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## 1. INTRODUCTION

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### 1.1 EIR PURPOSE AND INTENDED USE

This environmental impact report (EIR) describes the environmental implications of the proposed Marina Shores Village project. The proposed project site is comprised of two non-contiguous properties known as Peninsula Marina (approximately 33.24 acres, including 14.10 acres of water) and Pete's Harbor (approximately 13.21 acres, including 2.90 acres of water) located in the Bair Island Road area of Redwood City, near the confluence of Redwood Creek and Smith Slough.

The proposed development program includes a mix of approximately 1,930 housing units, 300,000 square feet of office floor area, and 12,000 square feet of retail space, in an array of multi-story structures up to 21 stories, most atop 2- to 3-story above-grade parking podiums, plus support facilities, including parking, public open space, pedestrian plazas and paths, private recreational space, and other on-site amenities. The development program also includes the reduction and reconfiguration of the two marina areas from an existing total of approximately 17.00 acres to a future total of approximately 5.46 acres of water. It is anticipated that project development would be phased over approximately ten years.

The City of Redwood City (the City) is the Lead Agency<sup>1</sup> for all environmental documentation and procedural requirements for the Marina Shores Village project. This EIR has been prepared by the City in keeping with state requirements set forth in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The report is intended to inform City decision-makers, other responsible agencies, and the general public of the proposed project and of the environmental consequences of its approval.

CEQA Guidelines stipulate that an EIR is intended to serve as a public information and disclosure document identifying those environmental impacts associated with the proposed project that are expected to be significant, and describing mitigation measures and alternatives that could minimize or eliminate these significant adverse impacts.<sup>2</sup> Such impacts and mitigation needs are discussed in this EIR to the level of detail necessary to allow reasoned

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<sup>1</sup>CEQA Guidelines define the "Lead Agency" as the public agency that has the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving a project.

<sup>2</sup>CEQA Guidelines section 15149(b).

decisions about the project and conditions of project approval. This report also describes and evaluates a range of reasonable alternatives to the proposed project.

Implementation of the project as currently proposed would require City approval of a General Plan Amendment (GPA) and a Precise Plan, among other entitlements, in order to permit the proposed residential use of the Peninsula Marina portion of the project site and to create a new residential designation allowing development of the residential portion of the project at an average density as high as 65 dwelling units per acre, which would exceed the current General Plan-permitted maximum density of 40 units per acre.

As used in this EIR, the terms "Marina Shores Village project" and "project" refer to all aspects of the current development plan proposal, including the potential General Plan Amendment and Precise Plan approvals, plus all other City and other approvals, entitlements, and permits that may be required for development of the proposed project. As a result of the information in this EIR, the Redwood City City Council may act to approve or deny these various actions, and/or to establish any associated requirements or conditions on project design, construction, and operation that it deems warranted in order to mitigate identified project impacts on the environment.

As the Lead Agency, the City also intends for this EIR to serve as the CEQA-required environmental documentation for consideration of this project by other Responsible Agencies<sup>3</sup> and Trustee Agencies,<sup>4</sup> potentially including, but not limited to, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC), the San Francisco Regional Water Quality Control Board, the City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County, the State Lands Commission, the State Department of Fish and Game, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Caltrans, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the National Marine Fisheries Service, the State Water Transportation Authority, the U.S. Coast Guard, and the Federal Aviation Administration.

## 1.2 EIR SCOPE--SIGNIFICANT ISSUES AND CONCERNS

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<sup>3</sup>Under CEQA Guidelines, the term "Responsible Agency" includes all public agencies, other than the Lead Agency, which have discretionary approval power over aspects of the project for which the Lead Agency has prepared an EIR.

<sup>4</sup>Under CEQA Guidelines, the term "Trustee Agency" means a state agency having jurisdiction by law over natural resources affected by the project which are held in trust by the people of California.

