

CITY OF SEAL BEACH HOUSING ELEMENT AND ZONING CODE UPDATES PROJECT

Draft Environmental Impact Report

Introduction

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to evaluate the potential environmental impacts associated with the City of Seal Beach's proposed Housing Element and Zoning Code Updates Project (Project). This document is prepared in conformance with CEQA (California Public Resources Code [PRC] Section 21000, et seq.) and the CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations [CCR], Title 14, Section 15000, et seq.). This Draft EIR is intended to serve as an informational document for the public agency decision makers and the public regarding the Project.

1.1 THE ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

CEQA requires public agencies to identify, disclose, and consider the potential environmental impacts of proposed discretionary actions that lead agencies are considering for approval. A project that may have a significant impact on the environment cannot be approved unless the lead agency makes the approval contingent upon the implementation of mitigation measures that would reduce or avoid that impact to the extent feasible. When a project may have significant environmental impacts, the lead agency must prepare an EIR before it considers whether to approve the project.

The City of Seal Beach (City), as the lead agency for the Project, has prepared this Draft EIR for public review and comment. As discussed below, the Draft EIR will be available for review and comment by public agencies and the general public for a period of 45 days. Prior to considering the Project, the City will prepare a Final EIR that includes the Draft EIR, the comments received on the Draft EIR, written responses to those comments, a list of commenters, and any revisions being made to the Draft EIR in response to the comments. The Final EIR will be considered by the City's discretionary bodies when taking action on the Project.

1.1.1 Purpose of Environmental Impact Report

CEQA requires that all state and local governmental agencies consider the environmental consequences of projects over which they have discretionary authority before taking action on those projects. This Draft EIR has been prepared to satisfy CEQA and meet the CEQA Guidelines. The EIR is the public document designed to provide decision makers and the public with an analysis of the environmental effects of the Project, to indicate possible ways to reduce or avoid environmental damage and to identify alternatives to the Project. The EIR must also disclose significant environmental impacts that cannot be avoided; growth inducing impacts; effects not found to be significant; and significant cumulative impacts of all past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects.

The lead agency means "the public agency which has the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving a project which may have a significant effect upon the environment" (CEQA Section 21067). The City of Seal Beach has the principal responsibility for approval of the Project. For this reason, the City of Seal Beach is the CEQA lead agency for this Project. The intent of the Draft EIR is to provide sufficient



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information on the potential environmental impacts of the Project to allow the City of Seal Beach to make an informed decision regarding approval of the Project. Specific discretionary actions to be reviewed by the City are described in Section 2.9.1, List of Permits and Other Approvals.

1.1.2 Type of Environmental Impact Report

This is a Program EIR that examines the potential environmental impacts of the proposed City of Seal Beach Housing Element Update and related Zoning Code Update. This EIR serves as a Program EIR under CEQA Guidelines Section 15168. According to CEQA Guidelines Section 15168(b), use of a Program EIR can provide advantages, including:

1. Provide an occasion for a more exhaustive consideration of effects and alternatives than would be practical in an EIR on an individual action,
2. Ensure consideration of cumulative impacts that might be slighted in a case-by-case analysis,
3. Avoid duplicative reconsideration of basic policy considerations,
4. Allow the Lead Agency to consider broad policy alternatives and program wide mitigation measures at an early time when the agency has greater flexibility to deal with basic problems or cumulative impacts, and
5. Allow reduction in paperwork.

As a Program EIR, this document focuses on the overall effects of the Project and is a discussion of cumulative impacts evaluating the entirety of the action. The analysis does not examine the effects of any project on a specific property that may occur during the lifespan of the Project. Any impacts associated with development that are not fully evaluated within the scope of this EIR may require further environmental analysis. However, the City envisions that this Program EIR may be used to eliminate or reduce the scope of future environmental review for individual projects that are consistent with the Project pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 21083.3 and other streamlining provisions authorized by CEQA. For a complete listing of environmental topics covered in this Draft EIR, see Section 3.0, Environmental Analysis.

