
II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The City of El Segundo is the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for preparing a Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for a proposed update to the Circulation Element of the El Segundo General Plan (proposed Circulation Element Update). The City of El Segundo last adopted an update to its General Plan in 1992. The 1992 General Plan Update included a comprehensive evaluation and update of the Circulation Element. At that time, a substantial amount of traffic analysis was conducted and a variety of Land Use and Floor Area Ratio (FAR) alternatives were tested for different portions of the City.

The current revision was initiated in 2002 to update the Circulation Element and to revisit the matter of FARs in the Urban Mixed-Use North (MU-N) and the Corporate Office (CO) areas of the City. The process for the update of the City's Circulation Element involved the development of a model to forecast traffic growth. The model was used to analyze the traffic implications of changes in land use, FARs, and network assumptions. The following subsections briefly describe the traffic models that were developed and the inputs utilized; potential changes in FARs for MU-N and CO zones that were considered by the City, and description of the No Land Use Change Scenario that was selected by the City as part of the proposed Circulation Element Update. It also summarizes the specific actions that would be undertaken as part of the proposed Circulation Element Update.

Traffic Model Characteristics

A traffic model was developed to analyze the existing conditions and potential changes to the City's street and roadway network. The assumptions utilized to develop this model were based on the Southern California Association of Government's (SCAG) regional model and used the regional input for travel patterns to, from and through the City of El Segundo. These assumptions were refined and custom tailored to reflect the City's street and roadway network in greater detail than was possible with the regional model.

The El Segundo traffic model was first developed and validated for base year (2003) conditions. After ascertaining that the base year model was capable of reflecting existing traffic conditions in El Segundo, the 2025 subarea model was developed.

Base Year Model Inputs

The base year model was developed to ensure that the model for the Circulation Element update would provide accurate results. If the base year model compared favorably with actual traffic counts, then it could be assumed that it would accurately model the future traffic conditions. The base model traffic year was 2003.

The existing roadway network within the City was also depicted in the model with the appropriate characteristics such as facility type, number of travel lanes, free-flow speed, and capacity. Roadway characteristics were verified in the field before input to the model. All existing roadways that are a part of the Circulation Element were included in the model.

Current land uses in the City were quantified by land use category and by Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZs). The City was subdivided into 40 TAZs. Land use categories included residential (single family, multi-family, and apartment), industrial, retail, corporate office, mixed-use, and other specific categories where appropriate. The number of trips associated with these land uses was estimated using applicable trip generation rates. These trip generation rates were obtained from information published by the Institute of Transportation Engineers. The estimated trips were incorporated into the model for the City of El Segundo. Traffic counts were conducted at 50 intersections and 70 roadway segments. These counts were taken on January 21 through January 23, 2003. The base model was validated by comparing the model results to the traffic counts. This process is described in detail in Appendix C to this EIR. The validation of the base year model confirmed that the modeling process would perform the function of a sound technical analysis tool.

Year 2025 Subarea Model

After ascertaining that the base year subarea model was capable of reflecting current traffic conditions in El Segundo, 2025 subarea models were developed to reflect the adopted Circulation Element and proposed Circulation Element roadway systems.

In the absence of the proposed Circulation Element Update, it would be reasonably foreseeable that the City's roadway system would continue to develop in accordance with the designations and policies set forth in the adopted Circulation Element. A 2025 subarea model was developed to reflect the adopted Circulation Element roadway system, including intersection improvements required to achieve Level of Service (LOS) D or better. Intersection improvements were limited to a maximum of three left turn lanes, four through lanes and two right turn lanes on any approach to an intersection. This limitation reflects operational considerations and pedestrian movements. The 2025 subarea model for the adopted Circulation Element roadway network also reflected planned improvements in the City's roadway network including connecting Douglas Street from Alaska Avenue to Rosecrans Avenue across the railroad tracks via a grade separation, which would complete the connection of Douglas Street between El Segundo Boulevard and Rosecrans Avenue, and the widening of Aviation Boulevard between Rosecrans Avenue and El Segundo Boulevard as presently planned and funded.