As required by the state CEQA Guidelines, the scope of this EIR includes all environmental issues to be resolved and all areas of environmental controversy known to the Lead Agency (the City), including those issues and concerns identified as possibly significant by the City in its preliminary environmental review (Initial Study<sup>5</sup>) of the project; and by other agencies, organizations, and individuals in response to the City's Notice of Preparation (dated February 19, 2001).<sup>6</sup> These known areas of environmental controversy and environmental issues to be resolved are listed below.

1. The **land use implications** of the project (including the project-proposed increase in residential density over current General Plan and zoning limitations), including potential external land use relationships and compatibility with adjacent and nearby residential, commercial, marina, and industrial uses;
2. The potential **visual impacts** of the proposed project, including its visual relationships to San Francisco Bay and to the surrounding Bayfront Area, its effects on "gateway" views from northbound and southbound U.S. 101, and its impacts on views from Redwood City vantage points to the west;
3. The potential **population, housing, and employment impacts** of the project, including its responsiveness to and impacts on future housing and employment needs in Redwood City and the subregion, and its effects on the localized and citywide jobs/housing balance;
4. Potential **transportation and circulation** implications of the project, including effects of the proposed land use mix and circulation layout in generating (and minimizing) outside-area vehicular trips; effects of project buildout in combination with anticipated cumulative surrounding buildout on future daily and peak-hour traffic volumes, capacities, and levels of service along local and nearby roadways, intersections, and interchanges; effects on the planned Blomquist Street Extension; and anticipated impacts on, and future demands for, alternative Bair Island Road area transportation modes, including local and regional transit, and pedestrian and bicycle provisions;
5. The potential **biological resources impacts** of the project, including impacts of the

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<sup>5</sup>The City's Initial Study for the Marina Shores Village project is included in appendix 21.1 of this EIR.

<sup>6</sup>The Notice of Preparation (NOP) is a CEQA-required brief notice sent by the Lead Agency to notify the Responsible Agencies, Trustee Agencies, and potentially involved federal agencies that the Lead Agency plans to prepare an EIR for the project, and solicits guidance regarding EIR scope and content. The City's NOP for the Marina Shores Village project is included in appendix 21.1 of this EIR.

proposed marina fill aspects on intertidal and subtidal habitats, including existing wetland, estuarine, and other waterfront biotic features; and project responsibilities regarding compliance with related jurisdictional agency requirements;

6. The potential **hydrology and water quality impacts** of the project, including anticipated changes in local, estuarine, intertidal, and subtidal drainage systems resulting from the proposed marina reconfiguration and associated dredging and fill activities, the impacts of project-related changes in peak stormwater runoff on the local storm drainage and pumping system, and potential project effects on water quality in the Redwood Creek tidal reach;

7. The potential **infrastructure and public service impacts** of the project, including demands for and effects on water, sewer, police, fire, emergency medical, school, parks and recreation (including the San Francisco Bay Trail), solid waste, and child care services;

8. The **soil and geotechnical implications** of the Bayside project, including the stability of existing on-site fill and Bay mud, and related potentials for seismic shaking and differential settlement; and the implications of existing high groundwater conditions;

9. The potential **public health and safety impacts** associated with the project, including possible hazards associated with existing and future on-site hazardous materials use and disposal, adjacent electrical transmission lines, and the site's location within the planning area of the San Carlos Airport Land Use Plan;

10. The potential **noise impacts** of the project, including the effects of buildout on traffic noise levels along sensitive local routes, and the compatibility of the proposed land uses with the U.S. 101, Bair Island Road, and overhead aircraft projected future noise environment;

11. The potential **cultural and historic resources** implications of the project, including its relationship to and potential impacts on potential unidentified Bayside cultural artifacts; and

12. The **air quality impacts** of the project, including the potential effects of increased automobile emissions, point source emissions, and short-term construction-related activities.

