

# CHAPTER 1

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## Introduction

The proposed project is the Master Development Plan for the Pasadena Art Center College of Design. The plan, which is included in **Appendix A** of this EIR, would be implemented over 25 years from the date of approval, and would provide for the modernization and updating of the Hillside Campus (alternately North Campus or Lida Campus), located at 1700 Lida Street through the year 2033. New facilities are proposed including, the Design Research Center (DRC, 48,183 sf), the expansion of the Tyler Addition (42,226 sf), operations and maintenance facilities (15,145 sf), and a new parking structure as well as renovation and remodeling of the existing Ellwood Building. The City of Pasadena has prepared this EIR (State Clearinghouse, SCH No. 2007061083) for the proposed project, in accordance with CEQA, the *CEQA Guidelines* and City requirements.<sup>1</sup> The Master Plan is for 25 years, however, all major construction projects are proposed to be completed in 2011.

### 1.1 Project Overview and History

#### History of the Art Center

The Art Center was founded in 1930 by Edward A. “Tink” Adams. Art Center taught skills to artists and designers to prepare its students for roles in advertising, publishing and industrial design. The College’s early successes in advertising design and illustration spurred the expansion of curricular offerings to include photography and industrial design in 1931 and 1932, respectively.

The Art Center’s original campus was located on West Seventh Street in Los Angeles, a site sufficient for the needs of Art Center’s (then 12 teachers and eight students). By 1940, enrollment had grown to nearly 500 students representing 37 states and several foreign countries. After World War II, returning veterans increased the enrollment, prompting a move to a larger building on Third Street in 1946, as well as a commitment to a year-round schedule. In 1949, Art Center became an accredited four-year college, and offered its first bachelor of professional arts degrees in Industrial Design, Photography, Illustration and Advertising. The College founded the first advanced-concept design studio for the automotive industry in the 1950s, but by the late 1960s, the need for updated and expanded facilities to accommodate a larger student body and new technologies was apparent. The Art Center’s move to Pasadena began in 1969 with the purchase of 175 acres in the Linda Vista neighborhood of the San Rafael Hills above Pasadena. The Art

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<sup>1</sup> CEQA Statute, Public Resources Code (PRC) Division 13, Chapter 1, §21000 et al., 2007; CEQA Guidelines, California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 14, Chapter 3, §15378, 2007.

Center commissioned Craig Ellwood Associates to design the new hillside campus in 1971. Groundbreaking occurred in November 1974, and by February 1976, construction had been completed and classes began. The centerpiece of the Art Center's new Hillside Campus was the black steel and glass Ellwood Building, which spanned a man-made ravine and mirrored the Center's modernist aesthetic (see discussion of this building, below).

In the 1980s, Art Center was the first design school to install computer labs, anticipating the revolution in digital design. In 1989, the Tyler Wing was completed, forming a south wing of the Ellwood Building. The Sinclair Pavilion, designed by Hodgetts + Fung Architects, was completed in 2001.

## 1.2 Background and Scope

As described in Section 15143 of the *CEQA Guidelines*:

*“The EIR shall focus on the significant effects on the environment. The significant effects should be discussed with emphasis in proportion to their severity and probability of occurrence. Effects dismissed in an Initial Study as clearly insignificant and unlikely to occur need not be discussed further in the EIR unless the Lead Agency subsequently receives information inconsistent with the finding in the Initial Study.”*

In compliance with CEQA, the City of Pasadena completed a multi-step process to determine the appropriate scope of issues to be examined in the Draft EIR. A Notice of Preparation (NOP) and Initial Study (IS) were circulated to responsible agencies and interested parties, including the State Clearinghouse (SCH# 2007061083), describing the proposed project and requesting comments between June 13, 2007 and July 13, 2007. The NOP and Initial Study are provided in Appendix A. The City announced it would accept comments beyond the circulation period, up until July 31, 2007, and several comments were accepted past July 31, 2007. Public comment letters, a summary of verbal and written comments and brief responses to those comments are also provided in Appendix A. A copy of the NOP/IS prepared by the City of Pasadena and comments received are included in Appendix A of this document. The IS identified the following issue areas, which are addressed in this EIR: aesthetics, air quality, biological resources, cultural and historic resources, geology and soils, hydrology and water quality (and storm drains), land use and planning, noise, public services (police and fire), utilities (water) and transportation.

