



1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE FINAL EIR

This Final Environmental Impact Report (Final EIR) has been prepared to respond to comments received on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) prepared for the proposed Sunset Crossroads Specific Plan (Development Project). This document also describes additional project design features, modifications to mitigation measures provided in the Draft EIR, and additional mitigation measures that further reduce impacts of the Project, provides supplemental analysis in response to comments, and clarifies, amplifies or makes other minor modifications to the analyses in the Draft EIR. The Draft EIR identifies the likely environmental consequences associated with implementation of the Development Project and the Mount San Jacinto College (MSJC) Entitlements, which consist of amending the general plan designation and rezoning the MSJC Site to very high-density residential development (collectively the “Project”) and recommends mitigation measures to reduce potentially significant impacts. This Final EIR provides responses to comments on the Draft EIR and makes revisions to the Draft EIR, as necessary, resulting from those comments or to clarify material in the Draft EIR.

According to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15132, the Final EIR shall consist of (1) the Draft EIR or a revision of the draft; (2) comments and recommendations received on the Draft EIR either verbatim or in summary; (3) a list of persons, organizations, and public agencies commenting on the Draft EIR; (4) the responses of the Lead Agency to significant environmental points raised in the review and consultation process; and (5) any other information added by the Lead Agency.

This document, together with the Draft EIR, constitutes the Final EIR for the Project.

1.2 ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

According to Sections 15086 and 15087 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, lead agencies are required to consult with public agencies having jurisdiction over a proposed project and to provide the general public with an opportunity to comment on the Draft EIR.

On February 5, 2021, the City of Banning (City) circulated a Notice of Preparation (NOP) notifying responsible agencies and interested parties that an EIR would be prepared for the Project and indicated the environmental topics anticipated to be addressed in the EIR. The NOP was mailed to public agencies, organizations, and individuals likely to be interested in the potential impacts of the Project. An online scoping session was held as a public meeting on February 18, 2021 to solicit feedback regarding the scope and content of the EIR. Comments received by the City on the NOP were considered during preparation of the Draft EIR.

The Draft EIR was made available for public review on December 15, 2023, and was distributed to local and State responsible and trustee agencies. The Draft EIR and an announcement of its availability were posted electronically on the City’s website at: <https://banningca.gov/762/Sunset-Crossroads-Specific-Plan>, and paper copies were also made available for review at the City and at the Banning Library. The Notice of Availability (NOA) for the Draft EIR was provided to all individuals



and organizations who made a written request for notice, residents in the vicinity of the Development Site, and filed with the Riverside County Clerk.

The CEQA-mandated 45-day public comment period ended on January 30, 2024. The City received a total of 54 comment letters from State, regional, and local agencies, organizations, and individuals. Copies of all written comments received during the comment period are included in Chapter 3.0, Comments and Responses, of this document.

1.3 DOCUMENT ORGANIZATION

This document consists of the following chapters:

- **Chapter 1.0: Introduction.** This chapter discusses the purpose and organization of this Final EIR and RTC and summarizes the environmental review process for the Project.
- **Chapter 2.0: List of Commenters.** This chapter contains a list of agencies, organizations, and individuals who submitted written comments during the public review period.
- **Chapter 3.0: Comments and Responses.** This chapter contains reproductions of all comment letters received on the Draft EIR. A written response for each CEQA-related comment received during the public review period is provided. Each response is keyed to the corresponding comment.
- **Chapter 4.0: Draft EIR Text Revisions.** Corrections to the Draft EIR that are necessary in light of the comments received and responses provided or are necessary to amplify or clarify material in the Draft EIR are contained in this chapter. Double underlined text represents language that has been added to the Draft EIR; text with ~~strikeout~~ has been deleted from the Draft EIR.

1.4 USE OF FINAL EIR

The Final EIR will be utilized by the City of Banning, as Lead Agency, for the following purposes.

- The City of Banning Planning Commission, as a recommending body, will hold a public hearing and consider whether to recommend to the City Council approval of the Project described in the Final EIR and associated actions, and certification of the Final EIR for the Project.
- The City of Banning City Council, as the final approval body, will hold a public hearing following the Planning Commission hearing to consider approving the Project, associated actions, and certification of the Final EIR for the Project.

The Final EIR may also be used by other State, regional, and local agencies, as responsible agencies under CEQA, in considering other actions required for the Project.