
NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT AND NOTICE OF A PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

DATE: August 24, 2020

SUBJECT: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR No. 633) and Public Scoping Meeting for the Mile Square Regional Park Master Plan

PROJECT: Mile Square Regional Park Master Plan

APPLICANT: County of Orange, OC Parks

Public Scoping Meeting: The County will host a virtual/online public scoping meeting to be held as noted below to provide an update to the project and to solicit comments relative to the content of the information to be analyzed in the Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR).

Date: September 10, 2020

Time: 6:00 pm

Location: For details on how to access the meeting, visit OC Parks website at <https://www.ocparks.com/parks/mile/expansion>

If you do not have access to the internet or are not able to join via the web, you can call the project hotline at 855-697-3702 to obtain access information and register for the meeting. Note you will need to call the hotline prior to the meeting date to register for the meeting.

Public input regarding the appropriate topics for analysis to be included within the EIR is being sought. In order for your concerns to be incorporated into the Draft EIR, we need to know your views as to the scope and content of the environmental information in connection with the Mile Square Regional Park (MISQ) Master Plan (Project). Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15082(b), all comments must be received as soon as possible but not later than 30 days after receipt of this notice. The comment period for this Notice is August 24, 2020 to September 22, 2020. You may provide your comments online at <https://www.ocparks.com/parks/mile/expansion>, through email at milequareexpansion@ocparks.com, or by submitting them in writing to the address at the bottom of this Notice.

Under CEQA Guidelines Section 15060(d), the County of Orange, as lead agency, has determined that a Draft EIR would be required. Upon completion of the Draft EIR, that document will be made available for public review and comment. There will be public notice regarding its availability at that time. Following the public review period for the Draft EIR, responses to all public and public agency comments received will be prepared and the project will be scheduled for a noticed public hearing before the Orange County Board of Supervisors.

Project Location:

Mile Square is a 607-acre urban park located in north Orange County in the City of Fountain Valley. The site is generally located west of Euclid Street, to the east of Brookhurst Street and to the north and south of Warner and Edinger respectively. Figure 1 shows the regional location and Figure 2 provides a site location map.



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Within the Mile Square boundaries are three regulation golf courses and the Fountain Valley Sports Park which make up 421 acres in the western portion of Mile Square. In addition, MISQ is 186 acres of regional park amenities that makes up the eastern portion of Mile Square.

The proposed project site encompasses 93 acres of the existing Mile Square Golf Course and the 186 acres of existing MISQ located in the eastern portion of Mile Square. The proposed project would integrate the existing Mile Square Golf Course parcel, which currently holds a lease from OC Parks to operate, with the regional park facilities as well as complete additional improvements within the eastern portion of the existing regional park.

Project Description:

The proposed project involves improvements outlined in the MISQ Master Plan which includes the addition of 93 acres from the Mile Square Golf Course parcel to the existing MISQ regional park facilities. MISQ is a fully developed, multi-use facility with many existing resources. The transition of the golf course into regional park amenities within MISQ will build on the park's existing resources, amenities and programs that are enjoyed by the public. The MISQ Master Plan identifies multi-modal circulation improvements, specific programming opportunities, areas for ecological restoration and other recreational improvements that focus on expanding the park's recreational value and open space preservation. A high-level summary of the MISQ Master Plan improvements are introduced below. Figure 3 shows the conceptual site plan for improvements within the 93-acre Mile Square Golf Course parcel, and Figure 4 shows the location of improvements within the existing regional park.

- **Circulation Improvements**
The MISQ Master Plan proposes a new vehicular entrance at Heil Street to create a new connection to the existing road within the park. The MISQ Master Plan also proposes the addition of new parking areas to improve park access, improvements to existing and new pedestrian trails, and plans and designs for bicyclists.
- **Park Core Programs**
The MISQ Master Plan includes a variety of programming components that will lead to the future park core programs. The five key components of the park core programs include historic references, educational programs and passive narratives throughout the park, multiuse open areas, civic spaces that are multi-functional, and expansion of the nature facility.
- **Environmental Habitat Improvements**
The MISQ Master Plan will take advantage of the open space and existing infrastructure to create a diverse culture of ecosystems and habitats. This will include tree plantings, adaptation of existing water features, and the introduction of a diverse plant palette. The MISQ Master Plan will expand the existing tree canopy by planting trees within the project area to create a naturalistic environment at the park. An element of the master plan emphasizes the existing ponds which provide a habitat for both plant material and wildlife. The MISQ Master Plan will also reduce the amount of turf grass plantings in the expansion area and replace it with a diverse mixture of other plant material.

As mentioned above, the MISQ Master Plan improvements will occur within MISQ at the eastern portion of Mile Square and the 93-acre portion of the Mile Square Golf Course. The proposed improvements are described in more detail below.

