City of Costa Mesa

FAIRVIEW DEVELOPMENTAL CENTER SPECIFIC PLAN

August 2026 | Final Environmental Impact Report

State Clearinghouse No. 2025101405



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FAIRVIEW DEVELOPMENTAL CENTER

SPECIFIC PLAN

City of Costa Mesa

City of Costa Mesa
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction 1-1
1.1 Final EIR Organization 1-1
1.2 Environmental Review Process 1-2
1.3 CEQA Requirements Regarding Comments and Responses 1-3

2. Response to Comments 2-1
2.1 List of Commenters 2-1
2.2 Comments and Responses 2-3

3. Revisions to the Draft EIR 3-1
3.1 Introduction 3-1
3.2 Draft EIR Revisions 3-1

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1. INTRODUCTION

This Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), as amended (Public Resources Code Sections 21000 et seq.), and the CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations Sections 15000 et seq.).

According to the CEQA Guidelines, Section 15132, the Final EIR shall consist of:

(a) The draft EIR or a revision of the draft.

(b) Comments and recommendations received on the draft EIR either verbatim or in summary.

(c) A list of persons, organizations, and public agencies comments on the draft EIR.

(d) The responses of the Lead Agency to significant environmental points raised in the review and consultation process.

(e) Any other information added by the Lead Agency.

This document contains responses to comments received on the Draft EIR for the Fairview Developmental Center Specific Plan during the public review period, which began May 14, 2026, and closed July 1, 2026. This document has been prepared in accordance with CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines and represents the independent judgment of the lead agency. This document and the circulated Draft EIR make up the Final EIR, in accordance with CEQA Guidelines, Section 15132.

1.1 FINAL EIR ORGANIZATION

Chapter 1, Introduction. This chapter describes CEQA requirements and the content of this Final EIR.

Chapter 2, Response to Comments. This chapter provides a list of agencies, organizations, and individuals commenting on the Draft EIR; comments received during the public review period; and responses to comments.

Chapter 3, Revisions to the Draft EIR. This chapter contains revisions to the Draft EIR as a result of the comments received by agencies and interested persons, as described in Chapter 2, and/or errors and omissions discovered subsequent to release of the Draft EIR for public review.

The document contains material and revisions that will be added to the text of the Draft EIR. City of Costa Mesa staff has reviewed this material and determined that none of this material

constitutes the type of significant new information that requires recirculation of the Draft EIR for further public comment under CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5. None of this new material indicates that the project will result in a significant new environmental impact not previously disclosed in the Draft EIR. Additionally, none of this material indicates that there would be a substantial increase in the severity of a previously identified environmental impact that will not be mitigated, or that there would be any of the other circumstances requiring recirculation described in CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5.

1.2 ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

1.2.1 Notice of Preparation

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15084, the City of Costa Mesa determined that an EIR would be appropriate for the project and circulated a Notice of Preparation (NOP). The public review period for the NOP was from October 29, 2025, to December 5, 2025, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15082. Additionally, a public scoping meeting was held at the Costa Mesa City Hall Community Room, at 77 Fair Drive, Costa Mesa, on November 17, 2025, to present the proposed project, describe the EIR process, and receive public comments. Public notification of the Draft EIR was satisfied by sending the NOP to state and local agencies and publishing it in a local newspaper.

Additionally, copies of the NOP were made available for review at:

- The City of Costa Mesa's website: https://www.costamesaca.gov/government/departments-and-divisions/economic-and-development-services/planning/environmental-notices-and-reports
- CEQAnet Web Portal: https://ceqanet.lci.ca.gov/2025101405

1.2.2 Draft Environmental Impact Report

Following the NOP, a Draft EIR was prepared in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15084 and Article 9. As the lead agency under CEQA Section 21067, the City is required to evaluate and consider environmental consequences of a proposed project before approving projects within its discretionary authority. In compliance with CEQA Guidelines Sections 15126.2 and 15126.4, the Draft EIR identified potentially significant adverse impacts to air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, noise, transportation, and tribal cultural resources, and proposed mitigation measures to reduce those impacts to less-than-significant levels. Impacts to air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, greenhouse gas emissions were found to be significant and unavoidable, and all other topics analyzed in the Draft EIR would result in impacts that are considered less than significant under CEQA or would result in no

environmental impact. Furthermore, consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(a), the City analyzed a range of reasonable project alternatives and locations that could feasibly achieve the project's basic objectives while avoiding or substantially lessening significant environmental effects and evaluated the comparative merits of those alternatives.

1.2.3 Notice of Availability

Following the completion of the Draft EIR, the City issued a Notice of Availability (NOA) on May 14, 2026, in compliance with CEQA Section 21165 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15087, to notify the public and federal, State, and local agencies that the Draft EIR is available for public comment for 48 days, between May 14, 2026 to July 1, 2026. Public notification of the Draft EIR was satisfied by sending the NOA to the following recipients:

- By mail to state and local agencies.
- By email to interested persons.
- Posted in a local newspaper.

The Draft EIR and NOA for the proposed project were available for public review at:

- City of Costa Mesa Development Services Department, 77 Fair Drive, 2nd Floor, Costa Mesa, CA 92626
- City of Costa Mesa website: https://www.costamesaca.gov/government/departments-anddivisions/economic-and-development-services/planning/environmental-notices-and-reports
- Mesa Verde Library, 2969 Mesa Verde Drive, Costa Mesa, CA 92626
- Costa Mesa/Donald Dungan Library, 1855 Park Avenue, Costa Mesa, CA 92627
- CEQAnet Web Portal: https://ceqanet.lci.ca.gov/2025101405/2

1.3 CEQA REQUIREMENTS REGARDING COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

CEQA Guidelines Section 15204(a) outlines parameters for submitting comments and reminds persons and public agencies that the focus of review and comment of Draft EIRs should be

> ... on the sufficiency of the document in identifying and analyzing possible impacts on the environment and ways in which significant effects of the project might be avoided or mitigated. Comments are most helpful when they suggest additional specific alternatives or mitigation measures that would provide better ways to avoid or mitigate the significant environmental effects. At the same time,

> reviewers should be aware that the adequacy of an EIR is determined in terms of what is reasonably feasible. CEQA does not require a lead agency to conduct every test or perform all research, study, and experimentation recommended or demanded by commenters. When responding to comments, lead agencies need only respond to significant environmental issues and do not need to provide all information requested by reviewers, as long as a good faith effort at full disclosure is made in the EIR.

CEQA Guidelines section 15204(c) further advises, "Reviewers should explain the basis for their comments, and should submit data or references offering facts, reasonable assumptions based on facts, or expert opinion supported by facts in support of the comments. Pursuant to section 15064, an effect shall not be considered significant in the absence of substantial evidence." Section 15204(d) also states, "Each responsible agency and trustee agency shall focus its comments on environmental information germane to that agency's statutory responsibility." Section 15204(e) states, "This section shall not be used to restrict the ability of reviewers to comment on the general adequacy of a document or of the lead agency to reject comments not focused as recommended by this section."

In accordance with CEQA, Public Resources Code section 21092.5, copies of the written responses to public agencies have been forwarded to those agencies at least 10 days prior to certifying the EIR. The responses have been forwarded with copies of this Final EIR, as permitted by CEQA, and will conform to the legal standards established for response to comments on Draft EIRs.

2. RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

Section 15088 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines requires the lead agency to evaluate comments on environmental issues received from public agencies and interested parties who reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and to prepare written responses.

This chapter provides all comments received on the Draft EIR and the lead agency's responses to each comment. Comment letters and specific comments are given letters and numbers for reference purposes. Where sections of the Draft EIR are excerpted in this document, the sections are shown indented. Changes to the Draft EIR text are shown in double underlined text for additions and ~~strikeout~~ for deletions.

2.1 LIST OF COMMENTERS

Table 2-1, *Commenters*, lists the agencies, organizations, and individuals that provided comments on the Draft EIR during the public review period.

Commenters

Number Reference	Commenter	Page Number of Comment Letter
Agencies		
A1	Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board	2-4
A2	Department of Toxic Substances Control (Scarlett Zhai)	2-7
A3	Southern California Gas Company	2-8
A4	Orange County Public Works Department	2-13
A5	Orange County Transit Authority	2-16
A6	California Governor's Office of Emergency Services	2-17
A7	Juaneño Band of Mission Indians, Acjachemen Nation- Belardes	2-31
Organizations		
O1	Lozeau Drury LLP on behalf of Supporters Alliance for Environmental Responsibility (SAFER)	2-32
O2	Coastal Corridor Alliance	2-34
O3	Costa Mesa First	2-38

Commenters

Number Reference	Commenter	Page Number of Comment Letter
Individuals		
I1	Joseph DeCarlo	2-79
I2	Robert Schureman	2-80
I3	Claire Ramser	2-81
I4	Wendy Leece	2-86

Responses on General Comments

The City acknowledges general comments opposing the project.. These general comments express the general opinion of commenters regarding opposition to the proposed project but do not raise issues related to the adequacy of any specific section, analysis, or evidence in the Draft EIR. Thus, no further response is required. "[A] general comment requires only a general response." P*aulek v. Cal. Dept. of Water Resources*, 231 Cal.App.4th 35, 47 (2014). General comments that do not include reference to any specific facts or evidence are considered speculative and unsupported. The CEQA Guidelines provide that:

The level of detail contained in the response, however, may correspond to the level of detail provided in the comment (i.e., responses to general comments may be general). A general response may be appropriate when a comment does not contain or specifically refer to readily available information, or does not explain the relevance of evidence submitted with the comment. (14 Cal. Code Regs. Section 15088)

Community Townhall Q&A

A Community Q&A meeting was conducted by the City on Thursday, July 23, from 6:00 pm to 8:45 pm at the Norma Hertzog Community Center at 1845 Park Avenue. Because this meeting was held after the closing of the Draft EIR public comment period, the Final EIR does not provide responses to each comment received, but does provide a summary of the comments received for transparency and to provide additional context regarding the FDCSP outreach process. City staff presented the FDC Specific Plan, covering the site's history, planning process, housing goals, conceptual land use plan, environmental review, and upcoming next steps. The meeting concluded with a moderated public question-and-answer session. The primary topics raised by attendees included: housing density (2,300–4,000 units), affordable housing levels and feasibility, traffic and circulation, school capacity, emergency access, impacts to the Costa Mesa Country Club and open space, commercial uses, public amenities, infrastructure funding, and the City's role versus the State's in redevelopment.

Staff explained that the Draft EIR evaluated all of these topics (traffic, schools, public safety, infrastructure, and other impacts), and includes mitigation measures that are required to be

complied with. Staff emphasized that the land use plan is conceptual, and the future master developer must submit detailed application materials that include: plans, public amenities, phasing, and development agreements being reviewed during later approval stages. The proposed secondary access road was described as a fire safety requirement, although construction may not occur for many years. Staff also clarified that developers would fund on-site infrastructure and pay impact fees, while ongoing public services would be supported through property taxes and City revenues.

2.2 COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

This section includes a reproduction of and response to each comment received during the public review period for the Draft EIR. Comments are presented in their original form in Appendix A, *Comment Letters Received on the Draft EIR*, and annotated to identify each comment number.

Responses to individual comments are provided in this chapter following the text of each corresponding comment. Comments are arranged by category, date received, and name. Categories and their corresponding abbreviations are:

- Agencies (A)
- Organizations (O)
- Individuals (I)

2.2.1 Comments from Agencies

A1. Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), May 27, 2026

Comment A1-1

Dear Ms. Dacey:

Thank you for providing Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board (Santa Ana Water Board) staff with the opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Fairview Developmental Center Specific Plan (Project). The Project would guide the development of a mixed-income, mixed-use community on a 95-acre portion of the former Fairview Developmental Center.

We appreciate the City of Costa Mesa's effort to present the Santa Ana Water Board's regulatory program for pollutants in stormwater runoff from the Project site in the DEIR. We value the opportunity to better inform the Project's stakeholders and to demonstrate the City's work to comply with the Clean Water Act. Please make the following clarifications in the DEIR.

Response A1-1

The City has reviewed the comments and provided responses. Responses to the specific issues raised by the RWQCB are provided in Responses A1-2 through A1-6.

Comment A1-2

In section 3.3.1, please add a section on California Water Code (CWC) section 13000 et seq. CWC section 13240 requires each regional board to adopt water quality control plans. The Santa Ana Water Board has adopted the Water Quality Control Plan for the Santa Ana River Basin (Basin Plan). The Basin Plan includes water quality objectives to protect beneficial uses. Among the beneficial uses is the RARE beneficial use for waters that support habitats necessary for the survival and successful maintenance of plant or animal species designated under state or federal law as rare, threatened, or endangered.

Response A1-2

At the request of the commenter the discussion of the California Water Code and the Basin Plan has been added to Section 3.3.1 of Section 3.3, *Biological Resources*. This revision provides additional regulatory background information but does not result in new significant environmental impacts, a substantial increase in the severity of an identified impact, or a

fundamentally different impact analysis. Therefore, recirculation of the Draft EIR is not required. Refer to Section 3, *Revisions to the Draft EIR*.

Comment A1-3

In section 3.9.1, please explain that the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act was amended to implement parts of the Clean Water Act, including section 402(p). The amendment helps authorize the Santa Ana Water Board to issue National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits under the Clean Water Act.

Response A1-3

At the request of the commenter the revision regarding the Clean Water Act amendment has been added to the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act in Section 3.9.1 of Section 3.9, *Hydrology and Water Quality*. This revision provides additional regulatory background information but does not result in new significant environmental impacts, a substantial increase in the severity of an identified impact, or a fundamentally different impact analysis. Therefore, recirculation of the Draft EIR is not required. Refer to Section 3, *Revisions to the Draft EIR*.

Comment A1-4

Santa Ana Water Board staff is concerned that the City's DEIR does not articulate a strategy to incorporate structural treatment controls into the Project's storm drain infrastructure in a way that does not risk noncompliance with the requirements of Order R8-2009-0033, NPDES Permit CAS618030. Section XII.A.2, in part, encourages the City to require submission of a conceptual Water Quality Control Plan (WQMP) as early in the planning process as possible. A conceptual WQMP would describe best management practices for source control, pollution prevention, site design, low impact development implementation, and structural treatment controls pursuant to section XII.A.3 of the Order.

At this planning stage of the Project, Santa Ana Water Board staff is most concerned with structural treatment controls that would comprehensively treat all runoff from the Project. The City could require that structural treatment controls be proposed as part of subsequent projects on lots within the Project area. This could result in a piecemeal approach to developing treatment control infrastructure that risks omitting treatment of runoff from the public roadways in the Project area.

Response A1-4

At the request of the commenter, revisions regarding a conceptual WQMP prepared by the Master Developer have been added in Section 3.9.1 and Section 3.9.4 of Section 3.9, *Hydrology and Water Quality*. These revisions provide additional regulatory background information but do not result in new significant environmental impacts, a substantial increase in the severity of

an identified impact, or a fundamentally different impact analysis. Therefore, recirculation of the Draft EIR is not required. Refer to Section 3, *Revisions to the Draft EIR*.

Comment A1-5

Section 7.II-2.4.1 of the Model WQMP requires that "[s]treets, roads or highway projects that are planned and constructed as part of a private new development or significant redevelopment project, even if they will become dedicated public right-of-way upon project completion, must be included as part of the overall Project WQMP for the private project." Section XII.B.2 of Order R8-2009-0033 requires that each project WQMP be developed in accordance with the Model WQMP. Not only would each subsequent project risk noncompliance with the Order, but the cost and treatment effectiveness of a piecemealed approach is likely to be limited.

Alternatively, the City could propose a comprehensive strategy for the Project by identifying and locating a conceptual sub-regional treatment control in section 2.6.7 and elsewhere in the DEIR. This would also include a local funding mechanism for operations and maintenance of a centralized facility. A centralized facility could provide additional community benefits such as open space and flood control.

Response A1-5

See Response to A1-4 regarding WQMP requirements. The location, ownership, operation, maintenance, and funding of stormwater treatment facilities would be determined through future project design, engineering studies, and permitting processes. The comment does not identify a deficiency in the Draft EIR's impact analysis. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

Comment A1-6

Compare this to a decentralized system of pollution controls in the public rights-of-way, developed by different proponents of subsequent projects over time, and with yet unknown funding for operations and maintenance. This could result in different types of single-purpose facilities spread over the Project site with varying hydrologic, pollution control, and maintenance efficiencies. Santa Ana Water Board staff strongly urges the City to pursue a comprehensive strategy instead.

Response A1-6

The issues raised in this comment regarding the level of hydrology and water quality analysis and the planning of future stormwater treatment infrastructure are addressed in Responses A1-4 and A1-5. The Draft EIR provides an analysis appropriate for the program-level nature of the proposed project. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are required in response to this comment.

A2. Department of Toxic Substances Control (Scarlett Zhai), June 17, 2026

Comment A2-1

Good afternoon Melinda,

I recently found this in my mailbox. It's a notice about a draft EIR for public comment for the Costa Mesa Fairview Development Center Specific Plan. I probably got on your distribution list when I was the Project Manager for a site nearby several years ago. Currently I don't have any projects within this area. It will be fine if you remove my information from your distribution list. DTSC has a CEQA coordinator who will identify the project team to reach out if I happen to have projects in Costa Mesa area in the future. Let me know if you need anything else from me. Thanks!

Response A2-1

The City acknowledges the commenter's request and has removed the commenter from the project's distribution list. The Notice of Availability (NOA) for the proposed project was distributed through certified mail to the address of the CEQA unit of the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) on May 13, 2026. The NOA was also distributed by email to the specific contacts at DTSC that commented on the project's Notice of Preparation. No further response is required.

A3. Southern California Gas Company Transmission Technical Services Department (SoCalGas), June 22, 2026

Comment A3-1

Good morning,

Attached is a letter from the Transmission Department of SoCalGas stating that we have high pressure gas transmission facilities within your proposed project vicinity. Included is a map of the conflict area and our general requirements when performing work or planning projects near SoCalGas high pressure lines. Please note, dimensioning is not provided, and we do not share as-built maps.

If additional assistance is required, please send a copy of the project plans for an engineer to review and advise.

Please reference the Document Control File number (DCF) on all future correspondence in regards to this project.

Response A3-1

The City has reviewed the comments and provided responses. Responses to the specific issues raised by SoCalGas are provided in Responses A3-2 through A3-5.

Comment A3-2

Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas) Transmission Department operates and maintains high-pressure natural gas transmission pipeline(s) in the vicinity of your project. The pipeline is shown on the attached map(s). Please note, only the high-pressure transmission pipeline information is current on these atlas prints.

Response A3-2

See Response A3-3. The City acknowledges the presence of one high-pressure natural gas transmission pipeline in the vicinity of the project site. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are required.

Comment A3-3

Our Gas Distribution Department may have other gas facilities within your project area. To assure no conflict with the SoCalGas' distribution pipeline system, please contact

AtlasRequests/WillServeAnaheim@semprautilities.com.

Response A3-3

The future master developer would be required to contact SoCalGas' Transmission and Distribution Department to ensure that the project does not adversely impact any identified pipelines in compliance with SoCalGas's requirements (as discussed in Response A3-5). If future projects would impact SoCalGas's existing gas pipelines or easements, communication would be maintained with SoCalGas's Transmission and Distribution Department. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are required.

Comment A3-4

This is only a response to a gas facility map request; a review of potential conflicts associated with your request has not been conducted. Consequently, **this letter does not constitute clearance for any construction work near or around SoCalGas' pipeline(s)**. As your project plans are developed, you must notify SoCalGas - Gas Transmission Department regarding the improvements that are proposed near our pipeline(s) and within our easement(s) before you begin any construction, including potholing. In doing so, please allow sufficient time as there may be certain requirements that need to be incorporated into your project's design and could significantly affect your project construction schedule.

Response A3-4

The City acknowledges that this does not constitute clearance for construction work on or near SoCalGas pipeline(s). As discussed in Response A3-3, the future master developer would coordinate with SoCalGas's Gas Transmission and Distribution Department during final design and prior to construction for any work near existing gas pipelines or easements. Any required protective measures or design modifications would be incorporated into the project, as appropriate, and as identified in Response A3-5. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are required.

Comment A3-5

The following are general requirements provided when performing work or planning projects near SoCalGas high pressure lines. Please review requirements along with project plans and notify SoCalGas Transmission Department about any questions or conflicts.

It is highly recommended that communication is maintained with SoCalGas to address all conflicts. Depending on the specific scope of your project there may be less or more requirements that need to be discussed regarding your project.

1 - Consideration must be given to the safety of our pipeline(s) during all project stages.

2 - SoCalGas must have continuous and uninterrupted access to the pipeline(s) and easement(s). In addition, SoCalGas conducts routine patrols and surveys of the pipeline(s); SoCalGas needs drivable access along the pipeline(s)/easement(s).

3 - Buried pipelines must have a minimum cover of 3 feet and a maximum cover of 7 feet below finished grade. No change of grade whatsoever, even within these parameters, shall be made without prior approval of SoCalGas.

4 - Prior to SoCalGas approving encroachment onto its easement(s), SoCalGas must be furnished with final grading plans showing the depth of the pipeline(s) below the existing surface and the depth of the pipeline(s) below the proposed finished grade. These elevations must meet SoCalGas' requirements for buried pipelines.

5 - No permanent structures, such as buildings, block walls, foundations, gates, etc., shall be constructed within the easement or over the pipeline(s).

6 - There shall be no planting of trees or other deep-rooted plants within the easement(s) or over the pipeline(s).

7 - Substructures shall cross perpendicular to the easement(s). Substructure crossings must provide a minimum of 18-inches vertical clearance from the pipeline(s). Additional separation is required for leach lines, fuel lines, etc.

8 - Parallel encroachments within the easement(s) are prohibited. In areas where a parallel substructure is being constructed outside of the easement(s), SoCalGas requires five feet of separation, with three feet of undisturbed fill, in order to protect the integrity of our facilities and allow the facilities to be safely accessed during inspection, maintenance, and repair. Additional separation may be needed for leach lines, fuel lines, high voltage electric, etc.

9 - All encroachments onto SoCalGas' easement(s) must have written approval of SoCalGas prior to construction or encroaching onto the easement(s).

10 - All work within the SoCalGas easement(s) and/or within 10 feet of the pipeline(s) must be witnessed by a SoCalGas representative, and no work will be allowed without the SoCalGas representative on site.

11 - No heavy equipment shall cross the pipeline(s) without SoCalGas' approval. Additional protective measures may be required where heavy equipment is expected to cross the pipeline(s).

12 - No mechanical equipment shall operate within three horizontal feet of the pipeline(s), and any closer work must be performed by hand.

13 - No mechanical equipment shall operate within two vertical feet of the pipeline(s), and any closer work must be performed by hand.

14 - Buried pipeline(s) shall not be left exposed, and exposed pipeline(s) shall not be buried, without prior inspection and approval by SoCalGas. If the pipeline(s) are exposed during construction (e.g. substructure crossings, etc.), the pipeline must be backfilled with sand or zero-sack slurry only.

15 - No vibratory compaction is permitted over the pipeline(s). In rare cases, vibratory compaction may be approved by SoCalGas' Engineering Department following review of detailed site conditions, pipeline data, and equipment specifications.

16 - All contractors and subcontractors must be notified of the presence of the pipeline(s).

17 - Contractors and subcontractors must call DigAlert (811) at least 2 working days prior to construction, grading, or excavation.

18 - Once approved, encroachments within SoCalGas' easement(s) shall be documented in an easement amendment or other document, as deemed appropriate by SoCalGas' Land Services Department.

In addition to the previous requirements, SoCalGas recommends the following:

19 - Potholes should be made, as necessary, to establish the horizontal and vertical alignment of the pipeline(s) within the project area. This information should be indicated on the plans, as needed. CAUTION: SoCalGas personnel must be present during potholing operations. Arrangements for SoCalGas personnel to stand by during potholing activities can be made by calling DigAlert at 811.

20 - Consideration should be given to building setbacks from the easement lines. A minimum 15-foot setback is recommended whenever possible.

21 - All potential buyers or tenants of the property should be made aware of the presence of the pipeline(s) and easement restrictions.

Response A3-5

As discussed in Section 7.2.1 of the FDCSP and Section 3.17, Utilities and Service Systems, the Master Developer would coordinate with SoCalGas to construct a new gas service system at the project site that would connect to the existing high pressure distribution in Harbor Boulevard. As such, the future master developer and City of Costa Mesa would coordinate with SoCalGas's Gas Transmission and Distribution Department during final design and prior to construction for any work near the existing high pressure gas pipelines or easements.

The future master developer and City of Costa Mesa would comply with all applicable SoCalGas requirements for work within or adjacent to high-pressure gas transmission pipelines and easements.

Prior to construction, the future master developer would coordinate with SoCalGas, obtain all required approvals, and incorporate SoCalGas requirements into project plans identified in Comment A3-5, as applicable. With adherence to these requirements and ongoing coordination with SoCalGas, potential impacts to gas transmission and distribution facilities would not be impacted. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are required.

The request for disclosures to future residents in the plan area will be considered as part of the entitlement review process.

A4. Orange County Public Works Department, June 26, 2026

Comment A4-1

Dear Melinda Dacey,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Notice of Availability of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Fairview Development Center Specific Plan Project (SCH No. 2025101405) (Project). The County of Orange (OC) offers the following comments:

Response A4-1

The City has reviewed the comments and provided responses. Responses to the specific issues raised by the OC Public Works are provided in Responses A4-2 through A4-6.

Comment A4-2

OC Public Libraries:

OC Public Libraries anticipates the scale of the proposed development to significantly increase usage at nearby OC Public libraries services. The proposed Project is planned to add approximately 2,300–4,000 new housing units and an estimated 10,000 new residents within the service areas of the Mesa Verde Library and the Donald Dungan Library. The libraries are located less than two miles from the Project site.

1. As essential community hubs offering educational resources, technology access, cultural programming and public gathering spaces, these libraries must be evaluated for capacity, functionality, and readiness to support projected population growth.

Response A4-2

Draft EIR Section 3.13, *Public Services* (page 3.13-21), evaluates whether the proposed project would result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, including libraries, or the need for such facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts.

As discussed in the Draft EIR, implementation of the proposed project would increase population and residential development within the plan area, resulting in increased demand for library services. However, this increased demand would be largely offset through property tax revenues generated by new development. In addition, future development projects within the plan area would be reviewed by the City of Costa Mesa on a project-by-project basis and would be required to comply with applicable regulations in effect at the time of development, including payment of development impact fees consistent with General Plan Policy LU 5.5.

Furthermore, as discussed in Section 7.2.5 of the FDCSP, the land use plan under the proposed project would allow for the development of additional library facilities at the project site to accommodate future demand. The Draft EIR determined that implementation of the proposed project would result in less than significant substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered library facilities. The comment does not identify any deficiencies in the Draft EIR's analysis or conclusions. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are required.

Comment A4-3

a. The Mesa Verde Library, built in 1965 and approximately 6,450 sq. ft., faces structural and functional limitations. Given its age, size, and projected population increases, modernization—or potential expansion—may be warranted.

