



2.0 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

2.1 PURPOSE OF THE EIR

The purpose of this EIR is to review the existing conditions, analyze potential environmental impacts, and identify feasible mitigation measures to avoid or lessen the project’s potentially significant effects. This EIR addresses the project’s environmental effects, in accordance with *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15161. As referenced in *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15121(a), the primary purposes of this EIR are to:

- Inform decision-makers and the public generally of the significant environmental effect of a project;
- Identify possible ways to minimize the significant effects of a project; and
- Describe reasonable alternatives to a project.

The mitigation measures that are specified shall be adopted as conditions of approval to minimize the significance of impacts resulting from the project. In addition, this EIR is the primary reference document in the formulation and implementation of a mitigation monitoring program for the project.

The City of Oceanside, which is the Lead Agency and has the principal responsibility of processing and approving the project, and other public (i.e., Responsible and Trustee) agencies that may use this EIR in the decision-making or permit process, including NCTD, will consider the information in this EIR in the decision-making or permit process will consider the information in this EIR, along with other information that may be presented during the CEQA process. Environmental impacts cannot always be mitigated to a level considered less than significant; in those cases, impacts are considered significant unavoidable impacts. In accordance with *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15093(b), if a public agency approves a project that has significant impacts that are not substantially mitigated (i.e., significant unavoidable impacts), the agency must state in writing the specific reasons for approving the project, based on the Final EIR and any other information in the public record for the project. *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15093 requires a “statement of overriding considerations” where the Lead Agency specifies the findings and public benefits for the project that outweigh the impacts.

This EIR analyzes the project’s environmental effects to the degree of specificity appropriate to the current proposed actions, as required by *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15146. The analysis considers the activities associated with the project to determine the short- and long-term effects related to their implementation. This EIR discusses the project’s direct and indirect impacts, as well as the cumulative impacts associated with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects.

2.2 COMPLIANCE WITH CEQA

PUBLIC REVIEW OF THE DRAFT EIR

In accordance with *CEQA Guidelines* Sections 15087 and 15105, this Draft EIR will be circulated for a 45-day public review period. Interested agencies and members of the public are invited to comment in writing on the information contained in this document. All comment letters received before the close of the public review period will be responded to in writing, and the comment letters, together with the responses to those comments, will be included in the Final EIR.



Comment letters should be sent to:

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Oceanside, California 92054
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CERTIFICATION OF THE FINAL EIR

Pursuant to *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15132, *Contents of Final Environmental Impact Report*, the Final EIR will consist of:

- a) The Draft EIR or a revision of the Draft;
- b) Comments and recommendations received on the Draft EIR either verbatim or in summary;
- c) A list of persons, organizations, and public agencies commenting on the Draft EIR;
- d) The Lead Agency's responses to significant environmental points raised in the review and consultation process; and
- e) Any other information added by the Lead Agency.

Additionally, pursuant to *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15088, *Evaluation of and Response to Comments*, at least ten days prior to certifying the EIR, the City will provide a written proposed response to a public agency on comments made by that agency.

PROJECT CONSIDERATION

Upon Final EIR certification, the City Council may consider approval of the proposed project. A decision to approve the project would be accompanied by specific, written findings, in accordance with *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15091, and if required, a specific written statement of overriding considerations, in accordance with *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15093.

2.3 NOTICE OF PREPARATION/ EARLY CONSULTATION (SCOPING)

In compliance with the *CEQA Guidelines*, the City has provided opportunities for various agencies and the public to participate in the environmental review process. During EIR preparation, efforts were made to contact various Federal, State, regional, and local government agencies and other interested parties to solicit comments on the scope of the review in this document. This included the distribution of a Notice of Preparation (NOP) and Initial Study to various responsible agencies, trustee agencies, and interested parties; refer to [Appendix 11.1, *Notice of Preparation/Initial Study*](#). The purpose of the NOP was to formally announce the preparation of a Draft EIR for the proposed project, and that, as the Lead Agency, the City was soliciting input regarding the scope and content of the environmental information to be included in the Draft EIR. The NOP and Initial Study provided preliminary information regarding the anticipated range of impacts to be analyzed within the Draft EIR. The NOP and Initial Study were distributed for a 30-day public review period from January 13, 2023 through February 13, 2023.



