



NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF A DRAFT SUBSEQUENT PROGRAM ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

The City of San Marcos (City) has prepared a Draft Subsequent Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR 26-007; Draft SEIR) for the proposed Creek Plan Specific Plan Update located in the City of San Marcos. A 45-day public review and comment period for the Draft Subsequent Program EIR is provided under State law. The public review period will start **August 19, 2026**, and end **October 5, 2026**. Response letters shall be submitted to the City at the mailing address given below or emailed no later than close of business on **October 5, 2026**:

Sean del Solar, Principal Planner / Sustainability Program Manager
City of San Marcos Planning Division
1 Civic Center Drive
San Marcos, CA 92069
Email: CreekPlan@sanmarcosca.gov

PROJECT TITLE: Creek Plan Specific Plan Update

PROJECT NUMBER: SP24-0001 and EIR 26-007

APPLICANT: City of San Marcos

LOCATION: The San Marcos Creek Plan Specific Plan area covers approximately 217.3 acres within the City's Creekside District. The project site is bound by San Marcos Boulevard to the north, Discovery Street to the south and west, and Grand Avenue and State Route 78 to the east. Figure 1 presents the project's regional location, and Figure 2 presents the project location on an aerial photograph.

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT: In 2007, the City adopted the existing San Marcos Creek District Specific Plan (Adopted Specific Plan). The intent of the Adopted Specific Plan was to create a planning framework for the future growth and redevelopment of the Creek District and to provide the mechanism to ensure that future development would occur in a coordinated, orderly, and well-planned manner. The Adopted Specific Plan was supported by the San Marcos Creek Specific Plan and Floodway Improvement Project Environmental Impact Report, which was certified in 2007 (SCH No. 2006121080). Since 2007, several major events have impacted the feasibility of on-going private development in the project area, including:

- Economic uncertainty, starting with the 2008 global financial crisis.
- Dissolution of redevelopment agencies by the State of California (taking away an important funding source).



- Build-out of the adjacent University District/North City area.
- Shifting market demands for retail and office space following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since 2007, the City has completed the following public improvements projects that were identified in the Adopted Specific Plan:

- Construction of bridges over San Marcos Creek at Bent Avenue and Via Vera Cruz.
- Construction of flood control levees along the creek.
- Establishment of habitat conservation areas along the creek.
- Construction of public park promenades and parklets, also along the creek.

As a result of the market changes and public improvements, the City has developed the Creek Plan Specific Plan Update, which retains many qualities of the Adopted Specific Plan while making necessary changes to be responsive to current conditions. The Adopted Specific Plan allowed existing uses to remain within individual property ownership while providing opportunities for owners to redevelop their properties consistent with the use regulations and development standards. This would remain unchanged under the project. The Adopted Specific Plan envisioned an active, pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use district, which the project would further enhance by incorporating centrally located common parking facilities that can support a “park once” approach for visitors.

In accordance with California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines Section 15124(b), the project includes objectives which would guide decision-makers in evaluating the purpose of the project and considering a reasonable range of alternatives and mitigation measures capable of substantially attaining those objectives while avoiding or reducing significant environmental impacts.

The following project objectives, stated in subsection 2.3.2 of the 2007 Program EIR, remain applicable to the project:

- Protect the biological resources in San Marcos Creek through habitat creation and restoration.
- Develop a “24-hour” mixed-use neighborhood including residential, retail, and office uses.
- Establish a distinct, regionally identifiable “downtown.”
- Establish a “walkable,” pedestrian-friendly district.

The following supplement the previous, providing a refined focus related to project objectives:

- Promote a balanced community with an updated development pattern able to support the needs of the City both socially and economically.
- Promote and support variety in housing design, cost, and density, with a firm commitment to integrate affordable housing district-wide.
- Reinforce connections to the regional transportation network.
- Highlight San Marcos Creek as a community amenity, including open space and trail connections for passive and active recreation.