Response A4-3

See Response A4-2. The potential need for future modernization or expansion of existing library facilities is speculative and does not alter the Draft EIR's conclusion that the proposed project would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant. The comment does not identify any deficiencies in the Draft EIR's analysis or conclusions. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are required.

Comment A4-4

b. Given anticipated increases in foot traffic and service requests, Donald Dungan Library may require evaluation of staffing levels to maintain acceptable service ratios, and demand on technology stations, public computers and service counters to ensure high quality, accessible library services for current and future residents.

Response A4-4

See Response A4-2. These recommendations pertain to the operational management and level of service provided by the library rather than physical environmental impacts subject to analysis under CEQA. The comment does not identify any deficiencies in the Draft EIR's analysis or conclusions. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are required.

Comment A4-5

OC Infrastructure Programs – Flood Plain Management and Hydrology:

Within the project limits, OC Flood Control District (OCFCD) facilities: D03 (Greenville-Banning Channel) and D04 (Fairview Channel) will be impacted by the proposed Project. Section 3.17 of

the DEIR indicates that installing a new connection to the Fairview Channel is an option. Please note that any potential impacts to OCFCD facilities (hydraulics, structures, right-of-way, access, operations and maintenance, future repairs or improvements, etc.) should be identified and appropriately mitigated in consultation with OC Public Works. An OC Property Permit is required for the proposed Project. For information regarding the permit application process, please refer to the Encroachment Permits website https://myoceservices.ocgov.com/. Technical reviews and approvals for the proposed Project will be accomplished within the permit process.

Response A4-5

As discussed in Draft EIR Section 3.17, *Utilities and Service Systems* (page 3.17-38), it is acknowledged that a potential new connection to the Fairview Channel would require permits from OCFCD and that the final drainage design and selection of the preferred option would be determined by the master developer in coordination with the City of Costa Mesa and OCFCD. The Draft EIR also notes that the City of Costa Mesa Public Works Maintenance Division is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the City's public drainage facilities. Because the proposed project is a specific plan, the design and location of future drainage improvements are conceptual at this time. As future implementation of development projects are proposed, they will be required to comply with all applicable federal, State, and local permitting requirements, including obtaining any required permits and approvals from OC Public Works and OCFCD prior to construction. Through the applicable permitting and engineering review processes, potential impacts to OCFCD facilities, including hydraulics, structures, rights-of-way, access, operations and maintenance, and future repairs or improvements, will be evaluated and addressed in accordance with applicable regulatory requirements. The comment does not identify any deficiencies in the Draft EIR's analysis or conclusions. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are required.

Comment A4-6

Thank you again for the opportunity to review the DEIR. If you have any questions regarding these comments, please contact Virginia Gomez at (714) 667-1614 for OC Development Services, Julie Oakley at (714) 566-3024 for OC Public Libraries, Alison Camara at (714) 975-4289 or Tai Bui at (657) 898-3134 for OC Infrastructure Programs. Please continue to keep the County of Orange on the distribution list for future notifications related to the proposed Project.

Response A4-6

See Response A4-1.

A5. Orange County Transit Authority (OCTA), July 1, 2026

Comment A5-1

Dear Ms. Dacey:
Thank you for providing the Orange County Transportation Authority with the opportunity to review the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the City of Costa Mesa's Fairview Developmental Center Specific Plan. The following comments are provided for your consideration:

- On page 2-39 of the DEIR, under section 'Public Transit', please make the following revisions:
  - Revise "Route 47 that stops at Harbor Boulevard and Wilson" to" Route 47 that stops at Wilson Street and Harbor Boulevard."
  - Revise "Route 178 that stops at Harbor Boulevard and Adams Avenue" to "Route 178 that stops at Adams Avenue and Harbor Boulevard."

Response A5-1

At the request of the commenter, the text on page 2-39 of Chapter 2, *Project Description*, has been revised to clarify the descriptions of the Orange County Transportation Authority bus stop locations for Routes 47 and 178. The revisions reorder the street names for consistency with the commenter's preferred convention but do not change the information presented or affect the environmental analysis. These minor editorial revisions do not result in new significant environmental impacts, a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified impacts, or a fundamentally different impact analysis. Therefore, recirculation of the Draft EIR is not required. Refer to Section 3, *Revisions to the Draft EIR*.

Comment A5-2

Thank you for the opportunity to review this document. Should you have any questions or comments, please contact me at (714) 560-5907 or at dphu@octa.net.

Response A5-2

The comment does not raise any specific issues regarding the adequacy of the environmental analysis or identify any significant environmental impacts. Therefore, no further response is required.

A6. California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (CalOES), July 7, 2026

Comment A6-1

On behalf of the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES), we appreciate the opportunity to review and comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Fairview Developmental Center Specific Plan (FDCSP). As the State continues construction of the Southern Region Emergency Operations Center (SREOC) on the State-retained parcel, we want to ensure that the final Specific Plan supports the long-term functionality, safety, and resilience of this essential facility.

Because the SREOC serves a critical statewide role in coordinating life-safety operations and multi-agency emergency response across eleven Southern California counties and has 24/7 mission-critical responsibilities, the facility relies on reliable access, stable utilities, protected communications pathways, and construction practices that avoid disruption to its operations. This includes retaining the right to request a temporary partial or total work stoppage of construction when necessary to complete the state's mission. We offer the following comments with the goal of supporting the City's planning efforts while ensuring continuity of essential emergency services for more than 23 million Californians.

Response A6-1

This comment serves as introductory statements to this letter. This comment identifies no specific deficiencies in the Draft EIR, and no further response is required.

Comment A6-2

1. Development and Design Standards: Golf Netting Study

The DEIR acknowledges potential need for enhanced golf netting, but existing conditions show current netting is inadequate. Since April 2025, over 3,000 errant golf balls have struck the SREOC construction site, confirming multiple holes and insufficient netting coverage. It is unclear in the DEIR who will be responsible for the installation, operation, and maintenance of the currently deficient, as well as future enhanced, golf ball netting. The State assumes that City or its golf course operator will address the current deficiency as well as any necessary future enhancements and that these costs will not be borne by, nor passed on to, the Fairview Specific Plan development. The State has owned and operated a residential care facility at this location since the 1950's, which preceded the City's construction a public golf course on land transferred to it by the State in the 1980's. Because the SREOC relies on unobstructed communications pathways, Cal OES requests that all proposed netting improvements—including pole height,

location, and materials—be reviewed and approved by Cal OES Public Safety Communications to ensure they do not interfere with line-of-sight communications.

- **DEIR Reference:** Development and Design Standards, Fencing, p. 90.
- **Requested Revision:** Require a golf netting study for the specific plan area which should be reviewed by Cal OES PSC for communication line of sight; clarify within the Specific Plan as to who is responsible for installation of enhanced netting as well as ongoing maintenance, repair, and replacement of golf netting to ensure continuous protection of existing and future surrounding uses.

Response A6-2

The City invites Cal OES to review the FDCSP's netting standards, outlined in Section 4.6.8 *Fences, Walls, Netting, and Safety,* of the FDCSP. However, the issue raised in this comment does not pertain to the environmental topics studied under CEQA, nor does it concern impacts of the proposed project on the environment. Public agencies subject to CEQA are not required to analyze whether existing environmental conditions may impact a proposed project's future users or residents (*California Building Industry Association v. Bay Area Air Quality Management District*, 2015, Case No. S213478). As this comment does not otherwise address the adequacy of the environmental analysis for the proposed project, no changes to the Draft EIR are required.

Comment A6-3

2. Air Quality

Construction is anticipated to take up to 18 years. Construction activities, particularly grading, may generate dust that could affect the SREOC's HVAC systems and staff. To minimize potential impacts on staff and equipment, we recommend measures such as continuous dust monitoring and perimeter misting during grading within 500 feet of the facility.

- **DEIR Reference:** Air Quality, p. 141.
- **Requested Revision:** When grading within 500 ft of SREOC require continuous dust monitor and employ continuous perimeter misting when applicable. Establish a developer-funded program to reimburse SREOC for accelerated HVAC filter replacement to protect staff and sensitive equipment.

Response A6-3

This comment recommends incorporating additional construction dust control requirements, including continuous dust monitoring and misting during grading activities within 500 feet of the facility and replacement of HVAC filters to protect staff and sensitive equipment. South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD) Rule 403 requires implementation of

comprehensive fugitive dust control measures to minimize construction-related dust emissions. Although the Draft EIR conservatively concludes that construction-related emissions impacts would remain significant and unavoidable, Mitigation Measure AIR-4 has been revised in response to the comment to include additional best management practices that will be considered, as appropriate, to further minimize fugitive dust emissions in the vicinity of nearby occupied buildings. With these revisions, Mitigation Measure AIR-4 provides additional measures to minimize construction-related dust emissions and potential exposure at the SREOC facility. These minor editorial revisions do not result in new significant environmental impacts, a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified impacts, or a fundamentally different impact analysis. Therefore, recirculation of the Draft EIR is not required. Refer to Section 3, *Revisions to the Draft EIR*.

Comment A6-4

3. Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Comment: Demolitions displace established rodent colonies and disturb insect nests. The vibrations, machinery, and lack of food sources force these pests into adjacent undisturbed structures.

- **DEIR Reference:** Hazards and Hazardous Materials, p. 335.
- **Requested Revision:** Require a Comprehensive Vector Control and Extermination Plan before and during demolition of adjacent FDC buildings to prevent pest migration into SREOC.

Response A6-4

The City recognizes Cal OES's concerns regarding pest dispersal during demolition of the existing FDC buildings. However, this issue does not pertain to the environmental topics studied under CEQA, or otherwise represent a physical impact to the environment. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are necessary to address this comment. The City will continue to coordinate with CalOES during the entitlement review process for any additional appropriate Conditions of Approval.

Comment A6-5

4. Air Quality

Comment: The DEIR does not describe how airborne contaminants from demolition, such as asbestos, silica, and diesel particulate matter, will be monitored and controlled near the SREOC.

- **DEIR Reference:** Hazards and Hazardous Materials, p. 335.

- **Requested Revision:** Require real-time perimeter air monitoring for asbestos, silica, diesel PM at the adjacent SREOC property lines during major abatement and/or grading activities.

Response A6-5

This comment recommends requiring real-time perimeter air monitoring for asbestos, silica, and diesel particulate matter (DPM) during construction activities. Air monitors in the South Coast AQMD region monitor coarse inhalable particulate matter by size (i.e., PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$) and do not have the ability to detect their composition (i.e., asbestos, silica, or DPM). Impacts AIR-2 and AIR-4 of the Draft EIR recognize and discuss the importance of minimizing exposure of sensitive receptors to airborne contaminants during construction. Construction activities would be required to comply with applicable federal, State, and local regulations governing asbestos abatement, hazardous materials handling, and fugitive dust control, including South Coast AQMD Rule 403, where applicable. In response to this comment, Mitigation Measure AIR-4 has been revised to include consideration of additional best management practices, such as air monitoring during major abatement, demolition, grading, or other high-dust-generating activities. These minor editorial revisions do not result in new significant environmental impacts, a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified impacts, or a fundamentally different impact analysis. Therefore, recirculation of the Draft EIR is not required. Refer to Section 3, *Revisions to the Draft EIR*.

Comment A6-6

5. Hydrology: Stormwater Drainage & SREOC Protection

To ensure that stormwater flows do not inadvertently affect SREOC operations, we suggest incorporating “no-impairment” criteria into the master grading and hydrology plan for both typical and extreme storm events.

- **DEIR Reference:** Hydrology and Water Quality, p. 371.
- **Requested Revision:** Cal OES requests a mitigation measure requiring “no-impairment” drainage criteria for the SREOC in the master grading/hydrology plan.

Response A6-6

As noted in Section 3.9, *Hydrology and Water Quality*, of the Draft EIR (see page 3.9-24), the proposed project would be required to improve the condition of the 36-inch storm drain west of the site and prepare a detailed hydrology and hydraulics study to be reviewed and approved by the City. This hydrology report would comply with the standards and methods in the Orange County Hydrology Manual. Compliance with the requirements needed to meet the County’s standards would ensure that the proposed project does not result in any runoff/flooding impacts at the SROC. As this comment does not provide any additional substantiation that the

proposed project would result in significant impacts with respect to hydrology, no revisions to the Draft EIR are required to address this comment. The City will continue to coordinate with CalOES during the entitlement review process for any additional appropriate Conditions of Approval.

Comment A6-7

6. Noise: Operational Disclosure & Sound Mitigation

Comment: Lead agencies have discretion to account for environmental conditions that will definitively exist at the time the new project is implemented. If a building under construction, such as the SREOC, is near completion or assured to be finished, the analysis should assess the post-completion condition. It is unclear whether the noise analysis and proposed mitigation measures account for post-construction conditions, including routine generator testing and emergency generator operations at the SREOC.

- **DEIR Reference**: Noise, p. 421.
- **Requested Revision:** Measures such as residential disclosures, sound attenuation for future adjacent buildings, and a vibration monitoring plan for heavy construction within 500 feet would help reduce potential conflicts.

Response A6-7

Noise Compatibility

The EIR analyzes impacts of the proposed project on the environment. However, the Specific Plan incorporates site planning and development standards to minimize noise exposure to sensitive receptors within the plan area in accordance with General Plan Goals N-1 and N-2 and Objectives N-1A and N-2A. Policies N-1.4, N-2.1, N-2.7, and N-2.8 require effective site design and the strategic placement of buildings, loading areas, parking areas, driveways, trash enclosures, and mechanical equipment to reduce noise exposure to residential areas. However, noise generated by the SREOC on the FDCSP (including noise from routine generator testing and emergency generator operations) is not an impact of the project on the environment. The FDCSP establishes a planning level framework for redevelopment and future development projects in the plan area. Future projects would be subject to discretionary review and environmental evaluation pursuant to Policy N-2.2. As part of this review, project level noise analyses would be required, as appropriate, to assess compliance with applicable interior and exterior noise standards and land use compatibility criteria, consistent with Policies N-2.4 and N-2.5. Where necessary, project-specific noise attenuation measures such as site design, building orientation, architectural treatments, and noise barriers would be implemented to ensure compatibility with surrounding noise conditions. Adherence to Costa Mesa General Plan Noise Element policies would ensure that future development under the Specific Plan would be

compatible with the existing and projected noise environment. Because this comment does not provide evidence of specific inadequacies that would trigger recirculation, no revisions to the Draft EIR to address this comment are necessary.

Construction Vibration

See Response A6-8. The Draft EIR on pages 3.11-27 through 3.11-28 provides an analysis of vibration generated by construction activities associated with the proposed project. As identified in the analysis, vibration as a result of future construction activities would not exceed 0.3 PPV at 50 feet. No significant impacts were identified, and no mitigation measures are warranted. As this comment does not otherwise substantiate that a significant vibration impact would occur, no revisions to the Draft EIR are necessary.

Comment A6-8

7. Noise: Vibration Control and Monitoring Plan

Comment: The SREOC will contain sensitive equipment necessary to ensure its continuous operation as an emergency operations center. Vibration from heavy construction can cause significant disruptions to sensitive equipment. Ground shock waves can travel hundreds of feet, leading to imaging distortions, critical miscalibration, data errors, and permanent component damage in delicate devices and sensitive equipment.

- **DEIR Reference**: Noise, p. 421.
- **Requested Revision:** Require a Vibration Control and Monitoring Plan for any heavy earthwork or foundation construction within 500 ft of the SREOC.

Response A6-8

The Draft EIR acknowledges potential future construction activity conflicts with existing, future, and proposed project uses. The FDCSP establishes a planning level framework for redevelopment, and future development projects on the project site would be subject to discretionary review and environmental evaluation pursuant to Policy N-2.2. In addition, Mitigation Measure NOI-1 requires future development under the proposed project to adhere to the Municipal Code and ensure that vibration exposure is being reduced to minimize temporary construction-related vibration impacts.

Based on the SREOC preliminary site plan, shown in the SREOC EIR NOA dated September 5, 2023 (State Clearinghouse Number 2023030046), the northern façade of the SREOC building would be approximately 85 feet from the proposed project boundary, and the eastern façade (entry) would be approximately 140 feet. Vibration levels of typical equipment at 85 feet would be as high as 0.014 inches per second PPV (in/sec PPV) and as high as 0.033 in/sec PPV for a large vibratory roller. Vibration levels of typical equipment at 140 feet would be up to

0.007 in/sec PPV and up to 0.016 in/sec PPV for a large vibratory roller. Assuming the northern and eastern portions of the SREOC building would have sensitive equipment within these distances, proposed project heavy construction equipment would generate vibration levels below 0.12 in/sec PPV, the FTA historical and sensitive equipment vibration standard, for all heavy construction equipment except a large vibratory roller at 85 feet. Therefore, the requested vibration control and monitoring plan is not warranted to reduce a project impact.

As this comment does not otherwise substantiate that a significant vibration impact would occur, no revisions to the Draft EIR are necessary. The City will continue to coordinate with CalOES during the entitlement review process for any additional appropriate Conditions of Approval.

Comment A6-9

8. Intersection Improvements: SREOC Backflow Assembly

Comment: Protection of the SREOC backflow assembly at Harbor Blvd and Fair Drive must be ensured.

- **DEIR Reference:** Intersection Improvements, Figure 3.15-5, p. 533.
- **Requested Revision:** Require protection of SREOC backflow assembly at Harbor Boulevard and Fair Drive in intersection improvement plans.

Response A6-9

Construction under the proposed project would occur in accordance with the City of Costa Mesa's standard engineering specifications and permit requirements. Existing utility connections and infrastructure, including the SREOC's backflow assemblies, would be identified and mapped prior to excavation and new utility construction and connections would be coordinated with the applicable utility provider, including Mesa Water District, to avoid disruption of services. Additionally, compliance with standard construction practices would minimize the potential for temporary disruption of utility service to adjacent properties. Temporary interruptions would be limited in duration.

Furthermore, it should be noted that the concern raised by the comment does not pertain to a specific environmental impact studied under CEQA. As substantiated in Section 3.17, *Utilities and Service Systems*, in the Draft EIR, construction and expansion of utility infrastructure associated with the proposed project would not result in significant impacts to the environment. This comment does not dispute this conclusion and as noted, compliance with existing regulatory standards would ensure that impacts to SREOC utility services are minimized throughout the course of construction activities under the proposed project. Therefore, no

revisions to the Draft EIR are required. The City will continue to coordinate with CalOES during the entitlement review process for any additional appropriate Conditions of Approval.

Comment A6-10

9. Aesthetics: Light/Glare

Comment: The DEIR evaluates project-related light and glare but does not account for visibility into, or complaints about, the State's essential facility.

- **DEIR Reference:** Aesthetics, pp. 127–131.
- **Requested Revision:** Require architectural shielding, deep setbacks, or blackout shading for residential buildings facing or with direct sightlines to the SREOC.

Response A6-10

The City invites Cal OES to review the FDCSP's setback standards provided in Table 4-5, Setbacks, of the FDCSP. As provided in this table, development facing the SREOC would be required to have a 25-foot setback measured from the property line. The issue raised in this comment pertains to a potential impact from the SREOC on the project. *California Building Industry Association v. Bay Area Air Quality Management District*, Case No. S213478 (December 17, 2015) has held that public agencies subject to CEQA are not required to analyze whether existing environmental conditions may impact a proposed project's future users or residents—also known as "reverse CEQA" or "CEQA in reverse." Because this comment does not raise an issue with the environmental analysis of the Draft EIR covered under the scope of CEQA, no changes to the Draft EIR are necessary.

Comment A6-11

Cal OES respectfully requests that the City revise the DEIR and FDCSP to incorporate the mitigation measures and standards outlined herein, particularly utility and stormwater no-impairment criteria, enhanced air quality and vector control safeguards, and enforceable operational disclosure requirements.

In addition to the comments and requests herein, enclosed is a document containing operational constraints and requests related to the development process and to a fully functional completed project. These adjustments will ensure the FDCSP advances the City's housing and community goals while fully preserving the readiness and resilience of the SREOC, an essential State facility protecting lives and property across Southern California.

We appreciate your consideration and look forward to continued collaboration.

Response A6-11

Responses to specific requests and concerns raised by Cal OES are provided in the previous Responses A6-1 through A6-10.

Comment A6-12

Essential Service Facility Context

The Southern Region Emergency Operations Center (SREOC) is an essential State facility responsible for coordinating life-safety operations, resource deployments, and multi-agency emergency response across eleven Southern California counties. As a 24/7 mission-critical installation, the SREOC must maintain uninterrupted functionality during both routine operations and severe regional disasters—including earthquakes, wildfires, floods, grid failures, and public safety emergencies. Because it serves as the operational backbone for emergency coordination for more than 23 million Californians, the SREOC requires uniquely reliable access, redundant utilities, protected communications line-of-sight, hardened security perimeters, and construction phasing that prevents any disruption to its command, dispatch, or logistics functions. These requirements are fundamental to ensuring the State can fulfill its statutory emergency response responsibilities. Accordingly, we have identified additional concerns regarding the proposed surrounding construction that may result in operational constraints.

1. SREOC Access

1.1. **Constraint:** Buildout of the Fairview Developmental Center Specific Plan is anticipated to take as many as 18 years, constructed in phases. Construction activities can frequently result in impacts to traffic and circulation in the surrounding areas. Physical access to the SREOC is critical and necessary, 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

Request: The City should include Cal OES as a consulting/approving agency on all Construction Traffic Management Plans (CTMPs) to guarantee SREOC access is never compromised during the up to 18-year construction timeline.

Response A6-12

The City recognizes the site access demands needed to accommodate the SREOC's operational requirements and shall give Cal OES the opportunity to consult on the project's Construction Traffic Management Plan pursuant to Mitigation Measure HAZ-2. Revisions to the Draft EIR have therefore been made to clarify Cal OES's role in this process. Refer to Section 3, *Revisions to the Draft EIR*.

Comment A6-13

1.2. **Constraint**: As shown in the DEIR, there are currently only two (2) access points into the FDCSP area: from Merrimac/Gregory and from Fair/Harbor. The land use plan and conceptual site plan for the FDCSP contemplate an additional future access point east of the SREOC through the existing golf course, exiting on Harbor Boulevard. The EOC requires two points of ingress/egress be available/operational at all times, and that both points of access can accommodate the turning radius of a Caltrans designated "Black" California Legal truck with a maximum length up to 65' .

Request: Cal OES requests development of a formal notification process for EOC emergency activations that would trigger implementation of agreed-upon measures such as pre-planned signal overrides and traffic control deployments, event/crowd management (if necessary) and temporary trail closures during SREOC activations.

Response A6-13

While the City recognizes the role of the FDCSP in helping the SREOC to meet its operational requirements, this comment does not describe or substantiate how the proposed project would result in an impact with respect to the emergency access needs of the SREOC. While the details of a formal notification process may be considered by the City and future master developer as part of the broader facility programming and operational planning, as currently presented, there is insufficient detail to assess the operational implications the measures outlined in this comment or determine whether further review is necessary at this time.

As this comment does not otherwise raise any issues regarding the adequacy of the environmental analysis, no further response is necessary.

Comment A6-14

2. Specific Plan Building Height(s)

2.1. **Constraint:** The Specific Plan proposes development of structures of varying heights. The SREOC utilizes various communications methods, including microwave and radio, which are tower mounted and require a clear line of sight for uninterrupted communications. CalOES has provided an analytical report titled *"Microwave Path Clearance Report"* to inform the City and its planning team of the clearances necessary. CalOES seeks assurances that no structure be permitted at such a height as to interfere with the necessary line of sight for the communications tower at the SREOC.

Request: Establish a building height threshold that triggers Cal OES review to ensure any proposed structure over a predefined height does not interfere with essential SREOC

communications. Require RFI studies for mid-rise/mixed-use parcels to prevent radio frequency interference with SREOC emergency communications.

Response A6-14

The City invites Cal OES to review Section 4.6.1, SREOC Building Height Limitations, and Figure 4-4, SREOC Tower Location and Antenna Clearance, of the FDCSP. Cal OES's directions regarding necessary clearances and line of sight have been incorporated into the regulations of the FDCSP. Appendix E to the FDCSP includes Cal OES's *Microwave Path Clearance Report.* The proposed project would therefore be required to meet Cal OES's operational criteria for radio communications. As this comment does not otherwise comment on the adequacy of the Draft EIR, no further response is required.

Comment A6-15

2.2. **Constraint**: To ensure essential operations are uninterrupted additional measures are needed to prevent radio frequency interference at the SREOC from unauthorized drones.

Request: The City implement a "No Drone Zone" or geofencing ordinance over the FDCSP to protect SREOC communications.

Response A6-15

This request does not concern environmental impacts studied under the CEQA review process. Under federal law, the Federal Aviation Administration has exclusive authority over all US navigable airspace, and the City therefore has limited jurisdiction over drone use and the airspace around the SREOC's radio frequency paths. As this comment does not raise any concerns with the environmental analysis in the Draft EIR, no revisions to the Draft EIR are necessary.

Comment A6-16

3. Utilities

3.1. **Constraint**: It is unclear whether phased utility demolition and construction, including water and sewer, will ensure uninterrupted power, water, sewer, and fiber service to the SREOC. The SREOC backflow assembly at the Harbor/Fair intersection is not depicted on various intersection and utility exhibits in the draft Plan not the draft EIR.

Request: The City and Mesa Water District should require utility isolation, trenchless construction methods, and contingency plans including restrictions on daytime construction, in conjunction with construction/connection permit issuance to ensure SREOC utility continuity. Ensure that SREOC utilities are depicted on all necessary exhibits and plan sets.

Response A6-16

See Response A6-9. As summarized above, construction under the proposed project would occur in accordance with the City of Costa Mesa's standard engineering specifications and permit requirements, which include mapping of all relevant existing utilities and coordination with utility providers to avoid disruption of services. Specifically, prior to ground disturbing activities associated with utility construction, all existing utility records would be reviewed, Dig Alert (811) would be contacted, and field verification would be conducted if necessary. Additionally, compliance with the City's standard construction practices and best management practices would minimize the potential for temporary disruption of utility service to adjacent properties.

Furthermore, it should be noted that the concern raised by the comment does not pertain to a specific environmental impact studied under CEQA. As substantiated in Section 3.17, *Utilities and Service Systems*, in the Draft EIR, construction and expansion of utility infrastructure associated with the proposed project would not result in significant impacts to the environment. This comment does not dispute this conclusion and as noted, compliance with existing regulatory standards would ensure that impacts to SREOC utility services are minimized throughout the course of construction activities under the proposed project. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are required.

Comment A6-17

3.2. **Constraint:** It is unclear whether new infrastructure sizing is sized to exceed cumulative demand. It is imperative to that pressurization of SREOC utilities, including the fire suppression system and domestic water supply, is uninterrupted.

Request: CalOES be provided written guarantees from the City and Mesa Water District that no depressurization of SREOC fire suppression or domestic water supply occurs due to construction activities or improper utility sizing.

