

Purpose of This Document

This document and the draft environmental impact report (EIR) that was circulated for public review between September 5, 2008 and February 2, 2009 constitute the FEIR for the Monterey 2007 General Plan. The information presented in this FEIR is being provided in accordance with the requirements of the State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines and includes the following Chapters and Appendices:

- Chapter 1, “Introduction,” discusses the purpose of this document, public review process, CEQA requirements, and use of this document.
- Chapter 2, “Master Responses,” is comprised of general responses to comments that were received from several commenters.
- Chapter 3, “Responses to Specific Comments,” contains the individual comments received during the public review period for the DEIR and the written responses to those comments.
- Chapter 4, “Changes to the Text of the Draft EIR,” contains changes to the text of the DEIR made in response to the comments. These changes are to correct minor errors and for purposes of clarification. This includes an updated table summarizing the impacts that would result from the proposed project, mitigation measures proposed, and levels of significance before and after mitigation.
- Chapter 5, “Changes to the Draft General Plan,” contains proposed revisions to the text of the draft General Plan. These revisions are proposed as a result of discussions by the Planning Commission, corrections made to the draft, and changes to reflect mitigation measures identified in the FEIR.
- Chapter 6, “References,” updates the reference section of the DEIR. This adds new references cited in the FEIR.
- Chapter 7, “Comment Letters,” includes a copy of each of the comment letters received during the review period from September 5, 2008 to February 2, 2009. The individual comments numbers correspond to those in the Chapter 3 responses.
- “Technical Supporting Data,” attached to this FEIR consists of Air Quality EMFAC and Caline4 Model Runs, and Greenhouse Gas Calculation Spreadsheets.

As mentioned in the DEIR, this document is intended to be a program EIR, pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15168. A program EIR assesses the impacts of a series of actions that can be characterized as one large project.

Note that throughout the FEIR, the terms “GPU5” and “2007 General Plan” are used interchangeably to describe the Draft General Plan that is to be considered by County decision makers.

Public Review Process

The DEIR was distributed to various public agencies, citizen groups, and interested individuals for a public review period, beginning on September 5, 2008. As a result of public concerns over the availability of reference documents, the DEIR was slightly revised and released with additional information for a second review period beginning December 15, 2008 and ending February 2, 2009. Both versions of the DEIR were submitted to the State Clearinghouse of the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research for circulation to state agencies for their review. Copies of the DEIR were available for public review during normal business hours at the County Planning Department in Salinas. Copies of the DEIR were also available for review at Monterey County libraries and on the County’s website.

CEQA Requirements

As lead agency under CEQA, the County has provided each public agency that commented on the DEIR with a copy of its responses to comments at least 10 days before certifying the FEIR.

Use of This Document

The FEIR allows the public and the lead agency to review revisions to the DEIR, comments, responses to comments, and other components of the EIR before approval of the project. This FEIR, including the DEIR incorporated by reference, will serve as the environmental document used by the County when considering approval of the project.

After completing the FEIR and before approving the project, the County, as lead agency, must make the following three certifications (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15090):

- The FEIR has been completed in compliance with CEQA.
- The FEIR was presented to the decision-making body of the lead agency, and the decision-making body reviewed and considered the information in the FEIR before approving the project.
- The FEIR reflects the lead agency’s independent judgment and analysis.

Separately from certification of the FEIR, the County must adopt findings of fact describing the disposition of each of those impacts (State CEQA Guidelines Section

15091[a]). For each significant impact, the lead agency must make one of the following findings:

- Changes or alterations have been required in or incorporated into the project that avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the EIR.
- Such changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency, not the agency making the finding. Such changes have been adopted by such other agency or can and should be adopted by such other agency.
- Specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other considerations, including provision of employment opportunities for highly trained workers, make infeasible the mitigation measures or project alternatives identified in the FEIR.

Each finding must be accompanied by a brief explanation of the rationale for the finding. In addition, the County must adopt, in conjunction with the findings, a mitigation monitoring or reporting program for the mitigation measures (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15091[d]). These measures must be fully enforceable through permit conditions, agreements, or other measures.

In addition, because this project would result in significant and unavoidable impacts, the County must state in writing its reasons for approving the action (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15093[b]). This statement of overriding considerations will be supported by substantial information in the record, including the FEIR.