In addition, a public scoping meeting was held on February 1, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. at the City of Oceanside Civic Center Library Community Rooms located at 330 N. Coast Highway, Oceanside, California 92054. The scoping meeting's objectives were to:

- Inform the public of the proposed project and the City's intent to prepare an EIR;
- Present an overview of the CEQA EIR process;
- Review the topics to be addressed in the EIR; and
- Receive public comments on issues of concern and environmental topics to be addressed in the EIR.

The NOP comments are in Appendix 11.2, *Notice of Preparation/Initial Study Comment Letters*, and have been addressed in each appropriate topic area of this EIR. Issues raised in the NOP comments are summarized below:

- Land use compatibility, aesthetic, traffic/parking, air quality, and noise concerns as a result of the relocation of bus stalls adjacent to residential uses (refer to Section 5.1, *Land Use and Relevant Planning*, Section 5.2, *Aesthetics/Light and Glare*, Section 5.8, *Transportation*, Section 5.9, *Air Quality*, and Section 5.12, *Noise*);
- Consistency with the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) objectives to utilize smart growth and transit-oriented development patterns, as well as the goals and policies of the General Plan Circulation Element (refer to Section 5.1, *Land Use and Relevant Planning*, and Section 5.8, *Transportation*);
- Aesthetic impacts of the proposed development, including impacts on scenic views, specifically coastal views from the Municipal Pier (refer to Section 5.2, *Aesthetics/Light and Glare*);
- Project compliance with Assembly Bill (AB) 52 and Senate Bill (SB) 18 regarding potential adverse changes in the significance of a historical resource, as well as consultation with California Native American tribes regarding tribal cultural resources (refer to Section 5.4, *Tribal and Cultural Resources*);
- Project impacts on existing traffic conditions, including cumulative traffic conditions (refer to Section 5.8, *Transportation*);
- Project impacts on existing transit users, pedestrians, and bicyclists, including access, safety, and transit connectivity, and bicycle parking/storage (refer to Section 5.8, *Transportation*);
- Concerns regarding proposed parking spaces, including availability during construction and adequacy of spaces provided to serve all proposed users (refer to Section 5.1, *Land Use and Relevant Planning*, and Section 5.8, *Transportation*);
- Design efficiency and accessibility of project circulation, including coastal access (refer to Section 5.1, *Land Use and Relevant Planning*, and Section 5.8, *Transportation*);



- Concern regarding existing and potential for increased coastal access, particularly via the existing pedestrian tunnel (refer to [Section 5.1, *Land Use and Relevant Planning*](#), [Section 5.8, *Transportation*](#), and [Section 5.14, *Public Services/Recreation*](#));
- Construction impacts on access, air pollution, and traffic (refer to [Section 5.8, *Transportation*](#) and [Section 5.9, *Air Quality*](#));
- Operational impacts analysis should include a Health Risk Assessment (refer to [Section 5.9, *Air Quality*](#));
- Necessary implementation of Traffic Demand Management strategies to discourage vehicle use, such as a parking management plan that includes priced parking (refer to [Section 5.1, *Land Use and Relevant Planning*](#) and [Section 5.10, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*](#));
- Increased vehicle trip emissions due to residential and hotel uses (refer to [Section 5.8, *Transportation*](#), [Section 5.9, *Air Quality*](#), and [Section 5.10, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*](#));
- Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions and climate destabilization (refer to [Section 5.10, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*](#));
- Noise impacts from new residential uses (refer to [Section 5.12, *Noise*](#));
- Adequacy of open space uses proposed (refer to [Section 5.1, *Land Use and Relevant Planning*](#) and [Section 5.14, *Public Services/Recreation*](#));
- Concern regarding proposed security features and increased need for police services/facilities, particularly involving safety concerns from potential increase to unhoused population in the project area (refer to [Section 5.14, *Public Services/Recreation*](#));
- Project impacts on existing and available solid waste disposal services (refer to [Section 5.15, *Utilities and Service Systems*](#));
- Project impacts on the City's water supply (refer to [Section 5.15, *Utilities and Service Systems*](#));
- Adequacy of list of project alternatives that address site design, location, and ability to reduce GHG emissions (refer to [Section 7, *Alternatives*](#)); and
- Adequacy of outreach involving the community and applicable agencies (refer to Section 2.3 herein, [Appendix 11.1, *Notice of Preparation/Initial Study*](#), and [Appendix 11.2, *Notice of Preparation/Initial Study Comment Letters*](#)).

