

The subject of this Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) is the Sutter Medical Center of Santa Rosa/Luther Burbank Memorial Foundation Joint Master Plan (the proposed project).

The lead agency for the project is the County of Sonoma, Permit Resource Management Department, 2550 Ventura Avenue, Santa Rosa, California 95403. Section 2 of this EIR describes the proposed project in detail.

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE EIR

Because the proposed project would require discretionary approvals by the County of Sonoma and other governmental agencies, the proposed project is subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Based on the preparation of a detailed Initial Study (see **Appendix A**) in February 2008, it was determined that the proposed project may have a significant effect on the environment and that an EIR should be prepared pursuant to the State and County of Sonoma *CEQA Guidelines*.

The County of Sonoma has commissioned this EIR for the following purposes:

- To satisfy CEQA requirements;
- To inform the general public, the local community, and responsible trustee, state, and federal agencies of the nature of the proposed project, its potentially significant environmental effects, feasible mitigation measures to mitigate those effects, and its reasonable and feasible alternatives;
- To enable the County of Sonoma to consider the environmental consequences of the proposed project;
- To provide a basis for preparation of any future environmental documents;
- For consideration by responsible agencies in issuing permits and approvals for the proposed project.

As described in CEQA and the *CEQA Guidelines*, public agencies are charged with the duty to avoid or substantially lessen significant environmental impacts where feasible. Where impacts cannot be mitigated to less-than-significant levels, public agencies have an obligation to balance the project's significant impacts on the environment with other conditions, including economic, social, technological, legal, and other benefits.

This Draft EIR is an informational document, the purposes of which are as follows:

- To identify the potentially significant impacts of the proposed project on the environment;
- To indicate the manner in which those significant impacts can be avoided or significantly lessened;
- To identify any significant and unavoidable adverse impacts that cannot be mitigated; and
- To identify reasonable and feasible alternatives to the proposed project that would eliminate any significant adverse environmental impacts or reduce the impacts to less-than-significant levels

CEQA requires the lead agency to consider the information in the EIR, along with any other relevant information, in making its decision on the proposed project. Although the EIR does not determine the ultimate decision regarding implementation of the project, the County of Sonoma is required to consider the information in the EIR and make findings regarding each significant effect the EIR identifies.

The County of Sonoma must certify the EIR before approving the proposed project. Once certified, the EIR will serve as the base environmental document for the County of Sonoma and will be used as a basis for decisions on implementation of the proposed project. Other agencies may also use this EIR in their review and approval processes.

This Draft EIR was prepared in accordance with Section 15151 of the *CEQA Guidelines*, which defines the standards for EIR adequacy as follows:

An EIR should be prepared with a sufficient degree of analysis to provide decision makers with information which enables them to make a decision which intelligently takes account of environmental consequences. An evaluation of the environmental effects of a proposed project need not be exhaustive, but the sufficiency of an EIR is to be reviewed in the light of what is reasonably feasible. Disagreement among experts does not make an EIR inadequate, but the EIR would summarize the main points of disagreement among the experts. The courts have looked not for perfection; but for adequacy, completeness, and good faith effort at full disclosure.

1.2 EIR REVIEW PROCESS

1.2.1 Notice of Preparation

Responses from identified responsible and trustee agencies, as well as interested parties on the scope of the EIR, were solicited through Notice of Preparation (NOP) of the EIR process. The NOP for the EIR was posted and circulated for a 30-day review period starting on February 4, 2008. A public scoping meeting was also held on February 21, 2008, at the Wells Fargo Center for the Arts, Carston Cabaret, 50 Mark West Springs Road, Santa Rosa to solicit input from agencies, individuals, and organizations. A copy of the NOP and the responses to the NOP are included in **Appendix B**. Comments from the Scoping Meeting are summarized in Section 7.

