

I. INTRODUCTION

A. PURPOSE OF THE EIR

In compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), this report describes the environmental impacts of the Gilead Sciences Corporate Campus Master Plan. In this document, “Master Plan” and “project” are used interchangeably to denote the proposal by Gilead Sciences.

This Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is designed to fully inform City of Foster City decision-makers, other responsible agencies, and the general public of the proposed project and the potential impacts of its approval. This EIR also examines various alternatives to the proposed project, and recommends a set of mitigation measures to reduce or avoid potentially significant impacts. The City of Foster City is the lead agency. This EIR will be used by the City of Foster City, the Planning Commission, the City Council, and the public in their review of the proposed project and the various approvals required to implement the Master Plan, as described in Chapter III, Project Description.

This EIR is a Program EIR. Specific projects proposed as part of the Master Plan will be examined in light of the Program EIR to determine whether additional environmental documents must be prepared. Section 15168 of the *CEQA Guidelines* defines a Program EIR as follows:

A program EIR is an EIR which may be prepared on a series of actions that can be characterized as one large project and are related either: (1) geographically; (2) as logical parts in the chain of contemplated actions; (3) in connection with issuance of rules, regulations, plans, or other general criteria to govern the conduct of a continuing program; or (4) as individual activities carried out under the same authorizing statutory or regulatory authority and having generally similar environmental effects which can be mitigated in similar ways.

Use of a program EIR can provide the following advantages: (1) provide an occasion for a more exhaustive consideration of effects and alternatives than would be practical in an EIR on an individual action; (2) ensure consideration of cumulative impacts that might be slighted in a case-by-case analysis; (3) avoid duplicative reconsideration of basic policy considerations; (4) allow the Lead Agency to consider broad policy alternatives and program wide mitigation measures at an early time when the agency has greater flexibility to deal with basic problems or cumulative impacts; and (5) allow reduction in paperwork.

This Program EIR identifies general effects of the Master Plan. Individual development projects proposed within the Master Plan area (e.g., individual buildings) would receive project-specific environmental evaluation, as necessary, during the development review process. This review would likely take the form of an Initial Study checklist, which would be used to determine whether the environmental impacts of an individual project are adequately addressed in this Program EIR.

B. PROPOSED PROJECT

The Master Plan was developed to allow for the growth of the existing Gilead Sciences Corporate Campus in Foster City. The project would redevelop a portion of the 40-acre campus, which currently contains 17 buildings (comprising 629,154 square feet of interior space) and is served by 1,993 parking stalls. The Master Plan entails the demolition of up to eight of the existing buildings, and construction of up to seven new buildings (comprising 807,585 square feet of new interior building space). After buildout of the Master Plan, the campus would contain a total of up to 16 buildings (approximately 1,200,480 square feet) and up to 3,060 parking stalls. The project includes the following components. Refer to Chapter III for additional detail about the project, including site plans and diagrams.

- Demolition of up to eight existing one- and two-story office, and research and development buildings (236,259 square feet);
- Construction of up to three new ten-story office buildings (550,000 square feet), located on the west edge of Vintage Lake;
- Construction of up to four new research and development laboratory buildings (235,585 square feet), ranging in height from two to three stories, and located among existing buildings on the southern half of the site;
- Construction of a new office annex (i.e., with a shared wall) on the front of building 322 (22,000 square feet);
- Construction of up to two parking structures, including a structure located at the north end of the campus site, which would have five decks and a capacity of 797 vehicles. The second parking structure would be located in the southeast corner of the site, behind a research building, and is designed as a three-deck structure with a capacity of up to 518 vehicles. Surface parking lots located adjacent to all campus buildings would provide the rest of the parking for the campus (up to 1,745 spaces);
- Development of a main truck dock in the southeast corner of the site (at Building NLB-1), with access off the eastern portion of Lakeside Drive, for deliveries to the campus; and
- The partial closure of Lakeside Drive and conversion of this portion of the public street to a private street, owned and maintained by the project applicant.

C. EIR SCOPE

The City circulated a Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the project on May 2, 2008 to notify responsible agencies and interested parties that an EIR would be prepared for the project. The NOP was submitted to the State Clearinghouse on December 18, 2008. The NOP was mailed to public agencies, organizations, and individuals likely to be interested in the potential impacts of the project. Comments on the NOP were received by the City and considered during preparation of the EIR. Two study sessions were held to introduce the project on February 5, 2008 and May 1, 2008. A scoping session for the Draft EIR was held as a public meeting before the Planning Commission on June 5, 2008. A copy of the NOP and the comment letters received during the scoping period are included in Appendix A of this EIR.

As a result of an evaluation of the potential environmental impacts of the project, consultation with City staff, and review of comments received as part of the scoping process, the following environmental topics are addressed as separate sections in this EIR:

- Land Use
- Visual Quality
- Population, Employment and Housing
- Geology, Seismicity and Soils
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Transportation and Circulation
- Noise
- Air Quality
- Public Services, Utilities and Recreation
- Global Climate Change
- Cultural and Paleontological Resources

D. REPORT ORGANIZATION

This EIR is organized into the following chapters:

- *Chapter I – Introduction:* Discusses the overall EIR purpose, provides a summary of the proposed project and the EIR scope, and summarizes the organization of the EIR.
- *Chapter II – Summary:* Provides a summary of the proposed project and of the impacts that would result from implementation of the Master Plan, and describes mitigation measures recommended to reduce or avoid significant impacts. A discussion of alternatives to the proposed project is also provided.
- *Chapter III – Project Description:* Provides a description of the project site, project background, project objectives, required approval process, and details of the project itself.
- *Chapter IV – Planning Policy:* Evaluates the Master Plan in the context of applicable planning-related policies.
- *Chapter V – Setting, Impacts and Mitigation Measures:* Describes the following for each environmental topic: existing conditions (setting); potential environmental impacts and their level of significance; and measures to mitigate identified significant impacts. Potential adverse impacts are identified by level of significance, as follows: less-than-significant impact (LTS), significant impact (S), and significant and unavoidable impact (SU). The significance of each impact is categorized before and after implementation of any recommended mitigation measures.
- *Chapter VI – Alternatives:* Provides an evaluation of alternatives to the proposed project, including the No Project alternative.

- *Chapter VII – CEQA Required Assessment Conclusions:* Provides additional specifically-required analyses of the proposed project’s potential growth-inducing effects, significant irreversible changes, cumulative impacts, and effects found not to be significant.
- *Chapter VIII – Report Preparation:* Identifies preparers of the EIR, references used, and persons and organizations contacted.