

TO: FOSTER CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

PREPARED BY: KOHAR SHIRIKIAN, ASSISTANT PLANNER

CASE NO.: EA-07-003

OWNER: GILEAD SCIENCES

PROJECT LOCATION: VINTAGE PARK – 300-368 LAKESIDE DRIVE - (APN's: 094-901-290; 094-901-300; 094-901-310; 094-901-340; 094-901-370; 094-901-380; 094-901-390; 094-901-400; 094-901-410; 094-904-290; 094-904-300; 094-904-310; 094-904-320; 094-904-330; 094-904-340), (NEIGHBORHOOD VP-VINTAGE PARK)

REQUESTED ACTION/PURPOSE

- Identify issues appropriate for review under the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to be studied in the Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

KEY PLANNING OR DESIGN ISSUES

- Identify potential environmental impacts to be studied in the EIR.

BACKGROUND

Project Overview

The proposed project would amend the Vintage Park General Development Plan to increase the allowed square footage of the existing 17 building Gilead campus from 629,154 square feet to a total of 1,200,480 square feet in 16 buildings. The proposed amendments to the Vintage Park General Development plan would create a Campus Master Plan for Gilead to include uses such as: office, cafeterias, meeting spaces, laboratories, pilot plant, manufacturing and a small amount of warehouse; fitness facilities; increased total number of parking spaces (at grade and in parking structures); multi-story buildings. Separate vehicular and pedestrian circulation would be designed in order to create a pedestrian-oriented campus by partially closing off Lakeside Drive to through-traffic.

Project Review

This project has been the subject of two Planning Commission Study Sessions on February 5, 2008 and May 1, 2008. The focus of each of these Study Sessions was to review and discuss the project site plan, proposed partial closure of Lakeside Drive, parking plan, proposed amendments to the Vintage Park Design Guidelines, lot line adjustments and parking exit strategy. Given the size and scale of this project and its importance to the City, staff has encouraged the applicant to seek early feedback from the City, which includes Planning Commission Study Sessions.

Public Notice

The City issued a Notice of Preparation (NOP) of an EIR that included notice of the Scoping Meeting on May 2, 2008. The public was advised of the NOP and this Scoping Session in the following ways:

- ½ page ad in the Daily Journal (May 9, 14 and 21, 2008)
- ½ page ad in the Examiner (May 9, 14 and 21, 2008)
- ½ page ad in the Foster City Islander (May 14, 21 and 28, 2008)
- Mailing to the applicants and persons who expressed interest in receiving project updates (May 8, 2008)
- Mailing to property owners who own property within a 1000-foot radius (May 8, 2008)
- Mailing to affected state agencies and State Clearinghouse (May 8, 2008)
- Foster City web site: www.fostercity.org
- Filing of the Notice of Preparation with the County Clerk
- Foster City TV Channel 27 (May 8, 2008)
- Marquee Sign in Leo Ryan Park (May 8, 2008)
- Public posting places (May 22, 2008)
- Emailed to people on the “Planning Public Notice” and “Gilead Sciences” email lists (May 8, 2008)
- Posted at the project site (May 22, 2008)

CEQA/Environmental Review Process

The purpose of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Section 21000-21177 of the Public Resources Code, is to maintain and provide a high quality environment. CEQA meets these goals by requiring local governments to disclose the significant environmental effects of a project to the community as well as to the decision makers and to identify and implement measures that will limit the environmental effects of a project.

The City will be the Lead Agency pursuant to CEQA and for the land use and project approvals. As such, it is the City’s responsibility to conduct the appropriate environmental review. CEQA requires that the Lead Agency issue a NOP after deciding that an EIR is required for a project. After reviewing the proposed project staff has determined that potentially significant environmental impacts would be associated with the proposed project and in consultation with the applicant, has determined that preparation of an EIR is required. In this instance, because an EIR has been determined to be necessary, preparation of an Initial Study is not required by CEQA. The NOP was published on May 2, 2008 (see attached).

This Public Scoping Session is being held to solicit public and Commission comments on what information and analysis should be contained in the EIR. In addition to oral comments received at the Scoping Session, written comments will be accepted until June 17, 2008.

Comments on the scope of the EIR should focus on the potential effects the project might have on the environment. Section 15360 of the State CEQA Guidelines defines the environment as “the physical conditions which exist within the area which will be affected by a proposed project including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise and objects of historic or aesthetic significance.” Comments not related to the environmental impacts of the project are inappropriate at this time. Comments regarding the design of the proposed buildings should be held for later meetings.

