

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) has been prepared to evaluate specific environmental impacts associated with the proposed 2008 Del Mar Fairgrounds Master Plan Project (the proposed project) for the 22nd District Agricultural Association (DAA). The Del Mar Fairgrounds is located in the Cities of Del Mar and San Diego.

The 22nd DAA is the “public agency which has the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving the project” and therefore is the “Lead Agency” for this Project under the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 (CEQA) (CEQA Guidelines Section 15367). CEQA requires the Lead Agency to consider the information contained in the Draft EIR prior to taking any discretionary action. This EIR is intended to serve as an informational document to be considered by the 22nd DAA and the Responsible Agencies during deliberations on the proposed project. The approvals associated with the proposed project are described in Section 3.0, Project Description.

This Draft EIR has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 (CEQA), as amended (Public Resources Code [PRC] Section 21000, et seq.), and the State CEQA Guidelines for Implementation of CEQA (California Code of Regulations [CCR], Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15000–15387).

Questions regarding the preparation of this document and the 22nd DAA review of the project should be referred to the following person:

22nd District Agricultural Association

2260 Jimmy Durante Boulevard
Del Mar, CA 92106-2216
Attention: Mr. Dustin Fuller
(858) 792-4212
Email: MasterPlanEIR@sdfair.com

2.2 PURPOSE AND TYPE OF EIR/INTENDED USES OF THE EIR

Under CEQA, “The purpose of an environmental impact report is to identify the significant effects on the environment of a project, to identify alternatives to the proposed project, and to indicate the manner in which those significant effects can be mitigated or avoided” (PRC Section 21002.1[a]). As previously discussed in Chapter 1, Executive Summary, an EIR is the most comprehensive form of environmental documentation identified in CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines and provides the information needed to assess the environmental consequences of a proposed project. An EIR is intended to provide an objective, factually supported, full-disclosure analysis of the environmental consequences associated with a proposed project that have the potential to result in significant, adverse environmental impacts.

As previously mentioned, the 22nd DAA is the Lead Agency for this project under CEQA. This Draft EIR provides information to the Lead Agency and other public agencies, the general public, and decision makers regarding the potential environmental impacts from construction and operation of the proposed 2008 Del Mar Fairgrounds Master Plan.

This EIR has been prepared to evaluate environmental impacts that may result from implementation of the proposed project. As the Lead Agency, the 22nd DAA has the authority to prepare this Draft EIR and, after the comment/response process, certify the Final EIR (FEIR) and approve the proposed project as described in this EIR. The 22nd DAA and Responsible Agencies have the authority to make decisions on discretionary actions relating to development of the proposed project. As stated previously, this EIR is intended to serve as an informational document to be considered by the 22nd DAA and Responsible Agencies during deliberations on the proposed project.

This EIR will serve as a Project/Program EIR pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines, Sections 15161 and 15168(a)(2), respectively. According to Section 15161 of the State CEQA Guidelines, a Project EIR is appropriate for specific development projects in which information is available for all phases of the project, including planning, construction, and operation. This EIR will provide project-level analysis for all of the near-term projects described in detail in Chapter 3.0, Project Description, of this EIR.

According to Section 15168(a)(2) of the State CEQA Guidelines, a Program EIR is appropriate for a series of actions that can be characterized as one large project and are related either geographically, as logical parts in the chain of contemplated actions; in connection with the issuance of rules, regulations, plans, or other general criteria to govern the conduct of a continuing program; or as individual activities carried out under the same authorizing statutory or regulatory authority and having generally similar environmental effects that can be mitigated in similar ways. Because the proposed Master Plan incorporates long-term, programmatic projects, this EIR provides an occasion for more exhaustive consideration of effects and alternatives than would be practical in an EIR on an individual action and ensures consideration of cumulative impacts that might be otherwise slighted on a case-by-case basis. When additional details and construction plans are available for the long-term projects, the 22nd DAA will examine each proposed action to determine whether the effects were fully analyzed in this EIR in accordance with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15162, or whether any subsequent additional environmental review would be required.

