

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Isla Vista Master Plan (IVMP) environmental impact report (EIR) discusses the potential environmental consequences associated with the implementation of the IVMP in Isla Vista. The County of Santa Barbara is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for preparation and approval of the proposed EIR.

This EIR has been prepared by the County of Santa Barbara in conformance with CEQA (Public Resources Code, Section 21000 et seq.), the State CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR Section 15000 et seq.) and County procedures. The EIR discusses all environmental resources potentially impacted by the proposed project as required by CEQA. The following issues were determined to be potentially significant by the County of Santa Barbara and were therefore evaluated in detail in this EIR:

- Aesthetic/Visual Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Drainage/Flooding
- Fire Protection
- Geological Resources
- Land Use
- Noise
- Public Facilities
- Recreation
- Transportation/Circulation
- Water Resources

In addition to these primary environmental concerns, the EIR addresses those potential impacts on environmental issue area considered to be adverse, but less than significant, as required under CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Objectives

At the direction of the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors (BOS) and Santa Barbara County Redevelopment Agency Board, with input from the Isla Vista Project Area Committee (PAC) and the Isla Vista community, the following objectives have been identified for the Proposed Project:

- Create a physically, socially, and economically sustainable plan for Isla Vista;
- Improve the quality of life for residents by enhancing the character of the built environment, promoting a more diverse population, and providing more amenities for residents;

- Improve and enhance housing opportunities;
- Integrate strategies that increase bicycle and pedestrian safety;
- Promote transit oriented land use and transportation decisions;
- Improve the interface with UCSB by strengthening physical and visual connections at the edges; and
- Enhance the connection to the natural environment by emphasizing orientation and connections.

As Isla Vista is an established Redevelopment Project Area; the Draft Isla Vista Master Plan (IVMP or proposed project) provides a unique opportunity to revitalize this community. Redevelopment tax increment financing funds are available for expenditure by the Redevelopment Agency (RDA) *with* the comprehensive, phased approach for revitalization and public-private partnerships for redevelopment that is set forth in the Draft IVMP. The IVMP includes direction on expending these funds, combined with new land use regulations and design guidance to revitalize the community and eliminate sources of blight that remain in Isla Vista.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1: No Project Alternative. As directed under CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6, the No Project Alternative assumes the reasonable future development of the project area assuming the proposed project was not approved. Alternative 1 retains the current land use and zoning designations for Isla Vista without modifications. Under the No Project Alternative, none of the projects identified in the Draft IVMP would be implemented. Build out would occur according to existing zoning and land use designations, potentially resulting in 646 new residential units. Because residential densities under the Draft IVMP would result in mostly multi-story redevelopment of existing properties, and because this could occur under the existing zoning, residential development under the No Project Alternative is unlikely affect the area of physical development for housing. However, the amount of land that will likely be developed to accommodate residential parking for the No Project Alternative would be reduced when compared with the proposed project. Impacts for each resource area as it relates to Alternative 1 are discussed below. In general, impacts associated with the No Project Alternative would be less than the proposed project. However, several beneficial effects of the proposed project, including catalyst projects, would not occur and few, if any, of the project objectives would be fulfilled.

Alternative 2: Reduced Residential Build-out. This alternative reduces residential build out by reducing proposed residential land use densities when compared to the proposed project. Densities would be higher than the No Project Alternative, but lower than those proposed in the Draft IVMP. Under Alternative 2, build out would result in 904 new residential units. The form-based land use regulations would still be adopted as part of the project, but would be modified to allow lower residential densities. The downtown zoning district would allow a mix of residential, office and commercial uses, and allow two- and

limited three-story development in this alternative. Infrastructure and catalyst projects, as well as the policy changes described in the Draft IVMP are included in this alternative.

Alternative 3: Downtown only Build-out. This Alternative includes changes in residential land use densities and zoning in the Isla Vista downtown only. The downtown zoning district would allow a mix of residential, office and commercial uses, and allow two- and three-story development. Densities in the downtown would be the same as those in the proposed project. Densities in the residential neighborhoods outside of the downtown, however, would be the same as Alternative 1, the No Project Alternative. Under Alternative 3, build out would add 1,028 new residential units and the form-based land use regulations would be modified to permit lower land use densities in residential neighborhoods. Infrastructure and Catalyst projects located in the downtown portion of the project area that are part of the proposed project are included in this alternative. Those catalyst projects outside the downtown, such as the Community Center, are not included.