1.2 SCOPE OF DRAFT EIR

Pursuant to CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines, a lead agency shall focus an EIR discussion on potentially significant environmental effects and may limit discussion on other effects to brief explanations about why they are not significant (PRC Section 21002.1, CEQA Guidelines Section 15128). A determination of which impacts would be potentially significant was made for this Project based on review of the information presented in the Initial Study prepared for the Project and comments received as part of the public scoping process (Appendix A), as well as additional research and analysis of relevant project data obtained during preparation of this Draft EIR. This Draft EIR addresses the potential environmental effects of the Project. The City distributed a Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Draft EIR for the Project beginning on November 16, 2023. The NOP was distributed for a 30-day comment period that ended on



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December 15, 2023. The Public Scoping Meeting on the Draft EIR for the Project was held on December 6, 2023. The comments received on the NOP and during the Public Scoping Meeting were considered in the preparation of this Draft EIR. The scope of this Draft EIR includes the potential impacts identified in the NOP and issues raised by agencies and the public in response to the NOP.

The City has determined that the Project has the potential to result in significant environmental impacts on the following resources, which are addressed in detail in this Draft EIR.

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems

Please refer to Section 1.2.1, Environmental Issues Determined Not to be Significant, for a list of environmental issues determined not to be significant. Table 1.2-1 lists the comment letters received during the Project scoping period.

Table 1.2-1: NOP Comment Summary

Commenting Agency/Person	Date	Comment Summary	Responses/ Location of Issue Addressed in EIR
California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)/Scott Shelley	December 15, 2023	The comment letter identified the agency's support for opportunities for affordable housing and provided specific guidelines that they would like incorporated into the future planning of roadways, bikeways, parking, pedestrian circulation, and transit services. The comment letter also provided impact analysis guidelines to be utilized for analysis of transportation related impacts and identified potential permits that may be required to meet Caltrans' guidelines. The comment letter stated they are requesting a Transportation	Potential impacts related to topics identified by the commenter are provided in the following sections: • Draft EIR Section 3.15, Transportation



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		Impact Analysis (TIA) be prepared to assess and address potential impacts from future developments.	
Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC)/Tamara Purvis	December 14, 2023	The comment letter stated the Project encompasses multiple active and nonactive mitigation and clean-up sites that may be impacted as a result of the Project and may restrict what construction activities are permissible in the Project areas in order to avoid impacts to human health and environment. The comment letter stated due to the broad scope of the Project, they are unable to determine if the Project sites are listed as having documented contamination, land use restrictions, be listed on a list of hazardous materials sites and therefore, recommends providing future information on the Project site and areas that may fall under DTSC oversight.	Potential impacts related to topics identified by the commenter are provided in the following sections: • Draft EIR Section 3.8, Hazards and Hazardous Materials • Draft EIR Section 6.0, Effects Found Not to be Significant
City of Long Beach Community Development Department/Alejandro Sanchez-Lopez	December 15, 2023	The comment letter outlined their general support for the Project.	The comment is noted. The comment provided does not identify specific environmental concerns related to the Project and does not require a response for the purposes of CEQA.
Anne S. Calvo	December 8, 2023	The commenter stated the Leisure World Housing Opportunity Site should be removed from the list of Housing Opportunity Sites stating the proposed area is an RV storage site reserved for Leisure World residents as an amenity. Additionally, the commenter listed impacts would result to aesthetics, air quality due to additional vehicles, energy use and demand, reduce quality of life due to increased population and limiting access to existing amenities, increased noise, increased demand to public services, eliminate residents access to RVs and access to recreational opportunities, traffic congestion, and increased utility demands.	The comment regarding removal of Leisure World as a Housing Opportunity Site is noted; however, the comment does not identify specific environmental concerns related to the Project and does not require a response for the purposes of CEQA. The remaining topics outlined in the comment letter are analyzed in the following sections: • Draft EIR Section 3.1, Aesthetics • Draft EIR Section 3.2, Air Quality • Draft EIR Section 3.5, Energy • Draft EIR Section 3.8, Hazards and Hazardous Materials • Draft EIR Section 3.10, Land Use and Planning • Draft EIR Section 3.11, Noise



