

This section summarizes the purpose of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the West Davis Active Adult Community Project (the “project”). The following discussion addresses the environmental procedures that are to be followed according to State law, the intended uses of the EIR, the project’s relationship to the City’s General Plan, the EIR scope and organization, and a summary of the agency and public comments received during the public review period for the Notice of Preparation (NOP).

## 1.1 PURPOSE AND INTENDED USES OF THE EIR

The City of Davis, as lead agency, determined that the proposed West Davis Active Adult Community Project is a "project" within the definition of CEQA. CEQA requires the preparation of an environmental impact report prior to approving any project that may have a significant impact on the environment. For the purposes of CEQA, the term "project" refers to the whole of an action, which has the potential for resulting in a direct physical change or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment (CEQA Guidelines Section 15378[a]).

An EIR must disclose the expected environmental impacts, including impacts that cannot be avoided, growth-inducing effects, impacts found not to be significant, and significant cumulative impacts, as well as identify mitigation measures and alternatives to the proposed project that could reduce or avoid its adverse environmental impacts. CEQA requires government agencies to consider and, where feasible, minimize environmental impacts of proposed development. CEQA further requires public agencies to balance a variety of public objectives, including economic, environmental, and social factors in making a decision to approve a development project with significant and unavoidable environmental impacts.

The City of Davis, as the lead agency, has prepared this Draft EIR to provide the public and responsible and trustee agencies with an objective analysis of the potential environmental impacts resulting from construction and operation of the West Davis Active Adult Community Project. The environmental review process enables interested parties to evaluate the proposed project in terms of its environmental consequences, to examine and recommend methods to eliminate or reduce potential adverse impacts, and to consider a reasonable range of alternatives to the project. While CEQA requires that consideration be given to avoiding adverse environmental effects, the lead agency must balance adverse environmental effects against other public objectives, including the economic and social benefits of a project, in determining whether a project should be approved.

This EIR will be used by the City to determine whether to approve, modify, or deny the West Davis Active Adult Community Project and associated approvals in light of the project’s environmental effects. The EIR will be used as the primary environmental document to evaluate full project development, along with all associated infrastructure improvements, and permitting actions associated with the West Davis Active Adult Community Project. All of the actions and components of the proposed project are described in detail in Section 2.0 of this Draft EIR.

### 1.2 TYPE OF EIR

This EIR is a Project EIR as defined in Section 15161 of the State CEQA Guidelines. A Project EIR is an EIR which examines the environmental impacts of a specific development project. This type of EIR should focus primarily on the changes in the environment that would result from the development project. The EIR shall examine all phases of the project including planning, construction and operation. The Project EIR approach is appropriate for the West Davis Active Adult Community Project because it allows comprehensive consideration of the reasonably anticipated scope of the project, as described in greater detail in Section 2.0.

### 1.3 KNOWN RESPONSIBLE AND TRUSTEE AGENCIES

As required by CEQA, this EIR defines lead, responsible, and trustee agencies. The City of Davis is the “Lead Agency” for the project because it holds principal responsibility for approving the project. The term “Responsible Agency” includes all public agencies other than the Lead Agency that have discretionary approval power over the project or an aspect of the project (CEQA Guidelines Section 15381). For the purpose of CEQA, a “Trustee” agency has jurisdiction by law over natural resources that are held in trust for the people of the State of California (CEQA Guidelines Section 15386).

The following agencies are considered Responsible or Trustee Agencies for this project, and may be required to issue permits or approve certain aspects of the proposed project:

- Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (CVRWQCB) - Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) approval prior to construction activities;
- Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District - Approval of construction-related air quality permits; and
- Yolo Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) – Processing and approval of the proposed annexation of the project site into the City of Davis.

### 1.4 ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

The review and certification process for the EIR has involved, or will involve, the following general procedural steps:

#### NOTICE OF PREPARATION AND INITIAL STUDY

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The City circulated an Initial Study and NOP of an EIR for the proposed project on April 14, 2017 to trustee agencies, the State Clearinghouse, and the public. A public scoping meeting was held on April 26, 2017 to present the project description to the public and interested agencies, and to receive comments from the public and interested agencies regarding the scope of the environmental analysis to be included in the Draft EIR. Concerns raised in response to the NOP were considered during preparation of the Draft EIR. The NOP and responses to the NOP by interested parties are presented in Appendix A.