Alternative 4: Del Playa Design Alternative. Alternative 4 would create a form-based zone district for the 6500-6700 blocks of the south side of Del Playa Drive that encourages higher quality new construction. The form-based zone district for properties on the south side of Del Playa would include requirements for front doors that face the street, porches, and building articulation. Additionally, this district would allow for development closer to the street edge, as front yards would not be used for parking. The existing front setback requirement of 20 ft. from the right of way would be reduced to 5 ft. from right of way. Parking for new private development in this area would be located off-site and would be required to pay a fee in lieu of providing on-site parking. Other than adding the form-based code, this alternative is exactly the same as the proposed project and would include the same land use and zoning densities as the Draft IVMP with no change for the south side of Del Playa Drive; therefore, build-out would be the same at 1,447 units. All catalyst and infrastructure projects, policies, and plan amendments identified in the Draft IVMP would be included in Alternative 4.

Alternative 5: Del Playa Redevelopment Alternative. Alternative 5 would create a form-based zone district for the south side of Del Playa Drive in the 6500 through 6700 blocks, similar to Alternative 4. This alternative would also increase land use and zoning densities along Del Playa to 14 units per acre which closely matches average existing densities. This could encourage the demolition and redevelopment of properties located along the south side of Del Playa Drive that are underdeveloped (below maximum allowed densities). The form-based zone district would result in higher quality new construction by including requirements for front doors that face the street, porches, and building articulation. Parking for private development would be located off-site in Alternative 5 and new development would be required to pay a fee in lieu of providing on-site parking. The form-based zone district would also allow for development closer to the street edge, as front yards would not be used for parking. The existing front setback requirement of 20 ft. from the right of way would be reduced to 5 ft. from the right of way.

Alternative 6: Housing Incentive Alternative. This alternative increases residential land use densities and height restrictions in the northern and eastern portions of the project area beyond the densities in the proposed project to enhance private sector incentives to redevelop and rehabilitate existing housing to improve housing conditions and increase supply.

The areas for increased land use densities were selected based on their proximity to:

- UCSB, most of the areas are within 1/4 mile, or comfortable walking distance, of the university.
- Large public open spaces, including Anisq'Oyo' Park, Greek Park, and Little Acorn Park, that can provide active and passive recreation opportunities
- Principal transportation corridors, such as El Colegio Road, Embarcadero del Mar/del Norte, which can accommodate transit links to western Isla Vista, UCSB, and outlying areas, and
- Downtown commercial services, located on Pardall Road and around the Embarcadero Loop.

Alternative 6 would result in the community wide build-out of 2,867 new housing units, as compared to 1,447 new units in the proposed project. The proposed project includes land use densities of 25-40 units per acre. This alternative increases land use densities to 50-80 units per acre in some areas.

SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS

Table ES-1 summarizes the impacts and mitigations identified in this EIR. Table ES-2 summarizes the project's contribution to cumulative impacts identified in this EIR.

SUMMARY OF PROJECT IMPACTS

This EIR evaluates the environmental impacts associated with the regulatory changes and proposed projects identified in the Draft IVMP. Adopting the Draft IVMP could result in significant adverse environmental impacts to aesthetics; air quality; hazard and hazardous materials; historic resources; noise; parks, open space and recreation; and public services. The following section summarizes the findings of the environmental analysis for each of the resource issue areas evaluated in the EIR. For a more detailed analysis, refer to individual resource area chapters in Section 3 of the EIR.

Land Use and Population

A significant impact associated with population growth is identified in Land Use and Population.

Aesthetic Resources

One significant impact to aesthetic resources was identified related to development of the Community Center and a reduction in view of the Santa Ynez Mountains. Beneficial impacts associated with the project include enhanced urban design and improved street trees.

Agricultural Resources

No impacts to Agricultural resources were identified.

Air Quality

A significant impact to air quality related to operational omissions was identified. Two mitigation measures are called out to reduce the significant impacts to air quality.

Biological Resources

No significant impacts to biological resources were identified.

Cultural-Historic Resources

No significant impacts to cultural-historic resources were identified.

Geologic Hazards

No significant impacts to geologic hazards were identified.

Hydrology and Water Quality

No significant impacts to hydrology and water quality resources were identified.

Noise

A significant noise impact was identified related to IVMP build-out and policies/programs/projects which would increase ambient noise levels in the project area and surrounding community.

Parks, Open Space and Recreation

No significant impacts to Parks, Open Space and Recreation were identified

Public Services

Significant impacts public service impacts were identified related to the solid waste stream, fire protection services, sewer service, and generation of solid waste.

Traffic and Circulation

Significant impacts to Traffic and Circulation were identified in the CEQA document, including impacts to local and area roadways, intersections and parking.

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