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Commenting Agency/Person	Date	Comment Summary	Responses/ Location of Issue Addressed in EIR
			• Draft EIR Section 3.12, Population and Housing • Draft EIR Section 3.13, Public Services • Draft EIR Section 3.14, Recreation • Draft EIR Section 3.15, Transportation • Draft EIR Section 3.17, Utilities and Service Systems
Schelly Sustarsic	December 15, 2023	The commenter stated the Project would result in the following impacts: aesthetics (views blocked, open space removed, glare), biological resources (wetlands and tree preservation), energy (increased demand and adequate infrastructure), geology and soils (fault lines and liquefaction), hazards and hazardous materials (existing gas line), hydrology and water quality (potential flooding), land use and planning (Consistency with Los Alamitos Joint Forces Training Base (JFTB)), noise (noise from Los Alamitos JFTB), recreation (increased demand for parks), transportation (circulation, increased vehicle miles traveled (VMT), emergency vehicle access), tribal (potential tribal artifacts and remains located within the City), and cumulative effects.	Potential impacts related to topics identified by the commenter are provided in the following sections: • Draft EIR Section 3.1, Aesthetics • Draft EIR Section 3.2, Air Quality • Draft EIR Section 3.3, Biological Resources • Draft EIR Section 3.5, Energy • Draft EIR Section 3.8, Hazards and Hazardous Materials • Draft EIR Section 3.9, Hydrology and Water Quality • Draft EIR Section 3.10, Land Use and Planning • Draft EIR Section 3.11, Noise • Draft EIR Section 3.12, Population and Housing • Draft EIR Section 3.13, Public Services • Draft EIR Section 3.14, Recreation • Draft EIR Section 3.15, Transportation • Draft EIR Section 3.16, Tribal Cultural Resources • Draft EIR Section 3.17, Utilities and Service Systems • Draft EIR Section 6.0, Effects Found Not to be Significant
Theresa Miller	December 15, 2023	The commenter stated they appreciated the scoping meeting and agree with the concerns discussed during the meeting.	The comment is noted and has been shared with the Planning Commission. The comment does not identify specific environmental concerns related to the Project and does not require a response for the purposes of CEQA.



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Kurt Bourhenne	December 11, 2023	The comment letter stated construction of residential uses at the Leisure World Housing Opportunity Site would deprive Leisure World residents of sunlight and shared political views regarding the Project.	The comment provided are political in nature and is not applicable to CEQA. Therefore, response is not required. The topic of sunlight is not a required topic of analysis under CEQA and therefore, is not further analyzed.
Aaron and Barbara Groseclose	December 14, 2023	The commenter stated their opposition for the Leisure World Housing Opportunity Site as it would take away the RV Club amenity at the site.	The comment is noted and has been shared with the Planning Commission. The comment does not identify specific environmental concerns related to the Project and does not require a response for the purposes of CEQA.
Alan Hunter	December 12, 2023	The commenter stated their opposition for the Leisure World Housing Opportunity Site as it would take away the RV lot amenity at the site.	The comment is noted and has been shared with the Planning Commission. The comment does not identify specific environmental concerns related to the Project and does not require a response for the purposes of CEQA.
Bert van der Veer	December 14, 2023	Stated their opposition for the Leisure World Housing Opportunity Site as it would take away the RV lot amenity at the site.	The comment is noted and has been shared with the Planning Commission. The comment does not identify specific environmental concerns related to the Project and does not require a response for the purposes of CEQA.
Lori Gray	December 13, 2023	Stated their opposition for the Leisure World Housing Opportunity Site as it would take away the RV lot amenity at the site.	The comment is noted and has been shared with the Planning Commission. The comment does not identify specific environmental concerns related to the Project and does not require a response for the purposes of CEQA.
Catherine Showalter	December 7, 2023	The commenter provided a list of spelling and grammatical errors discovered in the Initial Study document and provided requested revisions to the Initial Study.	The comments are noted and have been shared with the City. This Draft EIR does not include a revision to the Initial Study section and all applicable spelling and grammatical revisions have been incorporated. The comment does not require further response.
Adrianne Rosenfeld	December 11, 2023	The commenter stated their personal opinion that housing will not be constructed within Leisure World and shared personal political beliefs.	The comments provided are personal opinions and political views in nature and are not applicable to CEQA. Therefore, response is not required.
Susan Perrell	December 7, 2023	The commenter stated potential impacts to environmental, historical and cultural resources, and public services should be	The comments are noted and have been shared with the Planning Division. Potential impacts not scoped out during the Initial Study