The 2025 subarea model for the proposed Circulation Element Update included the following roadway modifications required to implement the proposed Circulation Element Update:

- Nash Street and Douglas Street would revert to two-way operation between El Segundo Boulevard and Imperial Highway. Nash Street would be connected, albeit not directly, between El Segundo Boulevard and Rosecrans Avenue, partially through a potential development site

located at the northeastern corner of the intersection of Sepulveda Boulevard and Rosecrans Avenue (Sepulveda/Rosecrans site).

- Nash Street, as a two-way street, would have four through lanes between El Segundo Boulevard and Imperial Highway, two northbound and two southbound. Nash Street would extend south of El Segundo Boulevard as a two-lane street, one in each direction.
- Douglas Street, as a two-way street, would have six through lanes between El Segundo Boulevard and Imperial Highway, three northbound and three southbound.
- Mariposa Avenue would not be extended to the east of Douglas Street to connect with Aviation Boulevard.
- Grand Avenue would be extended from Duley Road to Douglas Street but not further east to Aviation Boulevard.
- Continental Boulevard/Lairport Street would provide a connection between Maple Avenue and Walnut Avenue.
- The street system through the Sepulveda/Rosecrans site would be as depicted in the site plan that was under review by the City at the time the 2025 subarea model was developed. This would include a new intersection on Sepulveda Boulevard between Rosecrans Avenue and Hughes Way to serve the proposed development.
- The extensions of Continental Boulevard/Lairport Street to Walnut Avenue and Grand Avenue to Douglas Street would have the same number of lanes as the existing portions of these streets.

The changes in roadway designations represented in the year 2025 subarea model for the proposed Circulation Element Update reflected incremental changes in the adopted Circulation Element roadway system which would reconcile the planned roadway system with the physical constraints existing within the City. Because the City's roadway system is highly developed, and the generalized land use patterns in the City are basically established, time has demonstrated certain components of the adopted Circulation Element to be infeasible. Moreover, it was appropriate that the assumptions for the Circulation Element roadway network accurately reflect the status of roadway improvements proposed and approved within the City. Specifically:

- The extensions of Mariposa Avenue and Grand Avenue between Douglas Street and Aviation Boulevard are not feasible because of the presence of the built facilities of Northrup Grumman and the Los Angeles Air Force Base.
- The extension of Nash Street south of El Segundo Boulevard to Park Place and the extension of Hughes Way to Douglas Street are not feasible because of the presence of a secured campus occupied by Raytheon. However, an alternate configuration for the connection of Nash Street

to Park Place would be feasible in the event that Raytheon no longer occupies this location or the private roadways are made public, coupled with the potential for roadway improvements associated with future development at the Sepulveda/Rosecrans site.

- The widening of Aviation Boulevard to six lanes within the City of El Segundo is an approved project of the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority.
- The Douglas Street Overpass project that would provide the final connection of Douglas Street between El Segundo Boulevard and Rosecrans Avenue is an approved project.

Thus, the changes reflected in the year 2025 subarea mode for the proposed Circulation Element Update, with the exception of the conversion of Nash and Douglas Streets from one-way to two-way operation, were incorporated for the purpose of reflecting changes that would reconcile the year 2025 roadway network with the existing physical conditions.

Alternative Floor Area Ratio (FAR) Assumptions

In the process of defining a roadway network that would be capable of accommodating the future traffic that would use City streets, the City could exert some measure of influence over such future traffic levels through its ability to regulate future land uses in the City through the General Plan Land Use Element and zoning designations. Therefore, in addition to an analysis of the adopted Circulation Element conditions (which would constitute the No Project Alternative, see Section VI.A of this EIR), a number of model runs were conducted to test potential changes to the City's Circulation and Land Use Elements. These potential changes reflected changes in the current FARs for CO and MU-N zoned areas of the City. Under the current zoning designations, development under the CO Zone is permitted to occur up to an FAR of 0.8, while under the Urban Mixed-Use North (MU-N) Zone development is permitted up to an FAR of 1.3.

