



## Notice of Preparation and Scoping Meeting South El Monte Athletic Fields and Business Park Environmental Impact Report

**DATE:** July 2, 2024  
**TO:** Reviewing Agencies and Other Interested Parties  
**FROM:** City of South El Monte, Planning Division, 1415 Santa Anita Avenue, South El Monte, CA 91733

**PROJECT TITLE/SUBJECT:** Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Draft Environmental Report and Notice of a Public Scoping Meeting (Scoping Meeting) for the South El Monte Athletic Fields and Business Park Project.

**PROJECT LOCATION:** 825 Lexington-Gallatin Road (Assessor Parcel Number [APN] 8119-005-032).

**NOTICE OF PREPARATION REVIEW PERIOD:** July 2, 2024 to August 1, 2024

**SCOPING MEETING:** Monday, July 22, 2024, at 6:30 PM, City Hall Council Chambers, 1415 Santa Anita Avenue, South El Monte, CA 91733

Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21165 and the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines (CEQA Guidelines) Section 15050, the City of South El Monte (City) is the Lead Agency responsible for preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) addressing potential impacts associated with the proposed South El Monte Athletic Fields and Business Park Project (Project).

### **Project Overview**

The Project site is approximately 21.17 acres. The site is generally bordered by Santa Anita Avenue to the north and west, Whitter Narrows Recreation Area to the west, Lexington-Gallatin Road to the south, and an undeveloped vacant parcel and State Route (SR-60) to the east. The applicant proposes to develop approximately 10.2 acres of the approximately 21-acre site with a 221,815-square-foot (sf) warehouse on the southeastern portion of the site and dedicate the remaining approximately 10.9 acres on the northwestern portion of the site to the City for future park use. Attachment A includes an summary project description and a list of the environmental issues to be examined in the Program EIR.

### **REQUEST FOR COMMENTS ON THE SCOPE OF THE EIR**

The purpose of this Notice of Preparation (NOP) is to solicit comments and suggestions regarding the scope and content of the EIR and the environmental issues and alternatives to be addressed in the EIR (CEQA Guidelines §15082). This NOP also provides notice for the public scoping meeting. The City, as Lead Agency, respectfully requests that any Responsible or Trustee Agency responding to this notice reply in a manner consistent with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15082(b). Comments and suggestions should identify the significant environmental issues, reasonable alternatives, or mitigation measures that should be explored in the EIR, as they are applicable to your agency's statutory responsibilities, in addition to whether the responding agency will be a responsible or trustee agency for the proposed Project. The content of the responses will help guide the focus and scope of the EIR.

## RESPONDING TO THIS NOTICE

The City requests your careful review and consideration of this notice, and it invites input and comments from responsible and trustee agencies, and interested persons and organizations regarding the preparation of the EIR. Pursuant to CEQA Section 21080.4, agencies must submit any comments in response to this notice no later than *30 days after receipt of this notice*. The City will accept comments regarding this notice through the close of business on Thursday, August 1, 2024.

All comments or other responses to this notice should be submitted to:

Gerardo Marquez, Planning Manager  
City of South El Monte  
1415 Santa Anita Avenue  
South El Monte, CA 91733  
Or by email: [gmarquez@soelmonte.org](mailto:gmarquez@soelmonte.org)

The NOP is also available at the City of South El Monte at the address and department noted above, and can also be accessed online at: <https://www.cityofsouthelmonte.org/606/Current-Projects>.

Please include the name, phone number, email, and address of a contact person in your response. If comments are submitted by e-mail with attachments, it is recommended that the attachments be delivered in writing. Virus protection measures and variety of formats for attachments can limit the ability for the attachments to be delivered. If you wish to be placed on the mailing list, please note this in your response. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact the person identified above at 626-579-6540 or [gmarquez@soelmonte.org](mailto:gmarquez@soelmonte.org).

## PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

The City will hold a Public Scoping Meeting to solicit comments on the scope of the EIR on **Monday, July 22, 2024, at 6:30 PM**, City Hall Council Chambers, 1415 Santa Anita Avenue, South El Monte, CA 91733. Questions regarding the Scoping Meeting should be directed to Gerardo Marquez. You may also provide oral or written comments in person at the Scoping Meeting.

