

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) addresses the proposed City of Goleta Fire Station 10 Project within the western portion of the City of Goleta (City). The Final EIR includes the text of the Draft EIR (edited based on public and City staff review of the Draft EIR), responses to comments on the Draft EIR (Section 7.0), and various technical appendices. A mitigation monitoring and reporting program (MMRP) has also been prepared for the Final EIR based on Draft EIR mitigation measure text, as Appendix J. New text added or edited from the Draft EIR is shown in underline format. In instances where changes to the document involve changed facts or information, the deleted text has been left in strikeout format. Where changes do not involve new facts or information (i.e., they involve editorial changes or changes to impact text based on the same facts and information), the deleted text has simply been removed from the document in order to make the Final EIR more readable.

This section discusses: the history of the EIR's preparation; the legal basis for preparing an EIR; the scope and content of the EIR; lead, responsible, and trustee agencies; and the environmental review process required under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (California Public Resources Code §§ 21000, *et seq.*). The proposed Project is described in greater detail in Section 2.0, *Project Description*.

### 1.1 Environmental Impact Report Background

A Notice of Preparation (NOP) of an EIR was distributed for a 30-day agency and public review period, along with the EIR Scoping Document, on August 8, 2017. The Scoping Document concluded that preparation of an EIR was necessary to evaluate the potential of significant environmental impacts resulting from Project construction and/or operation. The City received eight letters in response to the NOP. The Scoping Document, NOP, and NOP comment letters are presented in Appendix A. An EIR Scoping Meeting was also held on August 29, 2017 in the Council Chambers of the Goleta City Hall.

The comments related to CEQA or environmental issues received during the comment period are summarized in Table 1-1.

### 1.2 Purpose and Legal Authority

The proposed Project requires the discretionary approval of the City of Goleta Planning Commission and City Council. As the City's partner, the Santa Barbara County Fire Department must also rely on this EIR as the operating agency for the fire station once it is constructed. Therefore, it is subject to the environmental review requirements of CEQA. In accordance with CEQA Guidelines § 15121, the purpose of this EIR is to serve as an informational document that:

*... will inform public agency decision-makers and the public generally of the significant environmental effects of a project, identify possible ways to minimize the significant effects, and describe reasonable alternatives to the project.*

**Table 1-1. NOP Scoping Comments Received**

Section	Subject	Where Subject is Addressed in EIR
Aesthetics/ Visual Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tree removal; loss of scenic resources.</li> <li>• Adequate mitigation for vegetation impacts.</li> <li>• Proposed structure’s compatibility with size, bulk, and scale of surrounding land uses.</li> <li>• Computer simulations to evaluate impacts on scenic views from removal of vegetation in various stages of new vegetation establishment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scoping Document (Appendix A)</li> <li>• Section 4.1, <i>Aesthetics/Visual Resources</i></li> </ul>
Geology and Soils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential unanticipated soil contamination.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scoping Document (Appendix A)</li> <li>• Section 4.4, <i>Geology and Soils</i></li> </ul>
Land Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preclusion of visitor-serving commercial space.</li> <li>• Land use compatibility.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scoping Document (Appendix A)</li> <li>• Section 4.6, <i>Land Use</i></li> </ul>
Noise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effects on sensitive receptors from nighttime noise related to fire engine responses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scoping Document (Appendix A)</li> <li>• Section 4.7, <i>Noise</i></li> </ul>

This EIR has been prepared as a Project EIR pursuant to CEQA Guidelines § 15161. As stated in the CEQA Guidelines § 15161:

*This type of EIR should focus primarily on the changes in the environment that would result from the development project. The EIR shall examine all phases of the project, including planning, construction, and operation.*

This EIR serves as an informational document for the public and City of Goleta decision-makers. The process will culminate with Planning Commission and City Council hearings to consider certification of the Final EIR and approval of the proposed Project.

### **1.3 EIR Scope and Content**

This EIR addresses the potential for significant environmental effects in the following issue areas:

- Aesthetics/Visual Resources
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Land Use
- Noise
- Public Services
- Transportation/Circulation

All other issues are addressed in the Scoping Document in Appendix A and in Section 4.10, *Less Than Significant Issues*.

In preparing the EIR, pertinent City policies and guidelines, certified EIRs and adopted CEQA documents, and background documents prepared by the City were utilized. A full reference list is contained in Section 8.0, *Persons/Agencies Consulted and References*.

Section 5.0, *Alternatives* was prepared in accordance with CEQA Guidelines §15126.6, which requires that an EIR examine a reasonable range of alternatives that are capable of avoiding or minimizing a project's significant effects, while achieving most of the basic project objectives. The Alternatives discussion evaluates the CEQA-related "no project" alternative and five alternative development scenarios for the site. It also identifies the environmentally superior alternative among the alternatives assessed.