Response A6-17

See Response A6-16. The City does not have jurisdictional authority over the Mesa Water District, which is a separate public agency. Infrastructure, including for water supply, would be appropriately sized when installed so that water pressure is maintained. Additionally, as described in Section 3.17, *Utilities and Service Systems*, Mesa Water District would have adequate water supplies to be able to serve the proposed project in addition to its existing commitments. Mesa Water District would also further assess water service connections for the proposed project at the time in which site plans are prepared. Impacts with respect to water service availability and water utility construction were determined to be less than significant. As this comment does not detail how the proposed project would contribute an environmental

impact, no revisions to the Draft EIR are necessary. The City will continue to coordinate with CalOES during the entitlement review process for any additional appropriate Conditions of Approval.

Comment A6-18

4. SREOC Perimeter Security and Buffer

4.1. **Constraint:** Perimeter security and controlled access are paramount to uninterrupted emergency operations. The Land Use Plan in the draft Specific Plan does not depict any buffer between the SREOC and surrounding land uses, which are predominantly medium- and high-density residential developments.

Request: City revise the Land Use Plan to include a security setback or buffer zone (i.e. landscape buffer) to preclude residential backyards, public parks, or high-density pedestrian trails directly against the SREOC perimeter fence. Recommend a "security setback" or "transitional landscape buffer." City could add a non-accessible "security setback" (20–30 ft, with planting except for a 5 ft clear zone next to the SREOC fence).

Response A6-18

See Response A6-10. The setback distance required for properties adjacent to the SREOC is 25 feet and would meet the distance recommended by Cal OES for security setback. Additionally, the FDCSP requires a local roadway of between 40 and 54 feet in right-of-way to be constructed along the northern and eastern perimeter of the SREOC between the 25-foot setback and the nearest properties which would further separate the nearest residential uses from the SREOC buildings. Buildings would also be setback from the local road. As such, a total distance of between 75 and 89 feet would be provided between residences, trails, and parks, and the SREOC.

Furthermore, the topic raised in this comment does not pertain to the environmental topics studied under CEQA nor does it comment on the adequacy of the Draft EIR. As such, no revisions to the Draft EIR are required.

Comment A6-19

5. Work Stoppage

5.1. **Constraint:** Because the SREOC serves a critical statewide role in coordinating life-safety operations and multi-agency emergency response across eleven Southern California counties and has 24/7 mission-critical responsibilities, the facility relies on reliable access, stable utilities, protected communications pathways, and construction practices that avoid disruption to its operations.

Request: Cal OES requests retaining the right to request a temporary partial or total work stoppage of construction when necessary to complete the state's mission.

Response A6-19

. The topic raised in this comment does not pertain to the environmental topics studied under CEQA nor does it comment on the adequacy of the Draft EIR. As such, no revisions to the Draft EIR are required. The City will continue to coordinate with CalOES during the entitlement review process to establish appropriate communication and protocol during an active emergency.

A7. Joyce Perry on behalf of Juaneño Band of Mission Indians, Acjachemen Nation–Belardes, July 10, 2026

Comment A7-1

Good Morning,

Thank you for providing the DEIR for the Fairview Developmental Center Specific Plan.

We approve of the language of the mitigation measures related to tribal cultural resources, but ask that should multiple consulting tribal nations express an interest in monitoring, monitors from each interested group be retained.

Response A7-1

The City invites the tribe to review Mitigation Measures TCR-1 through TCR-3, starting on page 3.16-19 of Section 3.16, *Tribal Cultural Resources*, of the Draft EIR. As noted in Mitigation Measure TCR-1, the future master developer under the proposed project shall retain a Native American Monitor approved by the tribes that consulted on this project, which includes the Juaneño Band of Mission Indians, Acjachemen Nation–Belardes. During the AB 52 and SB 18 consultation process under the proposed project, three tribes, including the Acjachemen Nation–Belardes, coordinated on the language for these mitigation measures with the City. The provisions regarding monitoring were approved by the tribe during this period. As this comment does not raise any particular issue regarding the environmental analysis of the Draft EIR, no revisions to the Draft EIR are necessary.

Comment A7-2

To ensure timely coordination, we respectfully request to be contacted prior to any ground disturbance, once the contracting process for tribal monitors begins. Please let us know who will be managing that portion of the project and how best to initiate the necessary agreements.

We look forward to working together to ensure protection of cultural resources.

Response A7-2

The tribe would be contacted and a monitor retained prior to beginning ground disturbance at the site. The future master developer and the City of Costa Mesa Community Development Department will initiate agreements and procedures with the tribe to implement Mitigation Measure TCR-1.

2.2.2 Comments from Organizations

O1. Lozeau Drury on behalf of SAFER, June 5, 2026

Comment O1-1

This comment is submitted on behalf of Supporters Alliance for Environmental Responsibility ("SAFER") regarding the Draft Environmental Impact Report ("DEIR") prepared for the Fairview Developmental Center Specific Plan (SCH 2025101405), which proposes the development of a specific plan consisting of 2,300 residential units, including 200 permanent supportive housing units, with the potential for up to 4,000 units, up to 35,000 square feet of commercial space, at least 14 acres of publicly accessible open space, and off site improvements, located on 95 acres of the Fairview Developmental Center at 2501 Harbor Boulevard in the City of Costa Mesa ("Project").

Response O1-1

The City acknowledges receipt of this comment letter submitted on behalf of SAFER. This comment provides an accurate summary of the buildout potential of the proposed project as analyzed in the Draft EIR. As this comment does not specific issues regarding the adequacy of the analysis in the Draft EIR, no further response is required.

Comment O1-2

SAFER is concerned that the DEIR fails as an informational document and fails to impose all feasible mitigation measures to reduce the Project's impacts. SAFER requests that the City address these shortcomings in a revised draft environmental impact report and recirculate it prior to considering approvals for the Project.

Response O1-2

See *Responses on General Comments* in Section 2.1. This comment constitutes a generalized statement about the adequacy of the Draft EIR and does not raise issue specific details of the analysis in the Draft EIR. As this comment does not provide evidence of specific inadequacies that would trigger recirculation, no further response to this comment is necessary. It is the City's position that the Draft EIR complies with the CEQA Guidelines and incorporates all feasible mitigation measures to reduce identified impacts. Therefore, no revision to the Draft EIR is required at this time.

Comment O1-3

SAFER reserves the right to supplement these comments during the administrative process. *Galante Vineyards v. Monterey Peninsula Water Management Dist.*, 60 Cal. App. 4th 1109, 1121 (1997).

Response O1-3

The City acknowledges the commenter's reservation of rights to supplement these comments. The administrative record will reflect that SAFER has reserved the right to do so. No revision to the Draft EIR is required.

O2. Coastal Corridor Alliance, June 30, 2026

Comment O2-1

Introduction

The City of Costa Mesa is currently preparing the draft Environmental Impact Report (dEIR) for the Fairview Developmental Center Specific Plan (FDCSP) for the redevelopment of the Fairview Developmental Center (FDC), a closed State hospital, located in the heart of Costa Mesa, that served patients with developmental disabilities for several decades. The nearly 95-acre FDC campus is expected to see at least 2,300 units of housing built in the coming years, including up to 1,000 units of affordable housing.

Response O2-1

This comment provides a summary of the proposed project and does not comment on the adequacy of the environmental review. Therefore, no further response is necessary.

Comment O2-2

Background

The Banning Ranch Conservancy (BRC) led the decades-long effort to protect and create a permanent public open space of the 401-acre Banning Ranch property, located at the mouth of the Santa Ana River between Costa Mesa, Newport Beach, and Huntington Beach. In December 2022, escrow closed on a conservation transaction, permanently protecting 387 acres of Banning Ranch. The $97 million real estate deal was negotiated and completed by The Trust for Public Land and made possible by an extremely generous private donation from Frank and Joan Randall. The title of the property was immediately transferred to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority, a local Joint Powers Authority (JPA) that manages over 85,000 acres of parkland in Southern California. The property is now known as the Frank and Joan Randall Preserve (Randall Preserve).

In January 2024, BRC became the Coastal Corridor Alliance (CCA), with a new mission, “To protect biodiversity, foster community stewardship, and advocate for appropriate human access on the Randall Preserve and Santa Ana River Coastal Corridor.” The change in name and mission reflects our organization’s transformation into a stewardship role and indicates we have expanded our vision beyond Randall Preserve to include the properties of the Coastal Corridor from the Pacific Ocean up the Santa Ana River to Adams St. in Costa Mesa.

The Coastal Corridor Alliance offers these comments: As stated in the first paragraph of the FDCSP Executive Summary, the State of California "...has prioritized housing to address the pressing need to increase housing supply for workforce..." at FDC.

The FDCSP should earmark up to 35 affordable units at FDC to be used as workforce housing for Newport-Mesa Unified School District (NMUSD) employees.

FDC is a superior option for workforce housing.

NMUSD is currently in the early stages of a proposal to build up to 35 units of workforce housing (as part of a controversial larger proposed development) on an 11.36-acre parcel of District-owned surplus land located on Banning Ranch. This proposal has met extensive public opposition due to documented sensitive California gnatcatcher, burrowing owl, and vernal pool habitat on these 11.36 acres, which are surrounded on three sides by Randall Preserve. The public's clear preference is that these 11.36 acres be preserved as open space.

There are more preferable locations for NMUSD to build workforce housing than on the last remaining unprotected piece of the Banning Ranch mesa. FDC is a very logical alternative location, located approximately two miles away, and without the sensitive habitat found on the NMUSD 11.36 acres. Further, both properties are owned by public agencies.

A State agency is interested in leasing NMUSD's 11.36-acre open space parcel on Banning Ranch for conservation purposes.

Per requirements of the Surplus Land Act, NMUSD notified public agencies about the availability of the 11.36 acres. In a letter dated March 10, 2026, MRCA expressed its interest to begin negotiations with NMUSD concerning a long-term lease of the 11.36 acres.

In addition, CCA had earlier submitted a separate offer to purchase the 11.36 acres for conservation purposes.

In addition to leasing or purchasing the site, other options might include a conservation easement which would allow NMUSD to retain the site for educational purposes, yet guarantee its open space status.

A win-win-win-win outcome is possible.

1. Up to 35 units of workforce housing earmarked for NMUSD staff could be constructed at FDC, allowing NMUSD staff to afford to live in this community of relatively high-priced homes.

2. A long-term lease, outright purchase, or conservation easement of the 11.36 acres could bring revenue to NMUSD.

3.By being preserved as open space, the valuable habitat on the 11.36 acres could aid and supplement the rare species found on the adjacent Randall Preserve.

4. The 11.36 acres could serve as a wonderful site to teach NMUSD students about the rare California gnatcatcher, burrowing owl, and vernal pool habitat in their vicinity, and provide a "hands on" opportunity to work on habitat restoration and management, instilling a sense of stewardship among NMUSD students.

Response O2-2

This comment details a separate development project and does not raise any specific issue regarding the analysis in the Draft EIR. The requests and proposal made in this comment shall be forwarded to decision makers for further review. No revisions to the Draft EIR are necessary to address this comment.

O3. Costa Mesa First, July 1, 2026

Comment O3-1

Dear Ms. Dacey:

We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments to Draft Environmental Impact Report ("DEIR") for the Fairview Developmental Center Specific Plan Project ("Project").

The Project would encompass approximately 95 acres of the 110 acres of Fairview Developmental Center and would establish a mixed-use community on the site. The development would include a minimum of 2,300 dwelling units, with a potential to accommodate up to 4,000 dwelling units.

The site is currently zoned Multi-Use Center, which allows for low- to moderate-intensity urban uses with residential densities ranging from six to 40 dwelling units per acre ("du/ac") and a maximum .25 floor area ratio ("FAR") for nonresidential uses. A smaller portion of the site is designated Medium Density Residential, allowing up to 12 du/ac. The eastern portion of the site is zoned Planned Development Residential – High Density, allowing residential development at 20 or more du/ac.

Under the General Plan, development current permits up to 582 dwelling units and requires a minimum of 25 acres of open space. Existing uses on the site include institutional buildings, associated infrastructure, and recreational facilities, all with a 0.25 FAR.

The Project is subject to the requirements of Senate Bills 82 and SB 188, including the provision of permanent supportive housing and affordable/mixed-income housing under the direction of the California Department of Developmental Services ("DDS") and the California Department of General Services.

The proposed land use plan under the Project consists of three major categories: residential, commercial, and open space. The allocation of the land uses across the site are:

- DDS Housing: **15** acres (to be constructed by State of California);
- Residential and Commercial: **45** acres;
- Open Space: **14** acres (minimum);
- Right-of-Way: **21** acres; and
- Total: **95** acres

To ensure consistency with the City's General Plan and Zoning Code, amendments will be required to reflect full buildout of the Project. At maximum development, the site is estimated to accommodate an maximum of:

- **9,926** residents; and
- **74** employees.

at the project site based on a maximum of:

- **4,000** housing units; and
- **35,000** square feet of non-residential development.

The Project is intended to provide a wide range of housing types serving diverse income levels, including two- and three-story townhomes, courtyard-style units, and apartment buildings up to 12 stories. This development would address a substantial portion of the City's Regional Housing Needs Allocation ("RHNA"). The proposed housing program includes:

a. **Very Low Income**: Minimum of 575 units, including 200 units of Permanent Supportive Housing in compliance with California Government Code Section 14670.31;

b. **Low Income**: Minimum of 345 units;

c. **Moderate Income**: Minimum of 690 units; and

d. **Above Moderate Income**: Minimum of 690 units

The Project would also provide independent and assisted living options for seniors.

The Project site is adjacent to the State of California's Emergency Operations Center, currently under construction on fifteen acres of the FDC property. That facility will include a 35,000-square-foot office building, a 20,000-square-foot warehouse, and a 120-foot communications tower.

Nearby amenities include a municipal golf course and an affordable housing neighborhood located approximately 600 feet from the Project site. Fairview Park, a nature preserve containing environmentally sensitive species and habitat areas, is situated approximately 1,800 feet from the proposed development.

[1] See Page 2-19, Section 2.5 of DEIR.

Response O3-1

This comment provides a summary of the proposed project and does not identify any deficiencies nor raise any concerns regarding the analysis in the Draft EIR. Therefore, no further response is required.

Comment O3-2

Introduction to Comments: We respectfully submit the following comments for the City of Costa Mesa's ("City") consideration. After careful review, we conclude that the DEIR is inadequate and fails to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") in multiple respects. The DEIR omits critical analyses, relies on incomplete and outdated data, improperly defers mitigation, and fails to evaluate reasonable alternatives. It makes it impossible for the residents of Costa Mesa to understand and meaningfully consider the issues raised by the Project and any attempts by the City to mitigate significant environmental impacts associated with the Project. Accordingly, additional and more robust environmental review is required under CEQA.

Further, serious concerns about the Project's compliance with applicable housing laws remain unaddressed and impede or constrict the ability of the City to comply with those laws and affirmatively further fair housing. Public engagement to date has also been minimal, undermining CEQA's fundamental purpose of informing decision-makers and the public about potential environmental effects and avoiding significant, preventable environmental harm.

Additionally, the DEIR identifies the Project as the only feasible alternative when evaluating environmentally superior options; however, it fails to consider a previously proposed 3,800-unit alternative. That alternative was originally identified by the City as the preferred option following financial analysis of three scenarios, and it was only superseded by the 4,000-unit proposal after action on August 25, 2025 by the Costa Mesa Planning Commission for CEQA evaluation purposes.

For these reasons, we urge the City to reject the current Project and instead advance the previously identified 3,800-unit alternative or an alternative with even fewer housing units.

Response O3-2

This comment provides a summary of the commenter's concerns regarding the proposed project and its environmental analysis, all of which are further expanded upon in subsequent comments in this letter. Responses to the concerns in this summary are provided in Responses O3-3 through O3-47.

Comment O3-3

1. **The Statement of Project Objectives does not align with the Guiding Principles in the Draft Fairview Developmental Center Specific Plan.**

Section 15124(b) of CEQA Guidelines requires a statement of the objectives sought by the proposed project, which is more clearly defined as "[a] clearly written statement of objectives

will help the lead agency develop a reasonable range of alternatives to evaluate in the EIR and will aid the decision makers in preparing findings or a statement of overriding considerations, if necessary. The statement of objectives should include the underlying purpose of the project." Objectives must articulate the "why" behind the project, capturing both the intent and anticipated benefits.

The DEIR identifies a set of Project objectives, with the primary purpose of transforming the site into "a mixed-use, mixed-income community" that addresses the City's housing needs while integrating commercial services, open space, and public infrastructure." However, these Project Objectives are inconsistent with those set forth in the Draft Fairview Developmental Center Specific Plan ("FDCSP"). For example, FDCSP Principle #5, "Integrate the Natural and Built Environment," is not included among the Project Objectives in the DEIR. This inconsistency must be resolved to ensure alignment between the governing planning document and the environmental analysis. Moreover, any mitigation measures necessary to achieve these objectives and principles must be identified and analyzed in the DEIR.

[2] See Page 2-19, Section 2.5 of DEIR.

Response O3-3

The commenter claims that the objectives of the proposed project chosen for the purposes of CEQA analysis in the Draft EIR are inconsistent with the guiding principles of the FDCSP; however, the City respectfully disagrees. The guiding principles of the FDCSP are: 1) advance Costa Mesa's housing goals; 2) create a network of connected gathering places and vibrant; accessible open spaces; 3) provide neighborhood-serving retail and community amenities; 4) prioritize multimodal transportation and safety; and 5) integrate the natural and built environment to support long-term fiscal and environmental sustainability. The objectives of the proposed project, summarized (see Chapter 2 of the Draft EIR for the full text of the objectives), are: 1) address regional housing needs; 2) promote inclusive, mixed-income community development; 3) enhance open space and recreation access; 4) improve connectivity and mobility; and 5) optimize land and community integration.

The objectives chosen for the Draft EIR have the same intent as the FDCSP's principles; they are not required to mirror one another (see further discussion of this in the next paragraph). Principle 1 of the FDCSP and objective 1 of the EIR both address housing needs for the City of Costa Mesa; principle 2 and objective 3 both address the provision of open space at the project site; principle 3 and objective 2 both promote the provision of community-serving uses and commercial development at the project site; principle 4 and objective 4 both target connectivity and multi-modal infrastructure for the project site; and principle 5 and objective 5 both emphasize the importance of a holistic and cohesive approach to the design, development, and implementation of the proposed project.

This comment implies that the guiding principles of the FDCSP must be the same as the objectives chosen for the EIR. Fundamentally, the vision statements/guiding principles of a specific plan and the objectives used in an EIR serve different purposes in different regulatory contexts. Guiding principles in a specific plan can be used to provide the policy direction that justify the development regulations and infrastructure plans that follow them. The objectives for a project under CEQA are discrete, legally technical parameters that help a lead agency identify and screen a reasonable range of feasible alternatives, as provided in Section 15124(b) of the CEQA Guidelines. No judicial or legislative guidance requires that project objectives under CEQA directly align with the guiding principles of a specific plan. As substantiated above, the proposed project's objectives in the EIR do not misrepresent or conflict with the guiding principles of the FDCSP. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are necessary to address this comment.

Lastly, this commenter's claim that mitigation measures needed to achieve project objectives or Specific Plan principles must be identified in the Draft EIR misrepresents the purpose of project objectives under CEQA as well as mitigation measures. As stated previously and cited in the comment itself, the discrete purpose of project objectives under CEQA is to help a lead agency develop a reasonable range of alternatives to evaluate in the EIR and aid decision makers in preparing findings or a statement of overriding considerations. Mitigation measures are incorporated with the specific intention of minimizing significant adverse impacts identified by the environmental analysis. Though implementation of a specific plan (i.e., development in accordance with its land use plan) can have environmental impacts, under CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.4, mitigation measures may only be incorporated to reduce the severity of impacts identified as significant, and are therefore not directly correlated to achieving a project objective or guiding principle. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are necessary to address this comment.

Comment O3-4

In addition, the Project as currently proposed fails to satisfy its stated objective of enhancing open space and recreational access. The City's General Plan requires 4.26 acres of open space per 1,000 residents; however, the Project falls more than 28 acres short of this standard. As a result, the Project does not meet applicable open space requirements and undermines its own stated objectives. Reducing the number of proposed housing units would help bring the Project closer to compliance with the General Plan's open space requirements.

Response O3-4

The City respectfully disagrees with the commenter's assertion that the FDCSP does not satisfy the open space and recreational access project objective. The EIR project objective 3 is to "provide accessible parks, trails, and recreational facilities to improve quality of life and encourage active lifestyles for residents and the surrounding community." Section 6.2.1, Open

Space Standards, and Table 6-1, Open Space Requirements, of the FDCSP require a minimum of 14 acres of public open space to be provided within the project site and note that additional open space needed to meet the City's 4.26 acres of open space per 1,000 residents standard can be met through land dedication, park improvements, and in-lieu fees. Table 6-1 establishes further minimums for open space under individual developments within the project site. Other required facilities under the FDCSP include the Shelley Circle multi-use trail and the paseo. The City therefore asserts that the requirements for open space under the FDCSP meet project objective 3 in the EIR. No revisions to the Draft EIR are necessary to address this comment.

Comment O3-5

2. Project violates SB 188 by failing to prioritize affordable housing and open space on FDC property.

In June 2022, the California Legislature adopted a budget that, among other provisions, provided funding to the City to support the planning and development of affordable housing at the FDC site.

Government Code Section 14670.31(a)(7) states "It is the intent of the Legislature that the Fairview Developmental Center property be utilized for a mixed-use development, including mixed-income housing. The development would include and prioritize affordable housing, including at least 200 units of permanent supportive housing, and open space." [emphasis added] This provision makes clear that affordable housing—particularly permanent supportive housing—and open space are to be central components of any redevelopment of the site.

Similarly, Government Code Section 14670.31(c)(4) provides "The agreement shall require that housing be a priority in the planning process and that any housing proposal determined to be appropriate for the property shall include affordable housing. The agreement and the development plan shall provide for housing and affordable housing at a level consistent with the January 2020 council-adopted strategy of 1,500 units and the housing assessment in the Department of General Services' 2021 Infrastructure Assessment of up to 2,500 units for the site." [emphasis added] This provision reinforces that the scale and composition of development at the site should remain aligned with prior analyses and strategies evaluating a substantially lower development intensity.

As currently proposed, however, the Project conflicts with these legislative priorities, as well as Governor Newsom's Executive Order N-6-19, by advancing a development program that exceeds the scale contemplated in prior state and local planning efforts and fails to appropriately prioritize the balance of affordable housing and open space envisioned for the site.

Response O3-5

As detailed in Chapter 2, *Project Description*, of the Draft EIR, the maximum limit of 4,000 housing units was chosen for the purposes of the environmental analysis under the proposed project. This decision was made with the intention of identifying and mitigating a more conservative level of impacts than what may be financially viable to develop. A minimum of 2,300 housing units must be developed by the State and selected Master Developer to comply with the City's RHNA allocation for the project site, but the ultimate number of units developed on the site will be determined by the Master Developer through an analysis of market conditions. It is the City's position that the proposed project complies with the intent of SB 188 and that the allowance of up to 4,000 housing units at the project site furthers the goals of the City's General Plan, including the Housing Element. As further discussed in the Findings of Fact/Statement of Overriding Considerations, this level of housing development also helps to meet an overall need for housing across the State. Furthermore, this comment does not address or raise issue with the environmental analysis provided in the Draft EIR. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are necessary.

Comment O3-6

3. Wildlife surveys must be completed before Project approval; City has failed to analyze the whole of Project.

CEQA requires the City to evaluate the environmental impacts of the entire Project, including "the whole of an action" that may result in either a direct physical change in the environment or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment. Please refer to CEQA Guideline Section 15378; *Banning Ranch Conservancy v. City of Newport Beach* (2012) 211 Cal.App.4th 1209, 1220. This requirement reflects CEQA's core principle that environmental review may not be fragmented or deferred. As the California Supreme Court has explained, "environmental considerations do not become submerged by chopping a large project into many little ones—each with a minimal potential impact on the environment—which cumulatively may have disastrous consequences." (*Laurel Heights Improvement Assn. v. Regents of University of California* (1988) 47 Cal.3d 376, 396.)

Here, the DEIR fails to adequately analyze the whole of the Project because it relies on incomplete and untimely biological surveys and defers necessary environmental analysis until after Project approval.

Appendix C.1 to the DEIR states that "In October 2023 ECORP Consulting, Inc. (ECORP) conducted a biological reconnaissance survey for the Fairview Development Center (FDC) Project (Project) located in the City of Costa Mesa (City), Orange County, California and thereafter prepared a Biological Resources Existing Conditions Report (January 2024 [revised April 2024]) for the Project." [emphasis added]. This survey was conducted prior to the Notice

of Preparation for the DEIR and does not address the information requested in responses to the Notice of Preparation submitted in December 2025. Accordingly, the survey is not sufficient to support the DEIR's analysis or conclusions.

Response O3-6

The Biological Technical Report (see Appendix C.1 of the Draft EIR) included a reconnaissance-level survey assessing the potential for special-status plant and wildlife species to occur on the project site. Focused protocol-level surveys were not conducted since the timing and exact details of construction activities for future projects in the plan area are not known at this programmatic stage.

Section 3.2.3, Survey Limitations, of Draft EIR Appendix C.1 disclosed that the biological reconnaissance survey was conducted outside of the plant blooming period for special-status plants that were included in the literature review, and the survey was conducted outside of the Crotch's bumble bee flight season and nesting bird season. The EIR stated that, based on the existing site conditions, lack of suitable habitat (including elevation and soil), and the high level of anthropogenic disturbance present, special-status plants were presumed absent from the project site. However, the monarch butterfly (present) and the Crotch's bumble bee, Cooper's hawk, burrowing owl, nesting birds, and other special-status wildlife species do have potential to occur within the project site based on suitable habitat present and literature review observations of the species.

In addition, due to the unknown extent of project impacts and potential site-specific impacts on the individual project at this time, the Biological Technical Report analyzed broad impacts for the FDCSP. As required under Mitigation Measures BIO-1a through BIO-1d, focused protocol-level surveys would be performed prior to construction, and the results of those surveys would be incorporated as part of subsequent environmental review assessing the environmental impacts of a detailed development plan, including construction and operational impacts. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are necessary to address this comment.

Comment O3-7

The deficiencies are particularly significant with respect to burrowing owl. Surveys for burrowing owl must be conducted during the appropriate seasonal period, including the species' wintering and nesting periods, not based solely on an October reconnaissance survey. The need for updated and protocol-level surveys is reinforced by nearby documented occurrences of burrowing owl, including information discussed in the "Biological Technical Memorandum CEQA Analysis, HSS Flying Field Relocation Project, City of Costa Mesa, Orange County, California," dated May 13, 2025, prepared by Hamilton Biological, Inc. for the City in connection with the Fairview Park Master Plan Update. That report is available on the City's

website here:
https://www.costamesaca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/63320/639144533016830000.

Response O3-7

See Response O3-6. Focused protocol-level surveys were not conducted since the timing and exact details of construction activities for future projects in the plan area are not known at this programmatic stage.