**Special Accommodations.** Should you require special accommodations at the Scoping Meeting, such as for the hearing impaired or an English translator, please contact the City no later than 5:00 p.m. on July 15, 2024 (see contact information above).

ATTACHMENT A  
SOUTH EL MONTE ATHLETIC FIELDS AND BUSINESS PARK PROJECT  
PROJECT SUMMARY

**PROJECT LOCATION AND EXISTING SETTING**

The Project site is located in the City of South El Monte, at 825 Lexington-Gallatin Road (Assessor Parcel Number [APN] 8119-005-032). The site is just within the southwestern boundary of the City. See **Figure 1, Local Vicinity Map**.

The approximately 21.17-acre property (rounded to 21 acres) is bordered to the northeast by a construction yard, which abuts the southern portion of State Route 60 (SR-60). The east side of the site is bordered by Lexington-Gallatin Road and single-family residences on the southern side of the roadway. The site is bordered to the southeast by Lexington-Gallatin Road with Whittier Narrows Recreation and residential properties south of the roadway. To the south, the site is bordered by the Los Angeles County Parks and Recreation Maximo Training Center with Lexington-Gallatin Road and Santa Anita Avenue south of Lexington-Gallatin Road and Santa Anita Avenue. The site is bordered to the southwest by Santa Anita Avenue with Whittier Narrows west of Santa Anita Avenue. To the northwest, the site is bordered by Santa Anita Avenue with Whittier Narrows parking lot and SR-60 north of the roadway.

The approximately 21-acre previously disturbed site is generally vacant containing ruderal vegetation and exposed soil. There are remnants of a dilapidated building and concrete slab located in the center of the southern boundary of the Project site. The site is relatively flat with an elevation of approximately 219 feet above mean sea level (msl) in the western corner and 226 msl in the eastern corner. The existing topography slopes downward to the west at a gradient of less than 1 percent. The Project site is located within U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) reservoir flowage easement lands associated with the spillway activation elevation of the Whittier Narrows Dam.

**DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED PROJECT**

**Warehouse Development**

Magellan Value Partners (MVP) (Applicant) is proposing to develop an existing 21-acre vacant property (location as referenced above) that would include the construction of an industrial warehouse building with approximately 201,815 square feet (sf) of warehouse space and 10,000 sf of ancillary office space on the first floor, and 10,000 sf of ancillary office/mezzanine space for a total building area of 221,815 sf. The proposed structure would be a concrete tilt up warehouse building and would have a roof line of approximately 45 feet in height. The warehouse component of the Project would be located on approximately 10.2 acres of the southeastern portion of the site. In addition, the Applicant would dedicate approximately 10.9 acres of the northwestern portion of the Project site to the City for future park use. The Applicant also proposes a freeway adjacent digital billboard sign approximately 50 feet in height in the northern portion of the project site. See **Figure 2, Overall Project Site Configuration**.

**Parking, Circulation, and Access.** Vehicular access to the warehouse component of the proposed Project would be consist of two 40-foot-wide driveways on Lexington-Gallatin Road. Both driveways would provide truck and passenger vehicle ingress/egress to the site.

Parking would be provided on the southeast and northwest sides of the warehouse and loading dock doors would be located along the southeast side of the building. **Table 1: Warehouse Building Summary** below summarizes the automobile parking stalls and loading docks required by the City and proposed for the warehouse. Short-term and long-term bike racks would also be provided for warehouse employees.

<b>Table 1: Warehouse Building Summary</b>						
Warehouse (sf)	Office (sf)	Office Mezzanine (sf)	Total Building (sf)	Dock Doors	Automobile Parking Stalls	
					Required	Provided
201,815	10,000	10,000	221,815	27	268	277

**Landscaping.** The South El Monte Municipal Code requires 5 percent landscape coverage. The Project proposes approximately 12.7 percent of the 10.2-acre warehouse area of the Project site would be landscaped. Landscape would be provided around the perimeter of the warehouse and interior parking lots. Landscaping would also be provided along the Lexington-Gallatin Road Project site frontage and the eastern and northern boundaries of the warehouse development.