Following the close of the 30-day review period for the NOP, other key milestones for the CEQA and approval process will include:

- Completion of the Draft EIR
- Notice of Completion and Availability of Draft EIR
- 45-day Public Review Period
- Public Hearing on Draft EIR (during 45-day review period)
- Preparation of Responses to Comments
- Preparation of Final EIR and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program
- Planning Commission Recommendation regarding certification of Final EIR and approval of Project applications
- City Council consideration of EIR certification and project approvals

EIR Request for Proposal

On April 21, 2008, the Community Development Department received City Council approval to issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) to five environmental consulting firms regarding the preparation of an EIR to meet the requirements of CEQA for the subject project. The five consulting firms were: LSA Associates, David J. Powers and Associates, RRM Design Group, Circle Point and Environmental Science Associates. Proposals in response to the RFP were due to the City on May 13, 2008. One proposal was received from LSA Associates. The City Council will consider authorizing an Agreement with LSA on June 2, 2008.

ANALYSIS

The EIR for this project is anticipated to examine thoroughly the following probable environmental effects of the project (as indicated in the attached NOP):

- Land Use - Conformance with General Plan and zoning
- Visual impacts
- Geology, Seismicity and Soils – seismic safety issues
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality – potential impacts on lagoon and storm water drainage
- Noise – noise impacts from surrounding streets; noise impacts from increased traffic; conformance with noise standards for buildings affected by street noise; construction related noise
- Traffic – impacts on levels of service, capacity of roadways, compliance with C/CAG and Caltrans requirements for traffic analysis (will be included in previously authorized Multi-Project Traffic Analysis and incorporated into the EIR)
- Project On-Site Vehicular Circulation
- Project On-Site Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation
- Public Transportation Services
- On-Site Parking - conformance with City codes; mixed use and shared parking
- Public Services and Utilities – police, fire, schools, parks, utilities
- Air Quality – impacts from increased traffic
- Cultural Resources

- Cumulative impacts – CEQA requires consideration of cumulative impacts including other current and foreseeable projects

Topics that are not anticipated to be significant and, after review, may be excluded from a detailed analysis in the EIR include: Biological Resources, Historic Resources, Agricultural Resources and Mineral Resources.

The level of analysis for these subject areas may be refined or additional subject areas may be analyzed based on responses to this NOP and/or refinements to the project that may occur subsequent to the publication of this NOP. In addition, the EIR will include an analysis of the project's consistency with relevant City and regional planning policies, as well as potential alternatives to the proposed project.

- Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends that the Planning Commission hear an overview of the CEQA process from staff; receive comments from the public regarding whether issues other than those listed above should be included and studied as part of the environmental assessment of the project; and provide input to staff about the scope and content of the EIR analysis.

SUMMARY

Comments from the June 5, 2008 meeting will be used to refine the scope of the EIR to be prepared to analyze the potential impacts of the proposed project. The Draft EIR will then be circulated for public review and comment.

NEXT STEPS

The preparation of the Draft EIR will take place over the next several months. Upon completion of the Draft EIR, a Notice of Completion will be prepared, notifying the public that the environmental document is available for public review and comment. A Planning Commission Public Hearing will be held during the public review period to invite comments from the Commission and the public on the Draft EIR. A Final EIR will incorporate the responses to the comments received on the Draft EIR and any necessary modifications to the previous document. After the Final EIR is available, the Planning Commission and City Council will hold Public Hearings to consider the certification of the Final EIR and whether to approve the proposed amendment to the Vintage Park General Development Plan. During the time the Draft EIR is being prepared, additional Study Sessions are planned to continue to review and discuss the project design.

INDIVIDUALS, ORGANIZATIONS AND DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

Susan Eschweller, DES Architects
 Kirk Syme, Woodstock Development
 State CEQA Guidelines
 Foster City Environmental Review Guidelines
 May 1, 2008 Planning Commission Study Session Plan Submittal

ATTACHMENTS:

Scope of Work prepared by the City of Foster City dated April 22, 2008
 Proposed Work Program proposed by EIR consultant LSA Associates
 Notice of Preparation
 Newspaper advertisement from the Daily Journal from May 9, 14 and 21, 2008
 Newspaper advertisement from the Examiner from May 9, 14 and 21, 2008
 Newspaper advertisement from the Foster City Islander from May 14, 21 and 28, 2008