

I. INTRODUCTION

A. PURPOSE OF THE RESPONSE TO COMMENTS DOCUMENT

This document has been prepared to respond to comments received on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) prepared for the proposed University Village at San Pablo Avenue Project (project). The Draft EIR identifies the likely environmental consequences associated with implementation of the proposed project, and recommends mitigation measures to reduce potentially significant impacts. This Response to Comments (RTC) Document provides a response to comments on the Draft EIR made by agencies, organizations, and individuals, and makes revisions to the Draft EIR, as necessary, in response to those comments or to clarify or revise information in the Draft EIR. This document, together with the Draft EIR, constitutes the Final EIR for the proposed project.

B. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

According to CEQA, lead agencies are required to consult with public agencies having jurisdiction over a proposed project and to provide the general public with an opportunity to comment on a Draft EIR.

On March 31, 2008, the City of Albany circulated a Notice of Preparation (NOP) to help identify the types of impacts that could result from the proposed project, as well as potential areas of controversy. The NOP was mailed to public agencies (including the State Clearinghouse), organizations, and individuals considered likely to be interested in the proposed project and its potential impacts. A public scoping session for the Draft EIR was held as a public meeting on April 22, 2008. Comments received by the City on the NOP and at the public scoping meeting were taken into account during the preparation of the Draft EIR.

The Draft EIR was made available for public review on July 3, 2009 and distributed to local and State agencies, including responsible and trustee agencies. Copies of the Draft EIR were distributed to affected agencies, City departments, and the members of the Planning Commission and City Council. A Notice of Availability (NOA) of the Draft EIR was prepared and distributed in the following ways/places:

- Mailing to persons who expressed interest in receiving project updates;
- Mailing to the State Clearinghouse and affected State agencies;
- Posting on the City of Albany web site: <http://www.albanyca.org/index.aspx?page=521>;
- Mailing to adjacent property owners;
- Filing with the County Clerk;
- Posting at public posting places; and
- Posting at the project site.

The CEQA-mandated 45-day public comment period for the Draft EIR would have ended on August 17, 2009. However, upon request by members of the public who were reviewing the Draft EIR, the City extended the public comment period to October 5, 2009. The Planning Commission held a public hearing on the Draft EIR during the comment period, on July 28, 2009. Several members of the public provided verbal comments at this meeting. The City received 6 comment letters from State and local agencies, and 31 letters from organizations and individuals during this period.

C. DOCUMENT ORGANIZATION

This RTC Document consists of the following chapters:

- *Chapter I: Introduction.* This chapter discusses the purpose and organization of this RTC Document, and summarizes the environmental review process for the project.
- *Chapter II: List of Commenters.* This chapter contains a list of agencies, organizations, and individuals that submitted written comments or spoke at the public hearing on the Draft EIR during the public review period.
- *Chapter III: Comments and Responses.* This chapter contains reproductions of all comment letters received on the Draft EIR, as well as notes of verbal comments provided at the public hearing. A written response to each CEQA-related comment received during the public review period is provided. Each response is keyed to the preceding comment.
- *Chapter IV: Draft EIR Revisions.* Modifications to the Draft EIR that are necessary in light of the comments received and responses provided, or to clarify material in the Draft EIR, are contained in this chapter. Underlined text represents language that has been added to the Draft EIR; text with ~~strikeout~~ has been deleted from the Draft EIR. Revisions to figures are also provided, where appropriate.