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## DRAFT EIR

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This document constitutes the Draft EIR. The Draft EIR contains a description of the project, description of the environmental setting, identification of project impacts, and mitigation measures for impacts found to be significant, as well as an analysis of project alternatives, identification of significant irreversible environmental changes, growth-inducing impacts, and cumulative impacts. This Draft EIR identifies issues determined to have no impact or a less than significant impact, and provides detailed analysis of potentially significant and significant impacts. Comments received in response to the NOP were considered in preparing the analysis in this EIR. Upon completion of the Draft EIR, the City has filed the Notice of Completion (NOC) with the State Clearinghouse of the Governor's Office of Planning and Research to begin the public review period.

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## PUBLIC NOTICE/PUBLIC REVIEW

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The City has provided a public notice of availability for the Draft EIR, and invites comment from the general public, agencies, organizations, and other interested parties. Consistent with CEQA, a forty-five (45) day review period would be required for this Draft EIR. However, this Draft EIR will be released for an extended, sixty (60) day review period. Public comment on the Draft EIR will be accepted in written form and orally at a public meeting before the Davis Planning Commission. All comments or questions regarding the Draft EIR should be addressed to:

Katherine Hess, Community Development Administrator  
City of Davis  
Community Development and Sustainability Department  
23 Russell Boulevard, Suite 2  
Davis, CA 95616  
khess@cityofdavis.org

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## RESPONSE TO COMMENTS/FINAL EIR

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Following the public review period, a Final EIR will be prepared. The Final EIR will respond to written comments received during the public review period and to oral comments received at a public hearing during such review period.

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## CERTIFICATION OF THE EIR/PROJECT CONSIDERATION

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The City will review and consider the Final EIR. If the City finds that the Final EIR is "adequate and complete", the City Council may certify the Final EIR in accordance with CEQA. The rule of adequacy generally holds that an EIR can be certified if:

- 1) The EIR shows a good faith effort at full disclosure of environmental information; and
- 2) The EIR provides sufficient analysis to allow decisions to be made regarding the proposed project in contemplation of environmental considerations.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

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The level of detail contained throughout this EIR is consistent with Section 15151 of the CEQA Guidelines and recent court decisions, which provide the standard of adequacy on which this document is based. The Guidelines state 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 the 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.*

Following review and consideration of the Final EIR, the City may take action to approve, modify, or reject the project. A Mitigation Monitoring Program, as described below, would also be adopted in accordance with Public Resources Code Section 21081.6(a) and CEQA Guidelines Section 15097 for mitigation measures that have been incorporated into or imposed upon the project to reduce or avoid significant effects on the environment. This Mitigation Monitoring Program will be designed to ensure that these measures are carried out during project implementation, in a manner that is consistent with the EIR.

## 1.5 ORGANIZATION AND SCOPE

Sections 15122 through 15132 of the State CEQA Guidelines identify the content requirements for Draft and Final EIRs. An EIR must include a description of the environmental setting, an environmental impact analysis, mitigation measures, alternatives, significant irreversible environmental changes, growth-inducing impacts, and cumulative impacts. Discussion of the environmental issues addressed in the Draft EIR was established through review of environmental and planning documentation developed for the project, environmental and planning documentation prepared for recent projects located within the City of Davis, applicable local and regional planning documents, and responses to the NOP.

This Draft EIR is organized in the following manner:

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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This Executive Summary summarizes the characteristics of the proposed project, known areas of controversy and issues to be resolved, and provides a concise summary matrix of the project's environmental impacts and possible mitigation measures. This chapter identifies alternatives that reduce or avoid at least one significant environmental effect of the proposed project.

### CHAPTER 1.0 – INTRODUCTION

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Chapter 1.0 briefly describes the purpose of the environmental evaluation, identifies the lead, trustee, and responsible agencies, summarizes the process associated with preparation and certification of an EIR, and identifies the scope and organization of the Draft EIR.

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## CHAPTER 2.0 – PROJECT DESCRIPTION

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Chapter 2.0 provides a detailed description of the proposed project, including the location, intended objectives, background information, the physical and technical characteristics, including the decisions subject to CEQA, related infrastructure improvements, and a list of related agency action requirements.