2.4 FORMAT OF THE EIR

The Draft EIR is organized into the following sections:

- [Section 1.0, *Executive Summary*](#), provides a brief project description and summary of the environmental impacts and mitigation measures.
- [Section 2.0, *Introduction and Purpose*](#), provides CEQA compliance information.



- Section 3.0, *Project Description*, provides a detailed project description indicating project location, background, and history; project characteristics, phasing, and objectives; as well as associated discretionary actions required.
- Section 4.0, *Basis of Cumulative Analysis*, describes the approach and methodology for the cumulative analysis.
- Section 5.0, *Environmental Analysis*, contains a detailed environmental analysis of the existing conditions, existing regulatory setting, potential project impacts, potential cumulative impacts, recommended mitigation measures, and significant unavoidable impacts (if any) for the following environmental topic areas:
 - Section 5.1, *Land Use and Relevant Planning*;
 - Section 5.2, *Aesthetics/Light and Glare*;
 - Section 5.3, *Biological Resources*;
 - Section 5.4, *Tribal and Cultural Resources*;
 - Section 5.5, *Geology and Soils*;
 - Section 5.6, *Hydrology and Water Quality*;
 - Section 5.7, *Hazards and Hazardous Materials*;
 - Section 5.8, *Transportation*;
 - Section 5.9, *Air Quality*;
 - Section 5.10, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*;
 - Section 5.11, *Energy*;
 - Section 5.12, *Noise*;
 - Section 5.13, *Population and Housing*;
 - Section 5.14, *Public Services and Recreation*; and
 - Section 5.15, *Utilities and Service Systems*.
- Section 6.0, *Other CEQA Considerations*, discusses long-term implications of the proposed action. Irreversible environmental changes that would be involved in the proposed action, should it be implemented, are considered. The project's growth-inducing impacts, including the potential for population growth, are also discussed.
- Section 7.0, *Alternatives to the Proposed Project*, describes a reasonable range of alternatives to the project or its location that could avoid or substantially lessen the project's significant impact and still feasibly attain the basic project objectives.
- Section 8.0, *Effects Found Not To Be Significant*, explains potential impacts that have been determined not to be significant.
- Section 9.0, *Organizations and Persons Consulted*, identifies all Federal, State, and local agencies, other organizations, and individuals consulted.
- Section 10.0, *Bibliography*, identifies reference sources for the EIR.
- Section 11.0, *Appendices*, contains the project's technical documentation.



2.5 RESPONSIBLE AND TRUSTEE AGENCIES

Certain projects or actions undertaken by a Lead Agency require subsequent oversight, approvals, or permits from other public agencies in order to be implemented. Such other agencies are referred to as Responsible Agencies and Trustee Agencies. Pursuant to *CEQA Guidelines* Sections 15381 and 15386, as amended, Responsible Agencies and Trustee Agencies are respectively defined as follows:

“Responsible Agency” means a public agency, which proposes to carry out or approve a project, for which a Lead Agency is preparing or has prepared an EIR or Negative Declaration. For the purposes of CEQA, the term “Responsible Agency” includes all public agencies other than the Lead Agency, which have discretionary approval power over the project. (Section 15381)

