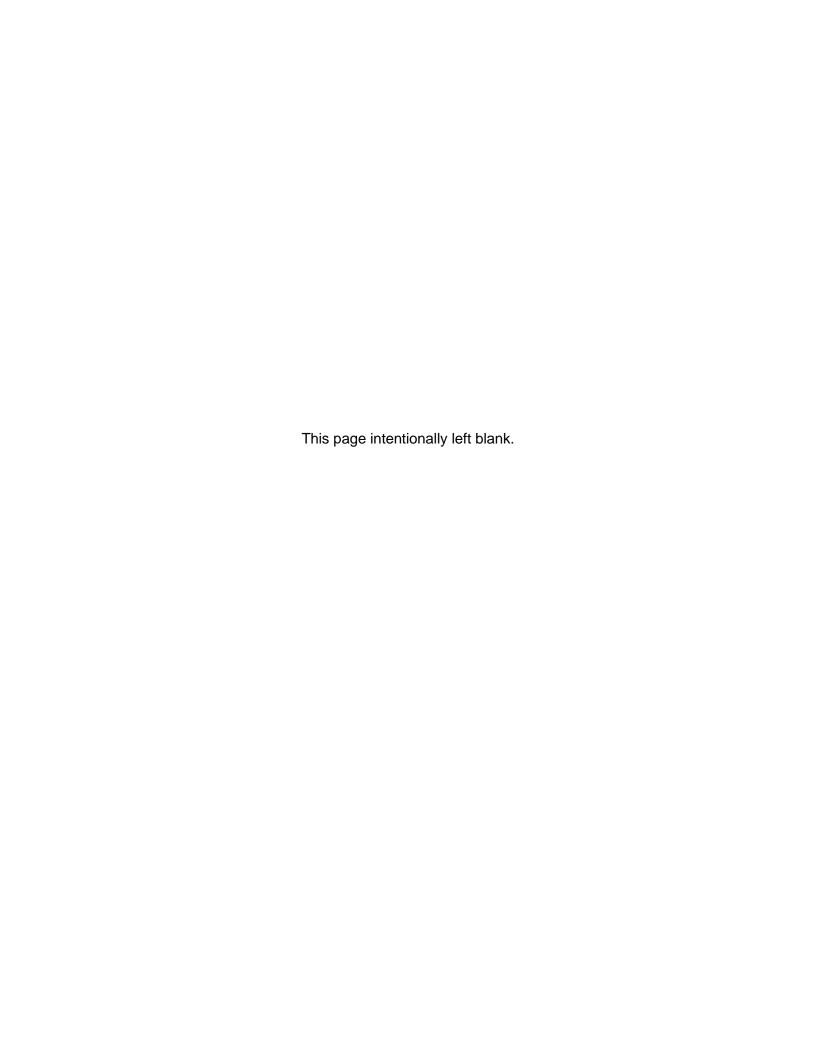
CEQA Findings of Fact and Statement of Overriding Considerations

Housing Expansion Phase 1 Housing Administration and Commons Building Project



California State University, Long Beach 1331 Palo Verde Avenue Long Beach, CA 90815

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1. FINDINGS OF FACT

1.1. INTRODUCTION

1.1.1. Purpose

This statement of Findings of Fact (Findings) and Statement of Overriding Considerations addresses the environmental effects associated with implementation of the Housing Expansion Phase 1 Housing Administration and Common Building Project (proposed project) on the California State University, Long Beach (CSULB) campus. These Findings are made pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Sections 21081, 21081.5, and 21081.6 of the Public Resources Code and Sections 15091 and 15093 of the CEQA Guidelines, Title 14, Cal. Code Regs. 15000, et seq (CEQA Guidelines). The potentially significant impacts were identified in both the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and the Final Supplemental EIR, as well as additional facts found in the complete record of proceedings.