## CHAPTER 3.0 – ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING, IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

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Chapter 3.0 contains an analysis of environmental topic areas as identified below. Each subchapter addressing a topical area is organized as follows:

**Environmental Setting.** A description of the existing environment as it pertains to the topical area.

**Regulatory Setting.** A description of the regulatory environment that may be applicable to the project.

**Impacts and Mitigation Measures.** Identification of the thresholds of significance by which impacts are determined, a description of project-related impacts associated with the environmental topic, identification of appropriate mitigation measures, and a conclusion as to the significance of each impact after the incorporation of mitigation measures.

The following environmental topics are addressed in this section:

- Aesthetics and Visual Resources
- Agricultural Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural and Tribal Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gases, Climate Change, and Energy
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use
- Noise and Vibration
- Population and Housing
- Public Services and Recreation
- Transportation and Circulation
- Utilities

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## CHAPTER 4.0 – OTHER CEQA-REQUIRED TOPICS

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Chapter 4.0 evaluates and describes the following CEQA required topics: impacts considered less-than-significant, significant and irreversible impacts, growth-inducing effects, cumulative, and significant and unavoidable environmental effects.

### CHAPTER 5.0 – ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROJECT

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State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6 requires that an EIR describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, which could feasibly attain the basic objectives of the project and avoid and/or lessen any significant environmental effects of the project. Chapter 5.0 provides a comparative analysis between the environmental impacts of the project and the selected alternatives.

### CHAPTER 6.0 – REPORT PREPARERS

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This section lists all authors and agencies that assisted in the preparation of the EIR, by name, title, and company or agency affiliation.

### CHAPTER 7.0 – REFERENCES

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This section lists all source documents used in the preparation of the EIR.

### APPENDICES

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This section includes all notices and other procedural documents pertinent to the EIR, as well as technical material prepared to support the analysis. The EIR appendices are available in electronic format. The appendices can be viewed online at:

<http://cityofdavis.org/city-hall/community-development-and-sustainability/development-projects/west-davis-active-adult-community>

## 1.6 SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

In general, CEQA Guidelines define a significant effect on the environment as “a substantial, or potentially substantial” adverse change in the physical environment. A potential impact is considered significant if a project would substantially degrade the environmental quality of land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise, and objects of historic and aesthetic significance (CEQA Guidelines §§15360, 15382).

Definitions of significance vary with the physical condition affected and the setting in which the change occurs. The CEQA Guidelines set forth physical impacts that trigger the requirement to make “mandatory findings of significance” (CEQA Guidelines §15065).

This CEQA document relies on three levels of impact significance:

1. Less-than-significant impact, for which no mitigation measures are warranted;
2. Significant impact that can be mitigated to a level that is less than significant; and
3. Significant impact that cannot be mitigated to a level that is less than significant. Such impacts are significant and unavoidable.

Each resource area uses a distinct set of significance criteria. For example, a proposed project resulting in an exposure of persons to noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or community plan would be considered a significant impact. If existing levels,

without the proposed project, already exceed the standards, an increase in noise levels of 3 dB attributable to the proposed would be considered significant. Construction of appropriate sound walls could reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level. If criteria for determining significance relative to a specific environmental resource impact are not identified in the Guidelines, criteria were developed for this Draft EIR consistent with the past pattern and practice of the City of Davis.

The significance criteria are identified at the beginning of the impacts discussion for each resource area. These significance criteria promote consistent evaluation of impacts for all alternatives considered, even though significance criteria are necessarily different for each resource considered.

## 1.7 COMMENTS RECEIVED ON THE NOTICE OF PREPARATION

The City received 17 comments (nine written, seven electronic, and one oral) on the NOP for the proposed West Davis Active Adult Community Project Draft EIR. A brief summary of each comment letter is provided in the list below. A copy of each letter is provided in Appendix A of this Draft EIR. A public scoping meeting was held on April 26, 2017 to present the project description to the public and interested agencies, and to receive comments from the public and interested agencies regarding the scope of the environmental analysis to be included in the Draft EIR. Oral comments received at the NOP scoping meeting are also included in Appendix A.