Figure 3 presents the proposed Land Use Plan, and Table 1 presents the proposed development intensities under the project. As shown in Table 1, buildout of the project would result in the following:

- Approximately 2,296 residential units built as small-lot subdivisions, townhomes, and multi-unit apartments and condominiums. This is a slight decrease compared to the 2,300 residential units anticipated under the Adopted Specific Plan.
- Approximately 655,856 square feet of commercial development, including restaurants, retail spaces, offices, entertainment uses, and cultural facilities such as museums or galleries. This is a decrease compared to the 1,854,000 square feet of commercial development anticipated under the Adopted Specific Plan

Table 1 Project Buildout	
Uses	Amount
Residential	2,296 Units
Commercial – Retail, Entertainment, Cultural	655,856 Square Feet
Open Space (required by development)	316,638 Square Feet
Open Space (parks)	17.89 Acres
Open Space (conservation)	83.45 Acres
Roadway, Trails, Paths	1,367,348 Square Feet
Total Parking	6,902 Parking Spaces

Development intensities are planned at an urban scale, with building heights varying across the plan area, the densest of which would allow a maximum of five stories. Furthermore, the project would make roadway improvements to provide an internal circulation pattern prioritizing slow motor vehicles and easy pedestrian and cyclist movement into and throughout the Creek District. New crossings of San Marcos Boulevard would be minimized to allow that major thoroughfare to continue to move traffic to and from State Route 78.

Although improvements to San Marcos Creek were completed in 2024, they did not resolve all long-standing flooding issues described in the Adopted Specific Plan. Substantial portions of the Creek District continue to lie within the 100-year flood boundaries identified on Flood Insurance Rate Maps published by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. To address flooding issues and facilitate property development and redevelopment within the Creek District, the project would include the following options:

- Establish a conceptual alignment and design for an above-ground, pervious-bottomed channel starting at San Marcos Boulevard and traversing to the San Marcos Creek to contain an existing floodway, with the ultimate design, funding, and construction to be accomplished via private and public partnerships.
- Require individual property owners to raise their properties in the floodplain above the base flood level to allow development and accommodate flood flows on the property, or to flow downstream consistent with local, state, and federal regulations.

Water and wastewater services would continue to be provided by the Vallecitos Water District.



ENVIRONMENT IMPACTS: The Draft SEIR analyzes impacts associated with the Creek Plan Specific Plan Update. Potentially significant impacts have been identified for the following issue areas: air quality, biological resources, cultural/Tribal cultural resources, hazardous materials, flooding hazards, land use, noise, transportation (vehicle miles travelled), and utilities. All potentially significant impacts would be reduced to less than significant levels with implementation of mitigation measures except vehicle miles traveled impacts associated with commercial development under the Specific Plan Update, which would be significant and unavoidable. The City will adopt a Statement of Overriding Considerations pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines Section 15093, finding that the benefits of the Specific Plan Update outweigh its unavoidable adverse environmental effects.

DOCUMENT REVIEW: The Draft SEIR and technical appendices will be available for review at the Development Services Department's public information counter during normal business hours and on the City's website given below. The document will also be available at the County Library at 2 Civic Center Drive, San Marcos.

<https://www.sanmarcosca.gov/Business-Services/Development/Planning/Community-Input/CEQA-Documents>

PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD: August 19, 2026 to October 5, 2026.

All written comments letters shall be submitted to the City at the mailing address given below or emailed no later than close of business on October 5, 2026:

Sean del Solar, Principal Planner / Sustainability Program Manager
City of San Marcos Planning Division
1 Civic Center Drive
San Marcos, CA 92069
Email: CreekPlan@sanmarcosca.gov

For more information regarding this notice or the proposed project, please contact Sean del Solar, Principal Planner/Sustainability Program Manager, at sdelsolar@sanmarcosca.gov or (760) 744-1050, ext. 3223.

Attachments (on following pages):

- Figure 1 – Regional Location
- Figure 2 – Project Location on Aerial Photograph
- Figure 3 – Proposed Land Use Plan