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Environmental Setting, Impacts and Mitigation

This chapter of the EIR addresses the potentially significant impacts associated with implementation of the 2008 LRDP. Sections 4.1 through 4.14 contain discussions of significant impacts to natural and human environments. The methods used to analyze these impacts are explained below, and are further elaborated in each section.

4.0.1 Scope of the Environmental Impact Analysis: Program-Level EIR and Tiering

This document is a “Program EIR,” which analyzes at a programmatic level the significant effects on the environment of the maximum growth proposed under the 2008 LRDP. The scope of this EIR focuses on the potential development capacity for the University as stated in the 2008 LRDP through the year 2025. Each project implemented under 2008 LRDP will be subject to individual approval by the University in compliance with CEQA. This EIR provides a foundation for “tiering” future project-level CEQA documents. The 2008 LRDP is a land use plan that would guide the physical development of the UC Santa Barbara campus.

The environmental factors listed in Appendix G of the CEQA guidelines that could be potentially affected by implementation of the 2008 LRDP include:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biology
- Cultural Resources
- Geology
- Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation and Circulation
- Water Supply
- Wastewater
- Other Utilities

A number of assumptions were made, typically “reasonable worst case,” in order to analyze impacts. The Initial Study (Appendix 1.0) found that there would be no impacts to Agricultural and Mineral Resources; therefore, these topics are not included in the impact discussion sections of this EIR. There are no agricultural operations, nor mineral resources of import, within the study area. Further explanation of why there are no impacts to mineral resources and agriculture can be found in section 6.0 Other CEQA Considerations.

4.0.2 Definition of Environmental Setting

CEQA Guidelines indicate that the baseline for environmental analysis is usually the physical environmental conditions in the vicinity of the project existing at the time of the publication of the Notice of Preparation. This means that projects which have been approved, but not completed, are not considered part of the baseline.

There are several campus housing projects that have been approved, but not completed, and are not part of the 2008-2025 LRDP. They are:

- San Clemente student housing (976 beds)
- North Campus faculty housing (173 units)
- Sierra Madre family housing (151 units)

The San Clemente student housing project is under construction at the time of this analysis. The buildings were all in an advanced state of framing. This meant that the physical impact to the ground had occurred, most of the air quality impacts of grading were in the past, and the aesthetic effects were established. However, because the project is not occupied, it is generating no traffic, nor is it using water or wastewater capacity.

Examples are the North Campus faculty and the Sierra Madre housing projects. These have been approved by the UC Regents and the California Coastal Commission, and are not considered a new project in the 2008 LRDP. However, there has been no construction activity, so the baseline condition includes this land in its natural state. Again, neither project has occupants, and therefore no effects on traffic and public services.

Accordingly, while not part of the 2008 LRDP, these projects are treated as cumulative projects and their impacts, together with the 2008 LRDP, are analyzed in this EIR. Prior CEQA analysis has both been incorporated by reference (discussed in relevant sections of the impact analysis), and briefly summarized where relevant; in order to give a more accurate picture of anticipated impacts.

There are no projects underway at UC Santa Barbara that would increase enrollment. Therefore academic year 2007-2008 enrollment constitutes the baseline for this EIR.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15150 (c) states: “Where an EIR or Negative Declaration uses incorporation by reference, the incorporated part of the referenced document shall be briefly summarized where possible or briefly described if the data or information cannot be summarized. The relationship between the incorporated part of the referenced document and the EIR must be described.” Several documents previously prepared have been incorporated by reference, and those are identified individually in the relevant impact discussions.

4.0.3 Definition of Study Area

The study area consists of the four campuses that make up UC Santa Barbara and the areas which will be affected by the 2008 LRDP. Because of the differing nature of each environmental factor analyzed in this EIR, the study area is defined for each topic area. For example, the study area discussed in Section 4.8, *Land Use and Planning*, is UC Santa Barbara and the neighboring jurisdictions. For Air Quality, Section 4.2, the study area is the area under the jurisdiction of the Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District, which is the portion of the air basin affected by campus development. The definition of study area is set forth in the impact analysis discussions.