Public Resources Code 21081 and Section 15091 of the CEQA Guidelines require that the lead agency prepare written findings for identified significant impacts, accompanied by a brief explanation for the rationale for each finding. The California State University (CSU) is identified as the lead agency responsible for preparation of the EIR in compliance with CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines. The approving governing body is the CSU Board of Trustees. Section 15091 of the CEQA Guidelines states, in part, that:

a) No public agency shall approve or carry out a project for which an EIR has been certified which identifies one or more significant environmental effects of the project unless the public agency makes one or more written findings for each of those significant effects, accompanied by a brief explanati

- b) When the lead agency approves a project which will result in the occurrence of significant effects which are identified in the final EIR but are not avoided or substantially lessened, the agency shall state in writing the specific reasons to support its action based on the Final EIR and/or other information in the record. The statement of overriding considerations shall be supported by substantial evidence in the record.
- c) If an agency makes a statement of overriding considerations, the statement should be included in the record of the project approval and should be mentioned in the notice of determination. This statement does not substitute for, and shall be in addition to, findings required pursuant to Section 15091.

The Final Supplemental EIR for the proposed project identified potentially significant effects that could result from project implementation. However, the CSU Board of Trustees finds that the inclusion of certain mitigation measures as part of the project approval will reduce most, but not all, of those effects to less than significant levels. Those impacts that are not reduced to less than significant levels are identified and overridden due to specific project benefits in a Statement of Overriding Considerations.

In accordance with CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines, the CSU Board of Trustees adopts these Findings as part of its certification of the Final Supplemental EIR for the proposed project. Pursuant to Section 21082.1(c)(3) of the Public Resources Code, the CSU Board of Trustees also finds that the Final Supplemental EIR reflects the Board's independent judgment as the approving governing body for the project. As required by CEQA, the CSU Board of Trustees, in adopting these Findings, also adopts a Mitigation Monitoring Program (MMP) for the proposed project. The CSU Board of Trustees finds that the MMP, which is incorporated by reference and made a part of these Findings, meets the requirements of Section 21081.6 of the Public Resources Code by providing for the implementation and monitoring of measures intended to mitigate potentially significant effects of the project.

1.1.2. Organization and Format of Findings

Section 1.1, Introduction, contains the purpose of this Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations, organization of this document, and a summary description of the proposed project and background facts relative to the environmental review process.

Section 1.2 discusses the CEQA findings of independent judgment. Section 1.2.1 identifies the proposed project's potential environmental effects that were determined not to be significant and, therefore, do not require mitigation measures. Section 1.2.2 describes the environmental effects determined to be less than significant and therefore, do not require mitigation measures. Section 1.2.3 identifies the potentially significant effects of the proposed project that would be mitigated to a less than significant level with implementation of the identified mitigation measures. Section 1.2.4 of these Findings identifies the significant impacts of the proposed project that cannot be mitigated to a less than significant level, even though all feasible mitigation measures have been identified and incorporated into the project.

Section 1.3 identifies the feasibility of the proposed project Alternatives that were studied in the Supplemental EIR.

Section 1.4 discusses the CEQA findings with respect to mitigation of significant adverse impacts, and adoption of the MMP.

Section 1.5 describes the certification of the Final Supplemental EIR.

Section 2 contains the Statement of Overriding Considerations providing the CSU

objectives of the proposed project.

1.1.3. Summary of Project Description

The Supplemental EIR analyzes the potential environmental impacts associated with the implementation of the proposed project. The existing Hillside Office/Commons building within the Hillside College residence hall complex was proposed for demolition and replacement in the Campus Master Plan and

Following construction, the proposed project would generally serve the same functions as the existing Hillside Office/Commons building, providing office space and a location for students to study and lounge. It is anticipated that the new HRL office building and new commons building would be open to students on a 24-hour basis, 7 days a week. The proposed buildings would be designed to be sustainable and achieve an NZE rating, and are expected to generate less energy and water demand than the existing Hillside Office/Commons building. Accordingly, the proposed project would be consis

1.1.4. Project Objectives

The overall purpose of the proposed project is to provide the space needed for student support services, including a housing and residential life office and a commons space in a central, accessible location within the Hillside College complex. Specific objectives of the proposed project are as follows:

Replace existing residential support facilities that are too outdated and undersized to support the full range of needed support services.

