



## TRANSMITTAL MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** August 13, 2015  
**TO:** Davis City Council and Interested Parties  
**FROM:** Mike Webb, Assistant City Manager  
**SUBJECT:** Release of Mace Ranch Innovation Center (MRIC) Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)

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### **Document Release**

We are pleased to announce today the release of the Mace Ranch Innovation Center (MRIC) Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR). Public comment on this document is invited for a 47-day period extending from August 13 through September 28, 2015.

### **What is an EIR?**

An EIR is an informational document that examines and discloses the potential for adverse environmental impacts to result from any given action. The DEIR for the MRIC provides a very detailed analysis of the potential for impacts in 15 topical areas under multiple scenarios including: Phase 1 of the MRIC only, full project build-out, and project build-out plus other cumulative growth which is discussed more below.

### **DEIR Conclusions**

The DEIR identifies adverse environmental impacts that may result from development of the project. It also concludes that most of the identified impacts can be mitigated by specific actions called mitigation measures. However some of the adverse impacts are likely to occur even with implementation of identified mitigation. These include impacts in the following areas:

- Visual character (4.2-1, 5-1)
- Agriculture (4.2-1, 4.2-3, 4.3-4, 5-3)
- Air Quality (4.3-2, 5-4)
- Biological Resources (4.4-5, 5-5)
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions (4.7-1, 4.7-2, 5-9)
- Traffic and Circulation (4.14-2, 4.14-5, 5-21, 5-22, 5-23)
- Cumulative Population and Housing (5-18)
- Cumulative Fire Protection Services (5-19)
- Growth Inducement.

This is not an unusual outcome. Given the size and scope of this project, this list is relatively modest. Virtually all large projects in California reach similar conclusions. This is important information for decision making but there is more to be considered.

### **DEIR Project Alternatives**

The DEIR also examines seven project alternatives which provides additional important information and context for the community and Council to consider:

- No Project (No Build)
- Reduced Site Size
- Reduced Project
- Off-Site A (Davis Innovation Center Site)
- Off-Site B (Covell Property)
- Infill
- Mixed Use

The Draft EIR identifies the Mixed Use alternative as the environmentally superior alternative that also best meets all of the project objectives. The DEIR notes that because this alternative includes housing it is not consistent with the City’s expressed goal of having only non-residential uses within the innovation center.

While the Mixed Use Alternative is identified as the Environmentally Superior alternative under CEQA the ultimate decision regarding feasibility of the alternatives lies with the City Council. The Council will make findings regarding the desirability of the proposed project and the feasibility of each alternative. In their deliberations the Council may consider the following related to the feasibility of each alternative:

- Attainment of Project Objectives
- Avoidance or Substantial Lessening of Significant Effects
- Suitability of Alternative Sites or Site Layouts
- Economic Viability
- Availability of Infrastructure
- General Plan Consistency
- Other Plans or Regulatory Limitations
- Jurisdictional Boundaries/Regional Context
- Property Ownership and Control
- Other Reasons for Rejecting as Infeasible

An assessment of how these factors apply to each alternative will be prepared for the Council to consider and adopt at the time final action is taken on the project.

**Cumulative Growth**

The DEIR evaluates impacts of the project combined with other reasonably foreseeable development. This DEIR assesses multiple cumulative scenarios, as follows:

- “CEQA” Cumulative Analysis – This scenario assumes full build-out of all of the following: MRIC, General Plan, Nishi, and the Davis Innovation Center.
- “Modified” Cumulative Analysis – This scenario assumes full build-out of: MRIC, General Plan, and Nishi. This scenario does not include the Davis Innovation Center.

The Davis Innovation Center was placed on hold by the applicant in May, with no indications of re-initiating the project presented thus far by the applicant. As such, we believe the Modified Cumulative Analysis presents a more realistic assessment of cumulative impacts.