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		more deeply studied in the EIR than the Initial Study suggests. The commenter stated each individual Housing Opportunity Site should be discussed in its own separate EIRs and stated they disagree with the programmatic nature of the EIR. The commenter stated potential impacts to resource topics discussed in the EIR need to be addressed on a site specific basis. Additionally, the commenter disagrees with the level of significance identified for impacts in the Initial Study and stated the Program EIR needs to be revisited and updated when a specific project is later proposed or a separate project EIR needs to be prepared. The commenter stated potential impacts to commerce and aesthetics should be discussed and needs to analyze placing new residential parking within existing commercial parking areas and assess if and where there is an excess of parking. The commenter stated Housing Opportunity Site 8 (Housing Opportunity Site 8 in the Initial Study has been renumbered to Housing Opportunity Site 7 in the Draft EIR) appears to be listed on GeoTracker and needs to study the feasibility of clean up to residential standards. The commenter noted that Housing Opportunity Site 10 identified in the Initial Study is prone to historic flooding and needs analysis in the EIR. Additionally, the commenter stated the EIR should consider impacts to capacity of stormwater systems and infrastructure and water quality as well as analyze the requirements for flood insurance in project areas and if areas with high flood insurance	process are expanded upon and discussed in more detail in this EIR. The level of analysis provided in this EIR is in accordance with CEQA requirements. This EIR is a programmatic document and does not analyze the potential impacts of each individual Housing Opportunity Sites as no actual development is currently proposed on these sites. When a development project is proposed on these sites in the future, each proposed development would require its own individual environmental analysis to address site specific impacts. Potential impacts to aesthetics are discussed in Draft EIR Section 3.1, Aesthetics. Potential impacts related to commerce are not a resource topic under CEQA and therefore, is not analyzed in this EIR. As stated in the Initial Study as well as in Draft EIR Section 3.8, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, and Section 6.0, Effects Found Not to be Significant, future individual developments proposed on identified Housing Opportunity Sites would require individual environmental review to analyze potential impacts and would be required to prepare an Environmental Site Assessment to assess any existing onsite contamination and determine if residential development is feasible within the site. Housing Opportunity Site 10, also referred to as the Old Ranch Country Club or the Old Ranch Country Club Pipeline Project, identified in the Initial Study, is no longer defined as a Housing Opportunity Site. Instead, the Old Ranch Country Club is defined as a pipeline project. This proposed pipeline project is a component of a larger specific plan proposal being evaluated by the City in a standalone EIR. However, the 167



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		costs can serve lower income residents. The commenter stated impacts to cultural resources and the potential loss of historic structures, specifically to Main Street's historic resources need to be discussed and analyzed in the EIR. The commenter stated an Avoidance, Mitigation, and Monitoring Plan should be developed that would specify administrative mechanisms to assure measures are implemented and enforced. The commenter stated the EIR should analyze water supply by comparing current demand with that post-project and determine if water supply would be available. Additionally, the commenter stated impacts to wastewater infrastructure should be analyzed. The commenter requested transportation noise and HVAC noise be analyzed and mitigated in the EIR as well as noise sources from Los Alamitos. The commenter requested impacts to response and evacuation times be analyzed and mitigated. The commenter stated mitigation should be required for developers to prevent impacts to recreation. The commenter states impacts to transportation systems should be analyzed in the EIR. The commenter stated the EIR should analyze potential cumulative impacts.	units proposed within the Old Ranch Country Club Pipeline Project count towards the City's Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) requirements. Therefore, the 167 proposed units from the Old Ranch Country Club Pipeline Project are evaluated at a programmatic level as a basis for implications associated with housing production only within this EIR, including potential impacts to stormwater systems and infrastructure and water quality. The topic of flood insurance costs is not a required topic of analysis under CEQA and therefore, is not further analyzed. Impacts related to cultural resources and historic structures are analyzed in Draft EIR Section 3.4, Cultural Resources. As part of the EIR, a Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Plan (MMRP) would be developed that describes all mitigation measures identified in this EIR. The MMRP would also specify the timing of implementation, specify the responsible party for the mitigation, and the monitoring frequency of the proposed mitigation to ensure the mitigation measures are implemented and enforced. Potential impacts related to water and wastewater infrastructure, and water supply are discussed in Draft EIR Section 3.17, Utilities and Service Systems. The analysis includes a comparison of the existing and projected demand for the City with the projected demand that would result from buildout of the Project. Potential noise related impacts, including noise resulting from transportation, stationary equipment, and Los Alamitos JFTB are



