposed Project is located within Zone C1 and D of March AIA, however, because the City of Perris is consistent with the compatibility plan for March Air Reserve Base/Inland Port Airport, they have noted that the City can conduct the review themselves, unless the Proposed Project requires a legislative action such as a change of zone or a specific plan amendment. The Proposed Project includes a specific plan amendment and was determined to be consistent with the 2014 March Air Reserve Base/Inland Port Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan by ALUC on July 11, 2024.	Chapter 2, Project Description
Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District	December 18, 2023	The Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District stated that the Proposed Project could require a NPDES permit. If the Proposed Project involves a FEMA mapped floodplain, the City should follow proper requirements under FEMA, and should require CLOMR and LOMR. Proper mitigation should be implemented as needed. If a natural watercourse or mapped floodplain is impacted, the City should require the applicant obtain a Section 1602 Agreement from the CDFW and a Section 404 Permit from US Army Corps of Engineers. A Section 401 Water Quality Certification may be required prior to issuance of the Army Corps 404 permit.	Section 4.9, Hydrology and Water Quality

Notes: CDFW = California Department of Fish and Wildlife; CLOMR = Conditional Letter of Map Revision; FEMA = Federal Emergency Management Agency; LOMR = Letter of Map Revision; NPDES = National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, Section 15082, the City of Perris Planning Commission held a Draft EIR public scoping meeting on December 19, 2023. Public agencies and members of the public were invited to attend and provide input on the scope of this EIR. City staff described the Proposed Project to the Planning Commissioners and provided a conceptual site plan for the Proposed Project and architectural elevations. Following a brief explanation of the environmental review process by the EIR consultant, comments from the Planning Commissioners and the public were solicited. In summary, the Planning Commissioners, organizations' representatives, and members of the public brought up the following environmental issues:

- **Request to analyze other alternatives.** Multiple Planning Commissioners requested that the following alternatives be analyzed:
 - Lower building height with larger setback along Placentia Avenue
 - Reducing the scale/size
 - Rearrange the dock doors, trailer and truck parking, and access to the north and west side
 - Longer queuing to get into the Proposed Project Site
- **Sewer concern brought up by multiple residents.** Commenters voiced that the City has allegedly promised connection to the sewer many times, but they are still on septic.
- **Inconsistencies with site plans/boundaries in presentation given by City staff.** The boundary before the acquisition of the additional area was not reflected in one of the figures.
- Concern about the following environmental issues:
 - Transportation impacts- narrow street as it is
 - Pollution
 - Lighting, aesthetics, and landscaping
 - Noise along the boundary of the lot line of people's homes
 - Greenhouse gas emissions
 - Air quality
 - Public services
 - Response time for emergency services
 - Schools impacted by more vehicles
 - Population and housing – there were concerns that residents would be pushed out because they don't want to live there due to an increase in industrial uses in the area
- **Economic impact.** When discussing Population and housing, Planning Commissioner Gomez stated concern about the economic impacts on having a project like this here which could have health impacts leading to a forced sale of property that would then be undersold because the value of the area decreased due to the development.

- **General comments.** Other public comments were that there is no sidewalk, no curb, and that students currently walk with these conditions to school.
- **Requests for more landscaping and screening.** Multiple requests were made for more landscaping and screening along the northeastern portion of the site.
- **Requests for visualizations and renderings.** The Planning Commissioners and residents requested more visualizations of what the Proposed Project would look like from surrounding the residential areas, especially as the front yards would be facing the Proposed Project.

1.4 Scope of the Environmental Impact Report

A Notice of Preparation (included as Appendix A of this EIR) was prepared in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15063(c), during the Draft EIR scoping process and determined that 5 environmental impact categories were not significantly affected by or did not affect the Proposed Project. These categories are not discussed in detail in this Draft EIR. Refer to Chapter 6, Other CEQA Considerations:

- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Mineral Resources
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Wildfire

1.4.1 Potentially Significant Adverse Impacts

Based on a review of the Proposed Project and comments received during the Notice of Preparation public review period and preparation of an Initial Study (Appendix A), the City determined that an EIR that addresses the following environmental issue areas should be prepared:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Noise
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems

The specific topics evaluated are detailed in Chapter 4, Environmental Analysis, of this EIR.

