

CHAPTER I

Introduction

A. Environmental Review

Kaiser Foundation Hospitals, a California non-profit public benefit corporation, has submitted an environmental review application to the City of Oakland for the Kaiser Permanente Oakland Medical Center (OMC) Master Plan Project, which would entail the phased redevelopment of the existing Kaiser Permanente OMC with a comprehensively planned state-of-the-art medical center over 14 years. The 20.6-acre project site is comprised of several noncontiguous properties concentrated at the intersection of Broadway and MacArthur / West MacArthur Boulevard¹, including the existing 16.3-acre Kaiser Permanente medical center. The project would result in a new medical center of approximately 1.78 million square feet (msf) of building area.² Kaiser Permanente is proposing the project to meet the operational and legal mandates of Senate Bill 1953, which requires the replacement or seismic retrofitting of existing hospitals within the designated statutory time period deadline of January 1, 2013.

The project is referred to throughout this document as the “Kaiser Permanente OMC Project” or “the project”. Kaiser Foundation Hospitals, the project applicant and sponsor, is generally referred to throughout this document as “Kaiser Permanente” or “Kaiser”.

Subsequent to receiving the application for environmental review, the City of Oakland decided to prepare an environmental impact report (EIR) for the Kaiser Permanente OMC Project.

Consistent with the California Environmental Quality Act and the Guidelines promulgated thereunder (together “CEQA”), this EIR is a public information document for use by governmental agencies and the public to identify and evaluate potential environmental consequences of the proposed project, to recommend mitigation measures to lessen or eliminate adverse impacts, and to examine a range of feasible alternatives to the project. The information contained in the EIR is reviewed and considered by the City prior to a decision to approve, reject, or modify the proposed project.

Among the EIR’s key purposes is to identify mitigation measures and alternatives that would substantially lessen or avoid significant adverse environmental effects. In addition to addressing

¹ West MacArthur Boulevard runs west from Broadway to approximately San Pablo Avenue; MacArthur Boulevard runs east from Broadway to the Oakland-San Leandro city limit border.

² Exclusive of parking structures.

environmental impacts under CEQA, this EIR also examines a number of non-CEQA issues relating to parking supply and urban design considerations.

An Initial Study was not prepared for the project, therefore all topics included in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines are addressed herein. This Draft EIR addresses topics for which the project could result in a potentially significant impact and therefore require further study. This Draft EIR also documents those issues that would result in less than significant impacts or no impact (as described in Chapter IV, under *Significance Thresholds and Impact Classifications*).

On March 25, 2005, the City issued a Notice of Preparation (NOP) to governmental agencies and organizations and persons interested in the project. The City reissued the NOP on April 1, 2005, to indicate updated City contact information. The reissued NOP is included in this EIR as **Appendix A**. The NOP requested that agencies with regulatory authority over any aspect of the project describe that authority and identify the relevant environmental issues that should be addressed in the EIR. Interested members of the public were also invited to comment. This Draft EIR addresses those responses to the NOP that involved environmental issues associated with the project site and proposed project. A list of comment topics is provided in **Appendix B** of this EIR. Copies of written responses to the NOP are available for review at all locations where the Draft EIR is available for review. Please refer to the notice provided in the front of this document for specific locations or contact information.

The Draft EIR is available for public review for the period identified on the notice provided in the front of this document. During this time, written comments on the Draft EIR may be submitted to the City of Oakland Community and Economic Development Agency, Planning Division, at the address indicated on the notice. Responses to all comments received on the environmental analysis in the Draft EIR and submitted within the specified review period will be prepared and included in the Response to Comments / Final EIR.

B. Organization of the Draft EIR

The Summary (Chapter II) of this EIR contains a summary of the document and allows the reader to easily reference the analysis of potentially significant effects, proposed mitigation measures and standard conditions of approval, residual environmental impacts after mitigation, if any, and alternatives to the project that reduce or avoid significant effects on the environment. **Table II-1**, Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures, is provided at the end of Chapter II. The detailed impact analysis is contained in the main body of the document.

The Project Description (Chapter III) describes the project location, the project characteristics, the objectives of the project, the anticipated development phasing, a list of the City's required project approvals, and other agencies that must consider aspects of the project.

Environmental Setting, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures (Chapter IV) contains a discussion of the setting (existing conditions and regulatory framework), the environmental impacts (including cumulative impacts) that could result from the project, and the mitigation measures or standard

conditions of approval that would reduce or eliminate the identified adverse impacts. As appropriate and relevant, activities on each development site, and within each phase, have been assessed for potential impacts during and after construction. Also where appropriate and relevant, potential impacts are identified by development site and/or phase, and measures and conditions are identified accordingly. The criteria used to assess the significance of adverse environmental effects are identified, and the significance of the impact both prior to and following mitigation or condition is reported.

Alternatives (Chapter V) evaluates a range of alternatives to the proposed project and identifies an environmentally superior alternative.

Impact Overview (Chapter VI) describes the significant unavoidable impacts and cumulative impacts identified in Chapter IV and describes the project's potential for inducing growth.

Report Preparation (Chapter VII) identifies the authors of the EIR. Persons and documents consulted during preparation of the EIR are listed at the end of each analysis section in Chapter IV.

The NOP, as well as certain supporting background documents and technical reports used for the impact analyses, are presented in Appendices A through I. All reference documents listed at the end of each analysis section (in Chapter IV) are available for review by the public at the City of Oakland Community and Economic Development Agency, Planning and Zoning Division, under reference Case Number ER05-004.