
INTRODUCTION TO THE FINAL EIR

PURPOSE OF THE FINAL EIR

This document, together with the Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) published in August 2010, shall constitute the Final Environmental Impact Report (Final EIR) prepared for the proposed *West Landing Specific Plan Project* (the Project) in the City of Ceres, California. The primary purpose of this EIR is to evaluate the potential environmental effects of the proposed Project.

This EIR has been prepared pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as amended (commencing with Section 21000 of the California Public Resources Code), and the CEQA Guidelines. The Lead Agency for the Project as defined by CEQA is the City of Ceres, which has planning jurisdiction over the site. This EIR has been prepared by Lamphier-Gregory and their subconsultants for the City of Ceres.

In addition to certification of the EIR, adoption of the Specific Plan would require the following City of Ceres actions:

- Approval of General Plan Amendment – The General Plan will be amended to remain consistent with the Specific Plan.
- Approval of Prezoning – Zoning designations will be declared that will become effective following annexation.
- Approval of the Specific Plan – The Specific Plan will become the planning document for development in the Plan area.

Subsequent actions by the City of Ceres that may be required to implement the proposed Specific Plan following adoption include tentative and final subdivision maps; development agreements; municipal bond financing; formation of landscape, lighting and maintenance assessment districts; conditional use permits; and/or demolition, grading and building permits. In accordance with CEQA Guidelines 21157.1, the lead agency shall assess specific development projects to determine whether they may result in any significant effect on the environment that was not examined in this EIR. At that time, the City shall either make written findings that the subsequent project is within the scope of the project covered in this EIR or that additional analysis is required.

Other agency approvals that would be required for project implementation include:

- Stanislaus Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) approval of annexation of the Plan area to the City of Ceres based on a sphere of influence adjustment to include the Plan area in the Primary Sphere and detachment from the Westport Fire Protection District.
- Stanislaus County Office of Education approvals for boundary modification between Ceres Unified School District and Modesto City School District. This modification is desired but is not required for Plan approval.
- National Pollutant Discharge Elimination Permit (NPDES) from the Regional Water Quality Control Board if discharge to surface waters would be necessary, or if discharges would increase over currently permitted levels.
- State General Construction Activity Storm Water Permit, issued by the State Water Quality Control Board.

EIR REVIEW PROCESS

Draft EIR

A Draft EIR was made available for public review in August 2010 and distributed to local and state responsible and trustee agencies. The general public was advised of the availability of the Draft EIR through public notice in the newspaper and by mail for those in the vicinity of the project area. During the public review period for the Draft EIR (ending October 4, 2010), the City received written comments. Additional comments were received following the close of the official comment period.

Final EIR

This Final EIR contains all comments received by the City on the Draft EIR (including those received late) and also includes responses to these comments, together with necessary changes or revisions to the text of the Draft EIR document. Changes to the text of the Draft EIR are included in Chapter 24 of this Final EIR, shown in underline for new text or ~~strikeout~~ for deleted text.

This Final EIR will be presented to the Ceres Planning Commission and City Council at public hearings to consider certification of this document as a technically adequate, full disclosure document consistent with the requirements of CEQA. As such, it must identify the potential environmental effects of the proposed Project, recommend mitigation measures to avoid or reduce potential environmental effects, and consider possible alternatives. Assuming certification of this EIR as complete and adequate under the guidelines of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), this document together with the Draft EIR will constitute the EIR for this Project. The Planning Commission may recommend and the City Council may require additional changes or modifications to this Final EIR prior to certification.

Certification of the EIR does not constitute approval of the project. The EIR will be used as an informational document by the Planning Commission and/or City Council when making decisions whether to grant project approvals.

REPORT ORGANIZATION

This Final EIR consists of the following chapters, commencing after Chapter 22 of the Draft EIR:

Chapter 23: Introduction to the Final EIR. This chapter outlines the purpose, organization and scope of the Final EIR document and important information regarding the public review and approval process.

Chapter 24: Revisions to the Draft EIR. This chapter includes corrections, clarifications or additions to text contained in the Draft EIR based on comments received during the public review period.

Chapter 25: Response to Comments. This chapter provides reproductions of letters received on the Draft EIR. The comments are numbered in the right margin. The responses to comments are also provided in this chapter immediately following each comment letter, and are keyed to the numbered comments.

This page intentionally left blank.