## 1.3 Purpose and Legal Authority

In accordance with *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15121(a), the purpose of an EIR is to serve as an informational document that will generally inform public agency decision makers and the public of the significant environmental effects of a project, identify possible ways to minimize the significant effects, and describe reasonable alternatives to the project. *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15151 contains the following standards for EIR adequacy:

*“An EIR should be prepared with a sufficient degree of analysis to provide decisionmakers 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 should summarize the main points of disagreement among the experts. The courts have looked not for perfection but for adequacy, completeness, and a good faith effort at full disclosure.”*

An EIR is an informational document for use by decision makers and the public in their review of the potential impacts of a proposed project, as well as in the evaluation of alternatives and mitigation measures which may minimize, avoid, or eliminate those impacts. As such, this document includes a full discussion of the project description, the existing environmental setting, environmental impacts, mitigation measures, residual impacts that may exist after mitigation has been implemented, and project alternatives that could alleviate potential impacts.

To gain the most value from this report, certain key points recommended in the *CEQA Guidelines* should be kept in mind:

- This report should be used as a tool to give the reader an overview of the possible ramifications of the proposed project. It is designed as an “early warning system” with regard to potential environmental impacts and subsequent effects on the local community’s natural resources.
- A specific environmental impact is not necessarily irreversible or permanent. Incorporating changes recommended in this report during the design and construction phases of project development can wholly or partially mitigate most impacts, particularly in more developed urban areas.

As the public agency with the authority to approve or deny the proposed project, the City of Pasadena will consider the information in the EIR along with other information before taking any action on the proposed project. The conclusions of the EIR regarding environmental impacts do not control the City of Pasadena’s discretion to approve, deny or modify the proposed project, but instead are presented as information intended to aid the decision-making process.

## 1.4 Draft EIR Organization

As illustrated in **Table 1-1**, this Draft EIR is organized into seven chapters each dealing with a separate aspect of the required content of an EIR as described in the *CEQA Guidelines*; it is intended for use and reference. To help the reader locate information of particular interest, a brief summary of the contents of each chapter of the EIR is provided. The following chapters are contained within the EIR:

**TABLE 1-1  
REQUIRED EIR CONTENTS**

Requirement/CEQA Guidelines Section	Location in Draft EIR
Table of contents (Section 15122)	Table of Contents
Summary (Section 15123)	Executive Summary
Project description (Section 15124) and environmental setting (Section 15125)	Chapters 2 and 3
Significant environmental impacts (Section 15126.2 (a))	Chapter 3
Unavoidable significant environmental impacts (Section 15126.2 (b))	Chapters 3 and 5
Mitigation measures (Section 15126.4)	Chapter 3
Mitigation monitoring program (CEQA Statute Section 21081.6 (a.1 and b))	Chapter 3 and Appendix A
Cumulative impacts (Section 15130)	Chapter 2 and Chapter 3
Alternatives to the proposed project (Section 15126.6)	Chapter 4
Growth-inducing impacts (Section 15126.2 (d))	Chapter 5
Effects found not to be significant (Section 15128)	Chapter 3 and Appendix A
Organizations and persons consulted (Section 15129)	Chapter 6
List of preparers (Section 15129)	Chapter 6

**Executive Summary:** This section contains an overview of the scope of the EIR, as well as a summary of the proposed project, environmental impacts, proposed mitigation, level of significance after mitigation, and unavoidable impacts. Also contained within this section is a summary description of project alternatives.

**Chapter 1. Introduction:** This chapter provides an overview of the purpose and use of the EIR, the scope of this EIR, the environmental review process for the EIR and the proposed project, and the general format of the document. A list of acronyms and abbreviations used in the EIR is also provided in this chapter.

**Chapter 2. Project Description:** This chapter defines the project location, summarizes the proposed project, and outlines the project objectives and the need for the proposed project. Surrounding land uses, as well as cumulative (related) projects are also presented in this chapter.

**Chapter 3. Environmental Setting, Impacts and Mitigation Measures:** This chapter describes and evaluates the environmental issue areas, including the existing environmental setting and background, applicable environmental thresholds, environmental impacts (both short-term and long-term), policy considerations related to the particular environmental issue area under analysis, mitigation measures capable of minimizing environmental harm, and a discussion of cumulative impacts. Where additional actions must be taken to ensure consistency with environmental polices, recommendations are made, as appropriate. By consolidating environmental impact assessment and site specific policy directives within each impact area, clear linkages between impact assessment and related policy consistency can be established.

**Chapter 4. Alternatives Analysis:** This chapter analyzes feasible alternatives to the proposed project, including the No Project/ No Build Alternative and a Reduced Project Alternative. Other alternatives that were considered but eliminated from further analysis based on failing to meet most of the project objectives, infeasibility, or inability to avoid significant environmental effects.