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		The commenter provided revisions and text edits that they would like to be made to the Initial Study. The commenter stated the EIR should require open space and tree planting and maintenance as part of each development project to mitigate atmospheric carbon and provide shade.	discussed in Draft EIR Section 3.11, Noise. Impacts related to public service such as police and fire services are discussed in Draft EIR Section 3.13, Public Services. Potential impacts related to recreation are analyzed and, if required, mitigated in Draft EIR Section 3.13, Public Services, and Section 3.14, Recreation. Potential impacts to transportation systems are analyzed in Draft EIR Section 3.15, Transportation. An analysis of potential cumulative impacts is included in each resource section of the Draft EIR. The cumulative analysis analyzes whether the Project in conjunction with cumulative projects, would result in a cumulatively considerable impact. This Draft EIR does not include a revision to the Initial Study section and all applicable revisions have been incorporated. The comment does not require further response. Potentially significant impacts identified in this EIR are mitigated to the extent feasible. The City has existing requirements for tree planting, landscape maintenance, and required open space for new developments in its Zone Code. All individual projects proposed in the future at one of the Project sites would be required to be designed and constructed in accordance with City requirements. The request for mitigation requiring open space and tree plantings have been noted; however, this mitigation is not identified to be required for the Project to reduce impacts.
Gary Allen (Environmental Quality)	December 6, 2023	Commissioner Allen requested additional information regarding	This comment was provided during the in-person public scoping



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Control Board (EQCB) Board Member)		what is analyzed as the Project as there is no guarantee that all or any of the identified residential units may be constructed as a result of the Project.	meeting. The comment was responded to by Stantec staff who stated that the worst-case scenario is analyzed to provide flexibility for future potential developments within the identified Project site and provide an adequate buffer for the analysis. As the comments provided does not identify specific environmental concerns related to the Project, additional analysis is not required.
Donald Horning (EQCB Board Member)	December 6, 2023	Commissioner Horning requested for a definition of an underutilized site. The commenter asked if all the proposed developments are consistent with the safety plan (General Plan safety element) and requested additional information regarding the certification process of the EIR, who the ultimate decisions makers are, process of evaluating the sites, site specific studies, how levels of impacts are determined, and who bears the costs of environmental assessments. Additionally, the commenter questioned whether there would be coordination with other environmental studies being prepared in the City. The commenter brought up potential impacts involving traffic within the Leisure World Housing Opportunity Site stating the senior population there are sensitive in terms of driving abilities.	This comment was provided during the in-person public scoping meeting. The comment was responded to by Stantec staff and City staff who responded to the specific questions and outlined the process of the EIR, how impacts are determined, what information is utilized, and outlined the different topics the EIR covers. As the comment provided does not identify specific environmental concerns related to the Project, additional analysis is not required. The EIR includes an analysis of potential transportation and traffic related impacts in Draft EIR Section 3.15, Transportation. This section includes an analysis of potential traffic related impacts resulting from increased population and vehicle usage; however, it does not take into account the driving abilities of a particular population as CEQA requires an evaluation of the Project's potential impacts on the environment.
Catherine Showalter (EQCB Board Member)	December 6, 2023	Commissioner Showalter questioned why a particular document was utilized in the Initiative Study. Additionally, the commenter questioned how a cumulative project list is developed. The commenter stated their concerns with how the Initial Study is written describing Housing Opportunity Site 10 and the associated development agreement and requests that	This comment was provided during the in-person public scoping meeting. The comment was responded to by Stantec staff who responded that different studies and documents are utilized in information gathering for the Project and outlined the process of determining thresholds. Stantec staff also provided an explanation of how a cumulative project list is developed and what is taken into consideration for an analysis of cumulative impacts. As the