**Other Analysis**

The City is also analyzing other important aspects of the project that do not get assessed through the DEIR. These include:

- Fiscal and Economic Impacts

- Project Design and Architecture
- Community Benefits
- Overall Project Merit

Reports addressing these topics will be released soon. A report on fiscal and economic impacts will be released in early September for both the MRIC and Nishi proposals. The remaining information will be addressed by staff in subsequent staff reports to the Planning Commission and City Council. Additionally, it is anticipated that the Draft EIR for the Nishi proposal will be released on September 9, 2015.

**Scheduled Meetings**

At the September 9, 2015 Planning Commission meeting staff will present a summary of the MRIC DEIR and the public will have the opportunity to present verbal comments on the document. Other scheduled meetings on the DEIR include:

- Aug 17           Open Space and Habitat Commission
- Sep 9            Planning Commission
- Sep 10          Bicycle, Transportation, Street Safety Commission
- Sep 14          Finance and Budget Commission
- Sep 14          Open Space and Habitat Commission
- Sep 17          Recreation and Park Commission
- Sep 23          Natural Resources Commission (tentative)
- Sep 28          Natural Resources Commission

**Other Upcoming Public Outreach**

The City is currently scheduling a series of public workshops to discuss the project. A calendar of these dates will be released soon.

**Public Hearings**

The Planning Commission will consider this project in November and December of this year and be asked to make a recommendation to the City Council. The City Council will consider this project in January and may take final action in February.

**Public Vote**

Because this project involves annexation and conversion of agricultural land to urban uses, it is subject to the City’s Measure R public vote requirement. The schedule developed by staff allows for final action by the City Council with enough time to place the project before the voters in June of 2016. If the City Council takes action to approve the project, the voting citizens of Davis will have the ultimate say on this project when it comes before them for public vote at that time.

**Attachment**

Notice of Availability (NOA)



## **Notice of Availability of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) and Notice of Public Meeting to Provide Comments on the Draft EIR**

**The Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) (SCH # 2014112012) for the MACE RANCH INNOVATION CENTER (MRIC) PROJECT is now available for review. Public comment on this document is invited for a 47-day period extending from August 13 through September 28, 2015. More information is provided below.**

**PROJECT LOCATION:** The project site is located northeast of Mace Boulevard and Interstate 80, on both sides of County Road (CR) 32A, within unincorporated Yolo County, east of the City of Davis city limits. The 229-acre project site consists of:

- 212-acre MRIC site (Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APNs) 033-630-009; 033-650-009, and -026).
- 16.58-acre Mace Triangle site (APNs 033-630-006; -011; and -012).

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** 1) MRIC site -- The proposed Innovation Center component of the project includes up to 2,654,000 square feet of innovation center uses and dedication of 64.6 acres of green space (including parks and open space) on a 212-acre site. Building space will be allocated in the following general manner: approximately 1,510,000 square feet for research/office/R&D uses; approximately 884,000 square feet for manufacturing and research uses; up to 260,000 square feet (10 percent) may be developed with supportive commercial uses, including a 160,000-square foot hotel/conference center and 100,000 square feet of supportive retail throughout the MRIC.

2) Mace Triangle site -- The City of Davis has included the 16.6-acre Mace Triangle within the overall project boundaries to ensure that an agricultural and unincorporated island is not created and to allow the continuation and expansion of existing uses. The EIR evaluates development of up to 71,056 square feet of general commercial uses including up to 45,900 of research, office, and R&D, and up to 25,155 square feet of retail is assumed on the Mace Triangle properties.

Approval of the following entitlements is necessary for the project to proceed:

### **Lead Agency Approvals – City of Davis**

1. General Plan Amendment
2. Rezoning
3. Preliminary Planned Development (PPD)
4. Site Plan and Architectural Review
5. Development Agreement
6. Action by the City Council to call for an election and set the baseline features of the project

### **Responsible Agency Approvals – Yolo LAFCO**

1. Combined Municipal Service Review (MSR) and Sphere of Influence (SOI) Amendment
2. Annexation
3. Detachment from the East Davis County Fire Protection District.

**SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS:** The Draft EIR identifies significant impacts in the following California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) environmental issue areas: aesthetics and visual resources; agriculture and forest resources; air quality; biological resources; cultural resources; geology, soils, and mineral resources; greenhouse gas emissions and energy; hazards

and hazardous materials; hydrology and water quality; land use and urban decay; noise and vibration; population and housing; public services and recreation; transportation and circulation; utilities; cumulative effects; and growth inducement. As described in the DEIR many of these impacts can be fully mitigated but some cannot and they would remain significant and unavoidable including visual character (4.2-1, 5-1), impacts to agriculture (4.2-1, 4.2-3, 4.3-4, 5-3), air quality impacts (4.3-2, 5-4), impacts to biological resources (4.4-5, 5-5), greenhouse gas emissions (4.7-1, 4.7-2, 5-9), traffic impacts (4.14-2, 4.14-5, 5-21, 5-22, 5-23), cumulative population and housing impacts (5-18), cumulative fire protection services (5-19), and growth inducement.

**HAZARDOUS MATERIALS/WASTE ON SITE:** The project site does not contain any sites listed on State data bases compiled pursuant to California Government Code Section 65962.5.

**ADDRESS WHERE COPY OF DRAFT EIR IS AVAILABLE:** The Draft EIR and other project materials are now available for public review and download on the City of Davis website at [www.CityofDavis.org](http://www.CityofDavis.org) under Hot Topics. Printed copies of the document are available for public review at the following locations during normal business hours:

City of Davis Department of Community Development and Sustainability 23 Russell Boulevard, Suite 2 Davis, CA 95616	Yolo County Library Davis Branch 315 E. 14 <sup>th</sup> Street Davis, CA 95616
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Should a member of the public require a thumb drive containing a copy of the document one may be obtained at the Department of Community Development and Sustainability.

**PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD FOR THE DRAFT EIR: August 13, 2015 to September 28, 2015**

All comments on the Draft EIR must be received by the City no later than 5:00pm on September 28, 2015 to be considered. Pursuant to Section 15088a of the CEQA Guidelines, late comments will be considered only at the City's discretion. Comments must be directed to:

MRIC Project Planner  
City of Davis Department of Community Development and Sustainability  
23 Russell Boulevard, Suite 2  
Davis, CA 95616  
[maceranchinctr@cityofdavis.org](mailto:maceranchinctr@cityofdavis.org)

**DRAFT EIR COMMENT MEETING:** On September 9, 2015, starting at 7:00 PM, the City of Davis Planning Commission will conduct a public meeting to solicit input and comments from public agencies and the general public on the Draft EIR for the Mace Ranch Innovation Center Project. **This meeting will be held at the City of Davis Community Chambers, located at 23 Russell Boulevard, Davis, CA 95616.**

There will be no transcription of oral comments at these meetings. Comments received will be summarized by staff for inclusion in the Final EIR. Those who wish to have their verbatim comments incorporated in the Final EIR must submit their comments in writing.

If you have any questions regarding this notice, please contact the Project Planner at [maceranchinctr@cityofdavis.org](mailto:maceranchinctr@cityofdavis.org). Meeting facilities are accessible to persons with disabilities. By request, alternative agenda document formats are available to persons with disabilities. To arrange an alternative agenda document format or to arrange aid or services to modify or accommodate persons with a disability to participate in a public meeting, contact the City Clerk by calling 757-5648 (voice) or 757-5666 (TDD).

**NOTICE REGARDING CHALLENGES TO DECISIONS**

Pursuant to all applicable laws and regulations, including without limitation, California Government Sections 65009, 66020, and/or California Public Resources Code Section 21177, if you wish to challenge in court any of the above decisions (regarding planning, zoning and/or environmental decisions), you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing(s) described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the city at, or prior to, this public hearing.