

Date: February 25, 2004  
To: Board of Trustees of the Santa Monica Community College District  
From: Piedad Robertson, Superintendent/President  
Subject: Resolution Adopting Mitigated Negative Declaration and Approving Renovation of West Building Bundy Campus Project

## **INTRODUCTION**

This staff report recommends that the Santa Monica Community college District (SMC) Board of Trustees adopt a resolution adopting a Negative Mitigated Declaration and approving the Renovation of West Building Bundy Campus Project.

The proposed project is the renovation of the existing West Building (also known as Building #4) for postsecondary educational use at the Santa Monica College Bundy Campus located at 3171 S. Bundy Drive in the City of Los Angeles. This existing four story, approximately 64,000 gross square footage building will be remodeled into a community college facility with classrooms, laboratories, offices, and student services functions including admissions, counseling, a bookstore, and food services. Most of the educational functions will be ongoing College programs that will be moved from other College locations in Santa Monica. Some of these programs include Health Sciences (Nursing), Early Childhood Education, Community Services, and general education.

The West Building is part of a complex of offices and research facilities (four buildings and two large parking lots) on a 10.2-acre site previously owned by BAE Systems, a defense contractor. The West Building was constructed in 1980. Building construction is steel frame, concrete floors on steel form deck and reinforced concrete block walls. SMC purchased the site and leased back the property to BAE Systems through May 2003. The site is now unoccupied.

Currently, two separate one-story manufacturing/warehouse buildings are connected to the West Building. The western portion of Building #1 that connects to the West Building will be demolished as part of this project. The demolition of the remaining portion of Building #1 will also be undertaken. Building #3 at the southwest corner of the West Building will be demolished as part of this project. Building #3 shares utilities with the West Building. As part of this project, the utilities will be relocated to serve only the West Building.

The Renovation of the West Building Bundy Campus Project will be funded from Santa Monica Community College District capital funds. The project must comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

For purposes of complying with CEQA, the Santa Monica Community College District (SMC) is the Lead Agency and is the primary public agency responsible for approving this project. SMC has prepared an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration document for the Renovation of West Building Bundy Campus Project and has circulated the document for public review. The study concludes that there are no significant environmental impacts from the project with the adoption of mitigation measures during the pre-construction planning phase of the project.

## DISCUSSION

### 1. Project Background

On January 12, 1998, the Santa Monica Community College District Board of Trustees unanimously adopted the Santa Monica College Facilities Master Plan, prepared with the participation of more than 1,000 individuals on- and off-campus and the holding of more than 35 public meetings.

The Facilities Master Plan supports SMC's vision and mission, specifically to preserve educational quality and to enhance student success. The Facilities Master Plan was adopted to meet a number of purposes, including to assist SMC in retiring and replacing obsolete buildings, to improve parking and circulation, and to regulate density and guide the relationship of the main campus with the satellite facilities.

The Plan was developed in recognition of significant unfunded capital needs, but with the anticipation that future funding resources would become available.

On November 5, 2001, the SMC Board of Trustees unanimously approved a resolution calling for a bond election. The bond measure, Measure U, was approved by Santa Monica and Malibu voters on March 5, 2002, and authorized the issuance of up to \$160 million in bonds to fund the construction requirements needed to meet the goals of SMC's Facilities Master Plan.

On December 3, 2001, the SMC Board of Trustees voted unanimously to purchase a 10.2-acre parcel of land south of the Santa Monica Airport. The BAE Systems property was currently in use for offices, manufacturing, and parking, and was acquired for \$30 million. The land purchase was financed with 20-year certificates of participation—special financial instruments available to schools that tend to have better interest rates than conventional loans. Under the financing plan approved by the SMC Board, BAE Systems had the right to stay on the site and lease it back from SMC for up to two years. At a future date, SMC would pay back the loans with funds from Measure U. In May 2003, BAE Systems ceased occupancy.

BAE Systems had also leased property from the City of Santa Monica on the northwest side of the BAE Systems property, and had used this property for purposes of access to the main property. As BAE Systems had ceased occupancy, the vehicular access and roadway was no longer appropriate for property access for general use or by emergency vehicles. On July 7, 2003, the SMC Board of Trustees unanimously resolved that certain improvements be made to the Bundy Campus to permit the use of the facility or to avoid danger to life or property.

These improvements included the design and construction of vehicular and roadway access to the lower portion of the Bundy Campus from Centinela, safety modifications to the parking lots, and utility relocation.

On September 3, SMC began an ongoing series of neighborhood meetings with nearby residents and attended by a representative of City of Los Angeles Councilmember Cindy Miscikowski. The neighborhood meetings have resulted in consensus for a 10-foot soundwall on the perimeter

of the Bundy Campus property along both the southeast and southwest sides of the campus, along with substantial landscaping.

Roadway work began in late September. At the present time, the roadway is complete, the above ground utilities have been relocated, the first phase of the soundwall is complete, the safety improvements are nearly complete, and the landscaping and the second phase of the soundwall are underway.