4.0.4 Regulatory Setting

A discussion of the applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations that govern resource use and development is provided in each section. Most importantly, the University lies within the Coastal Zone, and is subject to the relevant provisions of the California Coastal Act. This “Regulatory Setting” is the context for development of the University. Because the University of California is a state entity, it is not subject to local land use policies. Nevertheless, such policies are of interest or concern to the campus because University development and local development will coincide. This is discussed in Section 4.8 Land Use and Planning.

4.0.5 Basis of Impact Analysis and Mitigation Measures

2008 LRDP impacts related to air quality, hazards and hazardous materials, noise, land use and planning, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation and traffic, and utilities are mostly caused, directly or indirectly, by the proposed increase in the number of people who would attend or work at the University. Impacts related to aesthetics, biological resources, cultural resources, geological resources, and hydrology and water quality generally would be caused directly or indirectly by the physical development envisioned under the proposed 2008 LRDP.

Each section contains a subsection titled “Impact and Mitigation Measures.” Each potentially significant environmental impact anticipated under the proposed 2008 LRDP is analyzed based on standards of significance set forth in each section, as described below.

Standards of Significance. Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines is the primary source of significance standards (or “thresholds”) for the analysis of each impact. The University of California’s CEQA “Handbook” was also used to further define the thresholds. In some cases, other pertinent standards or thresholds were used (e.g. Air Quality thresholds administered by the SBCAPCD).

Impact Analysis. All impacts analyzed in this EIR were determined to be "potentially significant" in the initial study checklist. Sections 4.1 through 4.14 contain discussions about the impacts related to environmental factors as listed in the CEQA Environmental Checklist

Form (Appendix G) and other thresholds refined for this project. At the conclusion of each impact statement, impacts are either:

- **Significant and Unavoidable.** Impacts are considered unavoidable if they cannot be substantially lessened or avoided, to a less than significant level, through implementation of feasible mitigation measures.
- **Significant but Mitigable.** These impacts exceed the establish significance thresholds, but can be mitigated to a less than significant level through implementation of feasible mitigation measures.
- **Less than Significant.** These impacts do not pose a significant adverse threat to the environment and do not require mitigation.

According to CEQA Guidelines, Section 15382, ‘significant effect on the environment’ means a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any of the physical conditions within the area affected by the project, including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise, and objects of historic or aesthetic significance. An economic or social change by itself shall not be considered a significant effect on the environment. A social or economic change related to a physical change may be considered in determining whether the physical change is significant.”

Mitigation Measures. According to CEQA Guidelines, section 15126.4, “an EIR shall describe feasible measures which could minimize significant adverse impacts...” Mitigation measures are listed within the boxed segments of the impact discussions, and are often related to policy established within the 2008 LRDP.

Residual Significance. A determination is made after mitigation measures have been stated as to the level of residual significance provided mitigation measures are implemented.

4.0.6 Cumulative Impacts

In addition to the impacts of the project, CEQA requires the analysis of cumulative impacts. Cumulative impacts are defined as:

“...two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts.

- (a) *The individual effects may be changes resulting from a single project or a number of separate projects.*
- (b) *The cumulative impact from several projects is the change in the environment which results from the incremental impact of the project when added to other closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable probably future projects. Cumulative impacts can result from individual minor but collectively significant projects taking place over a period of time.”*

The cumulative context can differ depending on the environmental topic discussed. The cumulative scenario for utilities may be different than for traffic impacts. The cumulative

scenario can be described by the service area for a utility service provider, or affected roadways and intersections for traffic.

The cumulative context for the purposes of this EIR consists of the following:

- Aesthetics – the area visible from the campus
- Biology – the immediate vicinity of the campus
- Air Quality – South Central Coast Air Basin
- Cultural Resources – University planning area
- Geology – coastal Santa Barbara County
- Hazardous Materials – University environs
- Hydrology and Water Quality – contributing watersheds
- Land Use and Planning – the neighboring jurisdictions of the Cities of Goleta and Santa Barbara, as well as the County of Santa Barbara.
- Noise – roughly coincident with the traffic study area
- Public Services –service area of the various providers (police, fire, schools, landfills)
- Recreation – the area within one mile of the campus.
- Transportation and Circulation – as was analyzed using the City of Goleta regional traffic model (as modified for this project) and anticipated effects on area intersections:
- Water – service area of the Goleta Water District
- Wastewater –Goleta Sanitary District and Goleta West Sanitary District service areas

More information about the cumulative scenario for each topic is presented in each section.