Site the proposed HRL office building and proposed commons building in the same location as the existing, original Hillside Office/Commons building, to maintain the historic spatial relationship to the existing Hillside College Complex residential buildings, hardscape, and landscape that

Final Supplemental EIR

Section 15088 of the State CEQA Guidelines requires that the Lead Agency responsible for the preparation of an EIR evaluate comments on environmental issues and prepare written response addressing each of the comments. The intent of the Final EIR is to provide a forum to address comments pertaining to the information and analysis contained within the Draft EIR, and to provide an opportunity for clarifications, corrections, or revisions to the Draft EIR as needed and as appropriate.

The Final Supplemental EIR assembles in one document all the environmental information and analysis prepared for the proposed project, including comments on the Draft Supplemental EIR and responses by CSULB to those comments.

In accordance with State CEQA Guidelines section 15132, the Final Supplemental EIR for the proposed project consists of: (i) the Draft Supplemental EIR and subsequent revisions; (ii) comments received on the Draft Supplemental EIR; (iii) a list of the persons, organizations, and public agencies commenting on the Draft Supplemental EIR; (iv) written responses to significant environmental issues raised during the public review and comment period and related supporting materials; and, (v) other information contained in the Supplemental EIR, including Supplemental EIR appendices.

The Final Supplemental EIR was released on July 10, 2020 and was made available for review by commenting agencies, in accordance with CEQA requirements. The Final EIR was also made available to the public online at https://www.csulb.edu/beach-building-services/supplemental-eir-2020.

1.2. CEQA FINDINGS OF INDEPENDENT JUDGMENT

1.2.1. Effects Determined Not to Be Significant

Section 15128 of the State CEQA Guidelines requires an EIR to contain a statement briefly indicating the reasons that various possible significant effects of a project were determined not to be significant and were, therefore, not discussed in detail in the EIR. An analysis was conducted to compare the proposed

with the project analyzed in the 2008 EIR and determine which environmental topics warranted further analysis in this Supplemental EIR. The following environmental issues were determined to not have new or substantially more severe significant direct, indirect, and/or cumulative environments effects as the result of implementation of the proposed project. Therefore, further detailed evaluation of these

of the Final EIR includes a brief discussion of the following impacts that were found not to be significant:

Aesthetics

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remains are discovered during the course of construction. The onsite archaeological and Native American monitor shall administer supplement briefing to all new construction personnel, prior to their commencement of earth moving construction activities.

Mitigation Measure CR-3

the project area is situated on an uplifted Pleistocene marine landform with substantial soil development at the surface; this landform is capped with imported fill and disturbed/redeposited

These alternatives are evaluated for their ability to avoid or

therefore, this alternative would result in increased impacts related to operational energy usage and GHG emissions.

1.3.2. Renovation of Existing Building Alternative

Description

Under the Renovation of Existing Building Alternative, the existing Hillside Office/Commons building would not be demolished but would remain on the proposed project site and undergo renovations to accommodate the desired programming. This alternative includes three options with varying square footages and space configurations. All three options would include the addition of a second floor to the existing single-story Hillside Office/Commons building. Earl Warren Drive would remain in its existing configuration, and no new pedestrian pathways would be constructed at the project site under this alternative. The three renovation options are described below.

Option 1: Under option 1, the first floor would remain in its current configuration (office, common space, and two apartments) with renovations only to the existing restrooms. The new second floor

Rationale

The Renovation of Existing Building Alternative would preserve the location of the existing Hillside Office/Commons building near existing parking facilities. Although the Renovation of Existing Building Alternative would not site the HRL office building at the existing Hillside Office/Commons building, it would partially meet the following objective of maintaining the historic spatial relationship to the existing Hillside

Drive:

Site the proposed HRL office building and proposed commons building in the same location as the existing, original Hillside Office/Commons building, to maintain the historic spatial relationship to the existing Hillside College Complex residential buildings, hardscape, and landscape that and accessibility along

Earl Warren Drive.

Although the location of the existing Hillside Office/Commons building would be maintained under this alternative, the renovations required to support the desired programming would be extensive. Additionally, the existing Hillside Office/Commons building footprint would remain the same and would continue to constrain the use of the site. The Renovation of Existing Building Alternative would adhere to ertain extent by meeting all current

accessibility codes; however, certain guidelines would not be implemented, including coordinating the building with the open spaces of the campus, provide for enhanced pedestrian circulation patterns, and featuring broad and welcoming entrances. For these reasons, the Renovation of Existing Building Alternative would partially meet the following objective:

Replace existing residential support facilities that are too outdated and undersized to support the full range of needed support services.