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		additional information is incorporated.	comments provided does not identify specific environmental concerns related to the Project, additional analysis is not required. Housing Opportunity Site 10, also referred to as the Old Ranch Country Club or the Old Ranch Country Club Pipeline Project, identified in the Initial Study, is no longer defined as a Housing Opportunity Site. Instead, the Old Ranch Country Club is defined as a pipeline project. This proposed pipeline project is a component of a larger specific plan proposal being evaluated by the City in a standalone EIR. However, the 167 units proposed within the Old Ranch Country Club Pipeline Project count towards the City's RHNA requirements. Therefore, the 167 proposed units from the Old Ranch Country Club Pipeline Project are evaluated at a programmatic level as a basis for implications associated with housing production only within this EIR.
Susan Perrell (EQCB Board Member)	December 6, 2023	The commenter questioned the process of a programmatic EIR and the level of analysis of each site that would occur, and the process of subsequent environmental review of individually proposed developments and the process of incorporating comments received during the scoping period. Commissioner Perrell questioned what kind of recreational resources are going to be given up and how the Project would mitigate the loss of those resources. The additional comments provided by Commissioner Perrell during the in-person scoping meeting is the same as those described above in this table provided through a comment letter by Susan Perrell. For a	This comment was provided during the in-person public scoping meeting. The comment was responded to by Stantec staff who provided an explanation of the process, the level of analysis, and how the comments received during the scoping period are incorporated. As the comments provided does not identify specific environmental concerns related to the Project, additional analysis is not required. An analysis of the Project's potential impacts to recreational resources is provided in Draft EIR Section 3.14, Recreation, and mitigation has been identified to reduce potential impacts, where appropriate.



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		summary of comments provided, see above.	
Carol Churchill	December 6, 2023	The commenter stated the tide's movements can affect the water table resulting in contamination moving inland and outland with the tides and therefore, the environment study should evaluate not just a specific site but the water element and water tables and its effects on existing contamination. The commenter stated Housing Opportunity Site 10 has a contract with the City with regard to the use of the property until 2029 and what becomes of the existing golf course at the end of the contract and the potential legal implications and development restrictions. Additionally, the commenter stated Housing Opportunity Site 10 includes a golf course and the potential cumulative effects should be analyzed if the golf course is turned into housing. The commenter provided information about a study that looked at safety hazards and noise hazards on a military base and stated these issues need to be addressed in the EIR. The commenter stated that when calculating the Quimby fee, a fair market value of land within Seal Beach to ensure that the Quimby fee is not underestimated.	As outlined in the Initial Study, as well as Draft EIR Section 3.8, Hazards and Hazardous Materials and Section 6.0, Effects Found Not to be Significant, site specific evaluation of potential existing contamination and its potential effects are to be completed through individual project specific environmental review at the time of individual development proposal and would be required to prepare an Environmental Site Assessment. Housing Opportunity Site 10, also referred to as the Old Ranch Country Club or the Old Ranch Country Club Pipeline Project, identified in the Initial Study, is no longer defined as a Housing Opportunity Site. Instead, Old Ranch Country Club is defined as a pipeline project. This proposed pipeline project is a component of a larger specific plan proposal being evaluated by the City in a standalone EIR. However, the 167 units proposed within the Old Ranch Country Club Pipeline Project count towards the City's RHNA requirements. Therefore, the 167 proposed units from the Old Ranch Country Club Pipeline Project are evaluated at a programmatic level as a basis for implications associated with housing production only within this EIR. A discussion of safety and noise hazards related to the nearby airports, including Los Alamitos JFTB can be found in Draft EIR Section 3.8, Hazards, and Hazardous Materials and Section 3.11, Noise. As discussed in Draft EIR Section 3.14, Recreation, required Quimby fees would be calculated at the time of individual proposed developments



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			and would be based on the value of land at the time of calculation.
Susan Barronbam	December 6, 2023	The commenter noted that they live in College Park East which currently has flooding and drainage issues. Additionally, the commenter identified Housing Opportunity Site 10 and noted issues related to hydrology, noise, and traffic. The commenter asked a question regarding the Old Ranch Country Club's individual project level EIR analysis that is being prepared and how that would affect the decision making for the Housing Element Update EIR.	A discussion of potential flooding impacts and impacts to the drainage system can be found in Draft EIR Section 3.9, Hydrology and Water Quality. Housing Opportunity Site 10, also referred to as the Old Ranch Country Club or the Old Ranch Country Club Pipeline Project, identified in the Initial Study, is no longer defined as a Housing Opportunity Site. Instead, Old Ranch Country Club is defined as a pipeline project. This proposed pipeline project is a component of a larger specific plan proposal and is being evaluated by the City in a standalone EIR. However, the 167 units proposed within the Old Ranch Country Club Pipeline Project count towards the City's RHNA requirements. Therefore, the 167 proposed units from the Old Ranch Country Club Pipeline Project are evaluated at a programmatic level as a basis for implications associated with housing production only within this EIR This comment was provided during the in-person public scoping meeting. The comment was responded to by Stantec staff who outlined the process for each EIRs and how the approval or disapproval of each document could affect each other. As the comments provided does not identify specific environmental concerns related to the Project, additional analysis is not required.

