

Notice of Availability of a Draft Program Environmental Impact Report for the City of Santee Housing Element Rezone Program Implementation

Summary

Notice is hereby given by the City of Santee, Department of Development Services, as the lead agency pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), that the above-named draft Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) is available for public review and comment. Comments on the draft PEIR will be received for a 45-day period, commencing on June 17, 2022 and ending at 5:00 p.m. on August 1, 2022, after which a final PEIR will be prepared containing comments and responses to comments that, together with the draft PEIR, will form the final PEIR. The final PEIR will be used by the City of Santee Department of Development Services in its consideration of approval of the proposed Housing Element Rezone Program Implementation project (project), described below.

Project Location and Description

Located in southern California, the City of Santee (City) is an incorporated city within the county of San Diego and is roughly 18 miles east of downtown San Diego. The City is surrounded by the incorporated city of El Cajon on the south and southeast, the city of San Diego on the west and northwest, and the county of San Diego on the east and northeast. There are 25 housing sites considered by the project for rezone potential. These 25 sites are a subset of the Housing Element Sites Inventory included in Appendix C of the City's 6th Cycle Housing Element. These housing sites, coupled with two sites located on Graves Avenue (which are not housing sites but included in the environmental analysis) are collectively referred to as the Rezone Sites.

The City adopted its 6th Cycle Housing Element on July 14, 2021 which covers the planning period from April 15, 2021 to April 15, 2029. The project includes the implementation of both Programs 9 and 10 of the 6th Cycle Housing Element. Housing Element Program 9 of the 6th Cycle Housing Element commits the City to evaluate the 25 housing sites included in the project's Rezone Sites and implement rezones as appropriate to achieve adequate housing capacity. Housing Element Program 10 of the 6th Cycle Housing Element allows by-right approval of housing development where the project proponent voluntarily includes 20 percent of the units as affordable to lower income households. The last component of the project is to rezone two properties located on Graves Avenue.

Anticipated Significant Environmental Effects

The draft PEIR's analysis of project impacts identified significant impacts on the following:

- Air Quality (increase in air emissions)
- Biological Resources (sensitive plants and sensitive wildlife; least Bell's vireo, coastal California gnatcatcher, migratory birds, jurisdictional waters, wetlands)
- Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources (historical resources, archaeological resources, tribal cultural resources)

- Geology/Soils (paleontological resources)
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions (emissions)
- Land Use and Planning (airport safety zone)
- Noise (increase in ambient noise levels, construction noise, vibration associated with future development)
- Transportation (Vehicles Miles Traveled)
- Public Utilities (utility infrastructure improvements)

The following impacts would be reduced to less than significant levels after mitigation is implemented:

Aesthetics:

- Potential to impact visual character and quality. Implement measure MM-CUL-1.

Biology:

- Potential to directly or indirectly impact sensitive species. Implement MM-BIO-1, MM-BIO-2, MM-BIO-3, MM-BIO-4.
- Potential to directly or indirectly impact sensitive vegetation communities. Implement MM-BIO-5.
- Potential to directly or indirectly impact jurisdictional water, wetlands, and wildlife corridors. Implement MM-BIO-6.

Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources:

- Potential to directly impact historical resources. Implement MM-CUL-1.
- Potential to impact archaeological resources or tribal cultural resources. Implement MM-CUL-2 and MM-CUL-2.

Geology and Soils:

- Potential to impact paleontological resources. Implement MM-GEO-1.

Hazardous Materials:

- Potential to impact routine use, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials. Implement MM-HAZ-1.

Noise:

- Potential for substantial or permanent increase in ambient noise. Implement MM-NOS-1 and MM-NOS-2.
- Potential to result in generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels. Implement MM-NOS-3.