#### USACE Retention Basin

As noted above, the Project site is located within USACE reservoir flowage easement lands associated with the spillway activation elevation of the Whittier Narrows Dam. The proposed Project is not allowed to reduce the Whittier Narrows reservoir's storage space. Therefore, to avoid an adverse effect to flood storage capacity of the reservoir, the Project must balance the cut and fill up to the spillway activation elevation of the Whittier Narrows Dam. To maintain the reservoir capacity, the Project proposes to excavate within the future park portion of the Project site and raise the finished grade of the warehouse portion above the spillway activation elevation using the excavated material. The proposed 6- to-12-foot-high retention basin would be surrounded by 2.5h:1v (horizontal to vertical) to 3h:1v earthen slopes. The warehouse finished floor elevation would be approximately 228 feet and retention basin elevation within the future park area would have a minimum elevation of approximately 213 feet.

#### Future Public Park

Within the footprint of the USACE retention basin, approximately 10.9 acres of the northwestern portion of the Project site would be dedicated to the City for future development of a park. Access to the future park would be one driveway located off Santa Anita Avenue. Future park development by the City is conceptually proposed to include two soccer fields with open lawn areas. Lighting for the future park area would include safety and security lighting for the parking lots, and stadium lighting for the proposed soccer fields. Lighting would be shielded to direct the source of light downward, and be arranged to not create interference with highways and neighboring properties, as is consistent with Section 17.18.200 of the City of South El Monte's Municipal Code for exterior lighting. Approximately 152 parking stalls and restroom facilities are assumed.

#### Existing and Proposed General Plan Land Use Designations

The Project site is currently designated Commercial (C) in the City's General Plan Land Use Element. The Commercial (C) category includes a broad range of retail, professional office, and service-oriented business activities designed to serve both the local residential and business communities, as well as to

meet regional shopping and service needs. The maximum permitted Floor Area Ratio (FAR) under the Commercial (C) land use designation is 0.50.

The Project would require a General Plan Amendment from the existing Commercial (C) designation to Commercial-Manufacturing (C-M) which allows general commercial and limited manufacturing uses to co-locate. Permitted uses includes but is not limited to warehousing and distribution uses. The maximum permitted FAR under the land use designation is 0.75. The Project would be an allowed use under the C-M General Plan land use designation.

### **Existing and Proposed Zoning**

The Project site is zoned Commercial (C) which is intended to provide areas throughout the City in which commercial facilities designed to serve a broad area with a wide range of commercial services may be located. The City of South El Monte Municipal Code Section 17.14.030 outlines the permitted uses under the C zone; warehouses are not a permitted use in the C zone.

The Project would require a zone change to the Manufacturing (M) zoning district. Warehousing is a permitted use in the M zone.

### **Utilities**

The proposed Project would connect to existing utility systems. The Project site is within the service area of the San Gabriel Valley Water Company and the Los Angeles County Sanitation District. Storm water drainage would be managed by the Los Angeles County Flood Control District of the Los Angeles County Public Works Department. Off-site water and sewer improvements may be required. Dry utilities extended to the Project site would include Southern California Edison for electricity, Southern California Gas Company for natural gas, and AT&T for telephone service.

### **Construction**

Construction of the warehouse and USACE retention basin is expected to commence in 2025 with a construction duration of approximately 8 months and would be completed in one phase of construction. Excavation and fill of soils for the proposed Project is anticipated to excavate fill within the future park portion of the Project site and raise the finished grade of the warehouse portion above the spillway activation elevation using the excavated material. The park would be constructed by the City of South El Monte at a future date.

### **ANTICIPATED DISCRETIONARY PROJECT APPROVALS**

City of South El Monte discretionary actions that could be approved based on the certification of the Final EIR would include the following:

- General Plan Amendment
- Zone Change
- Parcel Map Subdivision
- Conditional Use Permit

In addition to the approvals identified above, the proposed Project would be subject to other discretionary and ministerial actions by the City as part of Project implementation. Additional City approvals include but are not limited to site development permits, grading permits, a Water Quality Management Plan and Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan, sign permits, and building permits.

