

I INTRODUCTION

This Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) provides an assessment of potential environmental consequences of the construction and operation of the proposed Siena Hill project. The City of Oakland is the lead agency for the project. This EIR is intended to inform the City of Oakland decision-makers, other responsible agencies, and the public-at-large of the nature of the project. Additionally, the report both identifies mitigation measures that, if followed, would reduce or avoid potentially significant environmental impacts and examines alternatives to the proposed project. The Draft EIR has been prepared in accordance with and in fulfillment of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements.

A. Proposed Action

The proposed project calls for 32 single-family homes on the project site, an undeveloped 3.9-acre parcel located on Keller Avenue in Oakland. Parking for the homes would be provided on site with a total of 103 off-street parking spaces.. The project site would be accessed from Keller Avenue via Siena Drive, a private one-way street constructed as part of the project. No on-street parking would be allowed along the private street. As a separate set of approvals, and not part of the project, the project applicant would request re-striping of 22 parallel parking spaces along Keller Avenue through the Public Works Agency, Transportation Services.

Basic data on the proposed project appears in Table 1 on the inside front cover of this EIR. The project is described in more detail in Chapter 3.

B. Scope of Environmental Concerns

An Initial Study was completed by the City of Oakland in January 2004. A Notice of Preparation (NOP) for this Draft EIR was issued on January 21, 2004, and a public scoping meeting was held before the Planning Commission on March 17, 2004. The following issues were identified as potentially sig-

nificant in the Initial Study, by members of the public at the Scoping Meeting, and through consultation with City of Oakland staff, Planning Commission and the project applicant. This EIR addresses the following concerns:

1. Aesthetics
2. Air Quality
3. Biological Resources
4. Cultural Resources
5. Geology and Soils
6. Hydrology and Water Quality
7. Land Use and Public Policy
8. Noise
9. Transportation and Traffic
10. Utilities and Service Systems

Through the Initial Study, other issues, such as those having to do with agricultural resources, hazardous materials, mineral resources, population and housing, and public services were determined not to require further study in the EIR. However, they are addressed briefly in Chapter 6.

C. Report Organization

This report is organized into the following chapters:

- ◆ Chapter 1: Introduction provides an introduction and overview of the document.
- ◆ Chapter 2: Report Summary provides a synopsis of the environmental impacts from the proposed project, describes recommended mitigation measures, and indicates the level of significance of impacts before and after mitigation.
- ◆ Chapter 3: Project Description describes the proposed project in detail, including the location, background information, primary objectives, and structural and technical characteristics.

- ◆ Chapter 4: Environmental Evaluation provides an analysis of the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project and presents recommended mitigation measures to reduce their significance.
- ◆ Chapter 5: Alternatives to the Proposed Project considers three alternatives to the proposed project, including the CEQA-required “No Project Alternative.”
- ◆ Chapter 6: Impact Overview briefly explains why the project would not have impacts related to other environmental issues included under CEQA’s purview.
- ◆ Chapter 7: Report Preparation identifies the preparers of the Draft EIR.

D. Environmental Review Process

As required by State Law, this Draft EIR will be available for review by the public and interested parties, agencies and organizations for a 45-day period.

The City of Oakland will hold a public hearing on the EIR during the review period. The public is invited to attend the hearing to offer oral comments on this Draft EIR.

Comments on the Draft EIR may also be submitted in writing to:

Heather Klein, Planner II
City of Oakland Community and Economic Development Agency
250 Frank Ogawa Plaza, Suite 3315
Oakland, CA 94612-2032

Following the close of the public comment period, a Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) will be prepared to respond to all substantive comments related to environmental issues surrounding the project. The FEIR will be available for public review prior to consideration of its certification by the City of Oakland Planning Commission.

Once the Planning Commission certifies the FEIR, the Commission will also consider the project itself, which may be approved or denied. If the project is approved, the Commission may require mitigation measures specified in this EIR as conditions of project approval. Alternatively, the Commission could require other mitigation measures deemed to be effective mitigations for the identified impacts, or it could find that the mitigation measures cannot be feasibly implemented. For any identified significant impacts for which no mitigation measure is feasible, the Commission will be required to adopt a finding that the mitigation measures are outside the jurisdiction of the City, or that the impacts are considered acceptable because specific overriding considerations indicate that the project's benefits outweigh the impacts in question.