**Chapter 5. Other CEQA Considerations:** This chapter provides a summary of the proposed project's potential growth-inducing impacts; provides a list of proposed project impacts that are significant and unavoidable by issue area; discusses the environmental effects of the proposed project found not to be significant; and identifies any irreversible changes to the natural environment resulting from the proposed project.

**Chapter 6. Preparers, Organizations and Persons Consulted, References:** This chapter identifies the public and private agencies and individuals contacted during the preparation of this report, and all individuals responsible for the preparation of this report. This chapter also identifies all references used and cited in the preparation of this report.

**Chapter 7. Acronyms and Abbreviations:** This chapter provides a description of abbreviations and acronyms used throughout the document.

**Appendices:** Data supporting the analysis or content of the EIR are provided in the appendices to the document. These include the NOP/IS and responses received, the Art Center College of Design Master Development Plan, traffic report, air quality calculations and other reports prepared for the project.

## 1.5 Draft EIR Process

This EIR has been prepared to meet all of the substantive and procedural requirements of CEQA (California Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq.), the *CEQA Guidelines* (California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 14, Section 15000 et seq.), and the City of Pasadena's *Environmental Policy Guidelines for the Implementation of CEQA*. Accordingly, the City of Pasadena is the Lead Agency for this proposed project, taking primary responsibility for conducting the environmental review and approving or denying the project.

As a first step in complying with the procedural requirements of CEQA, the City of Pasadena prepared a NOP/IS to determine whether any aspect of the project, either individually or cumulatively, may cause a significant effect on the environment and, if so, to narrow the focus (or scope) of the environmental analysis.

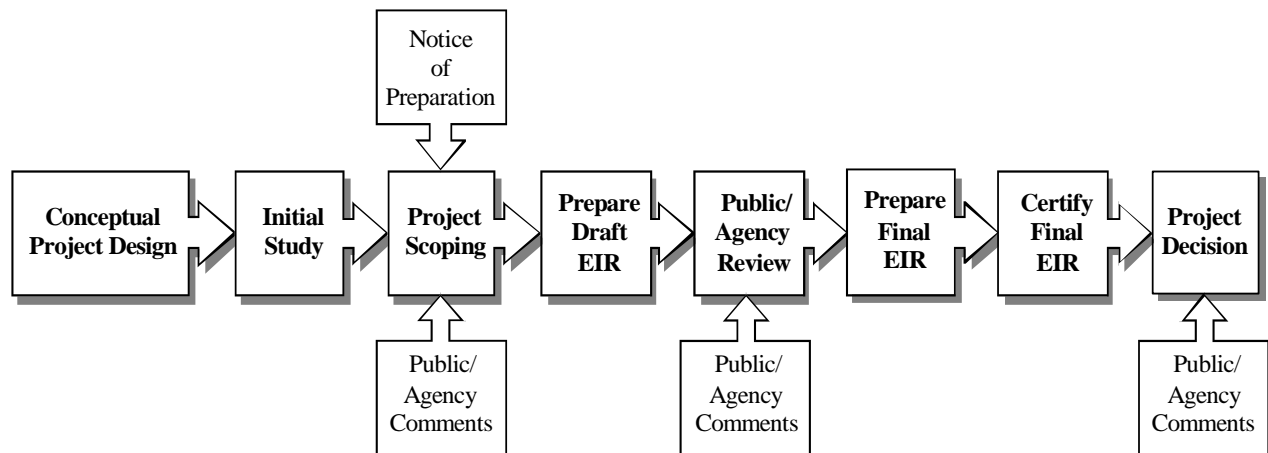
After completion, the City filed the NOP/IS with the State Clearinghouse in the Office of Planning and Research as an indication that an EIR would be prepared. The NOP was distributed to involved public agencies and interested parties for public review period (the statutory 30-day period was extended to allow for a three public scoping meetings), which began from June 13, 2007 to July 13, 2007 but was extended until July 31, 2007. The purpose of the public review period was to solicit comments on the scope and content of the environmental analysis to

be included in the EIR. The City of Pasadena received multiple comment letters on the NOP, which are included in Appendix A of this EIR.

During the preparation of the EIR, agencies, organizations, and persons whom the City believed might have an interest in this proposed project were specifically contacted. Information, data, and observations from these contacts are included in the EIR. Agencies or interested persons who did not respond during the public review period of the NOP will have an opportunity to comment during the public review period of the Draft EIR, as well as at subsequent hearings on the proposed project.