2.3 PUBLIC REVIEW PROCESS

The purpose of the public review of an EIR is to evaluate the adequacy of the environmental analysis in terms of compliance with CEQA. Section 15151 of the CEQA Guidelines states the following regarding standards from which adequacy is judged:

“An EIR should be prepared with a sufficient degree of analysis to provide decision-makers with information which enables them to make a decision which intelligently takes account of environmental consequences. An evaluation of the environmental effects of a proposed project need not be exhaustive, but the sufficiency of an EIR is to be reviewed in the light of what is reasonably feasible. Disagreement among experts does not make an EIR inadequate, but the EIR should summarize the main

points of disagreement among experts. The courts have not looked for perfection but for adequacy, completeness, and a good faith effort at full disclosure.”

In compliance with the CEQA Guidelines, the 22nd DAA has taken steps to maximize opportunities for the public and other public agencies to participate in the environmental review process. The 22nd DAA conducted the scoping process and determined that an EIR was required to evaluate the potentially significant environmental effects of the proposed project and related actions. The 22nd DAA issued a Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the proposed project and a public scoping meeting was conducted, as discussed below.

2.3.1 Notice of Preparation

At the outset of the environmental review process for this EIR, the 22nd DAA determined that an EIR would be required for the proposed project. Therefore, in compliance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15060, an Initial Study was not prepared for the project. Two previous NOPs were distributed in March 2003 and December 2004. On March 17, 2008, an NOP for the proposed project was distributed by the 22nd DAA via the State of California Clearinghouse. The State Clearinghouse issued a project number for the EIR (SCH No. 2003031069). In accordance with State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15082, the NOP was circulated to the agencies and individuals listed in Appendix A for a period of 45 days, during which time written comments were solicited pertaining to environmental issues/topics that the Draft EIR should evaluate. Responses to the NOP were received from members of the public and the following organizations and agencies:

- Batter Kay Associates
- Boca Del Mar Homeowners Association
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
- Carmel Valley Community Planning Board
- City of Carlsbad
- City of Del Mar
- City of San Diego–Development Services
- City of San Diego–Office of the City Attorney
- City of Solana Beach
- Southern California Edison (SCE)
- Friends of the San Dieguito River Valley
- League of Women Voters
- Native American Heritage Council (NAHC)
- North County Transit District (NCTD)
- San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG)
- San Diego County Archaeological Society, Inc.

- San Dieguito River Valley Joint Powers Authority (JPA)
- State of California Clearinghouse (SCH)
- State of California Public Utilities Commission (PUC)
- Torrey Pines Community Planning Board

Comments were received from several of the responsible agencies for the proposed project. The general topics covered in the comments and the location of the applicable information in the EIR are summarized below in Table 2.A.

2.3.2 Scoping Meeting and Areas of Controversy

The 22nd DAA held a public scoping meeting on April 16, 2008, to present the proposed project and to solicit input from interested individuals regarding environmental issues that should be addressed in this Draft EIR. The 22nd DAA gave a brief presentation on the proposed project and opened the meeting to public comment. Approximately 30 people attended the scoping meeting and 14 people provided verbal comments. Key environmental issues and concerns raised at the scoping meeting included: (1) transit and the need to implement the seasonal train platform, (2) parking areas adjacent to the Lagoon/River, (3) aesthetics, (4) traffic impacts to nearby communities, (5) impacts to the San Dieguito Lagoon, and (6) increased noise.

Please note that this is not an exhaustive list of areas of controversy, but rather includes the key issues that were raised during the scoping process. The EIR addresses each of these areas of concern or controversy in detail, examines project-related and cumulative environmental impacts, identifies significant adverse environmental impacts, and proposes mitigation measures designed to reduce or eliminate potentially significant impacts. Appendix A includes the NOP, a copy of the verbal comments captured by the court reporter at the scoping meeting, and copies of written comments received.

2.3.3 Public Review Period

This EIR is being distributed to numerous public agencies and other interested parties for review and comment. The EIR is also available at the following locations and on the 22nd DAA's Web site:¹

22nd District Agricultural Association
2260 Jimmy Durante Boulevard
Del Mar, CA 92106-2216

Del Mar Branch Library
1309 Camino Del Mar
Del Mar, CA 92701

¹ <http://www.sdfair.com/>.

