

# I. Introduction

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## **A. Purpose and Organization of the Final EIR**

In accordance with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Sections 15088, 15089, and 15132, the City of Pasadena (City), as the Lead Agency, has prepared this Final Environmental Impact Report (Final EIR) for the ArtCenter College of Design Master Plan (Project).

As described in Sections 15089 and 15132 of the CEQA Guidelines, a lead agency must prepare a Final EIR before approving a project. The purpose of a Final EIR is to provide an opportunity for the lead agency to respond to comments made by the public and agencies regarding a project's Draft EIR. Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15132, this Final EIR includes the Draft EIR or revisions of the draft, comments and recommendations received on the Draft EIR, a list of persons, organizations, and agencies that provided comments on the Draft EIR, responses to comments received regarding the Draft EIR, and any other information added by the lead agency.

Accordingly, this Final EIR constitutes the second part of the EIR for the Project and is intended to be a companion to the Draft EIR. The Draft EIR and related appendices for the Project, which were circulated for public review and comment from October 26, 2017, through December 18, 2017, constitute the first part of the EIR and is incorporated by reference and bound separately in five volumes, as follows:

- Volume 1: Draft Environmental Impact Report (Sections I–IX)
- Volume 2: Draft Environmental Impact Report (Appendices A–G)
- Volume 3: Draft Environmental Impact Report (Appendix G (Continued))
- Volume 4: Draft Environmental Impact Report (Appendices G (Continued)–J)
- Volume 5: Draft Environmental Impact Report (Appendices K–O)

This Final EIR is organized into four main sections as follows:

**Section I. Introduction**—This section describes the purpose and contents of this Final EIR, provides a summary of the Draft EIR public review process, and summarizes the Project.

**Section II. Clarifications, Revisions, and Corrections to the Draft EIR**—This section provides a list of revisions that have been made to the Draft EIR for the Project, based on comments received from the public and agencies, and other items requiring clarifications, updating, and/or correction.

**Section III. Responses to Comments**—This section presents a matrix of the parties that commented on the Draft EIR and the issues that they raised. This matrix is followed by verbatim numbered copies of the comments followed by numbered responses to each of the written comments made regarding the Draft EIR. Copies of the full original comment letters are provided in Appendix FEIR-1 of this Final EIR.

**Section IV. Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP)**—This section provides the full MMRP for the Project. The MMRP lists mitigation measures by environmental topic and identifies for each of the features and measures the applicable enforcement agency, monitoring agency, monitoring phase, monitoring frequency, and action indicating compliance.

This Final EIR also includes the following appendices:

**Appendix FEIR-1. Draft EIR Comment Letters**—This appendix to the Final EIR includes copies of all written comments received on the Draft EIR.

**Appendix C.4. Calculations to Support Additional Emissions Analysis**—This appendix to the Final EIR amends Appendix C, Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions, of the Draft EIR to include supporting documentation and calculations for the additional analysis that has been conducted to address comments received from the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) on the Draft EIR.

## **B. Overview of the CEQA Public Review Process for the Draft EIR**

In accordance with CEQA, the environmental review process for the Project commenced with solicitation of comments from identified responsible and trustee agencies, as well as interested parties on the scope of the Draft EIR, through a Notice of Preparation (NOP) process. The City circulated an NOP for a 30-day review period, beginning on September 2, 2016, and ending on October 3, 2016. In addition, the City held two scoping

meetings during the NOP comment period—a community meeting on September 20, 2016, and a second one before the City Planning Commission on September 28, 2016, to solicit comments and to inform the public of the Project and the preparation of the Draft EIR.

Consistent with the requirements of Sections 15087 and 15105 of the CEQA Guidelines, the Draft EIR was submitted to the State Clearinghouse, Office of Planning and Research, and was circulated for a 46-day public comment period commencing on October 26, 2017, and ending on December 11, 2017. However, the comment period was extended by seven days and officially ended on December 18, 2017. During the comment period, the Planning Commission held a special public hearing on November 8, 2017 to provide comments on the Draft EIR and to receive comments from the public on the Draft EIR. Following the Draft EIR public comment period, this Final EIR has been prepared that includes responses to the comments raised regarding the Draft EIR.

## **C. Project Summary**

The Project Site consists of ArtCenter’s Hillside Campus and South Campus, both of which are located in the City of Pasadena, within the County of Los Angeles. The two campuses are located approximately five miles apart and are connected via a shuttle system.

### **1. Project Characteristics**

As the South Campus has grown and operations have shifted to this campus over time, ArtCenter proposes to implement a 15-year Master Plan that focuses growth on its South Campus, while providing for infrastructure improvements and building renovations on its Hillside Campus. Specifically, within the South Campus, the Project would include renovations to existing buildings, demolition of existing buildings and surface parking, construction of new buildings for student housing, academic uses, student amenities, development of outdoor quad areas, installation of photovoltaic (PV) cells, and construction of a campus Cycleway and mobility hub. Improvements within the Hillside Campus would include renovations and additions to existing buildings, additional parking, installation of PV cells, and modifications to campus access. The Project would be implemented in two phases, with Phase I occurring in the first five years, although it could be completed as early as 2022, and Phase II occurring between 2022 and 2032. It is anticipated that, upon completion of the Project, total enrollment within ArtCenter would increase from its current enrollment of approximately 2,000 FTE students to 2,500 FTE students and increase faculty/staff from existing 753 faculty/staff members to approximately 994 faculty/staff members. The following provides a summary of the Project by campus and by phase:

## a. Hillside Campus

### *(1) Phase I*

- Removal of the Annex Building from the North Lot and restoration of parking spaces at the cleared location;
- Enclosure of the Sinclair Pavilion;
- Installation of photovoltaic (PV) cells and canopies at the North Lot and South Lot; and
- Improvements to campus circulation and parking.