1.2.2 Environmental Review

The Draft EIR will be circulated for review and comment by the public and other interested parties, agencies, and organizations for 45 days. During the public review period, the County of Sonoma will hold a noticed public hearing before the County of Sonoma Planning Commission, to allow the Commission and interested parties and agencies to voice their opinions regarding the adequacy of the Draft EIR. Notice of the time and location will be published before the public hearing. All written comments or questions about the Draft EIR should be addressed to:

County of Sonoma
Permit Resource Management Department
2550 Ventura Avenue
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Attn: Steve Dee
(707) 565-8350
(707) 565-8358 (fax)
sdee@sonoma-county.org

Any questions regarding the proposed project itself should be directed to Ken Ellison at (707) 565-1928 or (kellison@sonoma-county.org).

1.2.3 Project Approval

After the public comment period closes, the County of Sonoma will respond, in the Final EIR, to all written comments received regarding the project's environmental impacts. The Response to Comments will be prepared as a separate document from the Draft EIR. The Final EIR will consist of the Draft EIR and the Response to Comments document. It will be considered by the County of Sonoma at a public meeting(s) and be certified if it complies with *CEQA Guidelines*. Upon certification of the EIR, the County of Sonoma will consider the merits of the proposed project for approval.

1.2.4 CEQA Findings and Mitigation Monitoring

CEQA requires that when a public agency approves a project and makes the necessary findings based on an EIR, it must adopt a reporting or monitoring program for those measures that it has adopted or made a condition of project approval to mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment. Findings explain the connection between the analysis in the environmental document and the decisions by the decision-makers. The reporting or monitoring program must be designed to ensure compliance during project implementation. The mitigation monitoring program for the EIR will be prepared at the time the Final EIR is prepared.

1.3 PROJECT OVERVIEW

Sutter Medical Center of Santa Rosa (Sutter) and the Luther Burbank Memorial Foundation (LBMF) request approval of a joint Master Plan prepared for the properties that comprise the project site at 50 Mark West Springs Road, Sonoma County, California. The joint Master Plan reflects the intent to accommodate both LBMF and Medical Campus facilities on the 53-acre site via an integrated land use and circulation plan, which would include a single major signalized site entry road from Mark West Springs Road. Implementation of the Master Plan is the project evaluated in this Draft EIR.

California American Water Company (CalAm) currently provides domestic water to the site. It is proposed that CalAm would continue to provide water for all of LBMF's domestic needs and fire suppression purposes as well as for fire suppression for Sutter's proposed hospital and Medical Campus. A new well system composed of two wells approximately 600 feet deep would be drilled to provide all water (domestic and irrigation) needs for the Sutter hospital and Medical Campus, excluding water for fire protection, which, as noted above, would be provided by CalAm.

LBMF wastewater is currently treated and disposed of on site, via a private treatment and disposal facility. To provide reliable long-term service for the site, it is proposed that the existing private treatment and disposal facility be removed and that all of the existing and proposed facilities be connected to the Sonoma County Water Agency (SCWA) Airport-Larkfield-Wikiup Sanitation Zone wastewater treatment facilities.

The project would be completed in phases beginning with the annexation of the site into the SCWA's Airport-Larkfield-Wikiup Sanitation Zone, connection to the Airport-Larkfield-Wikiup Sanitation Zone's wastewater treatment system, and decommissioning of the existing on-site LBMF sewage treatment facility. Surcharging the proposed building sites would then begin. Structures located near the future hospital site will be demolished and LBMF maintenance activities would be relocated to a new single-story maintenance facility. The existing LBMF athletic fields would be relocated from the northeast portion of the site to the southern most part and the playground would be relocated northeast of its current location. A berm would be constructed along the northeastern edge of the East Drive to reduce noise from LBMF special events which currently occur on the East lawn.

The Sutter Medical Center hospital building would consist of a two-story, 70-bed acute inpatient facility with a full range of inpatient and outpatient treatment and diagnostic services, including all ancillary and support services required. A Central Utility Plant would also be constructed on site. The campus would include a new three-story Medical Office Building to house medical center administrative activities and operations.

The project also proposes a two- and three-story Physicians Medical Center, an acute care inpatient and outpatient facility with 28 licensed beds providing inpatient and outpatient surgery and a full range of outpatient hospital services. A ground-level helistop adjacent to the hospital to transport patients is a part of the proposed project. On-site surface parking would increase to 1,941 paved and striped spaces.