Table 2.A: Responsible Agencies who Submitted NOP Comments

Responsible Agency	Topics Commented on	Addressed in the Following EIR Sections
City of Del Mar (2 Letters)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Description/NOP • Environmental Analysis • Alternatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 3.0, Project Description • Chapter 4.0, Environmental Analysis • Chapter 5.0, Alternatives
City of San Diego – Development Services Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water Supply • Traffic impacts • Multiple Species Conservation Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 3.12, Public Services and Utilities • Section 4.2, Traffic and Circulation • Section 4.6, Biological Resources
City of San Diego – City Attorney’s Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land Use and Planning • Traffic/Transit • Air Quality • Aesthetics • Cultural Resources • Hydrology and Water Quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 4.1, Land Use • Section 4.2, Traffic and Circulation • Section 4.3, Air Quality • Section 4.5, Aesthetics • Section 4.7, Cultural Resources • Section 4.11, Hydrology and Water Quality
City of Solana Beach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Description • Environmental Analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Traffic/Transit/Alternative Modes ○ Noise ○ Lighting/Aesthetics ○ Biological Resources ○ Trails ○ Utilities/Sewer ○ Alternatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 3.0, Project Description • Chapter 4.0, Environmental Analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Section 4.2, Traffic and Circulation ○ Section 4.4, Noise ○ Section 4.5, Aesthetics ○ Section 4.6, Biological Resources ○ Chapter 3.0, Project Description; Section 4.1, Land Use; Section 4.13, Recreation ○ Section 4.12, Public Services and Utilities • Chapter 5.0, Alternatives
Department of Transportation (Caltrans)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic • Environmental Analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 4.2, Traffic and Circulation • Chapter 4.0, Environmental Analysis
San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smart Growth/Transit • Natural Environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 4.2, Traffic and Circulation • Section 4.6, Biological Resources
San Dieguito River Valley Regional Open Space Joint Powers Authority (aka San Dieguito River Park)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Description • Lighting/Aesthetics • Biological Resources/South Lot Restoration • Recreation/Trail • Traffic/Parking • Alternatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 3.0, Project Description • Section 4.5, Aesthetics • Section 4.6, Biological Resources • Section 4.13, Recreation • Section 4.2, Traffic and Circulation • Chapter 5.0, Alternatives
California Public Utilities Commission (PUC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorization of Seasonal Train Platform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 3.0, Project Description

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All comments received from agencies and individuals on the Draft EIR will be accepted during the 90-day public review period, which opened on October 9, 2009 and closes on January 8, 2010. All comments on the Draft EIR should be sent to the following 22nd DAA contact person:

Dustin Fuller
22nd District Agricultural Association
2260 Jimmy Durante Boulevard
Del Mar, CA 92106-2216

Phone: (858) 792-4212
Fax: 858-755-7820
Email: MasterPlanEIR@sdfair.com

Following the close of the review period, the 22nd DAA will prepare responses to all comments and will compile these comments and responses into a Final EIR. All responses to comments submitted on the Draft EIR by agencies will be provided to those agencies at least 10 days prior to final action on the project. The 22nd DAA Board of Directors will make findings regarding the extent and nature of the impacts as presented in the Final EIR. The Final EIR will be certified as complete by the 22nd DAA prior to making a decision to approve or deny the project. Public input is encouraged at all public hearings before the 22nd DAA.

2.4 SCOPE OF THIS EIR

As required by State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15128, this Draft EIR must identify the effects of the proposed project determined to be significant. This Draft EIR is considered a “full-scope” EIR in which all environmental impact categories are discussed (Chapter 4.0 of this document).

2.5 FORMAT OF THE EIR

Pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15120(c), this Draft EIR contains the information and analysis required by Sections 15122 through 15131. Each of the required elements is covered in one of the Draft EIR chapters described below.

2.5.1 Chapter 1.0: Executive Summary

Chapter 1.0 contains the Executive Summary of the Draft EIR document, listing all significant project impacts, mitigation measures that have been recommended to reduce any significant impacts of the proposed project, and the level of significance of each impact following mitigation. The summary is presented in a matrix (tabular) format.