### *(2) Phase II*

- Renovation and expansion of the South Building to house a new Commuter Services and Facilities Hub; and
- Potential installation of a compressed natural gas (CNG) fueling facility near the new Commuter Services and Facilities Hub.

## a. South Campus

### *(1) Phase I*

- Construction of the 988 Building, which would include student housing; ground floor amenities, such as an art store, cafeteria, student gallery, coffee shop, retail/café, gym, studio space, storage and equipment, and bike parking/rental facilities; a central plant; and subterranean parking;
- Construction of the 1101 Building, which would include student housing; street front amenities, such as a black box theater; and subterranean parking;
- Improvements to the 1111 Building to convert existing commercial space to administrative and academic use and to implement structural seismic upgrades, as well as create the Mullin Gallery;
- Installation of a digital gallery on the eastern façade of the 1111 Building;
- Improvements to the 950 Building to create a mezzanine and new floor space without increasing the existing building footprint;
- Construction of a large main quad area over the Metro Gold Line that would connect the 988, 1111, and 1101 Buildings;

- Construction of an underground tunnel under the Metro Gold Line to connect the proposed 988 Building subterranean parking with the existing 1111 Building parking;
- Construction of a mobility hub that would include a pick-up/drop-off area, large bike parking area, and a car sharing fleet;
- Potential installation of a compressed natural gas (CNG) fueling facility within the mobility hub area; and
- Establishment of the first segment of a Cycleway to create a campus circulation spine for pedestrians, cyclists, and electric carts to easily access buildings west of the Metro Gold Line.

### *(2) Phase II*

- Construction of the 888 Building, which would include either four buildings for academic uses (Scenario 1) or four buildings for a mix of academic and student housing uses (Scenario 2) and subterranean parking; and
- Construction of an elevated North Quad at the podium level of the 888 Building to connect its four new buildings and include a diversity of outdoor amenities for social interaction and relaxation.

Please refer to Section III, Project Description, of the Draft EIR for a more detailed description of the Project, including a discussion of proposed operation and programming; vehicular access, circulation, and parking; continued use of shuttles; lighting and signage; and Project construction and schedule. In addition, Section I, Executive Summary, of the Draft EIR provides a summary of the environmental impacts associated with implementation of the Project and mitigation measures included to avoid or lessen the severity of potentially significant environmental impacts, and residual impacts.

## **2. List of Discretionary Actions**

The City has the principal responsibility for approving the Project. Approvals and permits required for the implementation of the Master Plan may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Master Plan;
- Zoning Map Amendment to change the zoning designation of 870 and 888 South Raymond Avenue (currently zoned IG-SP2-HL-56) and 1111 South Arroyo Parkway (currently zoned CD-6) to Public, Semi-Public (PS);

- Vesting Tentative Tract Map;
- Development Agreement;
- Zoning Code Amendment for the installation and operation of a digital gallery on the façade of the 1111 South Arroyo Building;
- Conditional Use Permit for the sale of alcoholic beverages at the South Campus;
- Minor Conditional Use Permit for reduced parking;
- Public Tree Removal;
- Private Tree Removal;
- Design Review;
- Master Sign Plan;
- City Council Approval of an Exemption to PMC Section 9.36.070 (Noise Ordinance) to allow nighttime construction;
- Metro Approval of encroachments into the Gold Line right-of-way, including those for the Pedestrian Bridge, Main Quad, Underground Tunnel;
- Caltrans Encroachment Permit for any work performed on Arroyo Parkway during Project construction, as well as a transportation permit for use of oversized-transport vehicles on state highways;
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife Streambed Alteration Agreement in the event of potential encroachment into waters of the State during construction of the South Building expansion; and
- Regional Water Quality Control Board approval in the event of potential encroachment into waters of the State during construction of the South Building expansion.
- Other discretionary and ministerial permits and approvals that may be deemed necessary, including but not limited to temporary street closure permits, encroachment permits, grading permits, excavation permits, foundation permits, and building permits.

No other specific discretionary approvals are currently known by the City of Pasadena to be required. However, other permits and approvals, including those from other outside agencies, may become necessary as additional information becomes available.

### 3. Alternatives

CEQA requires that an EIR describe a range of reasonable alternatives to a proposed project that could feasibly avoid or lessen any significant environmental impacts, while attaining the basic objectives of the project. Section V, Alternatives, of the Draft EIR examined four alternatives to the proposed Project. A general description of these alternatives is provided below. Please refer to Section V, Alternatives, of the Draft EIR for a more detailed description of the Project alternatives and a comparative analysis of the impacts of these alternatives with those of the Project.