It should be noted that environmental impacts might not always be mitigated to a less than significant level. When this occurs, impacts are considered to be significant and unavoidable. If a public agency approves a project that has significant and unavoidable impacts, the agency shall state in writing the specific reasons for approving the project, based on the Final EIR and any other information in the public record for the project. This is termed a “statement of overriding considerations” and is used to explain the specific reasons why the benefits of a proposed project make its unavoidable environmental effects acceptable. The statement is prepared, if required, after the Final EIR has been completed, yet before action to approve the project has been taken.

A graphic description of the EIR preparation process is provided in the following flow chart:



## 1.6 Availability of the Draft EIR

The Draft EIR has been distributed to affected agencies, surrounding cities, counties, and interested parties for a 45-day review period in accordance with Section 15087 of the *CEQA Guidelines*. During the 45-day review period, which commences on April 9 2008 and ends on May 19 2008, the Draft EIR is available for general public review at the following locations:

- City of Pasadena Planning and Development Department at 175 Garfield Avenue;

- Central Library at 285 E. Walnut Avenue;
- Allendale Library at 1130 S. Marengo Avenue;
- San Rafael Library at 1240 Nithsdale Road; and
- La Pintoresca Library at 1355 N. Raymond Avenue.

Additionally, the Draft EIR can be downloaded or reviewed via the Internet at:

[http://www.ci.pasadena.ca.us/planning/environmental/Environmental\\_Home.asp](http://www.ci.pasadena.ca.us/planning/environmental/Environmental_Home.asp)

Interested parties may provide written comments on the Draft EIR. Written comments on the Draft EIR must be postmarked by **May 19, 2008** and should be addressed to:

Mr. Robert Avila  
 City of Pasadena  
 Planning and Development Department  
 175 North Garfield Avenues  
 Pasadena, CA 91109

Faxed comments should be sent to:

(626) 396-7767

Emailed comments should be sent to:

ravila@cityofpasadena.net

Upon completion of the 45-day public review period, written responses to all comments on environmental issues discussed in the Draft EIR will be prepared and incorporated into the Final EIR. These comments, and their responses, will be included in the Final EIR for consideration by the City of Pasadena, as well as other public decision makers.

## 1.7 Acronyms and Abbreviations

The following list of acronyms and abbreviations is provided to assist the reader in reviewing the EIR.

ADT	average daily traffic
AFY	acre feet per year
AQMP	Air Quality Management Plan
ARTS	Area Rapid Transit System
Basin	South Coast Air Basin
CAA	Clean Air Act

CAAQS	California Ambient Air Quality Standards
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CCA	California Clean Air Act
CDFG	California Department of Fish and Game
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CGS	California Geological Survey
CFC	chlorofluorocarbon
CMP	Congestion Management Program
CNEL	community noise equivalent level
CH <sub>4</sub>	methane
CO	carbon monoxide
CO <sub>2</sub>	carbon dioxide CO <sub>2</sub> E carbon dioxide equivalent
CRHR	California Register of Historical Resources
CUP	Conditional Use Permit
CWA	Clean Water Act
dB	decibel
dba	A-weighted decibel
DFG	California Department of Fish and Game
DPM	diesel particulate matter
du/ac	dwelling units per acre
DWR	Department of Water Resources
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
FCAA	Federal Clean Air Act
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
GHG	greenhouse gas
GPD	gallons per day
H <sub>2</sub> O	water, or water vapor
HFC	hydrofluorocarbons
ICU	Intersection Capacity Utilization
IS	Initial Study
LACSD	Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts

LEED	Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design
LOS	level of service
LOU	letter of understanding
MM	modified Mercalli intensity scale
MMT	million metric tons
mph	miles per hour
MTA	Metropolitan Transportation Authority
N <sub>2</sub> O	nitrous oxide
NO <sub>2</sub>	nitrogen dioxide
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NOI	Notice of Intent
NOP	Notice of Preparation
NO <sub>x</sub>	nitrogen oxides
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
O <sub>3</sub>	ozone
PFCs	perfluorocarbons
PM <sub>10</sub>	particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter
PM <sub>2.5</sub>	particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter
ppm	parts per million
PWP	Pasadena Water and Power
ROC	reactive organic compounds
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SCAQMD	South Coast Air Quality Management District
SF <sub>6</sub>	sulfur hexafluoride
SHPO	State of California Office of Historic Preservation
SIP	State Implementation Plan
SUSMP	Standard Urban Stormwater Mitigation Plan
SWPPP	Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan
TAC	Toxic Air Contaminants

TIA	Traffic Impact Analysis
USEPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
USFWS	US Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	US Geological Survey
v/c	volume to capacity
WRCC	Western Regional Climate Center