1. Jaron D. Ross (April 15, 2017):
  - Concern about land use conflicts between the existing neighborhoods and City outskirts;
  - Concern about traffic impacts at the intersection of Shasta Drive and Covell Boulevard;
  - Concern about pedestrian and bicycle safety.
2. Patrick S. Blacklock, County of Yolo (April 18, 2017):
  - Concerns about visual impacts/aesthetics, agricultural resources, growth inducement, air quality/odors, transportation/traffic, climate change/greenhouse gases, hydrology/water quality, and urban decay;
  - Concerns about fiscal impacts;
  - Concerns about direct and indirect infrastructure impacts.
3. Gregor Blackburn, FEMA (April 19, 2017):
  - Proper elevations for building construction within a riverine floodplain;
  - Potential to increase base flood elevation levels as a result of construction;
  - Construction within a coastal high hazard area;
  - Submittal of the appropriate hydrologic and hydraulic data to FEMA for a FIRM revision.
4. Corinne Gee (April 24, 2017):
  - Concerns about the size of the project and the potential to change the character of the community;
  - Concerns about an increase in traffic patterns.

5. Susan Garbini, Yolo Habitat Conservancy (April 24, 2017):
  - Concerns about impacts on species that are covered in the Draft Yolo Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural Community Conservation Plan;
  - Impacts to potential habitat for Swainson’s Hawk, white-tailed kite, burrowing owl, giant garter snake, western pond turtle, and tricolored blackbird.
6. Robin Whitmore (April 26, 2017):
  - Concern about creating a senior rental market;
  - Concern about ensuring Davis seniors buy the houses;
  - Concern about whether residents will walk to the nearby marketplace shopping center;
  - Concern that the development would be a retirement community and would not attract non-seniors;
  - Concern over putting seniors on the periphery of town without good transportation options;
  - Concern about the proposed annexation and the resulting time, energy, and money required;
  - Concerns about economic impacts and senior segregation;
  - Concerns about the building heights and the proportion of senior-owned versus senior-occupied homes;
  - Concerns about the financial ability to construct the affordable senior apartment component;
  - Concerns about the loss of views along Covell Boulevard.
7. Toni Terhaar and Russ Kanz (April 26, 2017):
  - Concerns about the feasibility of the low-income portion of the housing development, the heights of the proposed homes, and the ability to restrict the homes to 55 years and older only;
  - Concerns related to traffic on Covell Boulevard, westbound Interstate 80, and the Lake Boulevard / Covell Boulevard intersection;
  - Concerns about emergency response times due to the increase in traffic;
  - Concerns about cumulative traffic impacts resulting from the proposed project and pending and future projects in the City;
  - Concerns about drainage and flooding;
  - Concerns about impacts to schools;
  - Concerns about generation of additional emergency responders (e.g. ambulances), which would increase noise for nearby communities;
  - Concerns about lighting impacts, light pollution, aesthetics impacts, and building heights;
  - Concerns about impacts to Swainson’s hawk, red-shouldered hawk, and red-tailed hawk habitat;
  - One alternative should be analyzed as an affordable housing alternative, instead of a senior community.
8. Craighton Chin (April 27, 2017):
  - Concern about increasing the agricultural buffer;



- Concern about impacts to burrowing owls;
9. Sharaya Souza, Native American Heritage Commission (April 28, 2017):
- Recommends consultation with California Native American tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area;
  - Requirements associated with Assembly Bill 52 and Senate Bill 18;
  - Recommendations for cultural resources assessments, including:
    - Contacting the appropriate California Historical Research Information System Center for an archeological records search;
    - Preparing a professional report if an archeological inventory survey is required;
    - Contacting the Native American Heritage Commission for a Sacred Lands File search and a Native American Tribal Consultation List;
    - Remembering that the lack of surface evidence of archaeological resources does not preclude their subsurface existence.
10. Toni Terhaar and Russ Kanz (May 4, 2017):
- The EIR should define the proposed project and not include what could be developed at a later date;
  - Concern about impacts to Swanson’s hawk and valley elderberry longhorn beetle habitat;
  - Concerns about safety and increased traffic at West Covell Boulevard;
  - Concerns about increased run-off from the site and potential flooding;
  - Concern about providing a safe walking and biking path from the site to the Safeway Marketplace;
  - Concern about increased noise from emergency response, and helicopter landings at Sutter Davis Hospital;
  - Concerns about light pollution due to developing a currently undeveloped plot of land with dense housing;
  - Concern about increased traffic along alternate routes and cumulative traffic impacts;
  - Concern about impacts to schools;
  - Suggests considering a range of alternatives to the project, such as a non-age restricted alternative.
11. Stephanie Tadlock, Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (May 8, 2017):
- The environmental review document should evaluate potential impacts to both surface and groundwater quality;
  - The Construction General Permit requires the development and implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP);
  - Potential permitting requirements include:
    - Construction Storm Water General Permit;
    - Phase I and II Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permits;
    - Industrial Storm Water General Permit;
    - Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit;
    - Clean Water Act Section 401 Permit- Water Quality Certification;