The EIR identified that the burrowing owl has a high potential to occur on the proposed project based on suitable habitat present in the annual brome grassland and recent California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) occurrences within five miles of the project site. In accordance with Mitigation Measure BIO-1d, focused protocol-level surveys would be required prior to construction of future development projects, following the timing and methods described in the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) "Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation." The results of those surveys would be incorporated into a survey report, as outlined in Mitigation Measure BIO-1d. In addition to focused breeding season surveys, pre-construction surveys for western burrowing owl must be conducted prior to work beginning within all areas of suitable and marginal habitat identified on the project site, regardless of the time of year that construction is scheduled to begin. No revisions to the Draft EIR are necessary to address this comment.

Comment O3-8

The DEIR's own biological analysis confirms that suitable habitat exists on the Project site. Appendix C.1 states:

> "ECORP observed suitable breeding, foraging, and wintering habitat for western burrowing owl in the annual brome grassland habitat within the Project Site. The grassland habitat is characterized by low-growing, non-native species with a very active colony of California ground squirrels, which provide potential western burrowing owl burrows and an abundance of prey. ECORP identified four CNDDB records of western burrowing owl within 5 miles of the Project Site: the closest record (OCC #874) was documented in 2006 and located approximately 0.4 mile west of the Project Site; the most recent record (OCC #2015) was documented in 2017 and located approximately 2.9 miles west of the Project Site."

Despite these findings, the DEIR does not appear to account for other nearby documented burrowing owl activity, including the 2018 capture and banding of burrowing owls in Fairview Park, located a short distance from the Project site. That occurrence was reported by the *Daily Pilot* here: https://www.latimes.com/socal/daily-pilot/news/tn-dpt-me-cm-fairview-owls-20181213-story.html

Response O3-8

As identified on page 3.3-15 of the Draft EIR, a biological literature review evaluated existing scientific studies for special status wildlife. Though this review may not be exhaustive, it is complete and thorough for this type of report, and it already states that burrowing owl occur within five miles of the project site. For example, a literature review used CDFW's CNDDB and the California Native Plant Society's Electronic Inventory to determine the special-status plant and wildlife species that have been documented near the project site. Additional information was gathered from other sources, including but not limited to *State and Federally Listed Endangered and Threatened Animals of California*, *Special Animals List*, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Information Planning and Consultation System, *The Jepson Manual: Vascular Plants of California* (2nd ed.), *Jepson eFlora*, *A Manual of California Vegetation*, (2nd ed.), National Wetlands Inventory Mapper, various online websites, the USFWS IPaC database, the Natural Resources Conservation Service Web Soil Survey, etc. No revisions to the Draft EIR are necessary to address this comment.

Comment O3-9

We note that ECORP's 2023 survey listed sightings of other sensitive species, including Monarch butterfly. New surveys must be conducted following California Department of Fish and Wildlife ("CDFW") protocol to determine the presence of burrowing owls and other listed, threatened, or endangered species in the study area prior to Project approval. If present on site, development of the proposed project may result in significant direct impacts to these species, including burrowing owl, absent mitigation.

Response O3-9

The Draft EIR identifies mitigation measures for potential impacts to special status species, including the monarch butterfly and burrowing owl. Avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures for the monarch, Crotch's bumble bee, nesting birds, burrowing owl, and bats were incorporated as Mitigation Measures BIO-1a through BIO-1d. These measures provide protocols to address impacts if these species are determined to be present. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are necessary to address this comment.

Comment O3-10

The DEIR also acknowledges additional survey limitations. Section 3.2.2, "Survey Limitations," of Appendix C.1 states:

> "ECORP conducted the biological reconnaissance survey outside of the plant blooming period for special-status plants that were included in the literature review; however, based on the existing site conditions and by identifying plants

> by their vegetative characteristics, ECORP presumed these species absent. Additionally, ECORP conducted the survey outside of the Crotch's bumble bee (CBB; Bombus crotchii) flight season and nesting bird season; therefore, ECORP determined these protected species to have potential for occurrence based on the habitat present within the Project Site and literature review observations of the species."

These admissions demonstrate that the DEIR's biological analysis is incomplete. Surveys were conducted outside the appropriate blooming period for special-status plants, outside the Crotch's bumble bee flight season, and outside nesting bird season. Nevertheless, the DEIR proceeds without requiring the necessary protocol-level surveys before Project approval. CEQA does not permit the City to approve the Project first and conduct the studies necessary to determine the existence and severity of significant impacts later.

[3] See Page 16 of Appendix C-1.

Response O3-10

As discussed in Response O3-6, reconnaissance-level surveys of the project site were conducted. Focused protocol surveys were not conducted due to the programmatic nature of the specific plan. As noted in Responses O3-6 through O3-9, the monarch butterfly (present) and the Crotch's bumble bee, Cooper's hawk, burrowing owl, nesting birds, and other special-status wildlife species have potential to occur within the project site based on suitable habitat present and literature review observations of the species.

Mitigation measures in the EIR require focused, protocol-level surveys for monarch butterflies (Mitigation Measure BIO-1a), Crotch's bumble bee (Mitigation Measure BIO-1b), nesting birds (BIO-1c), and western burrowing owl (Mitigation Measure BIO-1d) to ensure impacts to special status species are minimized. As specified in these mitigation measures, focused protocol-level surveys would be performed prior to construction. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are necessary to address this comment.

Comment O3-11

The DEIR is also deficient because it fails to provide meaningful analysis of wildlife movement and habitat connectivity. Section 4.0, "Results," of Appendix C.1 states that the report summarizes the results of the literature review and field survey, including "site characteristics, vegetation communities, plants, wildlife, special-status species, and special-status habitats," including any potential wildlife corridors. However, the DEIR provides no meaningful data or analysis regarding wildlife movement on or near the Project site, despite the presence of nearby water features, open space, and habitat areas that may attract migratory birds and support local wildlife movement. The fact that burrowing owl surveys are necessary further underscores that

the FDC site may be used by migratory birds and other wildlife. Habitat linkages, movement corridors, and migration routes between habitat areas must be evaluated, preserved where feasible, and supported by enforceable mitigation measures disclosed in the DEIR.

Response O3-11

As stated in the Draft EIR on page 3.3-34 and detailed in Appendix C.1, the project site was assessed for its potential to facilitate wildlife movement or function as a movement corridor for wildlife moving throughout the region. According to CDFW's Biogeographic Information and Observation System online database, the project site is 1.2 miles northeast of Talbert Regional Park, less than 1.0 mile east of Fairview Park, approximately 1.5 miles from the channelized Santa Ana River, and 2.5 miles northwest of Newport Back Bay. CDFW's terrestrial connectivity dataset Areas of Conservation Emphasis (ACE) ranking system ranks the hexagon the project site falls in as ACE Rank 1. ACE Rank 1 areas have limited connectivity opportunity. A southwestern section of the project site falls into a neighboring hexagon with Ace Rank 2. Ace Rank 2 areas are "large blocks of natural habitat where connectivity is generally intact." The portion of the hexagon that covers the project site, however, is part of the Costa Mesa Country Club golf course and bordered by residential development; therefore, because the project site is bound by physical barriers (roadways) and surrounded by development, it is considered unsuitable as a corridor between natural habitat areas. Although the project site does allow for the movement of local wildlife, it most likely does not facilitate the regional movement of wildlife because the roadways and surrounding development create physical barriers.

Additional context has been added to Section 3.3.4 of Section 3.3, *Biological Resources*, but does not result in new significant environmental impacts, a substantial increase in the severity of an identified impact, or a fundamentally different impact analysis. Therefore, recirculation of the Draft EIR is not required. Refer to Section 3, *Revisions to the Draft EIR*.

The project site was also assessed for its ability to function as a native wildlife nursery site and as bat roosting habitat (see Draft EIR page 3.3-22 and Appendix C.1). The biologists documented suitable nesting habitat for bird species within the project site. Although a focused bat habitat assessment was not performed during the biological reconnaissance survey, buildings observed within the project site are mostly active/currently in use, sealed, or not otherwise suitable as bat-roosting habitat. However, mature trees scattered throughout the project site (including intact palm tree skirts) may provide bat roosting habitat. Although the biologists noted no evidence of bat roosting during the biological reconnaissance survey, there is potential for the buildings and trees observed to serve as bat maternity roost sites during the bat maternity season (March 1 through August 31). Maternity roosts are considered protected as native wildlife nursery sites under CEQA.

The project site is bounded by the Costa Mesa Country Club golf course to the northwest, south, west, and east and by residential and commercial development to the northeast and east along

Harbor Boulevard. Although the project site does allow for the movement of local wildlife, it most likely does not facilitate the regional movement of wildlife because the roadways and surrounding development create physical barriers. As such, impacts to regarding wildlife movement were considered less than significant.

In summary, the analysis in the EIR substantiates that the project site is not a potential wildlife nursery site. No impacts to native wildlife nursery sites are expected as a result of the proposed project. No revisions to the Draft EIR are necessary to address this comment.

Comment O3-12

As currently drafted, the DEIR fails to analyze the Project's foreseeable direct and indirect impacts on special-status plants, Crotch's bumble bee, burrowing owl, nesting birds, migratory species, and local wildlife using the FDC site as habitat or as part of a wildlife movement corridor. New biological surveys must be conducted as part of the environmental review process and must cover all relevant seasonal periods, including blooming season, Crotch's bumble bee flight season, nesting bird season, and the appropriate survey windows for burrowing owl.

By relying on incomplete surveys and deferring critical biological analysis until after Project approval, the City has failed to proceed in the manner required by CEQA. The City may not postpone necessary studies or rely on vague future mitigation measures to address impacts that should be identified, analyzed, and mitigated before approval. Additional, accurate biological review is therefore required before the City may consider approving the Project.

Response O3-12

This comment summarizes concerns raised in preceding comments. See Responses O3-6 through O3-11 for additional information. As substantiated in these responses, the implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1a through BIO-1d would ensure that protocol-level surveys will be performed and avoidance and minimization measures implemented to reduce impacts to less than significant. As such, no revisions to the Draft EIR are needed to address this comment and the concerns raised in preceding comments.

Comment O3-13

Finally, the City should solicit and consider comments from the appropriate wildlife agencies, including the CDFW and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, before certification of the EIR and approval of the Project.

Response O3-13

The City has complied with the necessary requirements for circulation and distribution of the Draft EIR to the public, including the solicitation of comments from responsible agencies.

CDFW South Coast Region 5 was noticed of the Draft EIR via certified mail, email, and the State Clearinghouse on May 14, 2026, coinciding with release of the Draft EIR for public review. CDFW's comments on the NOP dated December 12, 2025, were also addressed in Section 3.3, *Biological Resources*, of the Draft EIR.

Comment O3-14

4. DEIR does not fully consider sensitive receptors and needed mitigation.

The Project would permit development of a mixed-use community consisting primarily of high-density residential uses, along with commercial space, parkland, and a daycare facility serving seniors and low- and very low-income adults and children. The Project site is located near an existing affordable housing neighborhood on Joann Street (Census Tract 6059063808), where approximately 80 percent of residents are people of color.

CalEnviroScreen 4.0 ranks this census tract with a pollution burden score of 46 percent—an elevated level, particularly given its proximity to open space amenities such as a municipal golf course and coastal influences. The Project site is also near other census tracts with significantly higher pollution burdens, including Census Tract 6059063605, which has a score of 86 percent. In addition, a nearby high school and elementary school serve students from these census tracts and include sports fields, tennis courts, and a stadium that are also used by the broader community. Residents of these areas—including sensitive populations such as children and seniors—would be affected not only by long-term Project operations, but also by construction-related activities.

Response O3-14

The Draft EIR addresses potential regional and cumulative air quality and health risk impacts on sensitive receptors. Specifically, Impact AIR-2 and Impact AIR-3 evaluated potential regional construction and operation impacts, and Impact AIR-4 evaluated potential localized construction air quality and health risk impacts to off-site sensitive receptors.

As disclosed in the Draft EIR, because future development under the proposed project cannot be identified with sufficient specificity at this programmatic level, project-specific localized emissions and health risks cannot be quantified. Nevertheless, the Draft EIR concludes that implementation of the project could result in significant and unavoidable cumulative air quality and health risk impacts to sensitive receptors. Accordingly, per Mitigation Measure AIR-5, the Draft EIR requires future discretionary projects to prepare project-level health risk assessments in accordance with California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment and the South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD), to evaluate potential impacts to nearby sensitive receptors and identify feasible mitigation measures where warranted. These measures would help reduce construction emissions that would minimize exposure of sensitive receptors

to elevated concentrations of criteria air pollutants and toxic air contaminants (TAC). Additionally, as discussed under Air Quality Impact c on page 3.2-46 of the Draft EIR, the proposed land uses are not expected to generate substantial operational emissions of criteria air pollutants, TACs, or carbon monoxide (CO) impacts. Accordingly, project operation would not expose nearby sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations or create significant CO hotspots. This comment does not raise any issues with the adequacy of the environmental analysis of the Draft EIR, and revisions to the Draft EIR are necessary.

Comment O3-15

The DEIR acknowledges that air quality impacts would remain **significant and unavoidable** even after mitigation.[4] However, it fails to provide adequate analysis or enforceable mitigation measures addressing impacts to sensitive receptors, including those resulting from toxic air contaminants. This deficiency affects both existing nearby residents and future occupants of the Project, particularly vulnerable populations susceptible to adverse health outcomes such as asthma, cardiovascular disease, and cancer.

Although the DEIR states that mitigation measures will be identified through a future health risk assessment to be incorporated into grading plans, it does not identify what specific analyses, measures, or protections will be implemented prior to or during early phases of construction, including demolition. CEQA requires that feasible mitigation measures be identified and analyzed before Project approval, not deferred to future studies or plans.

[4] See Impact AIR-4, Page 3.2-45, Section 3.2.4 of DEIR.

Response O3-15

The Draft EIR acknowledges that implementation of the proposed project could result in significant and unavoidable cumulative air quality and health risk impacts. Because the project would be built out over up to 18 years and consist of multiple development phases, the specific construction schedule, equipment mix, and proximity of future development projects to sensitive receptors are not yet known, so it is impossible to conduct project-specific localized air quality or health risk analyses or identify project-specific mitigation measures. Accordingly, the Draft EIR evaluates impacts at the level of detail supported by the information currently available. Per Mitigation Measure AIR-6, as future discretionary projects are proposed, project-level health risk assessments will evaluate potential localized air quality and health risk impacts based on the specific characteristics of each project, including nearby sensitive receptors, and will identify appropriate mitigation measures, as necessary, to minimize exposure of sensitive receptors to elevated concentrations of criteria air pollutants and TACs. This subsequent project-level review will ensure that potential impacts to sensitive receptors are evaluated using project-specific information before implementation of individual development projects. Any required mitigation measures would be incorporated into project-specific approvals and are

anticipated to be implemented during the early phases of construction, as appropriate, to reduce potential health risk impacts. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are necessary to address this comment.

Comment O3-16

Accordingly, the DEIR must be revised to include a comprehensive health risk assessment and clearly defined, enforceable mitigation measures addressing construction and operational impacts to air quality and sensitive receptors. These measures must be incorporated into the DEIR and adopted prior to any demolition or construction activities.

Response O3-16

As discussed in Response O3-15, the proposed project is a program-level plan that would be implemented over an anticipated 18-year buildout period. Because the specific locations, construction schedules, equipment mixes, operational characteristics, and proximity to sensitive receptors for those future projects are not yet known, a comprehensive project-specific health risk assessment cannot be prepared at this time. Per Mitigation Measure AIR-6, future discretionary projects would prepare project-level health risk assessments, as appropriate, to evaluate potential localized air quality and health risk impacts based on the specific characteristics of each project. Where warranted, project-specific mitigation measures would be identified and implemented to minimize exposure of nearby sensitive receptors to criteria air pollutants and TACs. These analyses and any required mitigation measures will be identified before approval and implementation of future development projects, ensuring that potential impacts to sensitive receptors are appropriately evaluated and addressed prior to demolition and construction activities. As such, no revisions to the Draft EIR are necessary to address this comment.

Comment O3-17

5. Cumulative impacts are not fully identified, or are missing from DEIR.

CEQA requires that an Environmental Impact Report ("EIR") analyze cumulative impacts in a meaningful and comprehensive manner. CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(b)(1) provides that a cumulative impacts analysis must be based on either:

a. A list of past, present and probable future projects producing related cumulative impacts, including, if necessary, those projects outside the control of the agency; or

b. A summary of projections contained in an adopted general plan or related planning document designed to evaluate regional or area-wide conditions.

Courts have repeatedly emphasized that an EIR must include all reasonably foreseeable projects that could contribute to cumulative impacts. In *Communities for a Better Environment v. California Resources Agency* (2002) 103 Cal.App.4th 98, 120, the court held that an agency may not rely on an incomplete or improperly limited project list when evaluating cumulative impacts. Similarly, in *Kings County Farm Bureau v. City of Hanford* (1990) 221 Cal.App.3d692, 720–721, the court found an EIR inadequate where it failed to sufficiently analyze cumulative impacts, including traffic and air quality effects, from related projects in the surrounding area.

Response O3-17

This comment provides legislative background on the requirements for analysis of cumulative impacts in an EIR. As noted in this comment, CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(b)(1) states that the analysis of cumulative impacts should come from one or two sources. These two sources can be summarized as the "list method" and the "projections method." As stated in Chapter 3, *Environmental Analysis*, of the Draft EIR, the cumulative impact analyses in the Draft EIR use a combination of the list method and projections method. Table 3-1 of the Draft EIR provides a list of cumulative projects which are considered within the cumulative analyses of individual topical cumulative discussions when necessary. No specific concerns are raised in this comment with respect to the environmental analysis, and therefore no further response is required. Responses to the commenter's specific concerns regarding the cumulative analysis of the proposed project are provided in Responses O3-18 through O3-21.

Comment O3-18

Although the DEIR identifies several related projects within the City of Costa Mesa—including projects associated with the "Neighborhoods Where We All Belong" Housing Element rezoning—it fails to adequately evaluate regional or area-wide cumulative conditions.[5]

[5] See Pages 3-4 through 3-6, Section 3 of DEIR.

Response O3-18

This comment incorrectly asserts that the cumulative analysis of the Draft EIR does not evaluate regional or area-wide cumulative conditions. As noted in Chapter 3, *Environmental Analysis,* of the Draft EIR, the geographic scale of cumulative analyses throughout the Draft EIR are dependent upon the scale appropriate for the specific topical impact. Cumulative impacts that are localized to the footprint of the proposed project and its immediate vicinity include impacts in the topics of aesthetics, geology and soils, hazards, hydrology, cultural resources, biological resources, and noise. Other impacts affect the environment on a regional scale and so the cumulative analysis in the Draft EIR considers the cumulative impacts of other projects within the region to address these topics. These include the topics of regional air quality impacts and GHG emissions, noise associated with traffic, vehicle miles traveled (VMT), and consistency with

the City's level of service (LOS) guidelines, the scales of which all extend beyond jurisdiction of the City and affect conditions in the Southern California region. Impact analysis under these topics relies on modeling performed in the County's regional travel demand model, known as the Orange County Transportation Analysis Model (OCTAM). Specifically, the OCTAM models traffic and VMT based on land use projections from the Southern California Associations of Governments' (SCAG) Connect SoCal 2024 (2024 SCAG RTP/SCS). This land use information used in this model consists of data from jurisdictions across the Southern California region. Therefore, use of this model to assess the cumulative impacts driven by VMT and traffic conditions accounts for growth on a regional scale. No revisions to the Draft EIR are necessary to address this comment.

Comment O3-19

This deficiency stems from the omission of two major development projects located immediately adjacent to the City's boundaries in Santa Ana, which are reasonably foreseeable and would contribute to cumulative impacts within Costa Mesa.

These projects are substantial in scale. The Village at South Coast project includes 1,583 dwelling units, 80,000 square feet of retail space, and 300,000 square feet of office space. The Bristol Related project proposes 3,250 dwelling units, 350,000 square feet of commercial space, a 250-room hotel, and a 200-unit senior living project, with a floor area ratio of 2.7 and residential density of approximately 92 du/ac. Given their proximity and scale, these projects would foreseeably contribute to cumulative impacts related to traffic, air quality, noise, and infrastructure demand within Costa Mesa.

CEQA prohibits agencies from ignoring such related projects or artificially limiting the scope of cumulative analysis. As the California Supreme Court explained, "an EIR must not ignore the cumulative impact of multiple projects" (*Kings County Farm Bureau*, supra, 221 Cal.App.3d at p. 720).

Response O3-19

See Response O3-18. As noted, impacts related to traffic and VMT, including air quality, GHG emissions, and traffic noise, utilize the OCTAM, which takes into account regional conditions. The land use data used in the OCTAM is consistent with the *Connect SoCal 2024* land use projections for 2050 in Santa Ana. SCAG's land use projections represent a reasonably foreseeable land use growth allocation in Santa Ana and throughout the SCAG region. SCAG projects a 695 housing-unit increase in Transportation Analysis Zone (TAZ) 823 (where the Village of Santa Ana and Bristol Related projects are located) and 17,007 housing-unit increase citywide in Santa Ana by 2050. This is consistent with regional planning efforts and the cumulative project buildout assumptions applied in the City of Santa Ana Climate Action Plan. The City of Santa Ana's Climate Action Plan assumes a growth of 695 units in TAZ 823. While the entitled projects could build more units than were assumed by the Climate Action Plan in TAZ

823, there is no guarantee that all units will be built by 2050 because all construction is dependent on market forces. Further, the analysis does assume 17,007 housing-unit growth in Santa Ana, which is substantial housing growth over and above the full buildout of the Village of Santa Ana and Bristol Related projects. SCAG housing growth allocation is based on an assumed cap on population and housing growth in the SCAG region, which assumes that if more housing is built in TAZ 823, housing would not be built somewhere else, because a finite number of units are expected. For these reasons, the VMT and LOS analyses did consider a reasonably foreseeable cumulative scenario of regional housing growth appropriate for the context of the project and CEQA. The scope of the cumulative analysis was not artificially limited.

Additionally, as described in Section 3.17, *Utilities and Service Systems,* the scale of cumulative impacts related to infrastructure demand are based on the service area boundaries of the respective service providers. The Costa Mesa Sanitary District and Mesa Water District are Costa Mesa's sewer and water providers, and these providers do not serve Santa Ana. Therefore, the scale of cumulative impacts analyzed with respect to water and sewer infrastructure did not include the cumulative projects in Santa Ana described in this comment. The City of Costa Mesa's public works department constructs and maintains stormwater drainage infrastructure in the city, along with the Orange County Flood Control District, which maintains regional stormwater facilities. Additionally, the landfills that would serve the project also serve many jurisdictions across the state. Therefore, the cumulative impact analyses of these respective utility provider impacts analyze cumulative impacts and the project's cumulative contribution to these impacts at the appropriate scale of the service areas. Lastly, cumulative impacts to dry utility service providers similarly take into account the appropriate scale, which includes the service areas of Southern California Edison and SoCalGas in addition to the nationwide service areas of the primary telecommunications service providers. As discussed in Section 3.17, cumulative impacts with respect to utility service providers are generally addressed by compliance with existing regulations and regulatory processes, including coordination with the providers to ensure that the project's demand, along with demand from the providers' existing and projected commitments, do not exceed the providers' abilities to provide the services, requiring unforeseen construction or expansion of infrastructure.

Furthermore, it should be noted that while this EIR for the proposed project is required to address cumulative impacts and evaluate the project's contribution to these cumulative impacts, it is not required to mitigate the impacts of other projects, including those that may contribute to cumulative impacts that affect the same conditions as the proposed project. The projects addressed in this comment were required to undergo their own respective environmental reviews to analyze and address impacts, including cumulative impacts that affect regional conditions. The Village Santa Ana Specific Plan Project Supplemental EIR was certified in October 2025, and the Related Bristol Specific Plan Project EIR was certified in October 2024 (State Clearinghouse No. 2020029087). Since the environmental analysis appropriately analyzes and mitigates the proposed project's contribution to cumulative impacts, no revisions to the Draft EIR are necessary to address this comment.

Comment O3-20

Here, available information indicates that these Santa Ana projects will generate substantial increases in vehicle miles traveled, yet no traffic impact fees will be paid to the City of Costa Mesa and no corresponding roadway improvements are planned within the City. Moreover, the City of Santa Ana committed to routing construction and project-related traffic away from nearby Santa Ana neighborhoods and toward regional roadways located within Costa Mesa, including Bristol Street, Sunflower Avenue, Bear Street, South Coast Drive, Fairview Road, and Harbor Boulevard. These facts underscore that the impacts of these projects will not be confined to Santa Ana, but will directly affect Costa Mesa residents and infrastructure.

Response O3-20

As described in Responses O3-18 and O3-19, the Draft EIR appropriately analyzed cumulative impacts with respect to traffic, air quality, noise, and infrastructure demand. As noted, the proposed project itself is only required to mitigate its own incremental contribution to cumulative impacts. CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(a)(3) states that a project's contribution is less than cumulatively considerable if the project is required to implement or fund its fair share of a mitigation measure designed to alleviate the cumulative impact. As concluded in Section 3.15, *Transportation*, cumulative VMT impacts under the proposed project are less than significant and would not require the implementation of mitigation to address impacts. LOS traffic effects based on cumulative conditions, as analyzed in Appendix J.2 of the Draft EIR, would be addressed by the project's implementation of roadway improvements to address deficient conditions. CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.4(a)(4)(B) further codifies that a project's responsibility for addressing environmental impacts must be roughly proportional to the impacts it creates. This comment identifies perceived impacts from projects that are not only outside the scope of the proposed project but outside the lead agency's purview. The City of Santa Ana, in its capacity as the lead agency for the projects identified in this comment letter, was responsible for analyzing, disclosing, and mitigating the extra-jurisdictional impacts of these projects on facilities in Costa Mesa. As such, no revisions to the Draft EIR are necessary to address this comment.

Comment O3-21

Despite these reasonably foreseeable conditions, the DEIR does not meaningfully evaluate the cumulative impacts associated with increased traffic volumes, degraded air quality, or related environmental effects within Costa Mesa. Nor does it assess how these cumulative impacts may impair the City's ability to implement its General Plan policies or achieve applicable environmental goals. This omission renders the cumulative impacts analysis legally inadequate. (See *Communities for a Better Environment*, supra, 103 Cal.App.4th at p. 120.)

Accordingly, the DEIR fails to satisfy CEQA's requirements for a legally adequate cumulative impacts analysis. Sections 3.1 through 3.17 of the DEIR must be revised to incorporate all reasonably foreseeable related projects, including those in adjacent jurisdictions, and to fully evaluate the resulting cumulative impacts on transportation, air quality, and other environmental resource areas.

Response O3-21

As substantiated in Responses O3-18 through O3-20, the City respectfully disagrees with the commenter's assertion that the cumulative analyses in the Draft EIR are insufficient in addressing the scope of cumulative impacts. In the Draft EIR, impacts that affect regional conditions account for the cumulative impacts of cumulative projects. Cumulative impacts with respect to consistency with the City's General Plan are largely included in Section 3.10, *Land Use and Planning*, of the Draft EIR. Because the City of Costa Mesa's General Plan only has jurisdiction over decisions made in Costa Mesa, the scope of cumulative impacts for the General Plan consistency impact only includes other cumulative projects in the city. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are necessary to address this comment.

Comment O3-22

6. Phase I and Phase II Environmental Reports are outdated, incomplete, and unreliable; the DEIR fails to adequately address contamination and construction-related risks.

The Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments relied upon in the DEIR are more than five years old, having been commissioned by the State of California prior to significant changes in site conditions. Given ongoing activities at the site—including demolition, grading, and construction associated with separate State-led projects—it is necessary to reevaluate current environmental conditions. Reliance on outdated reports undermines the accuracy and reliability of the DEIR's analysis of contamination and associated risks

Response O3-22

The Phase II Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) was prepared in July 2021, and Phase II ESAs do not have a defined expiration date in ASTM standards. Additionally, the current operations at the project site have not changed since preparation of the Phase II ESA and there has not been a change in ownership in the past five years. Therefore, the recommendations and conclusions in the Phase II ESA are still appropriate and applicable to the proposed project.

Comment O3-23

Further, the DEIR omits critical information by failing to include the draft Additional Phase II Investigation, dated November 26, 2021, prepared by Avocet Environmental, Inc. for the

California Department of General Services ("Additional Phase II"). Although this report focuses on the Main Plant Operations Area, it identifies contamination that has the potential to affect other portions of the site if not properly managed.

The Additional Phase II emphasizes the need for a comprehensive Soil Management Plan, stating that it should include procedures for segregating, stockpiling, and characterizing soil suspected of being contaminated and screening levels for use in determining whether impacted soil, if encountered, can be reused onsite or must be transported offsite or disposal or to be recycled." [emphasis added] The DEIR does not adequately incorporate or analyze these recommendations, nor does it evaluate how failure to implement such measures could result in the migration or spread of contaminants during demolition and construction activities.

Response O3-23

The commenter references recommendations for a comprehensive Soil Management Plan in a draft report. The Draft EIR evaluates the potential for hazardous materials impacts based on the environmental site assessment reports and other relevant information that was available during preparation of the document. As discussed in Section 3.8, *Hazards and Hazardous Materials*, the Draft EIR identifies the potential for contaminated soil and groundwater associated with past site uses and concludes that construction activities could expose or disturb hazardous materials if not properly managed. To address these potential impacts, Mitigation Measures HAZ-1a through HAZ-1c require site-specific soil and groundwater investigations; preparation and implementation of soil and groundwater management procedures; appropriate handling and disposal of contaminated materials; worker protection measures; and compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local regulatory requirements. These measures are intended to prevent the release or migration of contaminants during demolition and construction activities.

Therefore, the Draft EIR already requires comparable management measures through the adopted mitigation measures (see Mitigation Measure HAZ-a) and applicable regulatory oversight. The commenter has not provided substantial evidence demonstrating that the Draft EIR's analysis is inadequate or that implementation of the identified mitigation measures would fail to reduce impacts associated with contaminated soil and groundwater. Accordingly, no revisions to the Draft EIR are required.

Comment O3-24

The DEIR is also deficient because it fails to meaningfully analyze how demolition of existing structures and site grading could exacerbate existing environmental hazards, including the release of hazardous materials, contaminated dust, or subsurface pollutants. CEQA requires that such foreseeable impacts be identified, analyzed, and mitigated prior to Project approval. The DEIR's failure to do so results in an incomplete assessment of potential risks to workers, nearby residents, and the environment.

Response O3-24

Impact b) of Section 3.8, *Hazards and Hazardous Materials*, of the Draft EIR specifically evaluates whether construction activities, including demolition, grading, and other ground-disturbing work, could create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset or accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials.

As discussed under Impact b), the Draft EIR identifies that construction activities could encounter hazardous materials present at the project site, including polychlorinated biphenyls, residual petroleum, asbestos-containing materials, lead-based paint, and localized areas of contaminated soil identified through the environmental site assessments. The Draft EIR concludes that uncontrolled disturbance of these materials could expose workers or the environment to hazardous substances and, therefore, identifies the impact as potentially significant prior to mitigation.

To address these potential impacts, Mitigation Measures HAZ-1a through HAZ-1c require pre-demolition hazardous materials surveys and abatement, oversight by a qualified environmental professional during soil screening and management activities, testing and approval of imported fill, and compliance with applicable regulatory agency requirements. These measures ensure that hazardous materials encountered during demolition and grading are properly identified, managed, and disposed of to prevent accidental releases and protect workers, the public, and the environment. The Draft EIR determined that with implementation of these mitigation measures, Impact b) would reduce impacts to a less-than-significant level.

Accordingly, the Draft EIR adequately identifies, analyzes, and mitigates the reasonably foreseeable hazards associated with demolition and construction activities, consistent with CEQA. No revisions to the Draft EIR are required.

Comment O3-25

Accordingly, updated Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments must be prepared to reflect current site conditions and to provide an accurate basis for environmental review. These updated reports must be incorporated into the DEIR and made available for public review.

Finally, because the inclusion of updated environmental analyses may disclose new or more severe impacts, the public comment period for the DEIR must be extended to ensure meaningful public participation and informed decision-making, consistent with CEQA's purposes.

Response O3-25

As discussed in Responses O3-22 and O3-23, the Draft EIR appropriately analyzed and disclosed impacts from hazardous materials, and implementation of Mitigation Measures HAZ-1a through HAZ-1c would ensure that these impacts are reduced to less than significant. This comment and the preceding comments addressing the presence of hazardous conditions on the project site do not provide evidence of additional impacts not otherwise disclosed in the Draft EIR. As such, no revisions to the Draft EIR are necessary to address this comment, nor would an extension of the comment period be warranted.

Comment O3-26

7. The DEIR reveals significant and unavoidable impacts that cannot be fully mitigated; DEIR fails to address impacts and does not address population and housing impacts adequately.

The DEIR identifies the following significant and unavoidable adverse impacts that would result from implementation of the proposed project:

a. Impact AIR-1: The proposed project would cumulatively contribute to the nonattainment designations in the South Coast Air Basin and would be inconsistent with the South Coast Air Quality Management District's Air Quality Management Plan.

b. Impact AIR-2: Construction activities associated with future development that would be accommodated under the proposed project could generate short-term emissions in exceedance of the South Coast Air Quality Management District's threshold criteria.

c. Impact AIR-3: Long-term operation of the proposed project would generate emissions in exceedance of the South Coast AQMD's threshold criteria and cumulatively contribute to the South Coast Air Basin's nonattainment designations.

d. Impact AIR-4: Construction of the proposed project could expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.[4]

e. Impact AIR-5: The proposed project's contribution to cumulative air quality impacts would be cumulatively considerable.

f. Impact BIO-2: Construction and operation of the proposed project may have an impact on an unknown aquatic resource (potential wetland).

g. Impact CUL-1: The proposed project would result in a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource due to the removal of historic buildings within the Fairview Developmental Center.

h. Impact GHG-1: Operation of the proposed project would generate a cumulatively considerable increase in GHG emissions that would exceed the South Coast AQMD Working Group bright-line threshold.

i. Impact GHG-2: The proposed project, together with cumulative projects, would result insubstantial GHG emissions impacts.

[6] See discussion in Section 4 above.

Implementation of the proposed Project would result in several environmental impacts. Under CEQA, an impact is considered significant and unavoidable if it would cause a substantial adverse change in the environment that cannot be feasibly mitigated to a less-than-significant level. Where a lead agency nonetheless approves such a project, it must adopt a Statement of Overriding Considerations explaining why the Project's benefits outweigh its significant impacts.[7]

[7] See CEQA Guidelines Section 15093[b].

Response O3-26

This comment summarizes the significant and unavoidable impacts identified in the Draft EIR. This comments does not identify any deficiencies with the analysis in the Draft EIR; therefore, no further response is required.

Comment O3-27

In addition, the DEIR erroneously identifies the following impact as "Less than Significant" due to the failure to perform adequate biological reconnaissance surveys:

j. Impact BIO-1: Construction of the project site may impact suitable habitat for the Crotch's bumble bee and the western burrowing owl; suitable nesting habitat for the Cooper's hawk and white-tailed kite; and suitable roosting habitat for the western yellow bat and monarch butterfly.

As discussed above, this conclusion is unsupported because the underlying biological reconnaissance surveys are incomplete. The DEIR must be revised following completion of protocol-level surveys conducted during appropriate seasonal periods.

Response O3-27

As discussed in Responses O3-6 through O3-12, the level of biological survey specificity conducted for this EIR aligns with the programmatic nature of the analysis. Mitigation Measures BIO-1a through BIO-1d would require additional focused surveys for special status species to

document the presence or absence of these special status species at the project site during development of the proposed project. These mitigation measures also provide protocols for addressing potential impacts to these species during construction activities. Depending on the results of the surveys and if avoidance cannot be achieved, a Habitat Management Plan, Avoidance Plan, and/or Mitigation Plan would be prepared and an application for an Incidental Take Permit may be necessary. As such, no revisions to the Draft EIR are necessary to require the completion of protocol-level surveys.

Comment O3-28

The DEIR is further deficient because it fails to identify or adequately evaluate the following impact areas:

k. Hazards and Hazardous Materials. The DEIR does not adequately address the presence of hazardous materials identified in the Additional Phase II[8], nor does it provide mitigation for potential exposure or the redistribution of contaminants during demolition and construction.

[8] See discussion in Section 6 above.

Response O3-28

As discussed in Response O3-24, impacts regarding exposure to hazardous materials during construction activities are identified and mitigated to less than significant in the Draft EIR. Neither this Comment nor preceding Comments O3-23 through O3-25 of this letter specify how the additional measures identified in these comments would address impacts of the proposed project. As described in Responses O3-23 through O3-25, Mitigation Measures HAZ-1a through HAZ-1c would mitigate impacts to less than significant. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are necessary to address this comment.

Comment O3-29

l. Noise. The DEIR fails to identify potentially significant noise impacts associated with construction activities and does not evaluate cumulative noise impacts from other concurrent projects within the City.

Response O3-29

Construction noise impacts are analyzed in Section 3.11.4, Impact Discussion a), of Section 3.11, *Noise* (see analysis starting on page 3.11-18). This analysis, which conservatively analyzed noise impacts from construction equipment based on a distance of 50 feet from potential receptor locations, concluded that construction equipment noise impacts would be potentially significant. Mitigation Measure NOI-1 was incorporated to reduce these impacts and included

requirements for noise reduction strategies and compliance with City Municipal Code requirements. This mitigation measure was determined to reduce construction noise impacts to less than significant.

The discussion of cumulative noise impacts recognized that other cumulative projects in the vicinity of the project, including those from the SREOC and the SB 138 housing developed by the Departmental Services on Merrimac Way, could contribute to construction and operational noise impacts based on proximity to the project. However, compliance with the City's Municipal Code provisions would ensure that noise levels under these cumulative projects are addressed. The cumulative traffic noise discussion was based on traffic modeling that included trips from relevant cumulative projects, including other concurrent projects in the city, as discussed in Responses O3-18 and O3-19. The proposed project's cumulative contribution to traffic noise was determined to be less than significant.

Comment O3-30

m. Transportation: Although the DEIR analyzes certain policy conflicts, it fails to evaluate significant impacts associated with modifications to the Fair Drive/Harbor Boulevard intersection related to the State's Emergency Operations Center project. It also does not analyze how traffic circulation would be affected during emergency operations, when ingress and egress to the facility would be prioritized. Additional analysis and mitigation measures beyond Mitigation Measure T-1 are required.[9]

[9] See Pages 3.15-34 and 3.15-35, Section 3.15 of DEIR.

Response O3-30

As stated in Chapter 2, *Project Description*, of the Draft EIR, the SREOC project is a separate project and is not part of the proposed project. Cal OES certified an EIR for the SREOC in December 2023 that analyzed potential impacts to circulation systems in its vicinity (see State Clearinghouse Number 2023030046). In addition, as discussed under Impact d) in Section 3.15, *Transportation*, of the Draft EIR, the proposed project includes construction of a secondary access road at the existing intersection of Harbor Boulevard and Harbor Center, which would provide a dedicated secondary access road to the project site. Harbor Boulevard is designated as an emergency evacuation route for Costa Mesa, and the additional access point would maintain adequate access for future residents, employees, and visitors to the project site, including in the event of an emergency. The Draft EIR does not analyze impacts related to traffic delay because such analyses are not required under CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3.

The commenter does not identify specific deficiencies in the transportation analysis or provide substantial evidence demonstrating that emergency operations would result in a significant transportation impact attributable to the proposed project that was not evaluated in the Draft

EIR. Similarly, the commenter does not provide evidence demonstrating that mitigation beyond Mitigation Measure T-1 is warranted. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are required.

Comment O3-31

n. Population and Housing. The DEIR acknowledges recent population declines in Costa Mesa and Orange County alongside increases in housing supply[10], yet concludes that adding up to 4,000 new housing units (approximately 9,926 residents) would result in less-than-significant impacts. This conclusion suggests either that the Project size could be reduced while still meeting RHNA obligations, or that the DEIR has failed to adequately analyze population and housing impacts.

[10] See Page 3.12-6 of Section 3.12 of DEIR.

Response O3-31

Section 3.12, *Population and Housing,* of the Draft EIR (see page 3.12-12), notes that the city experienced an overall population decline between 2019 and 2023, but the county experienced overall population growth with the exception of population decline in 2022 and 2023. The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) 2040–2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) also projects continued population growth for both the city and the county through 2050. Despite recent population shifts, the SCAG 2040-2050 RTP/SCS, which establishes regional growth goals and policies and provides population projections, forecasts continued population growth at in the city and county through 2050. In a conservative effort to evaluate all potential impacts in the Draft EIR, Section 3.12, *Population and Housing,* analyzes the maximum development allowed pursuant to the proposed Specific Plan. As discussed within Section 3.12, *Population and Housing* (Page 3.12-12), the proposed project could result in the development of up to 4,000 new residential units, accommodating up to 9,926 new residents, which would be well within the projected population growth for the city and county.

As concluded in the Draft EIR, the proposed project's contribution to housing supply would provide needed housing for various income levels consistent with the City's RHNA, remain within the projected housing growth for Orange County, support implementation of all four goals identified in the City's 2021–2029 Housing Element, and contribute to addressing the State's housing crisis (SB 330). Furthermore, the Draft EIR has adequately analyzed population and housing impacts, and this comment does not provide substantial evidence demonstrating that the analysis is inadequate under CEQA. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are required.

Comment O3-32

o. Recreation. The DEIR incorrectly concludes that impacts to recreational resources would be less than significant. It states that the Project would meet the City's standard of 4.26acres of parkland per 1,000 residents; however, the Project would result in a deficit exceeding 28 acres. This shortfall necessarily imposes increased demand on existing City recreational facilities, constituting a significant and unavoidable impact. The DEIR must be revised to acknowledge this deficiency and identify appropriate mitigation measures.

Response O3-32

See Response I3-4. With implementation of the open space standards of the FDCSP, in combination with land dedication and payment of impact fees, the proposed project would meet the City's parkland standard. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are necessary to address this comment.

Comment O3-33

p. Tribal Cultural Resources. The DEIR concludes that impacts would be less than significant despite requiring extensive mitigation measures. This conclusion is inconsistent with the City's own findings in the "Neighborhoods Where We All Belong"/Housing Element draft environmental impact report, where similar impacts were determined to be significant and unavoidable. We note that the description of the mitigation measure in the DEIR goes on for pages. It is difficult to understand how something that requires such an extensive mitigation measure can be less than significant, and be recognized as significant in a related environmental report. The DEIR must reconcile this inconsistency and, if necessary, revise its impact conclusions.

Response O3-33

The "Neighborhoods Where We All Belong"/Housing Element Draft EIR (State Clearinghouse No. 2025110783) is a program-level environmental analysis that evaluates the potential environmental effects associated with implementation of Costa Mesa's updated housing element and anticipated future housing growth throughout the city. Because the housing element EIR evaluates future development at a programmatic level, it does not analyze site-specific conditions or construction activities associated with individual development projects that may be proposed under the housing element. Accordingly, the housing element EIR recognizes that subsequent projects would be required to undergo project-specific environmental review, incorporate applicable mitigation measures, and comply with applicable regulatory requirements to address potential impacts, including impacts to tribal cultural resources (TCR).

The scope of the proposed project is more specific compared to the numerous dispersed sites in the housing element EIR's scope of review. The Draft EIR for the proposed project considers the developed and disturbed nature of the project site and reasonably foreseeable potential effects associated with project implementation. In addition, the proposed project has incorporated the requirements of Senate Bill (SB) 18 and Assembly Bill (AB) 52, including consultation with applicable Native American tribes, and project-specific mitigation measures TCR-1, TCR-2, and TCR-3 have been identified to further avoid, minimize, and address potential impacts to tribal cultural resources during project implementation. This comment does not identify a specific deficiency in the Draft EIR's TCR analysis or provide substantial evidence demonstrating that the proposed project would result in a significant impact with mitigation that was not evaluated. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are required.

Comment O3-34

In light of these deficiencies, the DEIR does not provide an adequate or legally defensible evaluation of the Project's environmental impacts. The document must be revised to correct these omissions, incorporate updated data and analysis, and identify enforceable mitigation measures prior to Project approval.

Response O3-34

As discussed in Responses O3-26 through O3-33, the Draft EIR sufficiently addresses, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, the topics identified by the commenter in the preceding comments. As this comment does not identify any additional deficiencies with the analysis of the Draft EIR, no further response is required.

Comment O3-35

8. Alternative analysis fails to consider a previously identified feasible alternative.

The City has erred in identifying the proposed Project as the only feasible environmentally superior alternative. CEQA requires an EIR to evaluate a reasonable range of alternatives that would feasibly attain most of the project's basic objectives while avoiding or substantially lessening one or more significant environmental impacts.

Response O3-35

This comment incorrectly states that the City chose the proposed project as the environmentally superior alternative. As discussed in Section 4.9 of Chapter 4, *Alternatives to the Proposed Project*, of the Draft EIR (see analysis starting on page 4-30), the City chose the Partial Adaptive Reuse of Historic District Alternative as the environmentally superior alternative since it would reduce the most impacts while meeting the most project objectives

compared to the other alternatives. The discussion does not identify this alternative as infeasible and concludes by noting, "this alternative provides an effective balance between reducing environmental impacts particularly with respect to historical resources and achieving key proposed project objectives, including redevelopment of the project site and provision of housing to meet the City's RHNA obligations" (see page 4-31 of the Draft EIR).

Furthermore, it is the City's position that the four alternatives selected for further analysis in Chapter 4 of the Draft EIR do represent a reasonable range of alternatives that would feasibly attain most of the project's basic objectives while avoiding or substantially lessening one or more significant environmental impacts. The commenter's specific concerns regarding the alternatives analysis are addressed in Responses O3-36 through O3-40.

Comment O3-36

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(a) provides that an EIR must "describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project," and must "evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives." CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(f) further provides that the range of alternatives is governed by the "rule of reason," meaning the EIR must include those alternatives necessary to permit a reasoned choice. The alternatives analyzed in detail must be capable of feasibly attaining most of the project's basic objectives while reducing significant environmental impacts.

California courts have repeatedly held that an EIR must provide decisionmakers and the public with a meaningful range of alternatives. The alternatives analysis is a core component of CEQA because it allows the public and decisionmakers to evaluate whether the project's significant environmental impacts can be reduced through a different development program. (*Laurel Heights Improvement Assn.*, supra, 47 Cal.3d 376, 400–403.) An EIR that fails to consider a reasonable alternative capable of reducing significant impacts does not satisfy CEQA's informational purpose. (*Watsonville Pilots Assn. v. City of Watsonville* (2010) 183 Cal.App.4th 1059, 1087–1089.)

Response O3-36

This comment summarizes the legislative requirements with respect to alternatives analysis under CEQA. As this comment does not identify any specific deficiencies regarding the Draft EIR, no further response is required.

Comment O3-37

Here, the DEIR's alternatives analysis does not satisfy the rule of reason. The alternatives selected for analysis do not permit a reasoned choice because they do not include the

previously identified 3,800-unit alternative, which had already been proposed by the City and subjected to financial analysis. That alternative is directly relevant because it appears capable of achieving most of the Project's basic objectives—mixed-income housing, affordable housing, commercial uses, infrastructure, and open space—while potentially reducing one or more of the Project's significant and unavoidable impacts, including impacts related to air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, traffic, recreation, and construction-related effects.

Response O3-37

As summarized by the commenter in Comment O3-36, the selection of alternatives for analysis is governed by the "rule of reason." An EIR need not consider every possible variation or permutation of a project but instead must analyze a range of reasonable alternatives that would feasibly attain most of the basic project objectives while avoiding or substantially lessening any of the significant effects of the project.

State housing law limits the use of reduced residential density as a mitigation measure or project alternative. Public Resources Code Section 21159.26 provides that, for projects that include housing development, a public agency may not reduce the proposed number of housing units as a mitigation measure or project alternative if another feasible mitigation measure or alternative would provide a comparable level of environmental impact reduction. In addition, the City's 6th cycle housing element identifies the FDC property as a key housing element site capable of accommodating residential units and helping the City meet its RHNA.

Moreover, the 3,800-housing unit alternative identified by this Comment presents a negligible, 5 percent reduction from the maximum buildout capacity under the proposed project. This minor reduction would be insufficient to avoid or substantially lessen the proposed project's significant and unavoidable impacts, resulting in nearly identical impacts related to the physical footprint of the project and largely similar air quality emissions and GHG emission impacts. It would not reduce any identified significant and unavoidable impact to a less than significant level. Therefore, analyzing a 3,800-unit scenario would not provide the public or decision-makers with distinct, meaningful comparative environmental data. Several judicial rulings have held that an EIR does not need to analyze alternatives that are substantively redundant or do not offer a substantial reduction in environmental impacts compared to those already analyzed. See *Village Laguna of Laguna Beach, Inc. v. Board of Supervisors* (1982) 134 Cal.App.3d 1022; *Sequoyah Hills Homeowners Assn. v. City of Oakland* (1993) 23 Cal.App.4th 704.

No revisions to the Draft EIR are necessary to address this comment.

Comment O3-38

The exclusion of the 3,800-unit alternative is particularly problematic because the alternatives included in the DEIR were not subject to comparable financial feasibility review. The City

previously identified and analyzed a 3,800-unit development scenario, therefore the DEIR must explain why that alternative was not carried forward for detailed analysis. Without that explanation, the DEIR improperly omits a facially reasonable and potentially feasible alternative from public review.

Response O3-38

As noted in response to Comment O3-37, the alternative proposed by the commenter does not meet the criteria needed for its inclusion as an alternative pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6. CEQA does not require that alternatives to a project be evaluated on the basis of financial feasibility; CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(b) specifically notes,

> … the discussion of alternatives shall focus on alternatives to the project or its location which are capable of avoiding or substantially lessening any significant effects of the project, even if these alternatives would impede to some degree the attainment of the project objectives, or would be more costly.

Moreover, State housing law limits the use of reduced residential density as a mitigation measure or project alternative. Public Resources Code Section 21159.26 provides that for projects that include housing development, a public agency may not reduce the proposed number of housing units as a mitigation measure or project alternative if another feasible mitigation measure or alternative would provide a comparable level of environmental impact reduction.

Section 4.3 of Chapter 4, *Alternatives to the Proposed Project,* of the Draft EIR provides an analysis and reasoning as to why a reduced density alternative was not carried forward for further consideration in the alternatives analysis. As substantiated in Response O3-37, revisions to the Draft EIR to incorporate this alternative are not necessary.

Comment O3-39

The DEIR also fails to evaluate another obvious reasonable alternative: a reduced-density alternative below 3,800 units. Such an alternative could lessen significant environmental impacts while still providing substantial housing, including affordable housing, and contributing toward the City's RHNA and Housing Element goals. A reduced-density alternative could also help address the Project's open space deficiency, reduce construction and operational emissions, lessen traffic and infrastructure demand, and better align development intensity with the surrounding community.

Response O3-39

As noted in Response O3-38, a reduced density alternative was considered and rejected in the alternatives discussion of the Draft EIR (see Section 4.3.2, page 4-5, of the Draft EIR). As stated

in Response O3-38, Public Resources Code Section 21159.26 states that a public agency may not reduce the proposed number of housing units as a mitigation measure or project alternative if another feasible mitigation measure or alternative would provide a comparable level of environmental impact reduction. This discussion recognizes that this alternative would result in reduced impacts related to population growth but would not reduce impacts related to the physical development footprint, including impacts associated with site disturbance or impacts to historical resources. This alternative, which proposed a scenario where the density of the project would be reduced to below the 2,300 housing units required under the City's housing element, was rejected from further analysis due to infeasibility because it would not meet key proposed project objectives related to providing housing and implementing the City's housing element and State housing directives for the project site.

An Increased Parkland Alternative was also considered but rejected in the Draft EIR (see Section 4.3.4, page 4-7 of the Draft EIR). This alternative was determined to result in a substantial reduction in developable area, resulting in decreased building footprints and overall project site coverage for residential land uses. As such, this alternative would not be able to accommodate the buildout of the project site and would therefore not meet key objectives of the project related to providing housing.

Comment O3-40

Instead, the DEIR evaluates alternatives that either have not been meaningfully vetted in prior public planning discussions or do not provide the public with a useful comparison to the proposed Project. Other than the required No Project Alternative, the alternatives analyzed do not appear to reflect the most relevant and feasible options available to the City. As a result, the DEIR fails to provide the public and decisionmakers with the information necessary to make a reasoned choice among alternatives.

The DEIR must therefore be revised to include, at minimum, the following alternatives:

a. The previously identified 3,800-unit alternative, which was previously proposed and financially analyzed; and

b. A reduced-density alternative below 3,800 units, designed to lessen significant environmental impacts while still meeting most of the Project's basic objectives.

Once these alternatives are analyzed, the DEIR must be recirculated for public review and comment. Without analysis of these reasonable and potentially feasible alternatives, the DEIR does not comply with CEQA's alternatives requirements and fails to provide the informed decision-making and public disclosure that CEQA requires.

Response O3-40

As described above Responses O3-35 through O3-39, the City disagrees with the commenter's assertion that the alternatives analysis did not address a reasonable range of alternatives or did not otherwise comply with CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6. The commenter's claims regarding the inadequacy of the alternatives analysis are not supported by substantial evidence in the record and therefore no revisions to the Draft EIR are necessary, nor is recirculation of the Draft EIR warranted.

Comment O3-41

9. Public Engagement has been inadequate and does not satisfy CEQA's public disclosure and participation requirements.

Public engagement for a project of this magnitude has been inadequate. CEQA is not merely a technical reporting statute; it is intended to ensure that environmental consequences are disclosed to, and meaningfully considered by, both decisionmakers and the public before a project is approved. The CEQA Guidelines expressly recognize that one of CEQA's basic purposes is to "[i]nform governmental decision makers and the public about the potential, significant environmental effects of proposed activities" and to "[e]nsure that environmental damage is avoided or minimized through feasible mitigation measures or alternatives." (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15002(a)(1), (2).) The Guidelines further emphasize that public participation is an essential part of the CEQA process. (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15003(b), (e).)