In developing the proposed Circulation Element Update, FAR scenarios ranging from 0.8 to 1.3 were developed and analyzed. Specifically, the following FAR scenarios were analyzed:

- FAR of 0.8 in MU-N and CO zones.
- FAR of 1.0 in MU-N and CO zones
- FAR of 1.3 in MU-N and CO zones

The 2025 subarea traffic model for the proposed Circulation Element Update was used to estimate 2025 traffic volumes for each of the three listed assumptions for FAR in the CO and MU-N zones. The following assumptions were used in the modeling and analysis process:

- It was assumed that there would be a 10% enhancement in roadway and intersection capacity to reflect the traffic flow benefits of the application of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) measures.
- For the analysis of intersections, lane capacity was assumed to be 1,600 vehicles per hour per lane per hour of green signal time, plus a ten percent enhancement for ITS. Lost time was assumed to be 5% or 0.05.

Proposed Project Characteristics

Based upon the analysis described above¹, the City developed a series of policies and actions that constitute the proposed Circulation Element Update. The proposed Circulation Element Update addresses deletions of planned roadways (to conform to existing physical constraints), changes in Circulation Element policies to convert Nash and Douglas Streets from one-way to two-way operation, changes in Circulation Element policies to define feasibility of physical intersection improvements and constructing physical improvements to modify and improve the City's planned roadway system as it would be set forth in the updated Circulation Element. After considering the potential effects of the FAR alternatives described above, the City decided not to propose changes in the land use designations as presently set forth in the General Plan Land Use Element or zoning classifications. The specific proposed changes to the Circulation Element therefore include: 1) changes in roadway designations; 2) physical changes in roadway configurations; 3) intersection improvements and revisions to the goals, objectives, and policies of the Circulation Element; and 4) all to be implemented under a No Land Use Change Scenario.

Changes in Roadway Designations

- Deleting the previously planned portion of Mariposa Street between Douglas Street and Aviation Boulevard.
- Deleting the previously planned portion of Grand Avenue between Douglas Street and Aviation Boulevard. This action would also result in deleting the truck route along this segment
- Deleting the east-west Secondary Arterial Street between Hughes Way and Douglas Street.
- Deleting Nash Street as a Secondary Arterial between El Segundo Boulevard and Park Place. This action would also result in deleting the truck route along this segment.
- Converting Nash Street from a one-way southbound street to a two-way Secondary Arterial between Imperial Highway and El Segundo Boulevard.

¹ *The resulting traffic conditions identified in the analysis are contained in Section IV.B, Transportation/Traffic, and VI, Alternatives, of this EIR*

- Converting Douglas Street from a one-way northbound street to a two-way Secondary Arterial between Imperial Highway and El Segundo Boulevard.
- Retaining the Grand Avenue truck route between Main Street and Sepulveda Boulevard.
- Changing the designation of Park Place between Nash and Douglas Streets from Local Commercial street to Collector street.

Physical Changes in Roadway Configurations

- Developing a street system within the site located on the northeast corner of the intersection of Sepulveda Boulevard and Rosecrans Avenue (the Sepulveda/Rosecrans site) consistent with the development concept of that site. It is expected that there will be a north-south, two-lane, albeit circuitous, roadway connection between El Segundo Boulevard and Park Place in lieu of the Nash Street Secondary Arterial (to be deleted). This connection may not be a linear route and may entail several turns. A two-lane, east-west connection between Sepulveda Boulevard and Nash Street along a new alignment would be provided through the Sepulveda/Rosecrans site.
- Converting Nash Street from a one-way southbound street to a two-way Secondary Arterial between Imperial Highway and El Segundo Boulevard.
- Converting Douglas Street from a one-way northbound street to a two-way Secondary Arterial between Imperial Highway and El Segundo Boulevard.
- Intersection modifications at six intersections on Nash Street and four intersections on Douglas Street associated with the change from one-way to two-way operation.

Intersection Improvements and Revisions to Circulation Element Policies

- The proposed Circulation Element Update includes planned intersection improvements designed to achieve LOS D or better. The proposed Circulation Element Update includes modifications to Circulation Element policies that would limit potential intersection improvements to those that can be feasibly implemented, by limiting lane additions beyond the existing right-of-way to those that would not affect buildings, freeway supports or railroad rights-of-way.