1.2.1 Environmental Issues Determined Not To Be Significant

Pursuant to CEQA, the discussion of the potential effects on the physical environment is focused on those impacts that may be significant or potentially significant. CEQA allows a lead agency to limit the details of discussion of the environmental effects that are not considered potentially significant (PRC



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Section 21100, CEQA Guidelines Sections 15126.2[a] and 15128). CEQA requires that the discussion of any significant effects on the environment be limited to substantial or potentially substantial adverse changes in physical conditions that exist within the affected area, as defined in PRC Section 21060.5 (Statutory definition of “environment”). Effects dismissed in an analysis as clearly insignificant and unlikely to occur need not be discussed further in the Draft EIR unless the lead agency subsequently receives information inconsistent with the finding (CEQA Guidelines Section 15143).

Based on a review of the project information provided in the NOP (Appendix A), comments received as part of the public scoping process and application submittal (Appendix A), and additional research and analysis of relevant project data obtained during preparation of this Draft EIR, the following were identified as resources that would not experience any significant environmental impacts from the Project.

Accordingly, these resources are not addressed further in this Draft EIR but are identified below. A brief explanation as to why impacts to each resource are not anticipated, as required by CEQA is provided in Section 6.0, Effects Not Found to be Significant.

- Agricultural and Forestry Resources
- Mineral Resources
- Wildfire

In addition, certain subjects within various environmental resource topics were determined not to be significant. Other potentially significant issues are analyzed within these environmental resource topics; however, the following issues listed in Table 1.2-2 are not analyzed, but a brief explanation as to why impacts are less than significant as required by CEQA is provided in Section 6.0, Effects Found Not to Be Significant.

Table 1.2-2: Issues Determined Not to be Significant

Issue Area	Impact Question
Aesthetics	Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?
	Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?
	Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?
Biological Resources	Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?
Cultural Resources	Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?
Energy	Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?
Geology and Soils	Directly or indirectly cause substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving: • Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.



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Issue Area	Impact Question
	- Strong seismic ground shaking? - Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction? - Landslides?
	Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?
	Be located on strata or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on or offsite landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?
	Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?
	Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?
	Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?
	Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?
	Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?
	Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?
	Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?
Hydrology and Water Quality	Violate water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?
	Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would: Result in substantial erosion or siltation on or offsite;
Land Use and Planning	Physically divide an established community?
Population and Housing	Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?
Public Services	Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services: - Schools - Other Public Facilities
Transportation	Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersection(s) or incompatible uses (e.g. farm equipment))?
	Result in inadequate emergency access?



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Issue Area	Impact Question
Utilities and Service Systems	Generate solid waste in excess of state or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?
	Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

1.3 ORGANIZATION OF THE DRAFT EIR

This Draft EIR is arranged into the following sections, which contain the contents of an EIR as required by CEQA Guidelines Section 15120 through 15132.

Section ES: Executive Summary. The Executive Summary provides a summary of the Project and the project alternatives, including a summary of project impacts, recommended mitigation measures, and the level of significance after mitigation for each environmental issue.

Section 1.0: Introduction. The Introduction provides an overview of the Project and the CEQA process and describes the purpose, scope, and components of this Draft EIR.

Section 2.0: Project Description. The Project Description provides a detailed description of the Project, including the location and project characteristics. The intended uses of this Draft EIR, project background, project objectives, and required discretionary approvals are also addressed.

Section 3.0: Environmental Analysis. The Environmental Analysis analyzes the environmental effects of the Project. Impacts are organized into major environmental topic areas. Each topic area includes a description of the environmental setting, regulatory setting, methods, thresholds of significance, Housing Element Update policies, impact analysis, mitigation measures, and level of significance after mitigation. The specific environmental topic areas that are addressed in Section 3.0 include the following:

- Section 3.1: Aesthetics
- Section 3.2: Air Quality
- Section 3.3: Biological Resources
- Section 3.4: Cultural Resources
- Section 3.5: Energy
- Section 3.6: Geology and Soils
- Section 3.7: Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Section 3.8: Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Section 3.9: Hydrology and Water Quality
- Section 3.10: Land Use and Planning
- Section 3.11: Noise
- Section 3.12: Population and Housing
- Section 3.13: Public Services
- Section 3.14: Recreation
- Section 3.15: Transportation
- Section 3.16: Tribal Cultural Resources
- Section 3.17: Utilities and Service Systems



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Section 4.0: Alternatives to the Proposed Project. Describes and compares the proposed alternatives to the Project.

