



CITY OF OAKLAND

Bureau of Planning

250 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza, Suite 3315, Oakland, California, 94612-2032

NOTICE OF PREPARATION (NOP) OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE HEAD-ROYCE SCHOOL PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT PERMIT (PUD) PROJECT

The City of Oakland's Bureau of Planning is preparing an Environmental Impact Report ("EIR") for the proposed Head-Royce School Planned Unit Development Permit (PUD) Project (the Project) as described below, and is requesting comments on the scope and content of the EIR. A description of the Project and its location, together with a summary of probable environmental effects that will be addressed in the EIR are included herein. The City has **not** prepared an Initial Study, and all CEQA topics will be addressed in the EIR.

The EIR for the proposed Project is being prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (California Public Resources Code Sections 21000 et.seq.) and the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000 et.seq.). The City of Oakland is the Lead Agency for the Project and is the public agency with the greatest responsibility for approving the Project. Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15082(a), upon deciding to prepare an EIR, the City as Lead Agency must issue a Notice of Preparation (NOP) to inform the Governor's office of Planning and Research, trustee and responsible agencies, and the public of that decision.

The purpose of this NOP is to provide information describing the Project and its potential environmental effects to those who may wish to comment regarding the scope and content of information to be included in the EIR. This NOP is being sent to responsible agencies and other interested parties. Responsible agencies are those public agencies, besides the City of Oakland, that may also have a role in considering approving or carrying out the Project. The City encourages responsible agencies and the Office of Planning and Research to provide this information to the City so that the City can ensure the Draft EIR meets the needs of those agencies. When the Draft EIR is published, it will be sent to all responsible agencies and to others who respond to this NOP or who otherwise indicate that they would like to receive a copy. The Draft EIR will also be available for review at the City of Oakland at the address identified below.

SUBMITTING COMMENTS IN RESPONSE TO THIS NOP: Comments that address the scope of the Draft EIR and any questions should be directed in writing to:

Rebecca Lind, Planner III
City of Oakland Bureau of Planning
250 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza, Suite 2114
Oakland, CA 94612
Phone: (510) 238-3472
Fax: (510) 238-4730
E-mail: rlind@oaklandnet.com

Written comments on the NOP must be received at the above mailing or e-mail address **by 5:00 p.m. on March 11, 2019**. Please reference **Case Number PLN18532-ER01** in all correspondence. Comments made or submitted at the 6:00 p.m. meeting of the City of Oakland Landmarks Preservation Advisory

Board on March 11 will also be accepted. Comments should focus on potential impacts of the Project on the physical environment. Commenters are encouraged to identify ways that potential adverse effects resulting from the Project may be minimized, and to identify reasonable alternatives and mitigation measures to the proposed Project. Comments and suggestions as to the appropriate scope of analysis in the EIR are invited from all parties, and will be received at the EIR Scoping Meetings to be held before the City Planning Commission and City Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board, as noticed below.

EIR SCOPING MEETINGS:

The **City of Oakland Planning Commission** will conduct a public meeting on the scope of the EIR for the Project on **February 20, 2019 at 6:00 p.m.** in Hearing Room #1, City Hall, 1 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza.

The **City of Oakland Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board** will conduct a public meeting on the scope of the EIR for the Project on **March 11, 2019 at 6:00 p.m.** in Hearing Room #1, City Hall, 1 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza.

PROJECT TITLE: Head-Royce School Planned Unit Development Permit (PUD) Project

PROJECT LOCATION: The Project address is Head-Royce School at 4315 Lincoln Avenue, Oakland (see **Figure 1**). The Project site includes Assessor's Parcel Numbers 29A-1367-4.4 (4315 Lincoln Avenue), 29-100906 (4368 Lincoln Avenue); 29A-1367-1-14 (4465 Lincoln Avenue), and an additional parcel owned by Ability Now Bay Area and used by Head-Royce School at APN 29-1009-10-5 (4500 Lincoln Avenue). Head-Royce School owns two properties on the north side of Lincoln Avenue (North Campus at 4315 and 4465 Lincoln) and one property on the south side of Lincoln Avenue (South Campus at 4368 Lincoln Avenue) and has an agreement with Ability Now Bay Area for non-exclusive use of the playfield at 4500 Lincoln. The Head-Royce School is located generally below the Ascension Greek Orthodox Cathedral and in the Lincoln Highlands/Oakmore neighborhood. The Project primarily involves the South Campus at 4368 Lincoln Avenue, formerly known as the Lincoln Child Center, as shown in **Figure 2** (attached).