The level of detail contained throughout this EIR is consistent with the requirements of CEQA and applicable court decisions. The CEQA Guidelines [14 California Code of Regulations §§ 15000, *et seq.*] provide the standard of adequacy on which this document is based. As stated in the CEQA Guidelines § 15151:

*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 the proposed Project need not be exhaustive, but the sufficiency of an EIR is to be reviewed in 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 the experts. The courts have looked not for perfection, but for adequacy, completeness, and a good faith effort at full disclosure.*

#### **1.4 Lead, Responsible, and Trustee Agencies**

The CEQA Guidelines define lead, responsible, and trustee agencies (CEQA Guidelines § 15367). The City of Goleta is the lead agency for the project because it holds principal responsibility for approving the project.

A responsible agency refers to a public agency other than the lead agency that has discretionary approval over the project (CEQA Guidelines § 15381). The California Coastal Commission serves as a responsible agency, as the proposed Project is located within the California Coastal Zone. A trustee agency refers to a state agency having jurisdiction by law over natural resources affected by a project (CEQA Guidelines § 15386). There are no trustee agencies for the proposed Project.

## 1.5 Environmental Review Process

The major steps in the environmental review process, as required under CEQA, are outlined below. The steps are presented in sequential order.

1. **Notice of Preparation (NOP).** After deciding that an EIR is required, the lead agency (City of Goleta) must file an NOP of a Draft EIR soliciting input on the EIR scope to the State Clearinghouse, other concerned agencies, and parties previously requesting notice in writing (CEQA Guidelines § 15082; Public Resources Code § 21092.2). The NOP must be posted in the County Clerk's office for 30 days. The NOP may be accompanied by an Initial Study or scoping document that identifies the issue areas for which the proposed Project could create significant environmental impacts. In this case, an Initial Study that resulted in preparation and certification of a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) is provided with this EIR.
2. **Draft EIR Prepared.** The Draft EIR (DEIR) must contain: a) table of contents or index; b) summary; c) project description and statement of project objectives; d) environmental setting; e) discussion of significant impacts (direct, indirect, cumulative, growth-inducing, and unavoidable impacts); f) discussion of alternatives; g) mitigation measures; and, h) discussion of irreversible changes.
3. **Notice of Completion (NOC).** The lead agency must file a NOC with the State Clearinghouse when it completes a DEIR and prepares a Public Notice of Availability of a DEIR. The lead agency must place the Notice in the County Clerk's office for 30 days (Public Resources Code § 21092) and send a copy of the Notice to anyone requesting it (CEQA Guidelines § 15087). Additionally, public notice of DEIR availability must be given through at least one of the following procedures: a) publication in a newspaper of general circulation; b) posting on and off the project site; and c) direct mailing to owners and occupants of contiguous properties. The lead agency must solicit input from other agencies and the public, and respond in writing to all comments received (Public Resources Code §§ 21104 and 21253). The minimum public review period for a DEIR is 30 days. When a DEIR is sent to the State Clearinghouse for review, the public review period must be 45 days unless the Clearinghouse (Public Resources Code § 21091) approves a shorter review period.
4. **Final EIR.** A Final EIR must include: a) the DEIR; b) copies of comments received during public review; c) list of persons and entities commenting; and, d) responses to comments.
5. **Certification of Final EIR.** Prior to making a decision on a proposed Project, the lead agency must certify that: a) the Final EIR has been completed in compliance with CEQA and reflects the independent judgement of the City; b) the Final EIR was presented to the decision-

making body of the lead agency; and, c) the decision-making body reviewed and considered the information in the Final EIR prior to approving a project (CEQA Guidelines § 15090).

- 6. Lead Agency Project Decision.** The lead agency may: a) disapprove a project because of its significant environmental effects; b) require changes to a project to reduce or avoid significant environmental effects; or, c) approve a project despite its significant environmental effects, if the proper findings and statement of overriding considerations are adopted (CEQA Guidelines § 15042-15043).
- 7. Findings / Statement of Overriding Considerations.** For each significant impact of the project identified in the EIR, the lead agency must find, based on substantial evidence, that either: a) the project has been changed to avoid or substantially lessen the magnitude of the impact; b) changes to the project are within another agency's jurisdiction and such changes have or should be adopted; or, c) specific economic, social, or other considerations make the mitigation measures or project alternatives infeasible (CEQA Guidelines § 15091). If an agency approves a project with unavoidable significant environmental effects, it must prepare a written Statement of Overriding Considerations that sets forth the specific social, economic, or other reasons supporting the agency's decision.
- 8. Mitigation Monitoring Reporting Program.** When the lead agency makes findings on significant effects identified in the EIR, it must adopt a reporting and monitoring program for mitigation measures that were adopted or made conditions of project approval to mitigate significant effects.
- 9. Notice of Determination (NOD).** The lead agency must file a NOD after deciding to approve a project for which an EIR is prepared (CEQA Guidelines § 15094). A local agency must file the NOD with the Santa Barbara County Clerk. The NOD must be posted for 30 days and sent to anyone previously requesting notice. Posting of the NOD starts a 30-day state of limitations on CEQA legal challenges (Public Resources Code §§ 21167[c]).

## 1.6 Public Outreach

The City of Goleta conducted multiple public outreach efforts for the proposed project that were noticed to neighbors and interested parties during the planning process. Community meetings were held at Ellwood School in March and November 2016, and the project was reviewed by the City of Goleta Design Review Board on an advisory basis in June 2016.

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