Site improvements would include widening/improvements to Mark West Springs Road and US 101 northbound off-ramp, signal modifications at the US 101 northbound off-ramp/Mark West Springs Road intersection, and signalization of the entry road/driveway. The entry road would be two lanes inbound and three lanes outbound. Additionally, paved, striped shared parking spaces would be added.

The proposed project provides for future expansion of the 70-bed Sutter Medical Center hospital by up to 29 beds, including expansion of the Emergency Department. Such expansion would include one- and two-story building additions. On site surface parking would decrease to 1,914 paved and striped spaces with this addition.

1.4 INITIAL STUDY FINDINGS

An Initial Study was prepared in February 2008 (Appendix A) to facilitate public input regarding issues to be addressed in this DEIR.

Based in part on the Initial Study, the County of Sonoma found that preparation of an EIR was necessary because the proposed project would have potentially significant impacts in the areas of aesthetics, agricultural resources, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, noise, population and

housing, public services, transportation/traffic, and utilities and service systems. Insignificant impacts determined in the Initial study not to require further analysis in the DEIR are identified following the significance criteria in each issue area of the DEIR.

1.5 INTENDED USES OF THIS EIR

The primary use of the Draft EIR is to inform decision makers and the public about a project's significant environmental effects and ways to avoid or reduce them, to demonstrate to the public that the environment is being protected, and to ensure that the planning and political processes reflect an understanding of the environmental cost of a project.. It is intended also to provide the information and environmental analysis necessary to assist public decision makers in considering all of the approvals necessary to implement the proposed project.

1.6 AGENCIES THAT MAY USE THIS EIR

The EIR is a public information document used in the planning and decision-making process. CEQA requires that all state and local agencies consider the environmental consequences of projects over which they have discretionary authority. The following agencies will use this EIR to base their decisions on issuing discretionary approvals for this project. The approvals for which they are responsible are listed in Section 2.

- County of Sonoma
- Sonoma County Local Agency Formation Commission
- North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board
- Bay Area Air Quality Management District
- California Department of Transportation
- Section 404 Permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
- California Department of Transportation Aeronautics Division
- Federal Aviation Administration

1.7 ORGANIZATION OF THIS EIR

This Draft EIR is organized into sections as follows:

- **Summary:** A summary of the project including the project objectives, the alternatives, and areas of known controversy or issues to be resolved.
- **Section 1 (Introduction):** Provides an overview of the project and an introduction and description of the intended uses of the EIR and the review and certification process.
- **Section 2 (Project Description):** Presents a complete description of the proposed project including location, characteristics, and objectives. This section also provides an overview of the study area's environmental setting, including a description of existing and surrounding

land uses, history, and background of the project site and a discussion of related projects to be analyzed in the EIR.

- **Section 3 (Environmental Impact Analysis):** This section is the primary focus of this Draft EIR. Each environmental issue contains a discussion of existing conditions for the project site, an evaluation and discussion of the significance of impacts associated with the proposed project, proposed mitigation measures, level of impact significance after mitigation and cumulative impacts.
- **Section 4 (Energy):** Describes the energy implications of construction and operation of the proposed project.
- **Section 5 (Other CEQA Considerations):** As required by CEQA, other considerations will be discussed in the Draft EIR. This section includes discussion of project impacts to growth inducement, and significant irreversible changes to the environment and significant unavoidable impacts. In addition, this section discusses the potential for the project to result in indirect environmental impacts related to the economic effect of the project on other hospitals.
- **Section 6 (Alternatives to the Proposed Project):** Includes an analysis of a range of reasonable alternatives to the proposed project to provide informed decision-making in accordance with Section 15126(f) of the *CEQA Guidelines*. The range of alternatives selected is based on their ability to feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project and avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project.
- **Section 7 (Public Scoping and Coordination):** Provides summary of public participation and coordination. Public meetings and hearings are summarized along with comments received during the comment period.
- **Section 8 (Preparers and Persons Consulted):** Presents a list of lead agency, other agencies, and consultant team members that contributed to the preparation of the Draft EIR. This section also identifies persons consulted during the preparation of the Draft EIR.
- **Section 9 (References):** Presents a list of all references cited in the Draft EIR.
- **Appendices**