This EIR evaluates direct impacts, reasonably foreseeable indirect impacts, and cumulative impacts resulting from planning, construction, and operation of the Proposed Project using the most current information available and in accordance with the provisions set forth in CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines. In addition, this EIR recommends potentially feasible mitigation measures, where possible, and project alternatives that would reduce or eliminate significant adverse environmental effects.

1.5 Public Review of the Draft EIR

This Draft EIR is being circulated for public review and comment for a period of 45 days. During this period, the public and public agencies can submit comments on this EIR's accuracy and completeness to the lead agency. Release of this Draft EIR marks the beginning of the 45-day public review period pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15105. The 45-day public review period for this Draft EIR will be from December 5, 2025, through January 19, 2026. The public can review this Draft EIR at the following address during normal business hours (Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) or on the City's website at <https://www.cityofperris.org/departments/development-services/planning/environmental-documents-forpublic-review>.

City of Perris Development Services Counter
135 North D Street
Perris, California 92570

The City encourages all comments on this Draft EIR to be submitted in writing. Comments or questions regarding this Draft EIR should be addressed to the following:

Mathew Evans, Senior Planner
City of Perris Planning Division
135 North D Street
Perris, California 92570
(951) 943-5003
mevans@cityofperris.org

1.5.1 Final Environmental Impact Report and Certification

Upon completion of the Draft EIR public review period, a Final EIR that will include written comments on the Draft EIR received during the public review period and the City's responses to those comments will be prepared. The Final EIR will also include a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program prepared in accordance with CEQA Section 21081.6. The Final EIR will address any revisions to the Draft EIR made in response to public, organization, or public agency comments. The Draft EIR and Final EIR together will compose the EIR for the Proposed Project. Before the City can review the Proposed Project for approval, it must first certify that the EIR has been completed in compliance with CEQA, that it has reviewed and considered the information in the EIR, and that the EIR reflects the independent judgment of the City. The City will also be required to adopt Findings of Fact and a Statement of Overriding Considerations (if any significant, unavoidable impacts are identified). If no significant, unavoidable impacts (assuming the City finds the proposed mitigation measures to be feasible) are identified, the City will not be required to adopt a Statement of Overriding Considerations if it approves the Proposed Project (California Public Resources Code, Section 21081).

1.6 Documents Incorporated by Reference

CEQA Guidelines Section 15150 allows for incorporation by reference of “all or portions of another document which is a matter of public record or is generally available to the public.” Incorporation by reference is used principally as a means of reducing the size of EIRs. This EIR relies in part on data, environmental evaluations, mitigation measures, and other components of EIRs and plans prepared by the City for areas in the Proposed Project vicinity. These documents are listed here and used as source documents for this EIR. These documents are available for public review during normal business hours (Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) at the City of Perris Planning Division building at 135 North D Street Perris, California 92570, and on the City’s website at <https://www.cityofperris.org/departments/development-services/planning/environmental-documents-forpublic-review>.

- Perris Comprehensive General Plan 2030, City of Perris, originally approved on April 26, 2005 (GP). Available at <https://www.cityofperris.org/departments/development-services/general-plan>.
- Perris General Plan 2030 Draft Environmental Impact Report (State Clearinghouse No. 2004031135), certified April 26, 2005. Available at <https://www.cityofperris.org/home/showpublisheddocument/451/637203139698630000>.
- Perris Valley Commerce Center Specific Plan Final Environmental Impact Report, November 2011, Certified January 10, 2012. Available at <https://www.cityofperris.org/Home/ShowDocument?id=2645>.
- Perris Valley Commerce Center Specific Plan Amendment No. 12. Adopted January 10, 2012, and subsequently amended and approved January 22, 2022. Available at: <https://www.cityofperris.org/home/showpublisheddocument/2647/637799977032200000>.