However, the following would remain significant and unavoidable:

Air Quality:

- The inconsistency with the Regional Air Quality Strategy (RAQS) would remain until the RAQs are revised and incorporate the growth projections with the project. Impacts would remain significant and unavoidable.
- Construction - Construction time frames and equipment for site-specific development projects are not available at this time, and there is a potential for multiple development

projects to be constructed at one time, resulting in significant construction-related emissions. Therefore, despite adherence to mitigation measure MM-AQ-1, impacts associated with criteria pollutants during construction would remain significant and unavoidable.

- Operation - Because the significant air quality impact stems from an inconsistency between the project and the adopted land use plan upon which the RAQS is based, impacts would remain significant and unavoidable.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions:

- While the City's Consistency Checklist and implementation of MM-TRA-1 would minimize Greenhouse Gas (GHG) impacts associated with future development at the Rezone Sites, impacts would not be fully mitigated. Therefore, impacts associated with GHG emissions would remain significant and unavoidable.
- While implementation of the mitigation framework including MM-GHG-1 and MM-GHG-2 would minimize future development's inconsistency with GHG related plans, policies, and regulations, impacts would not be fully mitigated. Therefore, impacts associated with consistency with plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing the emission of GHGs would remain significant and unavoidable.

Land Use and Planning:

- Because there is no feasible mitigation is available to reduce the potential conflict between the allowable density within the airport safety zones and the proposed Rezone Sites impacts would remain significant and unavoidable.

Noise:

- Vehicle Traffic Noise Increase in Ambient Noise: Impacts to existing sensitive land uses due to the increase in ambient noise levels associated with buildout of the Rezone Sites would remain significant and unmitigated.

Transportation:

- While implementation of the mitigation framework including MM-TRA-1, VMT impacts associated with future development at the Rezone Sites, impacts would be reduced but not be fully mitigated. Therefore, impacts associated with VMT would remain significant and unavoidable.

Public Review Process

One of the purposes of CEQA is to inform the public of the likely environmental consequences of public and private projects such as the proposed project. The purpose of this Notice, consistent with Sections 15086 and 15087 of the State CEQA Guidelines is to consult with and request comments on the draft PEIR's environmental analyses from responsible agencies, organizations, and interested parties.

The draft PEIR and all related technical studies are available for review during the public review period at the offices of the City of Santee Development Services Department at 10601 Magnolia Avenue, Santee, California 92071. Copies of the draft PEIR are also available at the following public location:

San Diego County Library
Reference Desk
9225 Carlton Hills Boulevard #17
Santee, CA 92071

The draft PEIR can be downloaded from the City's website at:

<https://www.cityofsanteeca.gov/services/project-environmental-review>

The Notice of Availability comment period closes at 5:00 p.m. on August 1, 2022. All comments concerning this environmental document must be submitted in writing to Michael Coyne, Project Planner, prior to the close of the public comment period as noted above. Please include a return address and contact name with your written comments. The City will consider all written comments received during the noticed public review period prior to approving the project.

Although CEQA does not require formal hearings at any stage of the environmental review process (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15202[a]), it does encourage "wide public involvement, formal and informal...in order to receive and evaluate public reactions to environmental issues" (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15201) and requires the lead agency to provide the public with the opportunity to provide comments. The City of Santee, as lead agency, circulated a Notice of Preparation (NOP) of an PEIR (SCH # 2021100263) for the proposed project on October 15, 2021, and a scoping meeting held on Wednesday, November 3, 2021. The NOP was distributed for a 30-day comment period that ended on November 15, 2021. Comments received on the NOP and during the public scoping meeting were considered in the preparation of the draft PEIR. The NOP and comment letter is included in the draft PEIR as Appendix A.

The draft PEIR incorporates public and agency responses to the NOP. Like the NOP, the draft PEIR is being circulated for review and comment by appropriate agencies, as well as organizations and individuals who have requested notification. In accordance with Section 15205(d) of the State CEQA Guidelines, the City of Santee has scheduled a 45-day public review period for the Draft PEIR, ending on August 1, 2022 at 5:00 p.m.