

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Background

A Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was prepared by the City of Palo Alto (the City) to disclose the potential environmental effects of the proposed City of Palo Alto Emergency Water Supply and Storage Project. The Draft EIR included a description of the proposed project, an assessment of its potential effects, a description of possible mitigation measures to reduce the significant effect identified, and a consideration of alternatives that address potential impacts. The proposed project includes rehabilitation of the five existing City wells, construction of up to three new wells, construction of a new 2.5 million gallon storage reservoir, and upgrade of an existing pump station.

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Draft EIR was distributed for public review and comments. The 45-day public review period for the Draft EIR commenced on Wednesday, November 8, 2006 and ended on Friday, December 22, 2006. During this time frame, the document was reviewed by various state, regional, and local agencies, as well as by interested organizations and individuals. Written comments were received from seven public agencies (state and local), two Planning and Transportation Commissioners, and seven organizations and individuals. In addition, two comments from state public agencies were received after the close of the comment period. A Planning and Transportation Commission public hearing was held on November 29, 2006 to obtain oral comments on the Draft EIR. Comments were received from the Palo Alto Planning and Transportation Commission and one member of the public during the public hearing.

This document responds to comments on the Draft EIR that were raised during the public review period and contains revisions intended to correct and clarify the Draft EIR. The responses and revisions in this document substantiate and confirm the analysis contained in the Draft EIR. No new substantial environmental impact and no increase in the severity of an earlier identified impact have surfaced in responding to the comments. Together, the previously released Draft EIR and this document constitute the Final EIR. As the lead agency, the City must certify the Final EIR before action can be taken on the proposed project. Certification requires that the lead agency make findings that the Final EIR complies with CEQA.

How to Use This Report

This document consists of five chapters:

- Chapter 1, Introduction – Overview of the purpose and content of the Final EIR.
- Chapter 2, List of Commentors – Listing of the public agencies and individuals and organizations who submitted comment letters on the Draft EIR or spoke at the public hearing on the Draft EIR.
- Chapter 3, Responses to Written Comments – Individual comment letters and responses to comments submitted in writing.
- Chapter 4, Responses to Oral Comments – Responses to oral comments made at the Planning and Transportation Commission Draft EIR public hearing.
- Chapter 5, EIR Text Revisions – Text and graphics changes to the Draft EIR requested by City of Palo Alto staff or in response to comments raised to correct inaccuracies or provide clarification.
- Chapter 6, Comments Received After Close of Comment Period – Individual comment letters and responses to comments submitted in writing, for comments received after the close of the 45-day public review period.