“Trustee Agency” means 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. Trustee Agencies include:

- a) The California Department of Fish and Game with regard to the fish and wildlife of the state, to designated rare or endangered native plants, and to game refuges, ecological reserves, and other areas administered by the department;*
- b) The State Lands Commission- with regard to state owned “sovereign” lands such as the beds of navigable waters and state school lands;*
- c) The State Department of Parks and Recreation with regard to units of the State Park System;*
- d) The University of California with regard to sites within the Natural Land and Water Reserves System. (Section 15386)*

As the project site is located at the existing NCTD’s Oceanside Transit Center, and the project proposes the development of a new NCTD headquarters as well as transit improvements, the NCTD shares jurisdiction over the project site with the City. As such, the NCTD is regarded as a Responsible Agency, the approval of which is required for future site improvements and development that would impact operations of the Oceanside Transit Center.

Additional Responsible and Trustee Agencies and other entities that may use this EIR in their decision-making process or for informational purposes include, but may not be limited to, the following:

- California Coastal Commission;
- San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board; and
- San Diego Air Pollution Control District.



2.6 INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE

Pertinent documents relating to this EIR have been cited in accordance with *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15150, which encourages incorporation by reference as a means of reducing redundancy and the length of environmental reports. The following documents are hereby incorporated by reference into this EIR. These documents are available for review at the City of Oceanside City Hall located at 300 N. Coast Highway, Oceanside, CA 92054.

- *City of Oceanside General Plan*. The *City of Oceanside General Plan* (General Plan) was adopted by the City Council in 2002 and has been periodically amended. The City is currently undergoing a comprehensive update to the General Plan, which is anticipated to be adopted in the fall of 2024. The General Plan is the City's comprehensive, long-range planning and policy document that not only guides growth and change within Oceanside, but also preserves and protects the unique qualities that the community values most. The General Plan goals and policies serve as a guide for future development and desired conditions in support of the City's overall vision.

The adopted General Plan is organized by elements. Each element includes an introduction to describe the element and its organization. Goals and policies are organized by topic areas specific to each element. The General Plan contains the following 10 elements:

- Land Use;
 - Circulation;
 - Recreational Trails;
 - Housing;
 - Environmental Resource Management;
 - Community Facilities;
 - Public Safety;
 - Noise;
 - Hazardous Waste Management; and
 - Military Reservation.
- *Oceanside Municipal Code (current through Ordinance 22-OR0062-1 and the January 2022 code supplement)*. The *Oceanside Municipal Code* (Municipal Code) consists of all the regulatory and penal ordinances and administrative ordinances of the City of Oceanside. The Municipal Code is one of the City's primary tools to implement control of land uses, in accordance with General Plan goals and policies.
 - *City of Oceanside Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance*. The broad purposes of the *City of Oceanside Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance* (Zoning Ordinance) are to protect and promote the public health, safety, and general welfare, and to implement the policies of the City of Oceanside General Plan, as provided in the California Government Code, Title 7, Chapters 3 and 4 and in the California Constitution, Article 11, Section 7. The Downtown and Coastal Zoning Ordinances have been consolidated into one ordinance.
 - *City of Oceanside Local Coastal Program*. Portions of the City are located within the coastal zone, the area designated by the State for special protections under the Coastal Act. The City has adopted a Local Coastal Program (LCP) to regulate development within the coastal zone and



identify the long-range planning vision for the City’s coastal areas. The current LCP was certified by the California Coastal Commission in 1986. The City is currently in the process of updating the LCP, focusing on coastal hazards and adaptation. These changes to the LCP are not expected to have an effect on the City’s ability to meet its Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) needs.

- *Coast Highway Vision and Strategic Plan.* The *Coast Highway Vision and Strategic Plan* (CHVSP) was adopted by the City Council on April 15, 2009. The CHSVP is an advisory document that provides guidance for revitalization of the Coast Highway Corridor. It envisions the Oceanside Transit Center as a transit-oriented development that becomes an extension of the downtown business area.