- Waste Discharge Requirements;
  - Dewatering Permit;
  - Regulatory Compliance for Commercially Irrigated Agriculture;
  - Low or Limited Threat General National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit;
  - NPDES Permit;
12. Christine M. Crawford, Yolo Local Agency Formation Commission (May 11, 2017):
- The Draft EIR should address:
    - Impacts to agricultural resources from developing the project itself, plus the continued productivity and viability of surrounding agricultural lands;
    - Housing need for the project; and
    - Water and water availability.
13. Greg Rowe (May 11, 2017):
- Suggests that the Draft EIR provides precise details on the mitigation measures that would be implemented to prevent flooding of the site as well as measures that would be implemented to prevent inundation of surrounding areas;
  - The Draft EIR should evaluate the cumulative storm water impacts that would result from development of the project site in combination with development of the hospital's expansion site;
  - Concern about congestion on Covell Boulevard;
  - Suggests that the cumulative transportation and traffic analysis includes:
    - The projected increase in both students and non-students included in the long range development plan;
    - Potential interaction between the increased vehicle traffic on Covell Boulevard and older pedestrians crossing Covell Boulevard to visit the two medical offices on the south side of Covell Boulevard, plus those walking to the Marketplace shopping center.
  - Proposes two alternatives: a Binning Ranch alternative, and a higher density alternative.
14. Jeffrey Morneau, California Department of Transportation (May 12, 2017):
- The transportation impact study should provide:
    - Analysis of multimodal travel demand expected from the project;
    - Maps, a site plan showing project access in relation to nearby areas, ingress and egress for the project, roads, transit routes, pedestrian and bicycle routes, as well as parking and intersections;
    - Project-related vehicles miles travelled (VMT), including per capita use of transit, rideshare or active transportation modes, and VMT reduction factors;
    - Illustrations of walking, biking and auto traffic conditions at the project site and study area roadways, trip distribution percentages and volumes as well as intersection geometrics, lane configurations, and AM and PM peak periods;
    - State Route 113 mainline, ramps, and ramp intersections.

15. Eileen M. Samitz (May 13, 2017):
  - All important planning documents would be completed before the project is placed on the ballot for the Measure J/R public vote;
  - Concerns about the floodplain, proposed flood control, and cumulative flooding impacts associated with the Sutter Davis Hospital expansion;
  - Concerns about signalization along streets, timing of intervals between traffic light changes, and pedestrian safety.
16. Brad and Cindy Nelson (May 15, 2017):
  - Concern about traffic impacts along West Covell Boulevard.
17. James Corless, Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) (May 15, 2017):
  - The project area is identified in SACOG's 2016 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (2016 MTP/SCS) as an area not identified for development by the MTP/SCS horizon year of 2036;
  - The project is located in an area identified for future residential mixed use development by the Sacramento Regional Blueprint.

## 1.8 AREAS OF CONTROVERSY

Aspects of the proposed project that could be of public concern include the following:

- Potential impacts to aesthetics, scenic views, building heights, and lighting;
- Resulting traffic congestion, particularly along Covell Boulevard;
- Increased noise associated with traffic and emergency response;
- Safety concerns for bicyclists and pedestrians due to increased vehicular travel;
- Size of the project;
- Loss or degradation of species and habitats resulting from site conversion;
- Financing mechanisms and land use conflicts;
- Drainage and flooding impacts.

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