The proposed Project would require permits and/or approvals from the following agencies:

- United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Section 408 Permission pursuant to Section 14 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899, 33 USC 408

### **ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES TO BE EVALUATED IN THE EIR**

The City of South El Monte, as the lead agency for the proposed Project, is subject to specific environmental review under CEQA. CEQA Guidelines Section 15063 provides that if a lead agency determines that an EIR will clearly be required for a project, an Initial Study is not required. In this case, the City has already determined that an EIR will need to be prepared based on the Project's potential to create project-level and cumulative impacts. Therefore, an EIR will be prepared to fully evaluate the potential impacts of the proposed Project.

The following environmental topic areas will be addressed in the EIR:

- 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
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation and Circulation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utility and Service Systems

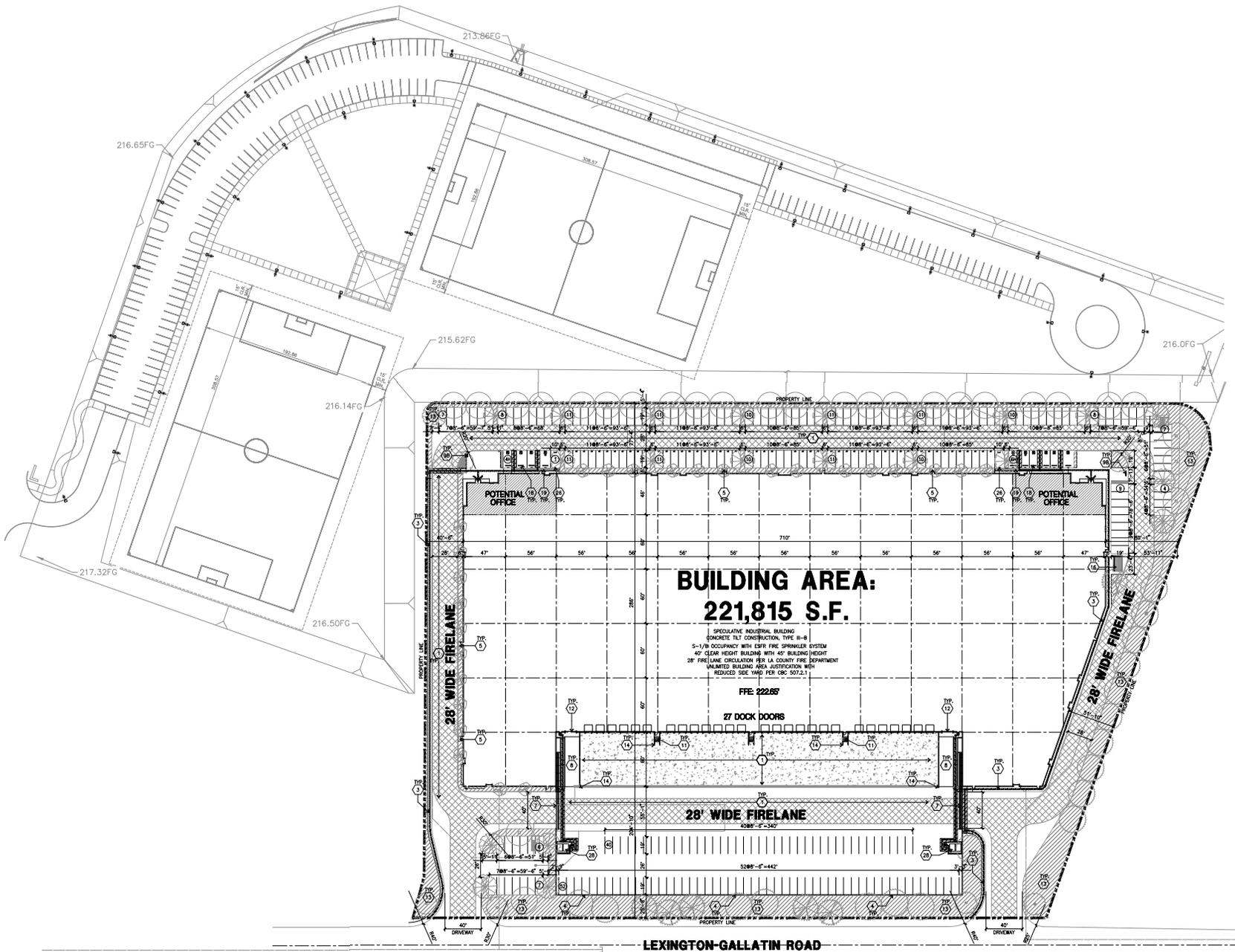
The environmental topics that would have no impacts from implementation of the proposed Project and are therefore scoped out of the EIR would be Agricultural and Forestry Resources, Mineral Resources, and Wildfire. The Project site is designated Urban and Build-up Land and does not contain Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance. No portion of the Project site is covered by a Williamson Act Contract. The Project site is not zoned for agriculture or forestry use, and it is not designated as forest land. The Project site does not contain regionally or locally-important mineral resources, and there are no locally-important mineral resource recovery sites in the Project site vicinity. The Project site is not directly adjacent to or within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. The proposed Project would have no impact to these resources.