PROJECT SPONSOR: Head-Royce School

EXISTING CONDITIONS: The Head-Royce School is an independent co-educational college preparatory school that serves students from kindergarten through high school. The School has been on its current 14-acre site on the north side of Lincoln Avenue (the North Campus, at 4315 and 4465 Lincoln Avenue) since 1964. The North Campus includes 12 buildings housing classrooms and administrative functions, a library, a gym and an auditorium, a café and a swimming pool. Attached to the North Campus on a separate parcel is a multi-purpose sports field, outdoor tennis courts and various other outdoor play areas. A prior PUD permit as amended in 2016 governs use of the North Campus for school activities up to an enrollment of 906 students during the school year and 780 students during the summer. Current enrollment is approximately 881 students, with 100 teaching faculty members and approximately 65 professional and administrative staff. A portion of the property at 4500 Lincoln Avenue (across from the North Campus sports field) is leased by the School and used (pursuant to a 2018 PUD amendment) as a playfield for school athletic practices.

In 2013, Head-Royce School purchased the 8-acre former Lincoln Child Center property (the South Campus, at 4368 Lincoln Avenue), immediately across Lincoln Avenue from the North Campus. The

South Campus currently consists of 12 buildings formerly used as classrooms, administrative space, storage and dormitories, occupying approximately 43,860 square feet of building space. Now primarily vacant, certain of these buildings are used for administrative and storage purposes by the School.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Head-Royce School wishes to integrate the North Campus with the South Campus to create a unified 22-acre K-12 school. As part of this Project, the School proposes to rehabilitate and reuse four of the existing buildings on the South Campus (Buildings 0, 1, 2 and 9) and to remove eight existing buildings. New construction will include a new 15,900 square-foot 32-foot tall Performing Arts Center building (containing up to 450 seats) for school-related purposes only, and construction of approximately 2,500 square feet of other ancillary building space. The School also seeks to provide interim housing within an existing building on the South Campus (Building 9) for newly hired faculty and staff moving to the Bay Area while they secure permanent housing. With demolition of approximately 16,500 square feet of building space and construction of approximately 18,400 square feet of new space, there would be a net increase of approximately 1,900 square feet of building space on the site. Other proposed physical improvements to the South Campus (see **Figure 3**, attached) include:

- A new internal, one-way Loop Road would ring the internal perimeter of the South Campus. The entrance to this Loop Road would be at the existing curb cut and driveway off Lincoln Avenue at the upper end of the South Campus, and the exit would be at a similar existing curb cut and driveway off Lincoln at the lower end of the South Campus. The new Loop Road would provide approximately 1,000 linear feet of on-Campus (off-street) queuing space, as well as drop-off/pick-up locations. Other than public and private bus loading and unloading, all pick-up and drop-off activity for the School would occur along this Loop Road, rather than as currently occurs along Lincoln Avenue.
- The Lincoln Avenue right-of-way would be reconfigured at the upper Loop Road entrance to accommodate a downhill left-turn pocket and an uphill right-turn pocket into the South Campus, and a new traffic signal would control this intersection. The existing traffic signal that controls pedestrian movement across Lincoln Avenue at the existing Head-Royce guardhouse would be moved to the lower Loop Road exit intersection. The uppermost traffic signal at the existing entrance to the Head-Royce parking lot (Lot F in the North Campus) would be retained.
- The existing 129 parking spaces within the South Campus would be reconfigured to accommodate new construction and the Loop Road, and an additional 25 more parking spaces would be added, for 154 total parking spaces on the South Campus. As enrollment increases (see below) the School would either add stacked parking at the existing Lot F on the North Campus, or reduce parking demand by prohibiting some or all students from driving to school.
- New landscaping within the South Campus would include ADA-accessible paths and trails, secondary pathways with staircases, a central commons space, outdoor wood deck classrooms, and new planting with native, drought-tolerant species.
- The Project proposes two options to provide a pedestrian connection between the North and South Campus. The first option is construction of a pedestrian tunnel under Lincoln Avenue. The tunnel would be 18-feet wide and approximately 12 feet tall, and constructed underneath Lincoln Avenue at about the mid-point of the South Campus frontage on Lincoln. The second option would be an at-grade pedestrian crossing across Lincoln Avenue, controlled by the relocated traffic signal at the southerly exit of the South Campus Loop Road, where it intersects with Lincoln Avenue.

