

1. Introduction

This Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR; Final EIR) has been prepared in conformance with the State guidelines for the implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to evaluate the environmental effects that may result from construction and operation of the proposed Redlands General Plan Transit Villages District and Specific Plan Project (proposed Project).

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

- (a) The Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR; Draft EIR) or a revision of the Draft EIR;
- (b) Comments and recommendations received on the Draft EIR, either verbatim or in summary;
- (c) A list of persons, organizations, and public agencies commenting 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 during the public review period, which began July 21, 2022 and ended on September 6, 2022. This document also includes revisions to the Draft EIR, which are reflected in the Errata in Chapter 3. This document has been prepared in accordance with CEQA, the State CEQA Guidelines, the City's Local CEQA Guidelines, and represents the independent judgment of the lead agency, the City of Redlands. This document and the circulated Draft EIR comprise the Final EIR in accordance with CEQA Guidelines, Section 15132.

1.1 Format of the Final EIR

The following chapters are contained within this document:

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

Chapter 2, Response to Comments. This chapter provides a list of agencies, organizations, and individuals who commented on the Draft EIR, as well as copies of their comment letters received during and following the public review period, and individual responses to their comments.

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

The City of Redlands has determined that none of this material constitutes significant new information that requires recirculation of the Draft EIR for further public comment under CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5. The additional material clarifies existing information prepared in the Draft EIR and does not present any new substantive information. None of this new material indicates that the project would 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 would not be mitigated, or that there would be any of the other circumstances requiring recirculation described in Section 15088.5.

Chapter 4, Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program. This chapter includes the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP). CEQA requires lead agencies to “adopt a reporting and mitigation monitoring program for the changes to the project which it has adopted or made a condition of project approval in order to mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment” (CEQA Section 21081.6, CEQA

Guidelines Section 15097). The MMRP was prepared based on the mitigation measures included in this Final EIR and has been included as Chapter 4.0.

1.2 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 the possible impacts on the environment and ways in which the 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 (PRC) Section 21092.5, copies of the written responses to public agencies are being forwarded to those agencies at least 10 days prior to certification of the Final EIR, with copies of this Final EIR document, which conforms to the legal standards established for response to comments on the Draft EIR pursuant to CEQA.