Source: ESRI 2024, LA County Department of Regional Planning GIS-NET Public 2023

### Figure 1, Local Vicinity Map

South El Monte Athletic Fields and Business Park Project  
 Notice of Preparation



**PROJECT DATA**

<b>SITE AREA</b>	
In s.f.	445,475 s.f.
In acres	10.23 ac
<b>BUILDING AREA</b>	
Office - 1st Floor	10,000 s.f.
Warehouse	201,815 s.f.
Total Building Footprint	211,815 s.f.
Office - 2nd Floor	10,000 s.f.
<b>TOTAL BUILDING AREA</b>	<b>221,815 s.f.</b>
<b>COVERAGE</b>	
	47.5%
<b>AUTO PARKING REQUIRED</b>	
Office: 1/300 s.f.	67 stalls
Whse: 1/1,000 s.f.	202 stalls
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>268 stalls</b>
<b>EV AUTO REQUIRED</b>	
EV Capable w/ EVSE (8'-6" x 18')	14 stalls
EV Capable w/o EVSE (8'-6" x 18')	37 stalls
ADA EV Van Parking (12' x 18')	1 stalls
ADA EV Std. Parking (9' x 18')	2 stalls
Ambulatory Parking (10' x 18')	2 stalls
<b>Total Required</b>	<b>56 stalls</b>
<b>ADA REQUIRED</b>	
ADA Van Parking (12' x 18')	2 stalls
ADA Std. Parking (9' x 18')	5 stalls
<b>Total Required</b>	<b>7 stalls</b>
<b>AUTO PARKING PROVIDED</b>	
Standard (8'-6" x 18')	122 stalls
ADA Van (12' x 18')	2 stalls
ADA Std (9' x 18')	5 stalls
EV Capable w/ EVSE (8'-6" x 18')	14 stalls
EV Capable w/o EVSE (8'-6" x 18')	37 stalls
ADA EV Van Parking (12' x 18')	1 stalls
ADA EV Std. Parking (9' x 18')	2 stalls
Ambulatory Parking (10' x 18')	2 stalls
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>185 stalls</b>
<b>Additional Parking Plan:</b>	
Standard (8'-6" x 18')	92 stalls
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>277 stalls</b>
<b>ZONING ORDINANCE FOR CITY</b>	
Proposed Zoning Designation - Commerical - Manufacturing	
<b>MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT ALLOWED</b>	
None	
<b>MINIMUM LANDSCAPE REQ.</b>	
5%	22,274 s.f.
<b>LANDSCAPE PROVIDED</b>	
12.7%	56,470 s.f.
<b>MAXIMUM FLOOR AREA RATIO</b>	
FAR - to be verified	
<b>SETBACKS</b>	
Front - 5'	
Interior/Side/Rear - none	

Source: Kimley-Horn, 2024

**Figure 2, Overall Project Site Configuration**

South El Monte Athletic Fields and Business Park Project  
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