

2. Introduction

2.1 PURPOSE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that all state and local governmental agencies consider the environmental consequences of projects over which they have discretionary authority before taking action on those projects. This draft environmental impact report (DEIR) has been prepared to satisfy CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines. The environmental impact report (EIR) is the public document designed to provide decision makers and the public with an analysis of the environmental effects of the Proposed Project, to indicate possible ways to reduce or avoid environmental damage and to identify alternatives to the project. The EIR must also disclose significant environmental impacts that cannot be avoided; growth inducing impacts; effects not found to be significant; and significant cumulative impacts of all past, present and reasonably foreseeable future projects.

Pursuant to CEQA Section 21067, the lead agency means “the public agency which has the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving a project which may have a significant effect upon the environment.” The Mt. San Jacinto Community College District (MSJCCD) has the principal responsibility for approval of the I-15 Corridor Campus Master Plan project. For this reason, MSJCCD is the CEQA lead agency for this project.

The intent of the DEIR is to provide sufficient information on the potential environmental impacts of the proposed I-15 Corridor Campus Master Plan to allow MSJCCD to make an informed decision regarding approval of the project. Specific discretionary actions to be reviewed by MSJCCD are described later in Section 3.4, *Intended Uses of the EIR*.

This DEIR has been prepared in accordance with requirements of the:

- California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as amended (Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq.)
- State Guidelines for the Implementation of the CEQA of 1970 (CEQA Guidelines), as amended (California Code of Regulations Sections 15000 et seq.)

The overall purpose of this DEIR is to inform the lead agency, responsible agencies, decision makers and the general public of the environmental effects of the development and operation of the proposed I-15 Corridor Campus Master Plan project. This DEIR addresses the potential environmental effects of the project, including effects that may be significant and adverse; evaluates a number of alternatives to the project; and identifies mitigation measures to reduce or avoid adverse effects.

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2.2 NOTICE OF PREPARATION AND INITIAL STUDY

MSJCCD determined that an EIR would be required for this project and issued a Notice of Preparation (NOP) and Initial Study on December 7, 2015 (see Appendix A). Comments received during the public review period, from December 7, 2015 to January 5, 2016, are in Appendix B.

The NOP process is used to help determine the scope of the environmental issues to be addressed in the DEIR. Based on this process and the initial study for the project, certain environmental categories were identified as having the potential to result in significant impacts. Issues considered Potentially Significant are addressed in this DEIR, but issues identified as Less Than Significant or No Impact are not. Refer to the initial study in Appendix A for discussion of how these initial determinations were made.

2.3 SCOPE OF THIS DEIR

The scope of the DEIR was determined based upon MSJCCD's initial study, comments received in response to the NOP, and comments received at the scoping meeting conducted by MSJCCD. Pursuant to Sections 15126.2 and 15126.4 of the State CEQA Guidelines, the DEIR should identify any potentially significant adverse impacts and recommend mitigation that would reduce or eliminate these impacts to levels of insignificance. The information in the Chapter 3, *Project Description*, establishes the basis for analyzing future, project-related environmental impacts.

2.3.1 Impacts Considered Less Than Significant

Four environmental impact categories are identified here as not being significantly affected by, or affecting the proposed I-15 Corridor Campus Master Plan project and as such are not discussed in detail in this DEIR. This determination was made by MSJCCD in its preparation of the Initial Study. The following topical issues are not addressed in the DEIR:

- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Mineral Resources
- Population and Housing
- Recreation

2.3.2 Potentially Significant Adverse Impacts

Thirteen environmental factors have been identified as potentially significant impacts if the Proposed Project is implemented. These factors are:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources

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- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use Planning
- Noise
- Public Services
- Transportation and Traffic
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Energy

2.3.3 Unavoidable Significant Adverse Impacts

This DEIR identifies four significant and unavoidable adverse impacts that would result from implementation of the Proposed Project. Unavoidable adverse impacts may be considered significant on a project-specific basis, cumulatively significant, and/or potentially significant. If MSJCCD, as the lead agency, determines that unavoidable significant adverse impacts will result from the project, MSJCCD must prepare a “Statement of Overriding Considerations” before it can approve the project. A Statement of Overriding Considerations states that the decision-making body has balanced the benefits of the Proposed Project against its unavoidable significant environmental effects and has determined that the benefits of the project outweigh the adverse effects, and therefore, the adverse effects are considered to be acceptable. The impacts that were found in the DEIR to be significant and unavoidable are:

- Biological Resources
- Land Use and Planning
- Noise
- Transportation and Traffic

2.4 INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE

The following documents are incorporated by reference in this DEIR, consistent with Section 15150 of the State CEQA Guidelines, and are available for review at the MSJCCD offices.

- *I-15 Corridor Campus Master Plan*, prepared by LPA, September 2016.

2.5 FINAL EIR CERTIFICATION

This DEIR is being circulated for public review for a period of 45 days. Interested agencies and members of the public are invited to provide written comments on the DEIR to the MSJCCD address shown on the title page of this document. Upon completion of the 45-day review period, MSJCCD will review all written comments received and prepare written responses for each comment. A Final EIR (FEIR) will then be

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prepared incorporating all of the comments received, responses to the comments and any changes to the DEIR that result from the comments received. This FEIR will then be presented to MSJCCD for potential certification as the environmental document for the project. All persons who commented on the DEIR will be notified of the availability of the FEIR and the date of the public hearing before the MSJCCD Board of Trustees.

The DEIR is available to the general public for review at the following locations:

- Mt. San Jacinto Community College District, 1499 North State Street, San Jacinto, California 92583
- Wildomar Library, 34303 Mission Trail, Wildomar, CA 92595

2.6 MITIGATION MONITORING

Public Resources Code Section 21081.6 requires that agencies adopt a monitoring or reporting program for any project for which it has made findings pursuant to Public Resources Code 21081 or adopted a Negative Declaration pursuant to 21080(c). Such a program is intended to ensure the implementation of all mitigation measures adopted through the preparation of an EIR or Negative Declaration.

The Mitigation Monitoring Program for the Proposed I-15 Corridor Campus Master Plan will be completed as part of the Final EIR, prior to consideration of the project by the MSJCCD Board of Trustees.