On October 14, 2003, the City Council of the City of Santa Monica approved the design plans and certification of the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for the Airport Park Project. This project includes the development of 8.3 acres of Airport land to the northwest of the Bundy Campus for recreational purposes and streetscape improvements along Airport Avenue. The FEIR includes information that the City of Santa Monica will provide access to the Bundy Campus from Airport Avenue through an extension of the Donald Douglas Loop roadway.

## **2. Project Description**

The proposed project is the renovation of the existing West Building (also known as Building #4) for postsecondary educational use at the Santa Monica College Bundy Campus located at 3171 S. Bundy Drive in the City of Los Angeles. This existing four story, approximately 64,000 gross square footage building will be remodeled into a community college facility with classrooms, laboratories, offices, and student services functions including admissions, counseling, a bookstore, and food services. Most of the educational functions will be ongoing College programs that will be moved from other College locations in Santa Monica. Some of these programs include Health Sciences (Nursing), Early Childhood Education, Community Services, and general education.

The Bundy Campus is located at 3171 S. Bundy Drive, Los Angeles, Los Angeles County, California 90066. The Bundy Campus is bounded by Bundy Drive/Centinela Avenue on the northeast, Stewart Avenue and residential homes on the southwest, residential homes on the southeast, and commercial/industrial uses on the northwest (on the southeast side of Airport Avenue). The Santa Monica Airport is located on the northwest side of Airport Avenue. Access to the site is currently from Stewart Avenue through adjacent residential development. SMC is currently constructing a new access entrance from Bundy Drive/Centinela Avenue at the southeast corner of the site as a separate project.

The West Building is part of a complex of offices and research facilities (four buildings and two large parking lots) on a 10.2-acre site previously owned by BAE Systems, a defense contractor. The West Building was constructed in 1980. Building construction is steel frame, concrete floors on steel form deck and reinforced concrete block walls. SMC purchased the site and leased back the property to BAE Systems through May 2003. The site is now unoccupied.

Currently, two separate one-story manufacturing/warehouse buildings are connected to the West Building. The western portion of Building #1 that connects to the West Building will be demolished as part of this project. The demolition of the remaining portion of Building #1 will also be undertaken. Building #3 at the southwest corner of the West Building will be demolished

as part of this project. Building #3 shares utilities with the West Building. As part of this project, the utilities will be relocated to serve only the West Building.

Renovation plans include retaining building systems that are in good condition and repairing/replacing systems that are in poor condition. All work will be in full compliance with applicable codes and regulations and American Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. All facilities will be designed with a high level of technology. The existing parking lots will be given a new slurry coat and restriped. No roadway work will occur.

Project completion is scheduled for October 2004.

### **3. Project Objectives**

The main objectives of the Renovation of West Building Bundy Campus Project are:

- To advance the mission of Santa Monica College to create a learning environment that both challenges its students and supports them in achieving their educational goals;
- To advance the mission of Santa Monica College to prepare its students to contribute to the global community as they develop an understanding of their personal relationship to the world's social, cultural, political, economic, technological, and natural environments; and
- To further Santa Monica College's adopted goals in the area of promoting student success, advancing academic excellence, developing community partnerships, and providing a supportive physical environment.

### **4. CEQA Process and the Public Review Process**

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources Code (P.R.C.) Division 13, § 21000 et seq.) was enacted in 1970 with the main objective of providing public disclosure to inform decision makers and the public of the significant environmental effects of proposed activities and to require agencies to avoid or reduce the environmental effects by implementing feasible alternatives or mitigation measures.

CEQA applies to all discretionary activities proposed to be carried out or approved by California public agencies, including state, regional, county, and local agencies. The Renovation of West Building Bundy Project requires discretionary approval from the Santa Monica Community College District Board of Trustees and, therefore, is subject to the environmental review requirements established under CEQA. For purposes of complying with CEQA, Santa Monica Community College District is identified as the Lead Agency for the proposed project.

The Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration was prepared in accordance with CEQA, the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations (C.C.R.), Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, § 15000-15387, as amended), and the Santa Monica Community College District Guidelines for Implementation of CEQA (January 2002).

On January 23, 2004, the report was published and made available for public review, with the public review period ending February 23, 2004. Copies of the report were provided to the State Clearinghouse and the City of Los Angeles. Copies were made available for public review in SMC Library. The entire report was also made available electronically on SMC's official web site, with a link provided from the home page of SMC web site. A Notice of Availability was published in the Daily Breeze. A neighborhood meeting on the report was held on February 5, 2004, with notification of the meeting made to residential neighbors and to City of Los Angeles Councilmember Cindy Miscikowski's Office.

## **5. Summary of Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration**

*Initial Study.* The Initial Study includes a checklist of environmental factors. The Initial Study considers for each environmental factor whether the project has: (a) potentially significant impact; (b) potentially significant impact unless mitigation is incorporated; (c) less than significant impact; or (d) no impact.

No Significant Impacts. The proposed project is a renovation of an existing building. The Initial Study evaluation concludes that there are no environmental factors that will experience significant environmental impacts from the proposed project.