#### a. Alternative 1: No Project/No Build Alternative

Alternative 1, the No Project/No Build Alternative, assumes that the Project would not be approved, and no new development would occur within the Hillside Campus or the South Campus. Thus, the physical conditions of the two ArtCenter campuses would generally remain as they are today. Under Alternative 1, the existing buildings and parking lots on both campuses would continue to operate as they are currently, and no new construction would occur. Furthermore, no changes to the existing on-site parking or access/circulation areas would occur.

#### b. Alternative 2: Reduced Building Height Alternative

Alternative 2, the Reduced Building Height Alternative, which involves changes to the South Campus only, includes the development of the Master Plan pursuant to the maximum height limits established by the CD-6 zoning designation for properties along Arroyo Parkway and by the IG-HL-56 zoning designation for properties along Raymond Avenue. Accordingly, this alternative would reduce the height of the 1101 Building along Arroyo Parkway to a maximum of 50 feet and height of the 988 and 888 Buildings along Raymond Avenue to maximum of 56 feet. Other components of the Master Plan related to improvements at the Hillside Campus or the interior renovations to the 1111 and 950 Buildings would remain unchanged from those proposed under the Project.

Due to the reduction in height from approximately 100 feet to 50 feet (along Arroyo Parkway) and 56 feet (along Raymond Avenue), new buildings to be developed on the South Campus would be designed to be no more than four stories in height. To be able to maintain and accommodate the same program as proposed under the Project, the footprint of the new buildings would be expanded to the property line, as allowed by the applicable Specific Plan and Zoning Code. As a result, this alternative would compromise more than 31,000 square feet of common areas originally planned for student amenities, including life and wellness programs. In addition, this alternative would eliminate almost 50 percent of the open space (e.g., plazas, gardens, quads, pedestrian paths, etc.) proposed by the Project.

Under this alternative, other components of the Master Plan related to improvements at the Hillside Campus would remain unchanged from those proposed under the Project.

**c. Alternative 3: No Encroachment Over and Under the Metro Right-of-Way Alternative**

Alternative 3, the No Encroachment Over and Under the Metro Right-of-Way Alternative, would involve changes to the portion of the Master Plan that pertains to the South Campus only. This alternative would involve development of the Master Plan without the Main Quad or the eastern portion of the 988 Building that hangs over the Metro right-of-way (ROW) or an underground tunnel under the Metro ROW to connect the proposed 988 Building subterranean parking with the existing 1111 Building parking to avoid any potential impacts to the operation of the Metro Gold Line. Consequently, the pedestrian connection and circulation between ArtCenter's facilities on Arroyo Parkway and Raymond Avenue would be limited to the sidewalk along the north side of Glenarm Street, similar to existing conditions.

Under this alternative, other components of the Master Plan related to the Hillside Campus, the 888 Buildings, the interior renovations to the 1111 and 950 Buildings, and the mobility hub would remain unchanged from those proposed under the Project.

**d. Alternative 4: Change in Location of the New Commuter Services and Facilities Hub to the North Lot Alternative**

Alternative 4, the Change in Location of the New Commuter Services and Facilities Hub on the Hillside Campus to the North Lot Alternative, would involve changes to the portion of the Master Plan that pertains to the Hillside Campus only and specifically the South Building and the new Commuter Services and Facilities Hub. This alternative would involve maintaining the South Building as it currently exists and constructing a new building to accommodate the Commuter Services and Facilities Hub at the North Lot, instead of the South Lot, to avoid any disturbance to the hillside area adjacent to the South Building. The new building would be approximately 15,300 square feet, which would be equivalent in size to the additional building area proposed for the reconstruction/expansion of the existing 4,200-square-foot South Building under the Project. Therefore, no new gross floor area beyond that is proposed under the Project would be added under this alternative.

Components of the Master Plan related to other improvements at the Hillside Campus (i.e., demolition of the Annex Building and enclosure of the Sinclair Pavilion) and the South Campus would remain unchanged from those proposed under the Project.

### e. Alternatives Considered and Rejected

Four other alternatives were considered but rejected as infeasible, as outlined further in Section V, Alternatives.

### f. Environmentally Superior Alternative

The CEQA Guidelines require that an environmentally superior alternative be identified from the alternatives considered in an EIR. Alternative 1, the No Project/No Build Alternative, would avoid all of the Project's environmental impacts related to biological resources, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology (mudflows), noise, and traffic that were determined to be less than significant with mitigation. Therefore, the No Project/No Build Alternative is considered the environmentally superior alternative. However, the CEQA Guidelines require the identification of an Environmentally Superior Alternative other than a No Project Alternative. Accordingly, a comparative evaluation of the remaining alternatives indicates that Alternative 4 is the Environmentally Superior Alternative. Under Alternative 4, the impacts of the Project related to biological resources and mudflows that were determined to be less than significant with mitigation would be eliminated without resulting in different tradeoffs that were identified for the other two alternatives (i.e., impacts related to hydrology and land use associated with the reduction in open space).