Section 5.0: Other CEQA Considerations. The Other CEQA Considerations section provides a summary of significant environmental effects, including unavoidable, irreversible, and growth-inducing impacts.

Section 6.0: Effects Found Not to Be Significant. This section provides a summary of project impacts that have been determined, through preparation of the NOP, to result in a less than significant impact or no impact.

Section 7.0: List of Preparers. The List of Preparers section provides a list of the various individuals who contributed to the preparation of this Draft EIR.

Appendices. The appendices contain the NOP (including comments) and technical studies prepared to support the analyses and conclusions in this Draft EIR.

1.4 REVIEW OF THE DRAFT EIR

CEQA does not require formal hearings at any stage of the environmental review process (CEQA Guidelines Section 15202[a]). However, it does encourage, “wide public involvement, formal and informal, in order to receive and evaluate public reactions to environmental issues...” (CEQA Guidelines Section 15201). The City distributed an NOP of a Draft EIR for the Project beginning on November 16, 2023. The NOP was distributed for a 30-day comment period that ended on December 15, 2023. The comments on the NOP were considered in the preparation of this Draft EIR. Appendix A contains the written comments received on the NOP.

The City of Seal Beach has filed a Notice of Completion (NOC) with Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR) to begin the public review period (PRC Section 21161). Concurrent with the NOC, this Draft EIR has been distributed to responsible and trustee agencies, other affected agencies, surrounding cities, and interested parties, as well as to all parties requesting a copy of the Draft EIR in accordance with PRC Section 21092(b)(3). During the public review period, the Draft EIR, including the technical appendices, are available for review online at: <https://www.sealbeachca.gov/Departments/Community-Development/Planning-Development/Environmental-Documents-Under-Review>.

Agencies, organizations, and interested parties have the opportunity to comment on this Draft EIR during the 45-day public review period, which will begin on **May 9, 2025**, and end on **June 23, 2025**. The City of Seal Beach encourages the electronic submission of comments. Send your comments to Alexa Smittle, Community Development Director, via email at: planning@sealbeachca.gov.

Written comments on this Draft EIR should be addressed to:

Alexa Smittle, Community Development Director
City of Seal Beach, Community Development Department
211 Eighth Street
Seal Beach, CA 90740



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Upon completion of the public review period, written responses to all environmental issues raised will be prepared and made available for review by the commenting agencies at least 10 days prior to any public hearing on the Project at which the certification of the Final EIR will be considered. Comments received and the responses to comments will be included as part of the record for consideration by decision-makers for the Project.

1.4.1 Effectively Commenting on an EIR

Readers are invited to review and comment on the adequacy and completeness of this Draft EIR in describing the potential impacts of the Project, the level of severity of each impact, the mitigation measures being proposed to reduce or avoid those impacts, and the project alternatives being considered. The most effective comments are those that focus on the adequacy and completeness of the environmental analysis and that are supported by factual evidence. Comments that focus on whether the Project should be approved or denied are not comments on the adequacy of this Draft EIR.

1.4.2 Final EIR

After the end of the review period, the City will review the comments received, prepare written responses to those comments, make any related revisions to the Draft EIR, and publish the Final EIR, which will include the Draft EIR, comments on the Draft EIR, responses to comments and any revisions to the Draft EIR.

The Final EIR will be considered by the City's Planning Commission and City Council when taking action on the Project. If the Project is approved, CEQA requires the City to adopt findings describing how each of the significant impacts identified in the EIR is being mitigated. The findings are required to describe the reasons why significant unavoidable impacts cannot be mitigated to less than significant levels by the adoption of feasible mitigation measures. The findings will also describe the project alternatives analyzed in the EIR and explain whether or not any alternative or portion of an alternative has been adopted. Because the Project has significant and unavoidable impacts, the City would be required to adopt a statement of overriding considerations describing the benefits of the Project that outweigh its environmental impacts.

Finally, the City would adopt a MMRP that describes how it will ensure the mitigation measures being required for the Project would be carried out.