The proposed changes to the North Campus consist of:

- The opening for the proposed pedestrian tunnel;
- Reuse of the existing MEW Auditorium as a gymnasium, its original use; and
- Reuse of existing administrative and classroom space on the North Campus whose current functions are relocated to the South Campus, for classroom or other administrative functions.

As part of the Project, Head Royce School proposes to increase the allowed maximum student population from 906 students to 1,250 students during the school year, an increase of 344 students over currently allowed enrollment. As part of this enrollment increase, the School may offer a pre-kindergarten (pre-K) option.

PROBABLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS: As indicated above, the City of Oakland is preparing an EIR for the Project that will analyze potential physical environmental effects of the Project related to each environmental topic for which the City has established CEQA thresholds. An Initial Study has not been prepared, and all relevant topics will be addressed. Based on any comments received during the NOP review period (including comments received at the Scoping Meetings as noticed above), the anticipated scope of work for the EIR may be amended to address any new issues raised. Based on known site conditions and anticipated potential effects, several technical studies, including but not limited to the following will be conducted:

- A Historic Resource Evaluation (HRE) report will be prepared for the Head-Royce South Campus. The HRE will include physical descriptions of buildings and landscape features based on a field survey, will discuss the Campus's historic context and will evaluate the potential significance of all buildings or site features 45 years or more in age for individual eligibility for the California Register or as historical resources under CEQA. Additionally, the Head-Royce South Campus will be evaluated as a potential historic district inclusive of cultural landscape.
- The Traffic Impact Analysis will assess the impacts of the Project on total vehicles miles travelled (VMT), and will compare VMT generated by the Project to applicable City CEQA thresholds. The School will be providing an updated Head-Royce TDM Plan, and the EIR will review this updated TDM Plan to assess its effectiveness in reducing vehicle trips.
- The proposed pedestrian tunnel under Lincoln Avenue will be assessed for potential geotechnical and structural issues.
- A Cultural Resources Assessment Report will be prepared to meet CEQA reporting standards. The report will include prehistoric and historic context as relevant to potential archaeological sensitivity, a discussion of the results of a records and literature search, and the results of Native American communication and outreach efforts.
- A Biological Resources Report will be prepared. This report will include a description of existing biological conditions, an assessment of potential presences of special-status species and any potentially sensitive/regulated habitats that may occur on the site, potential impacts on existing biological resources, and mitigation measures necessary to mitigate potentially significant impacts.

- The Project would involve removal of certain trees for new construction. Consistency of proposed tree removal with City of Oakland Tree Permit requirements for avoidance and/or replacement planting will be assessed.
- Construction-period air quality impacts resulting from the Project will be assessed using air dispersion modeling and methodologies as recommended by Air District policy guidance.

The Draft EIR will also examine a reasonable range of alternatives to the Project, including the CEQA-mandated No Project Alternative, and other potential alternatives that may be capable of reducing or avoiding potential environmental effects.

Case File Number PLN18532-ER01
February 1, 2019

Rebecca Lind, Planner III
City of Oakland Planning and Building Department