

# CHAPTER 1.0

## INTRODUCTION

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 PROJECT SCOPE**

This project-level Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) (SCH No. 2002121008) addresses the proposed Melrose Drive Extension (Project) located within the City of Oceanside (City) and the County of San Diego (County). The Project proposes to extend Melrose Drive between Spur Avenue and North Santa Fe Avenue (approximately 3,000 feet) and widen the existing roadway south of North Santa Fe Avenue for approximately 1,900 feet. Three alternative alignments (Alternatives A, B and C) are considered at an equal level of analysis. A detailed description of the Project is contained in Chapter 3.0, Project Description.

### **1.2 PURPOSE AND LEGAL AUTHORITY**

Under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970 (California Public Resources Code §21000 *et seq.*), as amended, and CEQA Guidelines (Title 14 California Code of Regulations §15000 *et seq.*), as amended, if a lead agency determines that there is substantial evidence in light of the whole record that a project may have a significant effect on the environment, the agency must prepare an EIR (CEQA Guidelines §15064(a)(1)). The purpose of an EIR is to inform public agency decision makers and the public of the potentially significant environmental effects of a project, identify possible ways to minimize the significant effects, and describe reasonable alternatives to the project (CEQA Guidelines §15121(a)). This EIR is an informational document for use by the City and County decision makers, responsible and trustee agencies and members of the general public to evaluate the environmental effects of the proposed project. This document complies with all criteria, standards and procedures of CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines.

The public agency with the greatest responsibility for supervising or approving the project or the first public agency to make a discretionary decision to proceed with a proposed project should ordinarily act as the “Lead Agency” pursuant to CEQA Guidelines §15051(b)(1). The City is the Lead Agency for the proposed project evaluated in this EIR.

The EIR and all supporting technical studies and documents are available at the City of Oceanside Planning Division, 300 North Coast Highway, Oceanside, CA 92054.

### **1.3 EIR SCOPE**

This EIR contains an analysis of the Project described in Chapter 3.0, Project Description. An EIR should “focus primarily on the changes in the environment that would result from the development project,” and “examine all phases of the project, including planning, construction and operation” (CEQA Guidelines §15161).

As Lead Agency, the City identified potentially significant environmental impacts associated with the following issues:

- Land Use
- Population and Housing
- Transportation/Circulation
- Biological Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Noise
- Air Quality and Climate Change
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Visual Quality and Aesthetics
- Agricultural Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Paleontological Resources
- Recreation
- Public Utilities

The City prepared two Notices of Preparation (NOPs), dated January 7, 2008 and February 21 2008, and distributed them to the State Clearinghouse, Responsible and Trustee Agencies and members of the general public for a 45-day review period. They are included in Appendix A.1 of this EIR. Comments on the NOPs were received from United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), State Clearinghouse, San Luis Rey Band of Mission Indians, County of San Diego, Joan Brubaker, Charla Giles, Laurie M. Luitweiler, and Jennifer Robertson and are included in Appendix A.1. Public scoping meetings were held on January 24, 2008 and March 13, 2008 to inform the public about the project and collect written comments. Local citizens submitted a total of 19 comment forms; these are provided in Appendix A.2.

The EIR addresses the relevant environmental issues raised in the NOPs and comment letters. Project impacts with respect to the issues of energy, mineral resources and public services have been determined to be less than significant, for the reasons described in Chapter 7.0 of this EIR.

#### **1.4 USE OF THE EIR**

The Draft EIR will be made available for review by the public and public agencies for a period of 45 days to provide comments “on the sufficiency of the document in identifying and analyzing the possible impacts on the environment and ways in which the significant effects of the project might be avoided or mitigated” (CEQA Guidelines §15204). A public meeting will also be held during the public review period. Written responses to written comments received during the public review period will be included in the Final EIR. The Oceanside Planning Commission and City Council will subsequently consider whether to certify the Final EIR as complete and in compliance with CEQA, and must consider it in approving or disapproving the Project. Public input is encouraged at any scheduled hearings for the EIR. In the final review of the Project, environmental considerations, as well as economic and social factors, will be weighed to determine the most appropriate course of action. Subsequent to certification of the EIR, several agencies with permitting authority over all, or portions, of the Project will use the EIR to evaluate environmental effects of the project, as they pertain to the approval or denial of applicable permits.