Improvements Within Existing 186-acre Regional Park Boundary

Circulation improvements within MISQ include a modified vehicular intersection and new park entrance at Heil Avenue and updates to existing walkways. A new Ranger Station is planned to be built near the new park entrance near Heil Avenue. Habitat improvements are also proposed and would involve re-grading the existing stormwater



drainage channel with a more gradual slope and landscape revegetation. New signage and wayfinding will be included. Upgrades will be made to the existing gravel lot north of the expansion boundary. A portion of the gravel lot will be improved to a paved lot and the other half will be converted to a pedestrian-only plaza. A relocated maintenance and storage yard will be expanded to 2.4-acres along the eastern edge abutting the Fountain Valley Sports Park.

Improvements Within 93-Acre Mile Square Golf Course Parcel

Within the existing 93-acre Mile Square Golf Course parcel, proposed circulation improvements include a 20-foot wide vehicular/security access trail along the perimeter of the new development. Habitat improvements involve planting a new 100-foot minimum tree buffer. Six of the existing ponds will remain protected in place and habitat revegetation and improvements will be made to the existing perimeter tree canopy. Two new restrooms are proposed. New benches and picnic shelters will be evenly distributed throughout the development area. As mentioned above, programing components are a key element of the MISQ Master Plan as well. A Visitor Center with educational information will be developed. A Botanic Garden and Nature Camp with Adventure Play will be located in the southern border of the site. A Great Meadow which will function as a multiuse space and including a terraced amphitheater facility to be used for large musical events and performances. A Shade Pavilion and Plaza will also be developed adjacent to the amphitheater facility.

Environmental Effects:

A full scope Environmental Impact Report would be prepared for the proposed project with the exception of agriculture and forestry resources, mineral resources, and population and housing. These resources have been scoped out from further environmental review for the reasons stated below.

Agriculture and Forestry Resources

The proposed project area is characterized by open space and is primarily surrounded by residential development (City of Fountain Valley, 2019). According to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, no agricultural lands including Prime, Unique, or Farmland of Statewide Importance exist within or immediately adjacent to the project site, and the project site is located on land designated as Urban and Built-Up land (California Department of Conservation, 2016). There are also no zoned timberland or forest lands within the proposed project area. The project site is not zoned for agricultural uses and is not subject to the provisions of the Farmland Protection Policy Act. In addition, there are no agricultural preserves or parcels under Williamson Act contracts within the project area. Land uses immediately adjacent to the proposed project are zoned for residential and commercial uses. Therefore, the proposed project would not convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance to non-agricultural use; conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, Williamson Act contracts or zoning of timberlands or forest lands; or otherwise result in the loss of forest lands or convert farmland to non-agricultural uses. No impacts would occur.

Mineral Resources

The project site and surrounding areas are not identified as sources of important mineral resources (California Department of Conservation, 2015), and mineral extraction activities are not present on the project site or on adjacent or nearby properties. Thus, the proposed project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and residents of the state or loss of availability of locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local, general, or specific plan or other land use plan (County of Orange, 2014). No impacts would occur.

Population and Housing

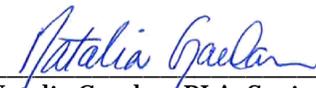
The proposed project does not involve the development of residential or commercial uses or infrastructure that would induce substantial unplanned population growth in the area, but would rather involve park improvements to existing and new amenities within the existing MISQ park boundaries. The project aims to enhance park and



recreational use for residents and visitors and is not expected to induce growth. Thus, no substantial population growth in the area would be induced, directly or indirectly, as a result of implementing the proposed project. Furthermore, as no residential units currently exist on the project site, and project development would not cause displacement of any persons or require construction of housing elsewhere. As such, the proposed project would not displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. No impacts would occur.

The Notice of Preparation is available for review on the County's website: https://www.ocpublicworks.com/ds/planning/projects/1st_district and on the OC Park's project website: <https://www.ocparks.com/parks/mile/expansion>

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Natalia Gaerlan at (949) 923-3759. Submit written comments to the following email address: milesquareexpansion@ocparks.com. The mailing address is OC Parks/Planning & Design Division, 13042 Old Myford Road, Irvine, CA 92602.

Submitted by: 
Name: Natalia Gaerlan, PLA, Senior Project Manager
OC Parks, Planning & Design Division

- Attachments:
- Figure 1 – Regional Vicinity
 - Figure 2 – Project Location
 - Figure 3 – Conceptual Master Plan
 - Figure 4 – Existing Park Improvements

References:

- California Department of Conservation. 2015. Mineral Land Classification. Available: <https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/informationwarehouse/index.html?map=mlc>. Accessed July 20, 2020.
- California Department of Conservation. 2016. California Important Farmland Finder. Available: <https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/DLRP/CIFF/>. Accessed: July 29, 2020.
- City of Fountain Valley. 2015. General Plan - Land Use Plan Map. Available: <https://www.fountainvalley.org/DocumentCenter/View/508/Chapter-2-Land-Use-Plan-Map>. Accessed July 29, 2020.
- City of Fountain Valley. 2019. General Plan. Available: <https://www.fountainvalley.org/DocumentCenter/View/506/Chapter-1-General-Plan-Introduction-March-21-1995>. Accessed July 29, 2020.
- County of Orange. 2014. Orange General Plan – Resources Element. July 2014. Available: <https://www.ocgov.com/civicax/filebank/blobdownload.aspx?blobid=8625>. Accessed August 4, 2020.



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