2.5.2 Chapter 2.0: Introduction

Chapter 2.0 contains a discussion of the purpose and intended use of the Draft EIR, background on project initiation and the Notice of Preparation, and areas of controversy known to the Lead Agency, including issues raised by the public.

2.5.3 Chapter 3.0: Project Description

Chapter 3.0 includes discussion of the project's geographical setting, past uses of the project site, and the project's goals, objectives, characteristics, components, and phasing.

2.5.4 Chapter 4.0: Environmental Analysis, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures

Chapter 4.0 includes an analysis of the project's environmental impacts. It is organized into topical sections including land use, transportation, air quality, noise, aesthetics, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, population and housing, public services and utilities, recreation, agricultural resources, mineral resources and greenhouse gases and energy. The environmental setting discussions describe the "existing conditions" of the environment on the project site and in the vicinity of the site as they pertain to the environmental issues being analyzed (Section 15125 of the CEQA Guidelines).

The project impact discussions identify and focus on the significant environmental effects of the proposed project. The direct and indirect significant effects of the project on the environment are identified and described, giving due consideration to both the short-term and long-term effects, as necessary (Section 15126.2[a] of the CEQA Guidelines).

Chapter 4.0 also includes a discussion of the cumulative effects of the project when considered in combination with other projects causing related impacts as required by Section 15130 of the CEQA Guidelines. Cumulative impacts are based on build out of the project and all other known proposed projects in the surrounding area, including build out in accordance with adopted General Plans/regional planning documents.

The discussions of mitigation measures and programmatic strategies identify and describe feasible measures that could minimize or lessen significant adverse impacts for each significant environmental effect identified in the Draft EIR (Section 15126[c] of the CEQA Guidelines). The level of significance after mitigation is reported in each section. Unavoidable adverse effects are identified where mitigation is not expected to reduce the effects to less than significant levels.

2.5.5 Chapter 5.0: Alternatives to the Proposed Project

In accordance with CEQA, the alternatives discussion in Chapter 5.0 describes a reasonable range of alternatives that could feasibly attain the basic objectives of the project and that are capable of eliminating any significant adverse environmental effects or reducing them to a level of insignificance. On-site alternatives analyzed in Chapter 5.0 include: No Project/No Development (Alternative 1), No Project/Existing Master Plan (Alternative 2), and Reduced Project/No Hotel (Alternative 3). Chapter 5.0 provides a brief description of the alternatives evaluated and the environmentally superior alternative, as well as alternatives rejected from further consideration.

2.5.6 Chapter 6.0: Long-Term Implications of the Project

Chapter 6.0 includes CEQA-mandated discussions required by Section 15126 of the State CEQA Guidelines: (1) of the relationship between short-term and long-term uses of the environment, (2) significant irreversible environmental changes that would result from implementation of the proposed project, and (3) growth-inducing impacts of the proposed project.

2.5.7 Chapter 7.0: Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

CEQA Guidelines Section 15097 requires that agencies adopt a mitigation monitoring and reporting program for any project for which it had made findings required under paragraph (1) of subdivision (a) of Section 15091. Chapter 7.0 provides a list of all proposed project mitigation measures, defines the party responsible for implementation, and identifies the timing for implementation of each control measure.

2.5.8 Chapter 8.0: Significant Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

Chapter 8.0 describes those significant adverse environmental impacts for which either no mitigation or only partial mitigation is feasible.

2.5.9 Chapters 9.0, 10.0, And 11.0

Chapters 9.0, 10.0, and 11.0 provide the organizations and persons contacted during preparation of the Draft EIR, the Draft EIR preparers and technical report authors and other experts included in preparation of the Draft EIR, and the references used to prepare the Draft EIR.

2.6 INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE

As permitted in Section 15150 of the State CEQA Guidelines, this Draft EIR has referenced several technical studies, analyses, and reports. Information from the documents that have been incorporated by reference has been briefly summarized in the appropriate section(s) of this Draft EIR along with a description of how the public may obtain and review these documents. The documents and other sources that have been used in the preparation of this Draft EIR are identified in Chapter 11, References.

The following documents are hereby incorporated by reference:

- 22nd District Agricultural Association. 1987. 1985 Updated Master Plan, Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Report. February.
- City of San Diego. 2008. General Plan, Environmental Impact Report. March.

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