Less Than Significant Impacts or No Impacts. The Initial Study identifies less than significant impacts or no impacts in the areas of Air Quality, Aesthetics, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology/Soils, Hydrology/Water Quality, Noise, Public Services, Transportation/Circulation, and Utilities and Service Systems. The document provides an analysis for each area in which a less than significant impact is identified.

Potentially Significant Impacts Unless Mitigation Incorporated. The Initial Study identifies potentially significant impacts unless mitigation is incorporated in the area of Hazards and Hazardous Materials. The document provides an analysis and provides a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program to reduce impacts to less than significant.

*Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.* The Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration includes mitigation measures to reduce impacts to less than significant during the pre-construction planning phase. Mitigations include design requirements, control measures, enforcement of conditions, specified procedures to deal with unexpected site conditions, incorporation of specified best management practices, certain regulatory agency approvals, and adherence to local regulations regarding construction activities. The complete program is in the report and is attached to this staff report as Attachment A.

*Mitigated Negative Declaration.* On the basis of the Initial Study, including an analysis of impacts identified as less than significant or less than significant unless mitigations are incorporated, the report determines that there will not be a significant effect on the environment from the proposed project because revisions on the project have been made or agreed to by SMC. A Mitigated Negative Declaration has been prepared and is being presented to the Board of Trustees for adoption along with approval of the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.

## **6. Agency and Public Comment**

SMC has received one comment letter in response to the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration. The letter received is from the Department of Transportation dated February 9, 2004.

CEQA does not require that formal written responses be provided in a revised document. Staff has provided a summary response to the letter below.

***Caltrans Comment Letter***

Stephen Buswell, IGR/CEQA Branch Chief  
Department of Transportation  
District 7, Regional Planning, IGR/CEQA Branch  
120 South Spring Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
February 9, 2004

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation in the environmental review process for the above mentioned project. Based on the information received, we have no comments at this time. However, we recommend maximizing the operation and use of multi-passenger vehicles to transport students to and from the proposed off-campus school site. Also, any additional peak period cumulative project trips which are expected to add to the traffic volumes at the Centinela Ave./Venice Blvd. Intersection should pay a fair share contribution towards intersection improvements as noted in the traffic mitigation for the Village at Playa Vista EIR.

If you have any questions regarding our response, refer to our internal IGR/CEQA Record # cs/040203, and please do not hesitate to contact me at (213) 897-4429.

***Staff Response to Caltrans' Comments***

Caltrans states that it has no comments on the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration. This statement is noted for the record. On February 20, 2004, SMC staff sent a letter to Caltrans thanking them for their letter and informing them of the date of the public hearing.

**7. Budgetary Impacts**

No budget action is required at this time in connection with the adoption of the resolutions. All funds have been secured to proceed with the award of bid for construction, which will require a subsequent Board of Trustees action.

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Board of Trustees adopt a resolution entitled "A Resolution of the Board of Trustees of the Santa Monica Community College District Adopting Mitigated Negative Declaration and Approving Renovation of West Building (Building #4) Bundy Campus Project."

## ATTACHMENT “A” – Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

**INTRODUCTION.** This Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program is adopted in accordance with the requirements of Public Resources Code Section 21081.6. CEQA Guidelines Section 15097 states: “...*In order to ensure that the mitigation measures and project revisions identified in the EIR or negative declaration are implemented, the public agency shall adopt a program for monitoring or reporting on the revisions which it has required in the project and the measures it has imposed to mitigate or avoid significant environmental effects. A public agency may delegate reporting or monitoring responsibilities to another public agency or to a private entity which accepts the delegation; however, until mitigation measures have been completed the lead agency remains responsible for ensuring that implementation of the mitigation measures occurs in accordance with the program.*”

**ENFORCEMENT.** In accordance with CEQA, the primary responsibility for making determinations with respect to potential environmental effects rests with the lead agency. As such, Santa Monica Community College District (SMC) is identified as the enforcement agency for this Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.

**PROGRAM MODIFICATION.** After review and approval by the lead agency, minor changes to the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program are permitted but can only be made by SMC. No deviations from this program shall be permitted unless the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program continues to satisfy the requirements of Section 21081.6 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), as determined by the Lead Agency.

**MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM.** The Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Project for the Bundy Campus West Building Renovation Project is as follows:

Mitigation Measure/ Condition of Approval	Action Required	Monitoring Phase	Responsible Agency or Party	Compliance Verification		
				Initial	Date	Comments
<b>HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS</b>						
<p>Building #4 was built in 1980 and should not contain hazardous materials such as asbestos-containing materials (ACMs). However, the contractor will prepare specifications for removal of any asbestos and/or other hazardous materials prior to renovation activities.</p> <p>Prior to the issuance of construction permits, SMC shall provide a letter to the City of Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety from a qualified asbestos abatement consultant stating that no ACMs are present in the structures. If ACMs are found to be present, remediation will be in compliance with the SCAQMD’s Rule 1403 and other state and federal rules and regulations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retain qualified asbestos abatement consultant.</li> <li>• Inspect premises.</li> <li>• Prepare letter.</li> </ul> <p>Take action as necessary based on inspection.</p>	Pre-construction planning	SMC			