California courts have repeatedly confirmed that meaningful public disclosure and participation are central to CEQA. As the California Supreme Court explained, an EIR is "an environmental 'alarm bell' whose purpose it is to alert the public and its responsible officials to environmental changes before they have reached ecological points of no return." (*County of Inyo v. Yorty* (1973) 32 Cal.App.3d 795, 810.) An EIR also serves as "an informational document" intended to ensure that "the public and public agencies are informed" of a project's significant environmental effects. (*Laurel Heights Improvement Assn.*, supra, 47 Cal.3d 376, 391–392.) Where the public is not provided a fair and meaningful opportunity to understand and comment on a project's impacts, CEQA's core purpose is undermined.

Response O3-41

This comment summarizes several statutory requirements under CEQA. Responses regarding this letter's specific claims about the project's public review and disclosure process are addressed in Responses O3-42 through O3-45.

Comment O3-42

Here, meaningful public engagement has been lacking. It was only recently that more than a limited number of Costa Mesa residents became aware of the Project, largely in response to the City's proposal to construct a secondary access road across several fairways of the municipal golf course. That proposal prompted significant community concern and resulted in one of the most well-attended outreach meetings for the Project, held at the golf course itself. The fact that public awareness substantially increased only after residents learned of a direct impact to the golf course demonstrates that earlier outreach efforts were insufficient to inform the broader community about the Project's scope, consequences, and long-term implications.

Response O3-42

Community outreach/public engagement conducted on behalf of the FDCSP is summarized in Section 2.6, *The Planning Process*, of the FDCSP. Outreach began in 2023 and included five workshops/open houses, each consisting of two in-person meetings and one virtual meeting. Other activities included seven decisionmaker study sessions with both City Council and Planning Commission; stakeholder interviews; a dedicated project website, www.fdcplan.com; and the use of a variety of advertising solutions (newspaper ads, citywide mailers, interested parties email notifications, and social media posts) for greater community reach. As noted in the FDCSP, over 312 residents were reached by email, 46,000 residential units were reached by mailer, 12,000 residents were reached by the weekly newsletter, and over 4,400 residents were reached per social media post.

Additionally, pursuant the requirements under CEQA Guidelines Section 15082, the City initiated the scoping process for the proposed project by releasing a Notice of Preparation (NOP) for a 30-day review period from October 29, 2025 through December 5, 2025 (accounting for 37 total calendar days). The City filed the NOP with State Clearinghouse and the Orange County Clerk's office, in addition to posting the notice on the City's website and publishing it in local newspapers. A scoping meeting was held on November 17, 2025, at Costa Mesa City Hall Community Room. Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15087 and Section 15105, the City released the Draft EIR for a 45-day public review period starting on May 14, 2026. The Draft EIR along with its Notice of Availability (NOA) was posted to the City's website and submitted for state agency review to the State Clearinghouse. The NOA was also filed at the Orange County Clerk's office and interested parties, including all commenters on the NOP, were notified of the availability of the Draft EIR via certified mail and/or email. This comment does not introduce any concerns relevant to the public engagement/disclosure process under CEQA or raise an issue with the proposed project under the purview of CEQA. Therefore, no further response is required.

Comment O3-43

By contrast, the kickoff meeting for the Notice of Preparation was sparsely attended. The meeting was held on a Monday evening in mid-November, approximately two weeks after the Notice of Preparation was submitted to the State Clearinghouse. It was held at the rear of City Hall shortly before Thanksgiving week, when many residents were traveling or preparing for the holiday. The deadline for submission of scoping comments followed shortly after Thanksgiving, leaving residents and interested parties with only a narrow and practically difficult window to review the materials, understand the Project, and provide meaningful input regarding the scope of the environmental analysis.

Response O3-43

The proposed project complied with all requirements necessary to carry out noticing of the project's NOP in compliance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15082. The NOP was released for a 37-day review period starting on October 29, 2025, which exceeded the statutorily required review period for NOPs of 30 days to account for the Thanksgiving holiday. As noted by this comment, the scoping meeting for the project was scheduled on November 17, 2025, a week before the Thanksgiving holiday and approximately two weeks into the start of the commenting period. This timing for the scoping meeting is consistent with previous projects in Costa Mesa and represents a reasonable effort to accommodate holiday schedules and provide the public with ample opportunity to review the NOP. As this comment does not provide evidence of specific inadequacies that would trigger recirculation, no further response is necessary.

Comment O3-44

This process falls short of CEQA's public participation objectives. CEQA requires more than nominal notice; it requires disclosure that enables informed public review and meaningful comment. Courts have made clear that an EIR must contain sufficient information and analysis to permit informed public participation and decision-making. (*Berkeley Keep Jets Over the Bay Com. v. Board of Port Commissioners* (2001) 91 Cal.App.4th 1344, 1355–1356 [EIR must provide sufficient detail to enable those who did not participate in its preparation to understand and consider the environmental issues].) When outreach is minimal, poorly timed, or disconnected from the scale of the decision being made, the public cannot meaningfully participate in the environmental review process.

This Project deserves a far more robust public process. Together with the proposed rezoning under Measure K and the Housing Element update, the Project would substantially reshape Costa Mesa's population, circulation patterns, infrastructure demands, open space needs, and overall community character. These changes are not minor or isolated. They would affect the long-term livability of the City and would alter the heart of Costa Mesa in a manner unlike any prior project. A project of this scale should have included a formal advisory committee or other

meaningful mechanism for sustained community involvement. Instead, the City proceeded without a transparent, structured process capable of incorporating public input into the Project's design, alternatives, mitigation measures, and community benefits.

Response O3-44

This comment raises concerns regarding the public outreach conducted on behalf of the FDCSP; however, as referenced in response to Comment O3-45, the procedures for noticing and public review under CEQA follow strict statutory guidelines, with which the City has complied for this project. While the City acknowledges the commenter's dissatisfaction with the level of outreach conducted for the FDCSP, this comment does not address inadequacies related to the EIR or its public review process. Public engagement conducted on behalf of the FDCSP consisted of five community workshops (each on three different dates and at various locations throughout the community), stakeholder interviews, social media posts, online surveys, and a dedicated project website that provides project resources and tracks the engagement and progress on the FDCSP, as summarized in Section 2.6 of the FDCSP. As this comment does not raise any concerns regarding the environmental analysis or procedures for public disclosure of the EIR, no recirculation is necessary.

Comment O3-45

The absence of meaningful public input is reflected in the DEIR itself. The document does not adequately incorporate community priorities repeatedly raised during outreach discussions. Notably absent are community benefits such as an arts and cultural center, community gardens, a transit center with meaningful access to public transportation, affordable childcare, and other amenities that would contribute to a complete, balanced, and environmentally sustainable community. Instead, the DEIR appears oriented toward facilitating a master development program, without adequately responding to the public's stated vision for the site.

Response O3-45

With respect to the commenter's assertion that the Draft EIR does not properly incorporate public input, the City received 14 comment letters from agencies, individuals, and organizations on the NOP for the proposed project and recorded verbal comments made during the scoping meeting. Chapter 1, *Introduction*, of the Draft EIR (see Table 1-1 starting on page 1-4), summarizes these comments and provides references to the applicable section/chapter of the Draft EIR where these comments have been considered and incorporated. Each topical section of the Draft EIR further provides, in its introduction, a description of the relevant comments received. These comments are referenced in the analysis of the proposed project where relevant.

This comment identifies several components relevant to the FDCSP. It should be noted that the scope of this environmental analysis is limited to analyzing the impacts of the project as proposed and a reasonable range of alternatives to the project. These concerns will be forwarded to decision-makers to consider for the FDCSP. However, as this comment does not raise issue with the adequacy of the environmental review, no revisions to the Draft EIR are necessary.

Comment O3-46

Most troubling is the failure to provide adequate open space. For years, residents have consistently advocated for sufficient parkland on the Fairview Developmental Center site. Yet the Project proposes open space that does not satisfy the City's General Plan standard of 4.26 acres per 1,000 residents. Rather than meeting this standard on-site, the City appears to rely on park in-lieu fees without identifying the land that would be acquired, where it would be located, whether it would serve the Project's residents, or when it would be available. That approach is speculative and inadequate. CEQA requires that mitigation be specific, enforceable, and supported by substantial evidence; it does not allow the City to rely on vague future possibilities as a substitute for meaningful environmental analysis and mitigation. (See *Communities for a Better Environment v. City of Richmond* (2010) 184 Cal.App.4th 70, 93 [mitigation measures must be fully enforceable and cannot be deferred without performance standards].)

The City's approach also undermines CEQA's requirement that alternatives and mitigation be evaluated in a manner that allows meaningful public review. The public cannot evaluate whether in-lieu fees are adequate mitigation if the DEIR does not identify where replacement parkland would be located, whether suitable land is available, how much it would cost, or whether it would actually offset the Project's recreational impacts. At a minimum, the Project should provide enough on-site parkland to meet the General Plan standard. If the City proposes any alternative approach, the DEIR must disclose and analyze that approach in detail before Project approval.

Response O3-46

This comment incorrectly identifies the use of in-lieu fees to offset the amount of open space needed to meet the City's parkland standard as mitigation needed to reduce potentially significant impacts. A discussed in Draft EIR Section 3.14, *Recreation* (page 3.14-8), based on the City's parkland standard (4.26 acres per 1,000 residents for new development) a total of 42.28 acres of parkland would be required for the proposed project. The proposed project includes a minimum of 14 acres of public open spaces, which is separate from the private and common open space that the FDCSP requires for new residential development.[1] Private open space and

[1] Public open space includes public parks, trails, plazas, and other types of open spaces available to the general public. It does not include private and common open space that is considered an on-site amenity for multifamily

privately owned, publicly accessible open space can count toward this requirement, as approved by the Community Services Department. The City's parkland standard can be met through land dedication, park improvements, and in-lieu fees. With implementation of the Open Space Standards of the FDCSP, in combination with land dedication and payment of impact fees, the proposed project would meet the City's parkland standard.

As discussed in Sections 3.13, *Public Services*, and 3.14, *Recreation*, of the Draft EIR, the proposed project would not result in significant impacts with respect to expansion or construction of new parkland/recreation facilities or result in the physical deterioration or acceleration of deterioration of parkland/recreation facilities.

The proposed project would also not result in the deterioration of existing parks and recreation facilities. As noted in response to Comment O3-4 and within Section 6.2.1 of the FDCSP, the proposed project not only requires the provision of a minimum of 14 acres of open space at the project site but would also require the provision of 90 square feet of private, common, or public space per residential unit as well as 5,000 square feet of open space per stand-alone commercial building. Under the maximum buildout of 4,000 housing units and 35,000 square feet of commercial space, the additional private open space provided under the proposed project would result in an additional 11 acres of open space.[2] While it should be noted that the space provided under this requirement is not required to be public or parkland, this requirement would ensure that residents of the proposed project have access to additional open space. Additional open space developed by the City through the use of the project's collected in-lieu fees, the deterioration of existing and parks and recreational facilities in the City would not occur.

In summary, the FDCSP requires that the project comply with the City's standard of 4.26 acres of public open space per 1,000 residents. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR would be required to address this comment.

Comment O3-47

Finally, the most important planning question remains unanswered: How does this Project advance Costa Mesa's long-term vision? The DEIR does not meaningfully explain how redevelopment of the Fairview Developmental Center fits within the City's plans for the next 20 to 40 years, how it integrates with Citywide infrastructure and open space needs, or how it

housing and is primarily accessible by the residents of the housing development, unless the common open space is made publicly accessible.

[2] The required 90 square feet of open space per unit for 4,000 housing units would theoretically produce 8.26 total acres of open space at the project site. While the sizes and number of stand-alone commercial buildings are unknown at this time, Table 13 of the Fairview Developmental Center Market Study (see Appendix C of the FDCSP) reports that 26 businesses would be supportable under the FDCSP. If each of these is a stand-alone building, a total of 3 acres of private open space would be provided.

reflects the community's priorities. Redevelopment of this site is a once-in-a-generation opportunity. Yet the City cannot assemble a coherent long-term vision when essential pieces—meaningful public input, complete environmental review, financial analysis, infrastructure planning, enforceable mitigation, and a clear community benefits framework—remain missing.

For these reasons, the City should not proceed with certification of the DEIR or approval of the Project until it has conducted a more robust public engagement process, revised the DEIR to reflect and respond to community input, and recirculated the environmental analysis for meaningful public review. Anything less would fail to satisfy CEQA's fundamental purpose of informed decision-making and meaningful public participation.

Response O3-47

This comment does not raise any issues on the physical environmental impacts of the proposed project. The Draft EIR addresses conformity with the Costa Mesa General Plan in Section 3.10, *Land Use and Planning*, in Table 3.10-1 on page 3.10-9. As concluded in this analysis, the proposed project would be consistent with the General Plan goals and policies adopted to reduce environmental impacts. The City's housing element, which is also an element of the General Plan, directly addresses the development of the project site pursuant to the requirements of SB 188 in Program 3B (see further discussion in Section 2.3.2 of Chapter 2, *Project Description*, of the Draft EIR). Other sections of the Draft EIR provide analysis relevant to other impacts of the project on future planning, including utility infrastructure needs in Section 3.17, *Utilities and Service Systems*, and parks and recreation space in Section 3.14, *Recreation*, of the Draft EIR. The concerns brought forward by the commenter in previous comments and summarized in this comment are addressed in Responses O3-1 through O3-46. As this comment does not raise any additional issues not previously addressed, no further response is required.

Comment O3-48

10. Conclusion.

For all of the reasons set forth above, the DEIR is inadequate and fails to satisfy CEQA's fundamental requirements of full disclosure, informed decision-making, and meaningful public participation. The document relies on incomplete and outdated data, omits critical analyses, improperly defers mitigation, and fails to evaluate a reasonable range of feasible alternatives. As a result, it does not provide the public or decision-makers with the information necessary to understand the Project's true environmental consequences or to weigh those impacts against potential benefits.

In addition, the Project as currently proposed is inconsistent with applicable state housing laws, undermines key General Plan standards—particularly with respect to open space—and fails to reflect longstanding community priorities. The lack of meaningful public engagement further

compounds these deficiencies and calls into question the integrity of the environmental review process.

Accordingly, the City must not certify the DEIR or approve the Project in its current form. Instead, the City should revise and recirculate the DEIR to address the deficiencies identified in these comments, including:

- preparation of updated technical studies and environmental analyses;
- identification and adoption of enforceable mitigation measures prior to approval;
- inclusion and evaluation of a reasonable range of feasible alternatives, including the previously identified 3,800-unit alternative and a reduced-density alternative; and
- implementation of a robust and transparent public engagement process.

Only after these steps are completed can the City ensure compliance with CEQA and make a fully informed, legally defensible decision regarding the future of the Fairview Developmental Center site.

This Project represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to shape the future of Costa Mesa. It is essential that the City proceed carefully, transparently, and in full compliance with the law to ensure that the outcome reflects both sound planning principles and the long-term interests of the community.

Thank you for your attention. Please feel free to contact us should you have any questions.

Response O3-48

This comment provides the letter's conclusionary remarks and summarizes comments made previously in this letter. As this comment does not raise any additional issues not previously addressed in Responses O3-1 through O3-46, no further response is required.

2.2.3 Comments from Individuals

I1. Joseph DeCarlo, May 18, 2026

Comment I1-1

The present Fairview Development Center was an ideal site for developmentally disabled, homeless and drug addiction consumers. It's 100 acres can handle medical, provide care for these individuals vs. emergency room centers at much less cost. If some homeless want to camp out on the grounds, they can if they do not block sidewalks or disturb businesses. These dorms are already in place so they can provide immediate housing. They provide arts & crafts workshops, food services and medical assistance, all available on site. Why not utilize these existing resources for them rather than bulldoze down the existing structures. We can help more people who need it, reopening Fairview Development Centers than demolishing it.

Response I1-1

As described in Chapter 2, *Project Description*, of the Draft EIR, the City of Costa Mesa and State of California are required by Government Code Section 14670.31 (SB 188) to develop a specific plan for the FDC property that prioritizes mixed use and mixed income housing, reserves at least 200 units of permanent supportive housing, and provides open space. The FDCSP was prepared to meet the requirements of SB 188 and other legislation and directives applicable to the FDC project site, including the development of a minimum of 2,300 units, as required by the City's Housing Element.

As described in Chapter 4, *Alternatives to the Proposed Project*, in the Draft EIR, the City has considered multiple alternatives to the proposed project that would preserve existing on-site buildings to various extents. The Full Adaptive Reuse Alternative, which conforms most closely with the commenter's suggestions, was determined to be infeasible due to the extent of the modifications needed to make the existing buildings and site functional and safe for use. Improvements under this alternative would require structural upgrades, seismic retrofitting, and compliance with building and safety codes in addition to significant remediation of hazardous conditions at the site, including residual petroleum from historical fuel storage, asbestos-containing materials, lead-based paint, and contaminated soil. As such, this alternative was rejected from further consideration in the Draft EIR. As this comment does not otherwise comment on the adequacy of the environmental analysis, no changes to the Draft EIR are required.

I2. Robert Schureman, May 20, 2026

Comment I2-1

Two years ago I presented some of these concepts to a special group at the Center but I was told that in 2026 they would build Housing on a big part of this facility. That's not all bad but the possibility of part of this Center could be so useful to the four Needy groups of people in our area. This is a great opportunity for the Development Center and could be a pace seter for the State. I am not looking for a job or on any ego trip but I would be more then happy to assist any one that could promote the Development Center**.**

Response I2-1

The commenter's suggestions regarding the potential use of the site to serve needy groups in the area will be forwarded to decision-makers for consideration. As this comment does not remark on the adequacy of the environmental analysis, no changes to the Draft EIR are required.

I3. Claire Ramser, May 21, 2026

Comment I3-1

While I understand the importance of addressing housing needs, I have serious concerns about whether the current proposal adequately supports the long-term functionality, safety, and quality of life of the surrounding community.

Response I3-1

This comment expresses concern with the proposed project regarding long-term functionality, safety, and quality of life of the surrounding community. These statements do not identify specific deficiencies in the environmental analysis contained in the Draft EIR or provide substantial evidence demonstrating that the analysis is inadequate under CEQA. Accordingly, no revisions to the Draft EIR are required.

Comment I3-2

One of my primary concerns is the limited parking allocation for nearly 1,000 residential units. Even with the inclusion of street parking, the number of vehicles generated by a project of this size will inevitably place substantial strain on surrounding neighborhoods and existing infrastructure. Overflow parking, increased congestion, and impacts to emergency access and traffic circulation are all issues that deserve closer evaluation before approval.

Response I3-2

It should be noted that parking in and of itself is not an environmental impact evaluated by CEQA. As outlined Section 2.6.3, *Access and Circulation*, of the Draft EIR, the FDCSP does not include a minimum parking requirement for housing uses but does include parking standard requirements for other permitted uses, and standard requirements if parking is provided, to support future development needs. Future development projects would be required to adhere to the standards and meet the minimum space counts shown in Table 2-7, *Parking Requirements*, of the Draft EIR so as to not create parking issues.

See Response I4-4, for discussion on congestion and traffic circulation.

As discussed in Draft EIR Section 3.15, *Transportation* (page 3.15-34), during operation the proposed project would not result in inadequate emergency access, and impacts would be less than significant. However, temporary off-site construction activities on Harbor Boulevard could interfere with emergency response and evacuations. The Draft EIR identifies Mitigation Measure T-1, which requires preparation and implementation of a Traffic Control Plan to

minimize temporary construction-related circulation impacts, including maintaining alternate routes during temporary road closures or construction activities along Harbor Boulevard.

This comment does not identify a specific deficiency in the Draft EIR's transportation analysis or provide substantial evidence demonstrating that the proposed project would result in a significant transportation impact that was not evaluated. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are required.

Comment I3-3

In addition, the traffic impacts associated with an estimated 8,000 new residents raise significant concerns for the surrounding roadways and freeway access points. Harbor Boulevard and Newport Boulevard already experience substantial congestion during peak commuting hours, and this development is likely to intensify existing bottlenecks throughout the area. Increased traffic volumes near freeway entrances and exits will further burden local circulation patterns and could create additional delays, safety concerns, and reduced accessibility for existing residents. With only limited access routes serving portions of the surrounding community, it is difficult to understand how infrastructure improvements currently proposed will adequately accommodate this level of growth.

Response I3-3

See Response I4-4, which explains that, under CEQA, transportation impacts are evaluated using vehicle miles traveled (VMT), not automobile delay or level of service (LOS), as the primary metric.

See Response I3-2 for a discussion on safety concerns. Additionally, as discussed in Draft EIR Section 3.15, *Transportation* (page 3.15-32), the proposed project would not substantially increase transportation hazards related to geometric design features, queueing, pedestrian safety and accessibility, or incompatible land uses. This comment does not identify a specific deficiency in the Draft EIR's transportation analysis or provide substantial evidence demonstrating that the proposed project would result in a significant transportation impact that was not evaluated. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are required.

Comment I3-4

I am also concerned that the project appears to allocate only approximately 14 acres of parkland despite the significant projected population increase. My understanding is that Costa Mesa's own parkland standards and planning goals generally require a higher ratio of recreational and open space to support developments of this scale. Existing parks and recreational facilities are already heavily utilized, and without adequate expansion, this project risks placing even greater pressure on community resources.

Response I3-4

As discussed in Draft EIR Section 3.14, *Recreation* (page 3.14-8), based on the City's parkland standard (4.26 acres per 1,000 residents for new development) a total of 42.28 acres of parkland would be required for the proposed project. The proposed project includes a minimum of 14 acres of public open spaces, which is separate from the private and common open space that the FDCSP requires for new residential development.[3] Private open space and privately owned, publicly accessible open space can count toward this requirement, as approved by the Community Services Department. The City's parkland standard can be met through land dedication, park improvements, and in-lieu fees. With implementation of the Open Space Standards of the FDCSP, in combination with land dedication and payment of impact fees, the proposed project would meet the City's parkland standard.

Furthermore, as outlined in Section 3.13, *Public Services*, (page 3.13-17) of the Draft EIR, a combination of on-site public open space, private and common open space (amenities), and the payment of the Park and Recreation Impact Fees—as well as property and sales tax revenue—would contribute to improvements and maintenance of existing recreation facilities, which would ensure that the proposed project would not impact park facilities or park services.

If Park and Recreation Impact Fees are paid, along with other revenues that support the City's General Fund (including property, sales, and utility taxes and fees), the addition or expansion of park facilities would be at the City's discretion based on whether a need is identified and funding is available. This comment does not identify a specific deficiency in the Draft EIR's recreational or park-land analysis or provide substantial evidence demonstrating that the proposed project would result in a significant impact that was not evaluated. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are required.

Comment I3-5

Additionally, I would appreciate clarification regarding the relatively small amount of commercial square footage proposed in relation to the anticipated population increase. (35,000 sq ft for commercial use is smaller than the new Target on 17th street) A development of this magnitude will generate increased demand for grocery stores, childcare, restaurants, retail services, and other daily-use amenities. The plan in place seems heavily flawed.

[3] Public open space includes public parks, trails, plazas, and other types of open spaces available to the general public. It does not include private and common open space that is considered an on-site amenity for multifamily housing and is primarily accessible by the residents of the housing development, unless the common open space is made publicly accessible.

Response I3-5

The commenter request clarification of commercial uses. As detailed in Section 2.6.1, *Land Use*, of the Draft EIR, the proposed project's maximum of 35,000 square feet commercial space is intended for neighborhood-serving retail and service uses in either a stand-alone or mixed-use configuration. Neighborhood-serving retail and service uses are commercial establishments that primarily provide goods and services for the daily needs of nearby residents. The proposed project does not intend to accommodate regional-serving commercial uses (i.e., big-box retailers) because such uses already exist in the area. As detailed in Appendix C of the FDCSP, the maximum commercial square footage and the types of commercial development allowed under the FDCSP, were informed by the analysis of a Market Study that assessed the market viability of different options for commercial space at the project site. As this comment does not remark on the adequacy of the environmental analysis, no changes to the Draft EIR are required.

Comment I3-6

Given the scale of this proposal, I respectfully urge the City to carefully evaluate whether the current plan aligns with Costa Mesa's infrastructure capacity, traffic conditions, parkland requirements, and broader community planning objectives. I would also urge the city to focus less on high density housing/low income housing incentives and instead come up with an alternative plan for market rate housing minus low income housing. It would be incredibly refreshing to have a city commission team provide two options given you're seeking out community feedback.

Response I3-6

As discussed in Section 3.15, *Transportation* (page 3.15-19), of the Draft EIR, the proposed project is consistent with applicable regional and local transportation plans, including Connect SoCal 2024; the OCTA Long Range Transportation Plan; the OC Transit Master Plan; and the City of Costa Mesa's Active Transportation Plan, Local Roadway Safety Plan, Pedestrian Master Plan, and General Plan Circulation Element.

See Response I4-4, which explains that, under CEQA, transportation impacts are evaluated using vehicle miles traveled (VMT), rather than automobile delay or level of service (LOS), as the primary metric. In addition, please refer to Response I3-4 for the proposed project's consistency with the City's parkland requirements.

Additionally, the commenter's preference for reduced density and elimination of low-income housing represents opinions regarding the merits of the proposed project. As identified in Chapter 4, *Alternatives to the Proposed Project*, of the Draft EIR, the City provides three other project alternatives to the proposed project. The evaluation and selection of a preferred alternative is a discretionary policy decision for the City based on the environmental

information disclosed in the EIR and other considerations. The comment does not identify a specific deficiency in the Draft EIR's environmental analysis or provide substantial evidence demonstrating that the analysis is inadequate under CEQA. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are required.

Comment I3-7

Thank you for your time and consideration. I appreciate the work involved in reviewing projects of this complexity and hope these concerns will be seriously considered moving forward.

Response I3-7

The comment does not raise any specific issues regarding the adequacy of the environmental analysis or identify any significant environmental impacts. Therefore, no further response is required under CEQA, and no revisions to the Draft EIR are necessary.

I4. Wendy Leece, July 1, 2026

Comment I4-1

Realistic mitigation of the numerous environmental impacts on current residents, visitors and workers who commute to Costa Mesa is impossible.

With the proposed FDCSP development we will lose our Costa Mesa, the beautiful, diverse, eclectic city we love.

It is very unfortunate that the State is forcing the city to this moment of decision by requiring a densely populated "mini city" of 10,000 people on 95 acres with many environmental challenges in the center of an already built out and busy part of Costa Mesa.

"A square peg in a round hole" comes to mind. Nice project, plenty of needed housing, just the wrong place. Let's be realistic and fair to Costa Mesans, present and future.

Response I4-1

This comment expresses general opposition to the proposed project and concerns regarding its location, density, and potential effects on the character of Costa Mesa. These statements do not identify specific deficiencies in the environmental analysis in the Draft EIR or provide substantial evidence demonstrating that the analysis is inadequate under CEQA. Accordingly, no revisions to the Draft EIR are required.

Comment I4-2

I call your attention to the list of mitigations necessary to build and bring this project to completion. Many are identified impacts that are "significant and unavoidable." Table ES-2

Air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, noise, transportation, tribal cultural resources.

Response I4-2

These statements do not identify specific deficiencies in the environmental analysis in the Draft EIR or provide substantial evidence demonstrating that the analysis is inadequate under CEQA. Accordingly, no revisions to the Draft EIR are required.