Section 15381 of the CEQA Guidelines defines Responsible Agencies as public agencies other than the Lead Agency, which have discretionary approval power over the Project. Section 15386

of the CEQA Guidelines defines a Trustee Agency as a State agency having jurisdiction by law over natural resources affected by a project, which are held in trust for the people of the State of California.

The CEQA Guidelines require that Responsible and Trustee Agencies review all EIRs. For the purposes of the Project, Responsible and Trustee Agencies include the County, City of Vista, Vista Irrigation District (VID), USFWS, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), CDFG, California Department of Parks and Recreation (CDPR), and San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). The following permits must be obtained from these agencies:

- Road Maintenance Agreement (County)
- Grading Permit (County)
- Habitat Loss Permit (County)
- Construction/Encroachment Permit (County)
- Public Improvement Permit (City of Vista)
- Permitting per VID Rules and Regulations
- Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 404 Permit (Corps)
- Endangered Species Act (ESA) Section 7 Consultation (USFWS)
- Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) Compliance (USFWS)
- California Endangered Species Act (ESA) Section 2080.1 Consistency Determination (CDFG)
- Streambed Alteration Agreement Section 1600 *et seq.* (CDFG)
- Parkland Conversion (CDPR)
- CWA Section 401 Water Quality Certification (RWQCB)
- National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Construction Activity Permit and Municipal Stormwater Permit (RWQCB)
- Waste Discharge Permit (RWQCB)

Discretionary actions are discussed in further detail in applicable sections of the environmental analysis within this EIR.

## 1.5 CONTENT AND ORGANIZATION OF THE EIR

This EIR is organized in the following manner:

- **Chapter ES Executive Summary** provides a summary of the Project, the alternatives that would reduce or avoid significant impacts, and the conclusions of the environmental analysis. Impacts and mitigation measures are provided in tabular format. In addition, the Executive Summary includes a discussion of areas of controversy known to the City, including those issues identified by other agencies and the public.
- **Chapter 1.0 Introduction** provides a brief description of the Project, the purpose of the EIR document, key discretionary City actions, permits and approvals required by other agencies, and an explanation of the document format.

- **Chapter 2.0 Environmental Setting** provides an overview of the regional and local setting, as well as the physical characteristics of the Project site. The setting discussion also addresses the relevant regional planning documents that apply to the Project site and vicinity.
- **Chapter 3.0 Project Description** provides a detailed description of the Project, including the purpose and main objectives, design, landscaping, site drainage, utilities, grading and construction, right-of-way acquisition, and environmental design measures. In addition, the discretionary actions required for Project implementation are included.
- **Chapter 4.0 Environmental Analysis** constitutes the main body of the EIR. The topics analyzed in this section include: Land Use, Population and Housing, Transportation/Circulation, Biological Resources, Geology and Soils, Hydrology and Water Quality, Noise, Air Quality and Climate Change, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Visual Quality and Aesthetics, Cultural Resources, Paleontological Resources, Recreation, and Public Utilities. Under each topic, the EIR includes a discussion of existing conditions, the thresholds used for the determination of significant impacts and an evaluation of the impacts associated with implementation of the project. Where the impact analysis demonstrates the potential for the project to have a significant adverse impact on the environment, mitigation measures are provided that would minimize the significant effects. The EIR indicates whether the proposed mitigation measures would reduce impacts to below a level of significance.
- **Chapter 5.0 Cumulative Impacts** addresses the cumulative impacts due to implementation of the Project in combination with other recently approved or pending projects in the area. The area of potential effect for cumulative impacts varies with the type of environmental issue.
- **Chapter 6.0 Growth Inducement** includes a discussion of the potential for the Project to foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment.
- **Chapter 7.0 Effects Found Not to be Significant** briefly discusses environmental issues determined not to have the potential for significant adverse impacts as a result of the Project.
- **Chapter 8.0 Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes Which Cannot be Avoided if the Proposed Project is Implemented** includes a discussion of significant irreversible environmental changes that would occur due to the Project.
- **Chapter 9.0 Alternatives** provides a description and evaluation of alternatives to the Project. This section addresses the mandatory “no project” alternative, as well as alternatives that would reduce or avoid Project’s significant impacts.

References, Individuals and Organizations Consulted, and Persons Involved in the EIR Preparation are provided in Chapters 10.0, 11.0 and 12.0, respectively.