Ensure that the new HRL office building and commons building are consistent with the 2008

As the HRL office building and its services would not be sited at the existing Hillside Office/Commons building, and therefore not be centrally located, this alternative would not meet the following project objectives:

Provide high-quality programming services for students that includes adequate space for commons, administration, and HRL staff.

Site the proposed HRL office building and commons building within the Hillside College Complex in a way that best utilizes existing parking that is convenient and accessible for campus students, employees and visitors; and

Provide a centralized and accessible HRL office building and commons building for students in the Hillside and Parkside College Complexes, to provide a safe and comfortable living environment for students.

This alternative would not provide new common open space areas and would continue the operation of the existing Hillside Office/Commons building, which does not include features that achieve LEED or NZE requirements. As such, the Renovation of Existing Building Alternative would not meet the following objectives:

Provide open space for students to recreate and socialize.

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construction activities as compared to the proposed project. In addition, traffic conflicts may arise with the location of this alternative, as student vehicles are not currently permitted to park along Earl Warren Drive or Beach Drive in the vicinity of the Corner Site location. Although the New Building at Corner Site Alternative would avoid the significant and unavoidable impact to historical resources identified for the proposed project as no demolition of the existing Hillside Office/Commons building would occur, it would result in additional impacts not identified for the proposed project, would not meet five of the eight objectives of the proposed project, and would result in greater impacts to GHG and energy due to the need to develop a new site to accommodate parking.

1.3.4. New Building at Beach Drive Site with Renovation of Existing Building Alternative

Description

The New Building at Beach Drive Site with Renovation of Existing Building Alternative would include

Therefore, the New Building at Beach Drive Site only meets two project objectives and partially meets two project objectives of the proposed project. Furthermore, although the New Building at Beach Drive Site with Renovation of Existing Building Alternative would avoid the significant and unavoidable impact to historical resources identified for the proposed project due to preservation of the existing Hillside Office/Commons building, and result in greater impacts to GHG and energy due to construction occurring on three different sites (new building site, existing Hillside Office/Commons building, and the potential parking lot). Also, this alternative would result in the following additional impacts not identified for the proposed project: (1) it would develop a site currently used as an informal outdoor event area by students,

All reply

15088.5(a), means information added to an EIR that changes the EIR so as to deprive the public of a

An example of significant new information provided by the CEQA Guidelines is a disclosure showing that

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Findings of Fact

2. STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS

Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21081(b) and CEQA Guidelines section 15093(a) and (b), the CSU Board of Trustees is required to balance, as applicable, the economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits, including region-wide or statewide environmental benefits, of a proposed project against its unavoidable environmental risks when determining whether to approve the project. If the specific economic, legal, social, technological or other benefits of the project, including region-wide or statewide environmental benefits, outweigh the unavoidable

- 4. The proposed buildings are designed to encourage student involvement while creating a unique indoor-outdoor experience. The canopy-covered central courtyard will transition outdoor to interior spaces and provide outdoor seating for individuals and groups in a variety of locations to encourage student use of the space.
- 5. The proposed project will replace existing facilities with new facilities that meet the design goals for the campus, as well as incorporate warmer tones that are considered reflective of modern facilities.
- 6. The proposed project supports students and staff with appropriate administrative and housing facilities.
- 7. The proposed project will provide for enhanced pedestrian circulation patterns.
- 8. The proposed project will encourage use of bicycles reducing single-commuter vehicular traffic on campus by providing bicycle racks in a location that accommodates preferred access to the buildings and a connection to the existing campus bicycle network.
- 9. The proposed project will support the student engagement and well-being goals of the CSU Graduation Initiative 2025 through the provision of expanded residential support aduation rates for all CSU students while eliminating opportunity and achievement gaps.

Considering all the factors, the CSU Board of Trustees finds that there are specific economic, legal, social, technological, and other considerations associated with the project that serve to override and outweigh the project's significant unavoidable effects and, thus, the adverse effects are considered acceptable. Therefore, the CSU Board of Trustees hereby adopts this Statement of Overriding Considerations.