### 1.3 "SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS" AND OTHER KEY EIR TERMINOLOGY

This EIR identifies those adverse environmental impacts that are expected to be "significant," and corresponding mitigation measures warranted to eliminate or reduce those impacts to less-than-significant levels. Where it is determined in this report that a particular impact cannot be mitigated to a less-than-significant level, the EIR identifies that impact as "unavoidable." Section 18.2 of the EIR, Significant Unavoidable Impacts, includes a summary list of all significant project impacts identified as "unavoidable." Identified significant impacts that are not listed as "unavoidable" in section 18.2 have been determined to be capable of mitigation to a less-than-significant level by implementation of the mitigation measure(s) identified in this EIR.

The feasibility of particular mitigation measures, and whether they are ultimately adopted, would depend in some cases on information outside the scope of this EIR and/or determinations by local and other agency decision-makers.

These particular EIR terms ("significant," "unavoidable," "mitigation") and other key CEQA terminology used in this EIR are defined in the box on the next page.

### **DEFINITIONS OF KEY EIR TERMINOLOGY**

**Significant/Potentially Significant Impact**

"Significant effect on the environment" means a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any of the physical conditions within the area affected by the project including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise, and objects of historic and aesthetic significance. (CEQA Guidelines, section 15382.) "An economic or social change by itself shall not be considered a significant effect on the environment. A social or economic change related to a physical change may be considered in determining whether the physical change is significant." (CEQA Guidelines, section 15382.)

**Significant Cumulative Impact**

"Cumulative impacts" are defined as "two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts." (CEQA Guidelines, section 15355.)

**Significant Unavoidable Impact**

"Significant unavoidable impacts" are defined as those significant adverse environmental impacts for which either no mitigation or only partial mitigation is feasible. If the project is to be approved without imposing an alternative design, the Lead Agency (the City) must include in the record of the project approval a written statement of the specific reasons to support its action--i.e., a "statement of overriding considerations." (CEQA Guidelines, sections 15126.2(b) and 15093(b).)

**Significance Criteria**

The criteria used in this EIR to determine whether an impact is or is not "*significant*" are based on (a) CEQA-stipulated "mandatory findings of significance"--i.e., where any of the specific conditions occur under which the Legislature and the Secretary of Resources have determined to constitute a potentially significant effect on the environment, which are listed in CEQA Guidelines section 15065; (b) the relationship of the project effect to the adopted policies, ordinances and standards of the City and of responsible agencies; and/or (c) commonly accepted practice and the professional judgment of the EIR authors and City staff.

**Mitigation Measures**

For each significant impact, the EIR must identify a specific "mitigation" measure or set of measures capable of "*(a) avoiding the impact altogether by not taking a certain action or parts of an action; (b) minimizing impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action and its implementation; (c) rectifying the impact by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the impacted environment; (d) reducing or eliminating the impact over time by preservation and maintenance operations during the life of the action; or (e) compensating for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments.*" (CEQA Guidelines, section 15370.)

SOURCE: Wagstaff and Associates, 2003.

## 1.4 REPORT ORGANIZATION AND CONTENT

The impact and mitigation information in this EIR is generally organized in chapters under the 12 environmental headings listed in section 1.2 above (land use; visual factors; population, housing, and employment; transportation and circulation; etc.). Each environmental chapter includes sections describing the following for that issue:

- (a) The environmental setting;
- (b) Pertinent plans and policies;
- (c) Impacts anticipated due to the proposed project; and
- (d) Measures recommended to mitigate anticipated significant adverse impacts.

In addition, this report includes a chapter describing and comparing various **alternatives to the proposed project** (chapter 17); a chapter summarizing the EIR information in terms of various **CEQA-required assessment considerations**, including project growth-inducing impacts, significant unavoidable impacts, irreversible environmental changes, cumulative impacts, and effects found not to be significant (chapter 18); and a chapter outlining the City's **mitigation monitoring** intentions in keeping with CEQA section 21081.6 (chapter 19).