

Basics about the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Chanate Property

STEPS IN THE EIR PROCESS

Notice of Preparation:

Notifies the public and governmental agencies of the proposal and start of the process to prepare an EIR

Draft EIR:

Provides an opportunity for governmental agency and public review and comment

Final EIR:

Includes responses to comments on the Draft EIR and necessary changes to Draft EIR

Final EIR Certification:

Indicates the Final EIR reflects the City of Santa Rosa's independent judgment and meets CEQA's requirements

Project Approval/Denial:

Decision about the proposed Chanate project – if the project is approved it will include adopting findings (disclosure of potentially significant impacts) and a mitigation monitoring program (including all feasible mitigation measures)

Notice of Determination:

If the project is approved this formally documents Santa Rosa's final decision to approve the proposed Chanate project

The owner of the Chanate property has submitted an application for a General Plan Amendment and Rezoning of the Chanate property from Public Institutional uses to Residential uses – that is the proposed Chanate “project.” Santa Rosa, as the lead agency, has determined that the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires this proposed project to have an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) prepared because there is the potential for the proposed Chanate project to cause one or more significant environmental impacts.

Preparation of this EIR, including the structure and substance, must follow specific CEQA requirements, which are important to keep in mind when providing substantive and effective comments.

OBJECTIVES OF CEQA

The objectives of CEQA are to:

- **Disclose** potential significant environmental effects
- **Identify** ways to avoid or reduce significant environmental impacts
- **Prevent** environmental damage by requiring implementation of feasible alternatives or mitigation measures
- **Foster** interagency coordination and public participation
- **Show** that the City of Santa Rosa is considering the environmental implications of its actions prior to making its decision about the proposed Chanate project

PURPOSE OF AN EIR

- **Inform** the public about the proposed Chanate project's potential significant environmental impacts and ways the City of Santa Rosa can feasibly avoid, minimize, reduce, or compensate for those impacts
- **Demonstrate** that the environment is being considered prior to approving the proposed Chanate project and that the City of Santa Rosa has considered the environmental implications of its actions
- **Ensure** prevention or minimization of environmental damage by requiring implementation of feasible alternatives or mitigation measures

EIR TOPICS COVERED

The proposed Chanate project EIR will consider whether environmental factors, including those listed below, will be potentially affected by this proposed project, determining whether the factors would have “no impact,” “less than significant impact,” “less than significant impact with mitigation,” or “a potentially significant impact,” as well as considerations such as whether the impacts will be direct or indirect, short- or long-term, project-specific or cumulative.

- Aesthetics
- Agriculture / Forestry Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology/Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards & Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology/Water Quality
- Land Use / Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population / Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities / Service Systems
- Wildfire / Evacuations
- Growth-Inducing Impacts
- Mandatory Findings of Significance

See the Environmental Checklist Form for specific CEQA questions on these topics.

Disclaimer: The information on this flyer is not legal advice, and is intended solely to be an informational guide on the public review component of the California Environmental Quality Act.



Tips for Commenting on the Chanate Property Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR)

WHY COMMENT ON A DRAFT EIR?

1. The Draft EIR public review process provides an opportunity for the public to refine the analysis of environmental impacts and the development of feasible mitigation for those impacts found to be potentially significant.
2. The best way to make the City of Santa Rosa, which will be responsible for considering approval of the proposed Chanate project, aware of concerns related to the environmental analysis is to send in comments during the public comment period.
3. The public review period for a Draft EIR provides an opportunity to address concerns related to any potential direct or indirect impacts to the physical and social/cultural environment, such as impacts to aesthetics, agricultural resources, air quality, noise, traffic, biological resources, water quality, wildfire and historic, cultural, and tribal cultural resources.
4. All substantive comments on the Draft EIR must be addressed by the City of Santa Rosa in the Final EIR.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SUBSTANTIVE EIR COMMENTS

Substantive comments that are backed by factual support can lead to changes to the proposed Chanate project itself or to the Draft EIR for inclusion in the Final EIR. To influence the EIR process, comments should specifically point out errors, inconsistencies, omissions of data or analyses, conclusions not based on evidence, or failures to provide discussion required by CEQA. To support the specific comments, the commentor can provide additional substantive evidence or information that was not considered in the Draft EIR. The City of Santa Rosa must consider all substantive comments and information submitted on the Draft EIR and needs to respond adequately to substantive comments prior to certification of the Final EIR.

EFFECTIVE COMMENTS:

- **Are concise**, focusing on the environmental analysis in the Draft EIR
- **Relate** to the proposed Chanate project's potential for impacts on the physical and social/cultural environment
- **Identify** the specific part of the Draft EIR at issue
- **Include** supporting evidence/facts, such as references or citations to specific websites, scientific studies, expert testimony, and other evidence/facts

City of Santa Rosa proposed Chanate project website:
SRCity.org/2881/The-Woodlands-at-Chanate

HOW TO REVIEW AND EFFECTIVELY COMMENT ON THE DRAFT EIR FOR THE PROPOSED CHANATE PROJECT

1

Read the EIR Executive Summary, and then review EIR chapter(s) and appendices of particular interest. Review references if needed (these are separate from the EIR).

Consider:

- Is the scope adequate? Are all important environmental issues covered?
- Is the discussion of existing conditions complete?
- Is there analysis to support the conclusions?
- Are the determinations of significance clear?
- Is the environmental analysis contained in the EIR technically adequate?
- Are mitigation measures well defined, feasible, and fully enforceable?

2

If there are shortcomings, explain what they are, and include any supporting facts and additional evidence not considered by the proposed Chanate project EIR.

3

When providing comments on the proposed Chanate project Draft EIR, consider:

- ✓ **Substance:** Address specific components of the analysis regarding significant environmental impacts and by providing substantive comments that point out errors, inconsistencies, or data emissions.
- ✓ **Supporting Evidence:** Back up comments by providing references, evidence, expert testimony or other factual support.
- ✓ **Objectivity:** Provide objective comments instead of personal opinion. While submitting personal views on the proposed Chanate project is not prohibited, these types of non-substantive comments may not receive a specific response in the Final EIR.