



CITY OF ESCONDIDO
PLANNING DIVISION
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MAY 11 2020
STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

EXTENSION OF PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD FOR THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR PALOMAR HEIGHTS PROJECT – ENV 18-0009; SUB 18-0011; PHG 18-0049; (SCH #2019059013)

The City of Escondido (City), as lead agency pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Cal. Pub. Res. Code § 21 et seq., as amended) has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Palomar Heights Project (Project), which is described below. In accordance with § 15105 of the CEQA Guidelines, a public notice was filed on March 17, 2020, which officially notified the general public, public agencies, and interested individuals and organizations of a 45-day public review period which started on March 20, 2020, and ended on May 4, 2020. Said notice indicated that hard copies of the document may not be made available for public review due to facility closures resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, and provided a link to the URL where the electronic documents could be found.

The City proactively provided the URL in an effort to make the document available in an alternate format, consistent with guidance provided by the the Office of Planning and Research. Additionally, while this action preceded and was not subject to Executive Order N-54-20 (Order), it is in compliance with said order. While the Order does not suspend the deadline for public review and comment on the subject Draft EIR, the City believes that in light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, it is in the best interest of the public to provide additional time for the public to review and provide comments on the document. As such, the City is extending the public review and comment period by 15 days. All comments must be received by **5:00 p.m. on May 19, 2020**.

Project Description

The 13.8-acre Project site is located in the central area of the City of Escondido (City), California. The Project site is the Palomar Health Downtown Campus and 11 surrounding properties/parcels, and is located south of E. Valley Parkway, north of E. Grand Avenue, west of N. Fig Street, and on the east and west sides of Valley Boulevard.

The Project would include 510 dwelling units and up to 10,000 square feet of commercial space. In addition, the Project would include supporting open space and recreational amenities, landscaping, parking, and infrastructure improvements. The infrastructure improvements include utility connections to existing utility lines within the adjacent roadways as well as roadway frontage improvements.

Approvals required to implement the Project include: (1) a Tentative Subdivision Map, (2) Specific Plan Amendment, (3) Planned Development Permit (Master and Precise Plans), (4) a Development Agreement, (5) a General Plan Amendment (Mobility and Infrastructure Element), and (6) a Specific Alignment Plan (SAP).

The Draft EIR evaluates the environmental impacts associated with project implementation. Environmental analysis presented in the EIR concluded that the project would result in significant environmental impacts with respect to the following issue areas: biological resources, cultural resources, hazards and hazardous materials, noise and tribal cultural resources. The environmental analysis concluded that mitigation for these impacts would reduce them to a less-than-significant level. Pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code, the site is not a listed hazardous material site but is known to include underground storage tanks that present a potential hazard.



The Draft EIR is now available for public review and comment. It is anticipated the Escondido City Council will review and consider certifying the Final EIR in the summer of 2020.

The Draft EIR may be viewed on the City's website at <https://www.escondido.org/palomarheights.aspx>. As noted above, hardcopies of the Draft EIR are not available for review as a result of actions taken to protect the public during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Written comments regarding the adequacy of this Draft EIR must be received by **5:00 p.m. on May 19, 2020**.

Comments should be addressed or e-mailed to:

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Case File No.: ENV 18-0009

Date: May 7, 2020

Mike Strong

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