Comment I4-3

Four of you will be termed out in a few months. Do you want this project to be your legacy? Do you want people to curse you as they are stuck in traffic on Harbor or rerouted because of the congestion? During months of construction do you want our local businesses to lose customers?

Response I4-3

These statements do not identify specific deficiencies in the environmental analysis or provide substantial evidence that the Draft EIR is inadequate under CEQA. Accordingly, no revisions to the Draft EIR are required.

Comment I4-4

No Traffic Management Plan can deal with the anticipated traffic congestion on Harbor and Fair and other busy streets like Wilson, Victoria and Merrimac.

Response I4-4

The Draft EIR evaluates the project's transportation impacts in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, which requires vehicle miles traveled (VMT) rather than automobile delay or level of service (LOS) as the primary metric for determining transportation impacts under CEQA.

As discussed in the methodology section of Section 3.15, *Transportation*, of the Draft EIR, Senate Bill (SB) 743 shifted the focus of CEQA transportation analysis from measuring automobile delay and congestion to evaluating whether a project would result in significant VMT impacts. Although not required, a Traffic Impact Analysis was prepared for the proposed project and is included in Appendix J.2 of the Draft EIR to provide additional information regarding project-related traffic conditions. In addition, the Draft EIR identifies Mitigation Measure T-1, which requires preparation and implementation of a Traffic Control Plan to minimize temporary construction-related circulation impacts, including maintaining alternate routes during temporary road closures or construction activities along Harbor Boulevard.

The comments do not identify a specific deficiency in the Draft EIR's transportation analysis or provide substantial evidence demonstrating that the proposed project would result in a significant transportation impact that was not evaluated. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are required.

Comment I4-5

What ARE the benefits of this project to the current 110,000 Costa Mesa residents? I don't see any. Any benefits to Costa Mesans do not outweigh the above serious environmental impacts, especially the increased traffic surrounding the FDC and air quality.

Response I4-5

The City acknowledges the commenter's concern that the proposed project's benefits may not outweigh its significant and unavoidable environmental impacts, particularly with respect to traffic and air quality. As disclosed in the Draft EIR, the proposed project would result in significant and unavoidable impacts in certain environmental issue areas after implementation of feasible mitigation measures. The purpose of the EIR is to disclose those impacts, identify feasible mitigation, and provide the City's decision makers and the public with information needed to evaluate the environmental consequences of the proposed project.

The determination of whether the project's benefits outweigh its significant and unavoidable impacts is a discretionary decision for the City's decision-making body. If the City approves the project notwithstanding significant and unavoidable impacts, CEQA requires adoption of a Statement of Overriding Considerations identifying the specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits that support approval despite those impacts. The comment does not identify a specific deficiency in the Draft EIR's analysis of traffic, air quality, or other environmental topics, nor does it provide substantial evidence demonstrating that additional mitigation or revisions to the Draft EIR are required. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are required.

Comment I4-6

Thankfully after all these many months, the moment of truth has arrived, and we can identify in the DEIR the many irreparable harms that will impact us and our daily lives.

Many of us sounded the alarm three years ago that this was a bad idea for Costa Mesa and we went to the FDC auditorium to speak up to State officials to oppose the EOC. We lost. Sadly.

Some of us attended the citizen meetings at the Senior Center, St. John the Baptist church, City Hall and the golf course and spoke to consultants and city sate about our concerns about the project's negative effects on us. Increased traffic congestion, poor air quality, adding public services like fire and police, increased noise, and loss of biological and cultural resources are still our main concerns.

Many of us hoped some of you would have negotiated with the State officials like DGS not to put the EOC and this new dense residential/commercial community at the FDC.

I recall years ago a nonpartisan citizen group stopped the sale of the OC Fair grounds which would have a huge negative impact on our quality of life. City council members met with the Governor and citizens sent hundreds of postcards opposing the sale. We, the citizens, won!

Response I4-6

The comment expresses the commenter's views regarding the planning process, prior public outreach efforts, the State's decisions concerning the FDC site, and negotiations related to the SREOC. These issues pertain to policy decisions and the project approval process rather than the adequacy of the environmental analysis in the Draft EIR. The comment does not identify a specific deficiency in the Draft EIR or provide substantial evidence demonstrating that the environmental analysis is inadequate under CEQA. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are required.

Comment I4-7

The State has usurped our local land use planning! The DEIR reveals that a very heavy burden will be placed on the city and its staff and resources to successfully oversee and complete mitigation to protect residents from all the environmental effects. Other city projects will suffer with focus on the FDC.

Response I4-7

The comment regarding the State's role in land use planning and the potential effect of project oversight on City staff and other City projects pertains to policy and administrative matters rather than the adequacy of the environmental analysis required under CEQA. The commenter does not identify a specific deficiency in the Draft EIR or provide substantial evidence demonstrating that the environmental analysis is inadequate. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are required.

Comment I4-8

Do you really want to go down this (dusty from construction debris) road?

Master planning may work well in the City of Irvine, but not in Costa Mesa. Our many unique neighborhoods represent our city’s diversity where “all are welcome”: Westside, (best side), Eastside, Mesa del Mar, Mesa Verde, Mesa North, Wimbledon, Greenbrook etc.

Response I4-8

The commenter does not identify a specific deficiency in the Draft EIR or provide substantial evidence demonstrating that the environmental analysis is inadequate. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are required.

Comment I4-9

This project, because of the proposed density, is not compatible with the small-town ambience and geography of Costa Mesa. But there is good news. The DEIR clearly gives the City Council a way out by acknowledging that the project proposed in the DEIR could not go forward unless the General Plan and zoning codes are amended. You do not have to approve the FDCSP.

Response I4-9

As stated in Impact d) in Section 3.1, *Aesthetics*, of the Draft EIR, the project site is located within an urbanized area; therefore, the Draft EIR evaluates whether the proposed project would conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality. The proposed project would establish the FDCSP, which includes new zoning, development, and design standards that would supersede the existing zoning applicable to the site. Although the proposed project would allow greater heights and residential density than currently permitted, the Draft EIR concludes that the proposed project would not conflict with applicable regulations governing scenic quality. The proposed project also includes development, landscaping, open space, and design standards to guide future development of the site.

The comment regarding whether the City Council should approve the proposed project and associated General Plan and zoning amendments reflects the commenter's opinion on policy and land use decisions. The approval of these discretionary actions is a decision for the City Council after consideration of the environmental analysis presented in the Draft EIR and other relevant information. The comment does not identify a specific deficiency in the Draft EIR's environmental analysis or provide substantial evidence demonstrating that the analysis is inadequate under CEQA. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are required.

Comment I4-10

A reduced project scope would have less impact on Costa Mesans and would be a win for our city and comply with RHNA obligations.

See (ES.5.2) “Under the No Project/No Development Alternative, the FDCSP would not be approved, and the project site would remain in its current condition under State ownership. Without the proposed project's General Plan and zoning amendments, the State would not be able to proceed with the disposition process, including selection of a Master Developer or transfer or lease of the property for redevelopment. The project site would remain subject to the existing Costa Mesa General Plan land use designations and zoning regulations.

“Under the No Project Alternative, redevelopment would likely occur through future development proposals reviewed on a project-by-project basis rather than through the coordinated planning framework of Specific Plan.

Development could occur incrementally and may involve multiple developers rather than a single master developer. This alternative assumes the project site could accommodate approximately 2,300 residential units, consistent with the development capacity identified in the City's Housing Element and would be subject to the same affordable housing requirements as the proposed project. Additionally, this alternative would continue to require the secondary access road through the golf course. A secondary access point at Harbor Boulevard and Harbor Center would still be constructed to adequately serve future residential development. Environmental impacts under the No Project Alternative would be similar to those associated with the proposed project because the project site would still be redeveloped with residential uses and supporting infrastructure. Impacts related to population growth, vehicle trips, and operational resource demand could be reduced due to the lower number of housing units compared to the proposed project. However, the No Project Alternative would not remove any of the significant and unavoidable impacts identified for the project air quality, historic resources, and greenhouse gases. Impacts to public services and transportation would be reduced compared to the proposed project but remain less than significant. Impacts to land use and planning and recreation would be greater compared to the proposed project but remain less than significant."

Even though I live 3.7 miles from FDC I have been actively speaking against this project for nearly three years because of the many impacts I and all Costa Mesans will experience if this project goes forward.

Response I4-10

The commenter's preference for a reduced project and concerns regarding potential community impacts represent opinions regarding the merits of the proposed project and the selection of an alternative. The evaluation and selection of a preferred alternative is a discretionary policy decision for the City based on the environmental information disclosed in the EIR and other considerations. The comment does not identify a specific deficiency in the Draft EIR's environmental analysis or provide substantial evidence demonstrating that the analysis is inadequate under CEQA. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are required.

Comment I4-11

Here are more reasons to deny this project:

Please see "Section 15123{b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines requires that an EIR contain issues to be resolved, including the choice among alternatives and whether or how to mitigate significant impacts.

1. Whether this EIR adequately describes the environmental impacts of the project. I don't think it does—there are many required studies necessary by qualified biologists who must write

reports about the many impacts on critters such as bees, burrowing owls, bats, birds. Reports should be made available to the public before construction begins.

Response I4-11

Section 3.3, *Biological Resources*, identifies mitigation measures (Mitigation Measure BIO-1b through Mitigation Measure BIO-1e) for biological resources, including bees, birds, burrowing owls, and bats. These measures require qualified biologists to conduct surveys at specified times prior to construction and implement additional protective measures if sensitive species are identified. The commenter does not identify a specific deficiency in the biological resources analysis or provide substantial evidence demonstrating that additional studies are required for the Draft EIR to comply with CEQA. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are required.

Comment I4-12

2. Whether the benefits of the project override those environmental impacts which cannot be feasibly avoided or mitigated to a level of insignificance. The benefits of about 10,000 residents housed on the project in 4,000 units do not outweigh the negative impacts to the current residents. The city should determine a lower number of units to meet the RHNA requirements.

Response I4-12

See Response I4-5.

Comment I4-13

3. Whether the proposed land use changes are compatible with the character of the existing area. No, the project is not compatible. Originally Shannon's Mountain was proposed which was compatible and single-family homes, condominiums, perhaps apartments near the golf course would be better.

Response I4-13

See Response to I4-9.

Comment I4-14

4. Whether the identified goals, policies, or mitigation measures should be adopted or modified. This will take a lot of time with residents needing more information.

Response I4-14

The planning process for the FDCSP included multiple opportunities for community input beginning in 2023, including stakeholder interviews, community workshops/open houses, community Q&A meeting and Planning Commission and City Council Study Sessions. The Draft EIR was circulated for public review from May 14, 2026, through July 1, 2026, consistent with the CEQA minimum 45-day public review period for an EIR. The comment does not identify a specific deficiency in the Draft EIR's environmental analysis or proposed mitigation measures, nor does it provide substantial evidence demonstrating that revisions to the Draft EIR are required. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are required.

Comment I4-15

5. Whether there are other mitigation measures that should be applied to the project besides the mitigation measures identified in the EIR. There are pother mitigation issues mentioned in the Costa Mesa First letter.

Response I4-15

Comments submitted by Costa Mesa First during the Notice of Preparation process are summarized in Table 1-1, *NOP Comment Summary*, in Chapter 1, *Introduction*, of the Draft EIR, which identifies the Draft EIR sections where the issues raised are addressed. To the extent those comments raise specific environmental issues or request additional mitigation, they are addressed in the applicable topical sections of the Draft EIR. This comment does not identify a specific additional mitigation measure that should be applied to the proposed project, nor does it provide substantial evidence demonstrating that the mitigation measures identified in the Draft EIR are infeasible, inadequate, or insufficient to address a significant environmental impact. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are required.

Comment I4-16

6. Whether there are any alternatives to the project that would substantially lessen any of the significant impacts of the proposed project and achieve most of the basic project objectives." There may be alternatives to be explored but the "significant and unavoidable" impacts are many and cannot be overcome.

Response I4-16

Chapter 4, *Alternatives to the Proposed Project*, of the Draft EIR, evaluates a range of potential alternatives that could feasibly attain most of the project's basic objectives while avoiding or substantially lessening the project's significant environmental impacts. The chapter compares the environmental effects of each alternative to those of the proposed project and identifies the

Environmentally Superior Alternative in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6. The commenter does not identify a specific deficiency in the Draft EIR or provide substantial evidence demonstrating that the environmental analysis is inadequate. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are required.

Comment I4-17

And more reasons:

Please see "Areas of Controversy ES.7"

"The following list includes issues that are likely to be of particular concern to agencies and interested members of the public during the environmental review process. Though every concern applicable to the CEQA process is addressed in this Draft EIR, this list is not exhaustive; rather, it attempts to capture concerns that are likely to generate the greatest interest based on the input received during the scoping process.

- The Native American Heritage Commission summarizes the requirements under AB 52 and SB 18.
- A member of the public commented on and requested analysis of impacts to public services, and transportation, and alternative access points.
- The Supporters Alliance for Environmental Responsibility (SAFER) requests that the city provide notice to the commenter regarding all actions associated with the proposed project.
- The Department of Toxic Substances Control discussed regulatory compliance, requested analysis of hazards and hazardous waste, and provided recommendations in the event contamination is present.
- A member of the public expressed concerns about transportation and suggested an alternative access point.
- The Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board requested regulatory compliance with hydrology and water quality policy and best management practices
- The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG's) request that the DEIR summarize SB 375 and SCAG's Connect SoCal goals, evaluate the project's consistency with those goals, incorporate regional growth projections in the growth analysis and review the Connect SoCal EIR for applicable mitigation measures.
- The California Department of Transportation Supports smart growth and diverse housing and recommends a verity of transportation related strategies.
- The California Department of Fish and Wildlife notes that the proposed open space may be less than required under the site's existing land use designation and that no special-status species or sensitive habitat occur on the site or adjacent golf course.

- The local organization, Costa Mesa First, requested analysis of air quality, biological resources, land use and planning, utilities and service systems, cultural resources, aesthetics, hazards and hazardous waste, greenhouse gas emissions, mineral resources, geology and soils, transportation, noise, land use and planning, cultural resources, tribal cultural resources, energy, hydrology and water quality, utilities and service systems, and project alternatives.
- The Fairview Park Alliance raises concerns about impacts on biological resources, and requests seasonal bird and wildlife surveys and preservation of habitat linkages and migratory corridors.
- A member of the public asked questions related to the project's description, air quality, biological resources, utilities and service systems, hydrology and water quality, public services, transportation, hazards and hazardous waste, and recreation.
- The South Coast Air Quality Management District (South Coast AQMD) requested the DEIR and all air quality-related appendices be sent to South Coast AQMD and provided recommendations regarding air quality analysis and policy. MAY 2026”

Response I4-17

As described in Executive Summary Section ES.7 of the Draft EIR, the listed topics were identified as areas of potential public and agency interest and informed the scope of the environmental analysis prepared for the Draft EIR. The Draft EIR evaluates these issue areas, as applicable, in the corresponding environmental resource sections and identifies mitigation measures where appropriate. The inclusion of an issue in the "Areas of Controversy" section does not indicate that the project would result in a significant impact; rather, it reflects topics identified during the scoping process for consideration in the environmental review. The commenter does not identify a specific deficiency in the Draft EIR or provide substantial evidence demonstrating that the environmental analysis is inadequate. Therefore, no revisions to the Draft EIR are required.

Comment I4-18

In closing, I want to acknowledge the analysis and many concerns and conclusions listed in the 22-page letter from Costa Mesa First. I hope you take the letter seriously because their careful analysis speaks volumes on all the issues on behalf of your constituents who do not have the time to read, absorb and comment on the inch thick document.

Response I4-18

The City has reviewed and considered all comments received on the Draft EIR, including the comment letter submitted by Costa Mesa First. Written responses to the comments raised by Costa Mesa First are provided in this Final EIR, as required by CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.

Comment I4-19

Please stand up for your Costa Mesans and restore our city's local control of the development of these 95 acres. That's why we elected you: to protect our city and its future even though the State owns the land. You have the power to do what is right for your constituents.

Vote NO on this project and pass the buck to the next City Council and you will be remembered fondly and be blessed for your courage to protect our enviable and special quality of life here.

I support no more than 2,300 units, which is much more realistic for our city. I insist on robust town halls to include residents nearby and throughout our city so elected officials, not just consultants, can hear our ideas and concerns. I would hope this project might finally include the shelf ready-special housing project for the disabled--Shannon's Mountain.

Response I4-19

These comments concern policy considerations and the merits of the proposed project rather than the adequacy of the Draft EIR's environmental analysis. The comments have been noted and will be considered by the City decision-makers as part of the project's public review and approval process.

3. REVISIONS TO THE DRAFT EIR

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This section contains revisions to the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) in response to comments from agencies, organizations, and the public as well as staff-directed changes. These text revisions include typographical corrections, insignificant modifications, and amplifications and clarifications of the Draft EIR. For each revision, the Draft EIR page and location on the page are identified, followed by the textual, tabular, or graphical revision.

Double underlined text represents language that has been added to the EIR; text with ~~strikethrough~~ represents language that has been deleted from the Draft EIR. None of the revisions to the Draft EIR constitute significant new information, as defined in California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15088.5; therefore, the Draft EIR does not need to be recirculated.

3.2 DRAFT EIR REVISIONS

Revisions to Significant Impacts and Mitigation Measures

The following table presents revisions to Table 3-1, *Summary of Significant Impacts and Mitigation Measures*.

Table 3-1 Summary of Significant Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance without Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance with Mitigation
AIR QUALITY			
Impact AIR-2: Construction activities associated with future development that would be accommodated under the proposed project could generate short-term emissions in exceedance of the South Coast AQMD's threshold criteria.	Potentially Significant	**Mitigation Measure AIR-4:** Prior to discretionary approval by the City of Costa Mesa for development projects subject to CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) review (i.e., nonexempt projects), project applicants shall prepare and submit a technical assessment evaluating potential project regional air quality, localized air quality, and health risk impacts from activities to the City of Costa Mesa Planning Division for review and approval. The evaluation shall be prepared in conformance with South Coast Air Quality Management District (South Coast AQMD) methodology for assessing air quality impacts. If construction-related criteria air pollutants are determined to have the potential to exceed the South Coast AQMD–adopted thresholds of significance (South Coast AQMD Air Quality Significance Thresholds Table), the City of Costa Mesa Building Safety Division shall require feasible mitigation measures to reduce air quality emissions. Potential measures shall be incorporated as conditions of approval for a project and may include: ▪ Prepare and implement a Fugitive Dust Control Plan that complies with South Coast Air Quality Management District Rule 403 and considers additional ~~Require~~ fugitive dust control measures that exceed South Coast Air Quality Management District's Rule 403, such as: o Requiring use of nontoxic soil stabilizers to reduce wind erosion. o Applying water every four hours to active soil disturbing activities.	Significant and Unavoidable

Table 3-1 Summary of Significant Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance without Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance with Mitigation
		o Tarping and/or maintaining a minimum of 24 inches of freeboard on trucks hauling dirt, sand, soil, or other loose materials. o Implementing continuous dust monitoring and use of perimeter misting systems during grading or other high dust-generating activities. o Replacement of HVAC filters in occupied buildings in close proximity to construction activities to maintain indoor air quality. o Implementing air monitoring during major demolition, abatement, grading, or other high dust-generating activities. ▪ Using construction equipment rated by the United States Environmental Protection Agency as having Tier 4 interim or higher exhaust emission limits. ▪ Ensuring construction equipment is properly serviced and maintained to the manufacturer's standards. ▪ Limiting nonessential idling of construction equipment to no more than five consecutive minutes. ▪ Using Super-Compliant VOC paints for coating of architectural surfaces whenever possible. A list of Super-Compliant architectural coating manufactures can be found on the South Coast Air Quality Management District's website at: https://www.aqmd.gov/home/rules-compliance/compliance/vocs/architectural-coatings/super-compliant-coatings. These identified measures shall be incorporated into all appropriate construction documents (e.g., construction management plans) submitted to the City and shall be verified by the City's Planning Department.	

Table 3-1 Summary of Significant Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance without Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance with Mitigation
HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS			
Impact HAZ-3: Temporary off-site construction activities along Harbor Boulevard, an established evacuation route, could impair emergency response or evacuation access.	Potentially Significant	**Mitigation Measure HAZ-2:** Prior to issuance of grading permits, the project applicant and/or their construction contractor shall prepare a Construction Traffic Management Plan to ensure that alternate routes are provided and maintained during temporary road closures or construction activities along Harbor Boulevard. The Construction Traffic Management Plan shall detail construction hours, truck routes, travel patterns for haul routes, traffic detour routes, staging and parking areas, emergency vehicle access provisions, and coordination protocols with local emergency service providers. The plan shall be submitted to the Costa Mesa Public Works Department and the Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue Department for review and approval prior to the start of construction activities. Prior to approval of the plan, it shall be submitted to the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services for comment. The plan shall also require the construction contractor to implement the following measures during construction activities, which shall be discussed at a pre-grading conference/meeting. ▪ Minimize obstruction of roadways, bikeways, and sidewalks and provide temporary traffic controls, including use of a flag person as appropriate. ▪ Develop a traffic plan to minimize interference of emergency vehicles and personnel from demolition and construction activities (e.g., advance public notice of demolition and construction activities). o When emergency responders approach the construction zone with lights and sirens (Code 3) the contractor shall temporarily suspend all construction activity and remove barriers or other obstructions where possible to allow emergency vehicles to pass through the construction zone.	Significant and Unavoidable

Revisions to Other Text in the Draft EIR

CHAPTER ES, EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Draft EIR page ES-12, Table ES-2, Summary of Significant Environmental

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance without Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance with Mitigation
Impact AIR-3: Long-term operation of the proposed project would generate emissions in exceedance of the South Coast AQMD's threshold criteria and cumulatively contribute to the South Coast Air Basin's nonattainment designations.	Potentially Significant	**Mitigation Measures~~ AIR-5~~:** Implement Mitigation Measures AIR-1 through AIR-3 ~~would apply and would contribute to reduce mobile-source, area-source, and energy sector criteria air pollutant emissions of the proposed project.~~	Significant and Unavoidable
Impact AIR-4: Construction of the proposed project could expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.	Potentially Significant	**Mitigation Measure AIR-~~6~~5:** Construction of projects subject to CEQA on sites of one acre or greater; within 1,000 feet of residential and other sensitive land use projects (e.g., hospitals, schools, nursing homes, day care centers), as measured from the property line of the project to the property line of the source/edge of the sensitive land use; that utilize off-road equipment of 50 horsepower or more; and with more than 12 months of active construction (i.e., exclusive of interior renovations), shall require preparation of a construction health risk assessment (HRA) prior to future discretionary project approval, as recommended in the current HRA Guidance Manual prepared by the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA). The construction HRA shall generally be	Significant and Unavoidable

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance without Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance with Mitigation
		prepared in accordance with policies and procedures of the OEHHA and the South Coast Air Quality Management District. The latest OEHHA guidelines shall be used for the analysis, including age sensitivity factors, breathing rates, and body weights appropriate for children ages 0 to 16 years. If the construction HRA shows that the incremental cancer risk exceeds 10 in a million or the appropriate noncancer hazard index exceeds 1.0, the construction HRA shall be required to identify all feasible measures capable of reducing potential cancer and noncancer risks to an acceptable level to the extent feasible (i.e., below 10 in a million or a hazard index of 1.0), including appropriate enforcement mechanisms. The construction health risk assessment shall be submitted to the City for review and approval. Measures identified in the health risk assessment shall be included in grading plans prepared for the development projects. Compliance with these measures shall be verified during regular construction site inspections.	
Impact GHG-1: Operation of the proposed project would generate a cumulatively considerable increase in GHG emissions that would exceed the South Coast AQMD Working Group bright-line threshold.	Potentially Significant	**Mitigation Measures~~ GHG-1~~:** Implement Mitigation Measures AIR-1 through AIR-3	Significant and Unavoidable

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance without Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance with Mitigation
Impact TCR-1: Implementation of the proposed project could result in a substantial adverse change to unknown TCRs during ground-disturbing activities.	Potentially Significant	**Mitigation Measure TCR-1**: Retain a Native American Monitor Prior to Commencement of Ground-Disturbing Activities. a) Prior to the commencement of any ground disturbing activity at the project site, the Project Applicant shall retain a Native American Monitor, approved by the tribes that consulted on this project pursuant to Assembly Bill AB52 and Senate Bill SB18 (the "Tribe" or the "Consulting Tribe"), which includes the Juaneño Band of Mission Indians – Acjachemen Nation Belardes, Juaneño Band of Mission Indians – Acjachemen Nation 84A, and Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians – Kizh Nation, and in concurrence with the City of Costa Mesa (City) as the CEQA lead agency. The Project Applicant shall coordinate with the Consulting Tribes to develop an executed contract to pay for a tribal monitor to be present during ground-disturbing activities. Prior to the issuance of any permit necessary to commence a ground-disturbing activity, a copy of the executed contract shall be submitted to the City of Costa Mesa Community ~~Economic and~~ Development ~~Services~~ Department. b) The monitor shall be retained prior to the commencement of any "ground-disturbing activity" for the subject project at all project locations (i.e., both on-	Less than Significant

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance without Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance with Mitigation
		site and any off-site locations that are included in the project description/definition and/or required in connection with the project, such as public improvement work). "Ground-disturbing activity" shall include, but is not limited to, demolition and removal of building foundations, pavement removal, potholing, auguring, grubbing, tree removal, boring, grading, excavation, drilling, and trenching. c) The monitor will complete daily monitoring logs that will provide descriptions of the relevant ground-disturbing activities, the type of construction activities performed, locations of ground-disturbing activities, soil types, cultural-related materials, and any other facts, conditions, materials, or discoveries of significance to the Tribe. Monitor logs will identify and describe any discovered tribal cultural resources (TCRs), including but not limited to, Native American cultural and historical artifacts, remains, places of significance, etc. as well as any discovered Native American (ancestral) human remains and burial goods. Copies of monitor logs will be provided to the City upon written request to the Tribe. On-site monitoring shall conclude upon either (1) written confirmation to the Consulting Tribes from a designated point of contact for the City that all	

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance without Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance with Mitigation
		ground-disturbing activities and phases that may involve ground-disturbing activities on the project site or in connection with the project are complete; or (2) a determination and written notification by the Consulting Tribes that no future, planned construction activity and/or development/construction phase at the project site possesses the potential to impact TCRs.	

CHAPTER 2, PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Draft EIR page 2-28

- **Fencing**. Fences and walls on the project site are generally subject to the requirements under Section 13-75 of the CMMC. Perimeter fencing and netting for golf course safety would be installed consistent with the netting used at the golf course. Final location for netting shall be approved by the Community ~~Economic and~~ Development ~~Services~~ Department, who would confer with the golf course operator and developer prior to determining final location.