Under the proposed Circulation Element Update, planned intersection improvements would be located at the following intersections:

- Aviation Boulevard/Imperial Highway
- Aviation Boulevard/El Segundo Boulevard
- Aviation Boulevard/Utah Avenue
- Aviation Boulevard/Rosecrans Avenue

- Sepulveda Boulevard/Imperial Highway
- Sepulveda Boulevard/Maple Avenue
- Sepulveda Boulevard/Mariposa Avenue
- Sepulveda Boulevard/Grand Avenue
- Sepulveda Boulevard/El Segundo Boulevard
- Sepulveda Boulevard/Rosecrans Avenue
- Atwood Way/I-105 Eastbound Ramp Entrance
- Douglas Street/El Segundo Boulevard
- Continental Boulevard/Grand Avenue
- El Segundo Boulevard/Isis Avenue

No Land Use Change Scenario

In order to estimate levels of traffic that would be generated under the “No Land Use Change Scenario”, a projection of the levels of future development that would result by the year 2025 was developed. Accordingly, the No Land Use Change Scenario reflects the following assumptions:

- Vacant land² was assumed to develop in accordance with appropriate zoning designation.
- Development of recyclable parcels³ was calculated assuming that any property developed at less than 50% of its maximum permitted FAR would be redeveloped up to its maximum FAR per the General Plan, with no changes to FAR in the CO and MU-N zones. This assumption reflected the level at which it would be economically feasible to develop such a property.
- Large projects, including the proposed development at the Sepulveda/Rosecrans Rezoning and Plaza El Segundo site, Playa Vista and LAX Master Plan, were included in the analysis.

² A vacant land survey prepared in 1995 provided the basis for a revised vacant land survey. Staff reviewed the list of vacant properties and removed from the list parcels which had been developed since 1995 and added buildings which had been demolished since 1995. For the purposes of projecting future traffic volumes, all vacant land that was not included in the major projects assumption was assumed to be developed to the maximum FAR permitted under the current General Plan and zoning designations by 2025.

³ Staff prepared a list of potentially recyclable parcels, to provide a basis for estimating future traffic from the reuse or replacement of these parcels. Recyclable parcels include structures, which are below the allowed FAR, are near the end of their life span and are likely to be replaced. The list was developed by first conducting a “windshield survey” of the commercial and industrial areas of the City then by reviewing the County Assessor parcel data. Data regarding the parcel size, structure size, and year built was obtained from the Assessor’s rolls as well as City building permits.

- The effect of transit was reflected in the traffic volume projections.

The locations of proposed changes in roadway designations and physical changes in roadway configurations under the proposed Circulation Element Update are shown in Figure II-1.

Project Objectives

The City of El Segundo has identified the following objectives for the proposed Circulation Element Update:

- To set forth a plan for modifying and upgrading the City's roadway network to effectively accommodate projected traffic growth to the year 2025.
- To provide a circulation system that effectively serves the City's residents and businesses.
- To promote the implementation of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), transit use and other technological innovations that would enhance the City's circulation system.
- To implement key policies of the El Segundo General Plan with respect to Land Use, Economic Development, Air Quality, Noise, and Public Safety.
- To maintain consistency with State and local congestion and transportation policies and practices.

Discretionary Actions

The City of El Segundo is the lead agency for the proposed Circulation Element Update. Decision making bodies of the City, including the Planning Commission and City Council, have the sole discretionary authority to modify the City's General Plan and all Elements thereof. These decision making bodies will consider whether to update the Circulation Element of the General Plan to reflect the policies and roadway designations identified herein as the proposed Circulation Element Update. These decision making bodies may, at their discretion, adopt the proposed Circulation Element Update in its entirety or in part.

Figure II-1 Location of Proposed Changes in Roadway Designations and Roadway Configurations

This Draft EIR serves as the environmental document for all discretionary actions associated with the proposed Circulation Element Update. This EIR is intended to be the primary reference document in the formulation and implementation of a mitigation monitoring program for the proposed Circulation Element Update. This Draft EIR is also intended to cover all state, regional, and/or local government discretionary approvals that may be associated with the proposed Circulation Element Update, whether or not they are explicitly listed. Agencies that may have some approval authority over certain activities associated with the implementation of the proposed Circulation Element Update (although these agencies do not have the authority to approve, disapprove or modify the proposed Circulation Element Update) may include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD)
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
- California Public Utilities Commission
- Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA)
- Southern California Association of Governments
- California Department of Fish and Game
- United States Fish and Wildlife Service