Draft EIR page 2-34

Conformance with the FDCSP requires that the minimum number of affordable housing units per income category is met, as identified in Table 2-1, which would be deed restricted units. The Master Developer would be required to submit an Affordable Housing Implementation Plan detailing how the requirements of the FDCSP would be implemented. This Plan must include but is not limited to the following information:

~~1. The location, structure, proposed tenure, and size of the proposed market rate and affordable units, including bedroom count.~~

~~2. The total number of affordable units to be provided per development application.~~

~~3. A floor plan and site plan depicting the location of the affordable units.~~

~~4. The applicable affordable income levels for each affordable unit.~~

~~5. The mechanisms that will be used to ensure that the affordable units remain affordable for the required term.~~

~~6. A fair housing marketing plan for the process by which qualified households will be reviewed and selected to rent or own affordable units.~~

7. ~~Construction phasing plan schedule with the anticipated completion and opening dates, as applicable within the FDCSP Conceptual Phasing Plan~~

1. The location, structure, tenure (to be detailed within the affordable housing plan), and size of the proposed market rate and affordable units, including bedroom count.

1. The affordable units shall be comparable to the market rate units in terms of materials used and bedroom count and shall be proportionate in terms of unit mix.

2. The total number of affordable units to be provided per development application.

3. A floor plan and site plan depicting the location of the affordable units.

4. The affordable housing agreement shall specify the number, type, location, size, and phasing of all affordable units; provisions for income certification and screening of potential purchasers or renters of units; and resale control mechanisms, including the financing of ongoing administrative and monitoring costs, consistent with the approved affordable housing plan, as determined by the Community Development Director.

5. A fair housing marketing plan for the process by which qualified households will be reviewed and selected to rent or own affordable units.

6. Construction phasing plan schedule with the anticipated dates for building permit issuance, certificate of occupancy, completion, and opening date. This schedule may be modified with approval by the Community Development Director, or designee (see Section 2.6.7, *Implementation*).

Draft EIR page 2-39

Public Transit

Public transit access in the project vicinity is provided by the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA), which operates Bus Route 43 that stops at Harbor Boulevard and Merrimac Way, Route 47 that stops at Wilson Street and Harbor Boulevard ~~Habor Boulevard and Wilson Street~~, and Route 178 that stops at Adams Avenue and Harbor Boulevard ~~Habor Boulevard and Adams Avenue~~. Under buildout of the proposed project, demand for public transit at the project site is anticipated to increase. To ensure this demand is met under the project, the City and Master Developer would work with the OCTA to provide service and/stops ~~within the project site~~throughout the future FDC planning areas.

Table 2-7 Parking Requirements

Use/Unit Type	Minimum Number of Parking Spaces	Unit
Commercial		
Retail, Office, Food & Beverage[1]	4	1,000 SF
Residential		
Affordable and Market Rate[2]	No minimum	Per Unit
~~Market Rate Studio and 1 Bedroom~~	~~1.25 (includes 0.25 guest)~~	~~Per Unit~~
~~Market Rate 2 Bedroom+~~	~~2.25 (includes 0.25 guest)~~	~~Per Unit~~
Electric Vehicle Charging		
EV Capable	0.10	Per Total Spaces
EV Ready	0.25	Per Total Spaces
Open Space[3]		
Public Parks (including playgrounds)	5	Per Acre
Courts	2	Per Court
Fields	30	Per Field
Bicycle Parking[4]		
Residential – Long Term	~~4 per multifamily building~~0.5	Per ~~Building~~Unit
Residential – Short Term	1	Per 10,000 SF[5]
Retail and Commercial	5% of required vehicle parking	% of Total Vehicle Spaces
Public Park and Trails	2	Per 0.5 acre of park/trail

Notes: Parking rates may be superseded by State legislation, including AB 2097 and State Density Bonus Law (Gov Code § 65915). SF = square feet

1. Outdoor dining associated with food & beverage establishments are excluded from parking requirements.
2. Affordable includes Very Low, Low, Moderate, Senior, Permanent Supportive, and Special Needs.
3. On-street parking may be used to satisfy and/or contribute to this requirement.
4. Or as otherwise required by California Building Code and CalGreen Code.
5. Minimum of 2 spaces shall be provided, regardless of size.

Draft EIR page 2-42

Paseo

One paseo, generally east–west through the site has been identified in the FDCSP to provide a centralized pedestrian amenity directly in the heart of the community. Different from a trail, this community-centered connection should have buildings or open space on either side. The paseo would have special paving and pedestrian-scaled lighting and provide amenities such as landscaping and/or planters, seating, and possibly public art. The paseo would conform with the following standards:

- Paseos shall be open to the public and designed primarily for pedestrian use.
- Where a paseo is required to provide Fire Department access to buildings with portions located more than 150 feet from an approved fire access point, the minimum clear width shall be increased to 20 feet, as required per California Fire Code.
- Paseos shall connect to streets, open spaces, trails, plazas, and building entrances where feasible.
- Lighting, landscaping, and seating shall be provided to enhance safety and comfort. Seating along a paseo shall be provided at a ratio of one bench for every 150 feet of continuous linear pathway.
- Ground-floor uses adjacent to a paseo shall include active uses, residential entries, common spaces, or patios where feasible.
- Public art shall be implemented, where feasible, as described in Section 6.4 of the FDCSP.

Draft EIR page 2-44

WATER

Water service in Costa Mesa is provided by the Mesa Water District (MWD), which currently serves the project site. The project site currently receives water from a main water line that runs under Harbor Boulevard, which then enters an on-site system of smaller water lines. ~~The system currently provides service to existing uses and has no major issues in terms of supply, pressure, or fire flows. However, future development would require project-specific evaluation of domestic demand and fire protection needs. Final infrastructure sizing, looping, hydrant spacing, and pressure/flow performance shall be confirmed through detailed engineering and coordination with the MWD and Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue during subsequent planning, mapping, and building permit.~~ The existing on-site water system will be demolished and replaced with a new 8- to 12-inch polyvinyl chloride (PVC) system. The new system will connect at Fair Drive and the future roadway to Fair Drive to create a looped network. Additionally, development of the SREOC property will include a new 10-inch domestic line dedicated to its water needs, connecting from an existing main at Fair Drive and Harbor Boulevard.

Draft EIR page 2-46

CONDITIONS AND REQUIREMENTS DURING CONSTRUCTION

As required under the FDCSP, all portions of the project site would be subject to the following operational standards. Any vacant land or portions of the project site under active construction, including demolition, grading and excavation, and above-ground building activities, shall be maintained in a visually attractive manner with the following criteria, including:

- **Fencing**. The owner, beneficiary or trustee shall install a minimum six-foot high chain link fence with dust control covers adjacent to the property boundaries, or other alternative fencing acceptable to the City's Building Official or Code Enforcement Manager that is adequate to protect the public health, and welfare, unless the City officials determine that the installation of such fencing will be detrimental to the public safety and welfare.
  - Any fencing required under this section may additionally require screening if deemed necessary in order to protect the safety, adjacent properties from dust, streetscape and overall appearance of the site. The Building Official or Code Enforcement Manager may enforce fencing standards for vacant areas consistent with this section.
  - If fencing is proposed for long-term vacant sites (for example, vacancy anticipated for more than 12 months vs. active construction sites) with no berms, then fencing shall be permanently installed into the ground and set back three feet to provide for landscaping to be installed and maintained in the front.
  - Any decorative or graphic elements on fencing must be approved by the City and shall not contain any advertising.
- ~~**Screening.** Screening shall be provided at all temporary chain link fencing and shall include graphics and visuals that promote the project and the City of Costa Mesa.~~
- **Stormwater**. A stormwater pollution prevention plan shall be approved by the Public Works Division and Best Management Practices must be effectively implemented at all times to prevent soil, debris or runoff from affecting right-of-way through erosion or other means.
- **Storage**. Open storage is prohibited on a vacant lot or site within the project site. Vehicle storage such as cars, trucks, vans, motorcycles and buses is not permitted. Vacant lots are permitted to be used for construction staging, construction parking, and site security trailers while any portion of the site is under construction.
- **Property Maintenance**. The project site shall be kept clear of debris, litter, rubbish, overgrown weeds, graffiti, and other elements that contribute toward blight.
- **Lighting**. Exterior security lighting shall illuminate areas with visibility from a street or alley, however, the lights shall be shielded to avoid lighting adjacent properties.

Draft EIR page 2-47

FIRE AND POLICE PROTECTION SERVICES

Buildout under the FDCSP is anticipated to increase demand for public safety services including fire and police protection. The FDCSP does not identify or propose new public safety facilities but also does not preclude the siting of these facilities or support functions, including a new substation for police and/or fire department services at the project site. If a future need is identified, such facilities would be accommodated, consistent with applicable City review and implementation actions. A nexus study is identified as a short term implementation action for

the City to complete within the FDCSP that will determine the new increment of development associated with the FDCSP, estimate the proportion of each improvement needed due to that new growth, and allocate the appropriate fee accordingly.

Additionally, the Master Developer would coordinate with Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue and applicable agencies to confirm emergency access, fire lane geometry, turning radii, vertical clearances, hydrant spacing, and required fire flows under implementation of the proposed project. Project phasing shall incorporate any identified fire protection improvements needed to maintain effective emergency response and public safety up to and including the placement of a fire station on-site or another acceptable location.

SECTION 3.1, AESTHETICS

Draft EIR page 3.1-16

In addition, the proposed project includes design standards to minimize light spillover and glare. Section 5.3.10, Lighting, of the specific plan requires that lighting be designed to enhance safety and visibility while minimizing glare and light spillover.

- Pedestrian-scale lighting shall be provided along streets, paseos, open spaces, and building entrances.
- Lighting shall be directed downward and shielded to minimize impacts from light spillage on adjacent properties.
- ~~Lighting levels shall be appropriate to the scale and use of the space.~~
- Illuminators shall be integrated with the architectural design/theme of the buildings.
- Outdoor lighting for streets, open space areas (such as fields), and commercial areas shall be placed to minimize visual nuisance and maximize safety, specifically adjacent to residential areas.
- Shielding shall be used to mitigate outdoor lighting glare from adjacent properties, uses, buildings, and roadways.
- Outdoor lighting shall not project above the roofline of the building on which it is mounted.
- Time-control devices shall be utilized on exterior lighting sources.
- Outdoor security lighting for construction purposes shall be either directed away from or located away from existing residential areas.

Draft EIR page 3.1-13

According to the latest U.S. Census Bureau data, Costa Mesa has a population of 110,538 ~~110,523~~ persons (US Census 2023). It is surrounded by incorporated cities (see Figure 2-1, *Regional Location*) and would meet the population density threshold or planning policy

requirements defined under PRC Section 21071. Additionally, the City of Costa Mesa does have its own general plan and zoning ordinances. The City and the project site are considered an urbanized area. The analysis below identifies the proposed project's potential to conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

Draft EIR page 3.1-19

Costa Mesa, City of. 2018. Residential Design Guidelines.
~~http://ftp.costamesaca.gov/costamesaca/council/agenda/2013/2013-12-03/PH-1-Attach-1.pdf.~~
https://www.costamesaca.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/13567/636742375432370000

SECTION 3.2, AIR QUALITY

Draft EIR page 3.2-43

Mitigation Measures ~~AIR-5~~: Implement Mitigation Measures AIR-1 through AIR-3~~ would apply and would contribute to reduce mobile-source, area-source, and energy sector criteria air pollutant emissions of the proposed project~~.

Draft EIR page 3.2-45

Mitigation Measure AIR-~~6~~5: Construction of projects subject to CEQA on sites of one acre or greater; within 1,000 feet of residential and other sensitive land use projects (e.g., hospitals, schools, nursing homes, day care centers), as measured from the property line of the project to the property line of the source/edge of the sensitive land use; that utilize off-road equipment of 50 horsepower or more; and with more than 12 months of active construction (i.e., exclusive of interior renovations), shall require preparation of a construction health risk assessment (HRA) prior to future discretionary project approval, as recommended in the current HRA Guidance Manual prepared by the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA). The construction HRA shall generally be prepared in accordance with policies and procedures of the OEHHA and the South Coast Air Quality Management District. The latest OEHHA guidelines shall be used for the analysis, including age sensitivity factors, breathing rates, and body weights appropriate for children ages 0 to 16 years. If the construction HRA shows that the incremental cancer risk exceeds 10 in a million or the appropriate noncancer hazard index exceeds 1.0, the construction HRA shall be required to identify all feasible measures capable of reducing potential cancer and noncancer risks to an acceptable level to the extent feasible (i.e., below 10 in a million or a hazard index of 1.0), including appropriate enforcement mechanisms.

The construction health risk assessment shall be submitted to the City for review and approval. Measures identified in the health risk assessment shall be included in grading

plans prepared for the development projects. Compliance with these measures shall be verified during regular construction site inspections.

Significance with Mitigation: Significant and unavoidable. Construction activities associated with the proposed project could expose sensitive receptors to substantial concentrations of criteria air pollutants and TACs. Mitigation Measure AIR-~~6~~5 would require that future development phases incorporate measures to reduce construction emissions that would minimize exposure of sensitive receptors to elevated concentrations of criteria air pollutant emissions and TACs. Additionally, individual development projects would be required to achieve the incremental risk thresholds established by South Coast AQMD.

However, because existing sensitive receptors may be close to project-related construction activities and due to the programmatic nature of the proposed project, construction emissions generated by future development phases have the potential to exceed SCAQMD's LSTs and contribute to higher levels of cancer risk in the SoCAB. Consequently, Impact AIR-4 would remain significant and unavoidable.

SECTION 3.3, BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Draft EIR page 3.3-4

California Water Code

The California Water Code (CWC) Section 13000 et seq. establishes the State's water quality control program and provides the statutory authority for the State Water Resources Control Board and Regional Water Quality Control Boards to protect and enhance water quality. Pursuant to CWC Section 13240, each Regional Water Quality Control Board is required to formulate and adopt water quality control plans for all areas within its jurisdiction.

The Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board has adopted the Water Quality Control Plan for the Santa Ana River Basin (Basin Plan) that identifies beneficial uses of surface water and groundwater resources and establishes water quality objectives necessary to protect those uses. Beneficial uses designated in the Basin Plan include, among others, the Rare, Threatened, or Endangered Species (RARE) beneficial use, which applies to waters that support habitats necessary for the survival, reproduction, and successful maintenance of plant or animal species designated as rare, threatened, or endangered under state or federal law.

Draft EIR page 3.3-23

The remaining 623 trees are healthy or potentially treatable and can be preserved as part of the proposed project. All trees that are intended for removal as part of a project require a removal permit and must be approved by the City Community ~~Economic and~~ Development Director. The

City Community ~~Economic and~~ Development Director must also approve final mitigation involving the number of trees being replaced, the tree species, and size (Appendix C.2).

Draft EIR page 3.3-34

According to CDFW's Biogeographic Information and Observation System online database, the project site is 1.2 miles northeast of Talbert Regional Park, less than 1.0 miles east of Fairview Park, approximately 1.5 miles from the channelized Santa Ana River, and 2.5 miles northwest of Newport Back Bay. CDFW's terrestrial connectivity dataset Areas of Conservation Emphasis (ACE) ranking system ranks the hexagon the project site falls in as ACE Rank 1. ACE Rank 1 areas have limited connectivity opportunity. A southwestern section of the project site falls into a neighboring hexagon with Ace Rank 2. Ace Rank 2 areas are "large blocks of natural habitat where connectivity is generally intact." The portion of the hexagon that covers the project site, however, is part of the Costa Mesa County Golf Club and bordered by residential development; therefore, because the project site is bounded by physical barriers (roadways) and surrounded by development, it is considered unsuitable to function as a corridor between natural habitat areas. Although, the project site does allow for the movement of local wildlife, the project site likely does not facilitate the regional movement of wildlife because the roadways and development create a physical barrier, and therefore, construction of the proposed project is not anticipated to impact wildlife movement corridors. In addition, the project site was not determined to be a location of a potential wildlife nursery site, thus, no impacts would occur.

Draft EIR page 3.3-34

The City's Municipal Code requires that trees that are intended for removal as part of a project require a removal permit and must be approved at the discretion of the City Community ~~Economic and~~ Development Director. The Specific Plan Chapter 6, Open Space, Landscaping & Public Art, requires that existing trees removed during development shall be replaced on-site at a ratio of two new trees for every one tree that is removed. Existing trees may be boxed and relocated on-site. Therefore, the Specific Plan requires that trees shall be replaced consistent with City requirements.

The proposed project would comply with municipal requirements that would be subject to approval by the City Community ~~Economic and~~ Development Director to ensure trees on-site are replaced consistent with City requirements. Therefore, this impact is less than significant.

SECTION 3.4, CULTURAL RESOURCES

Draft EIR page 3.4-25

Mitigation Measures ~~CUL-5~~: Implement Mitigation Measures CUL-4 and CUL-5.

SECTION 3.7, GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Draft EIR page 3.7-21

Mitigation Measures ~~GHG-1~~: Implement Mitigation Measure AIR-1 through AIR-3.

SECTION 3.9, HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Draft EIR page 3.9-3

Porter-Cologne Water Quality Act

The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Act (Water Code sections 13000 et seq.) is the basic water quality control law for California. Under this Act, the SWRCB has ultimate control over state water rights and water quality policy. ~~In California, the EPA has delegated authority to issue NPDES permits to the SWRCB.~~ The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act was subsequently amended to implement provisions of the federal Clean Water Act, including Section 402(p), which regulates stormwater discharges. These amendments provide the statutory authority for the SWRCB and RWQCBs, including the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board, to administer and enforce the NPDES permit program in California under authority delegated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The SWRCB, through its nine RWQCBs carries out the regulation, protection, and administration of water quality in each region. Each regional board is required to adopt a Water Quality Control Plan (or Basin Plan [WQCP]) that designates beneficial uses and water quality objectives for the region's surface water and groundwater basins.

Draft EIR page 3.9-8

Any conceptual WQMP and subsequent project WQMP shall be submitted for new development and significant redevelopment projects in the City of Costa Mesa. Conceptual or preliminary WQMPs describe BMPs for source control, pollution prevention, site design, LID implementation, and structural treatment controls pursuant to Section XII.A.3 of the NDPES permit and are encouraged to be submitted early in the planning process. Project WQMPs describe how property owners/managers will comply with the post construction water quality requirements described in the City's NPDES permit (issued by the Santa Ana RWQCB). Project plans submitted for plan check must be consistent with the approved project WQMP, and the project WQMP must be approved prior to the issuance of building or grading permits.

Draft EIR page 3.9-21

The incorporation of site design, LID features and BMPs as required under the County of Orange MS4 Permit implemented by the City of Costa Mesa, are designed to protect surface waters and groundwater. The redevelopment of the existing project site into the proposed higher density residential land uses would result in improvement to water quality runoff based on the implementation of water quality BMPs that likely do not exist under current conditions. The conceptual WQMP prepared by the Master Developer for the entire project site and any subsequent project WQMPs would incorporate all the post-construction LID BMPs and ~~is~~ be subject to City review and approval.

SECTION 3.16, TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Draft EIR page 3.16-19

Mitigation Measure TCR-1: Retain a Native American Monitor Prior to Commencement of Ground-Disturbing Activities.

a) Prior to the commencement of any ground disturbing activity at the project site, the Project Applicant shall retain a Native American Monitor, approved by the tribes that consulted on this project pursuant to Assembly Bill AB52 and Senate Bill SB18 (the "Tribe" or the "Consulting Tribe"), which includes the Juaneño Band of Mission Indians – Acjachemen Nation Belardes, Juaneño Band of Mission Indians – Acjachemen Nation 84A, and Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians – Kizh Nation, and in concurrence with the City of Costa Mesa (City) as the CEQA lead agency. The Project Applicant shall coordinate with the Consulting Tribes to develop an executed contract to pay for a tribal monitor to be present during ground-disturbing activities. Prior to the issuance of any permit necessary to commence a ground-disturbing activity, a copy of the executed contract shall be submitted to the City of Costa Mesa Community ~~Economic and~~ Development ~~Services~~ Department.

b) The monitor shall be retained prior to the commencement of any "ground-disturbing activity" for the subject project at all project locations (i.e., both on-site and any off-site locations that are included in the project description/definition and/or required in connection with the project, such as public improvement work). "Ground-disturbing activity" shall include, but is not limited to, demolition and removal of building foundations, pavement removal, potholing, auguring, grubbing, tree removal, boring, grading, excavation, drilling, and trenching.

c) The monitor will complete daily monitoring logs that will provide descriptions of the relevant ground-disturbing activities, the type of construction activities performed, locations of ground-disturbing activities, soil types, cultural-related materials, and

any other facts, conditions, materials, or discoveries of significance to the Tribe. Monitor logs will identify and describe any discovered tribal cultural resources (TCRs), including but not limited to, Native American cultural and historical artifacts, remains, places of significance, etc. as well as any discovered Native American (ancestral) human remains and burial goods. Copies of monitor logs will be provided to the City upon written request to the Tribe.

On-site monitoring shall conclude upon either (1) written confirmation to the Consulting Tribes from a designated point of contact for the City that all ground-disturbing activities and phases that may involve ground-disturbing activities on the project site or in connection with the project are complete; or (2) a determination and written notification by the Consulting Tribes that no future, planned construction activity and/or development/construction phase at the project site possesses the potential to impact TCRs.

SECTION 3.17, UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Draft EIR page 3.17-34

Based on the results in Table 3.17-7 and the 50 percent d/D threshold, the proposed project would require the following improvements:

- Upsize one of the two parallel existing 15-inch sewer lines ~~from the project's point of connection at~~ between Fair Drive to Merrimac Way ~~with an~~ to 18-inch~~es line~~ or greater (approximately 1,860 linear feet (LF)).
- Upsize the existing 18-inch line ~~from~~ between Merrimac Way ~~to~~ and Baker Street to 21 inches or greater (approximately 4,240 LF).
- ~~Total estimated linear feet of sewer replacement or upsizing is 6,100 LF.~~ Existing capacity in the sewer system can support 1,600 residential units before full upgrades are required, based on conservative generation factors.
- Further evaluation and ~~analysis in~~ coordination with CMSD would be required to determine final sizing and cost sharing responsibilities. The Master Developer will be responsible for coordinating this with CMSD and the City.

Draft EIR page 3.17-41 and 3.17-42

Southern California Edison (SCE) would install typical facilities as needed around the property (e.g., outdoor switches, transformers, and services). Additionally, SCE completed an Engineering Analysis Report (EAR) for the proposed project, which is provided in Appendix B to the FEIR. The EAR determined upgrades are needed to SCE's distribution system ~~SCE previously confirmed that they have capacity in the local area for some redevelopment, but off-site infrastructure would likely be required~~ to support the full buildout. ~~Points of connection from SCE and the~~

~~need for a looping system and/or multiple circuits would be identified in the Engineering Analysis Report (EAR). The EAR would provide a current assessment of how much power is currently available for the proposed project and identify what new infrastructure would be required to energize the entire proposed project. The report would also identify how long it will take to build the new infrastructure if needed. Depending on SCE's EAR study, SCE may decide to feed the new development from the same source on Merrimac Way or from the nearby vault on Harbor Blvd or from both locations.~~ SCE determined the electricity demand for the proposed project would be served by the SCE Bayside Substation, approximately 0.9 miles east of the project site, via interconnection with the Tarpon 12 kilovolt (kV) Distribution Circuit along Harbor Boulevard. To accommodate the project's electricity demand as well as other growth requests in the area, SCE estimates a 48-month timeline to increase the capacity of the Tarpon 12 kV Circuit.

Draft EIR page 3.17-50

SWRCB. 2026a. Making Conservation a California Way of Life Regulation. https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/conservation/regs/water_efficiency_legislation.html.

SWRCB. 2026b. Storm Water Program: Trash Implementation Program. https://www.waterboards .ca.gov/water_issues/programs/stormwater/trash_implementation.html.

CHAPTER 4, ALTERNATIVES

Draft EIR page 4-20

4.6.15 Transportation

This alternative would generate approximately 44 percent fewer vehicle trips than the proposed project due to reduced development intensity and fewer mixed-use components. This alternative would result in 10,353 daily trips while the proposed project would result in ~~18,494~~ 20,038 daily trips (See Appendix ~~M~~L.1, Alternatives Trip Generation). In addition, a secondary access road at Harbor Boulevard and Harbor Center would still be constructed to adequately serve future residential development. Because Harbor Boulevard would remain a major evacuation route, preparation and implementation of a Construction Traffic Management Plan would also be required to ensure adequate emergency access from the project site. Impacts would be reduced compared to the proposed project but remain less than significant with mitigation measures. Cumulative impacts would be less than significant similar to the proposed project.

Draft EIR page 4-27

Table 4-3 Comparison of Project Alternative Impacts

Environmental Topic	Proposed Project	Alternative 1: No Project/ No Development	Alternative 2: No Project Alternative	Alternative 3: Partial Adaptive Reuse of Historic District
3.1 Aesthetics	LTS	↑	=	=
3.2 Air Quality	SU	↓	↓	↓
3.3 Biological Resources	SU	↓	=	=
3.4 Cultural Resources	SU	↓	=	↓
3.5 Energy	~~SU~~LTS	↓	↓	=
3.6 Geology and Soils	LTS/M	↓	=	=
3.7 Greenhouse Gas Emissions	SU	↓	↓	↓
3.8 Hazards and Hazardous Materials	LTS/M	↓	=	=
3.9 Hydrology and Water Quality	LTS	↓	=	=
3.10 Land Use and Planning	LTS	↑	↑	=
3.11 Noise	LTS/M	↓	=	=
3.12 Population and Housing	LTS	↑	=	=
3.13 Public Services	LTS	↓	↓	=
3.14 Recreation	LTS	↑	↑	=
3.15 Transportation	LTS/M	↓	↓	=
3.16 Tribal Cultural Resources	LTS/M	↓	=	=
3.17 Utilities and Service Systems	LTS	↓	=	=

Notes:

NI No Impact
PS Potentially Significant
LTS Less than Significant
LTS/M Less than Significant with Mitigation
SU Significant and Unavoidable

↓ Reduced impact in comparison to the proposed project
= Similar impact in comparison to the proposed project
↑ Greater impact in comparison to the proposed project

Revisions to Draft EIR Figures

SECTION 3.15, TRANSPORTATION

Figure 3.15-3, *Bus Stops and Transit Routes*, in the Draft EIR is hereby revised to match Figure 5-16, *Bus Stops and Transit Routes*, in the FDCSP.

Revisions to Draft EIR Appendices

NEW APPENDIX

Southern California Edison (SCE) provided an Engineering Analysis Report (EAR) that studied the electricity capacity required to serve the proposed project and identified the infrastructure upgrades needed to meet the project's capacity requirements. This report was received by the City on June 24, 2026, after the release of the Draft EIR for public review. The edits needed to incorporate the findings of this report have been incorporated into the Draft EIR in the preceding section. SCE's EAR is also incorporated as Appendix B to the Final EIR.

DRAFT EIR APPENDIX J.2

Draft EIR Appendix J.2 is hereby revised to include Table 6: *Future (2045) Intersection LOS With Improvements*, on page 22 of the memorandum after the appearance of Table 5: *(2045) Intersection LOS*. This revision is made to provide further clarification about the LOS results after implementation of the intersection improvements on Harbor Boulevard and Fair Drive. This addition to Draft EIR Appendix J.2 is included as Appendix C, *Revision to Draft EIR Appendix J.2*, to this FEIR.

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