
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

This Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) evaluates the environmental impacts that could result from the proposed renovation of Swan Hall and construction of a building addition (proposed project), on the Occidental College Campus, an approximately 120-acre site in the City of Los Angeles (City). The City of Los Angeles is the Lead Agency, the Department of City Planning has the authority to prepare this Draft EIR and, after the comment/response process, act upon certification of the Final EIR and make a decision as to whether to approve the proposed project. The City and responsible agencies have the authority to make decisions on discretionary actions relating to the proposed project. This Draft EIR is intended to serve as an informational document to be considered by the City and responsible agencies during deliberations on the proposed project to evaluate the proposed project's impact on the environment.

This Draft EIR has been prepared in conformance with State and City of Los Angeles Guidelines for the implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

This section provides an overview of the proposed project and its objectives, and summarizes the potential impacts anticipated as a result of project implementation. The Summary Table (**Table ES-2**) included at the end of this section identifies potential impacts and mitigation measures recommended to reduce significant adverse impacts. Alternatives to the proposed project are also briefly described.

For a full description of the proposed project, its impacts, and alternatives see Chapters 2, 3, and 4 of this EIR.

Project Background

In 2004, Occidental College initiated a master planning effort for the campus. A Specific Plan and associated Draft EIR were published in November 2008, and a Final EIR including a revised Draft Specific Plan was published in July 2009. In December 2009, Occidental College decided to reevaluate its approach to campus planning and withdrew their Specific Plan and associated applications. No hearings were ever held on the Specific Plan.

Occidental College is currently reevaluating campus needs and anticipates this effort will eventually lead to a new Facilities Master Plan. However, the content and scope of that plan is not currently known or foreseeable.

Project Description

Occidental College, is proposing to renovate the 16,340 square foot (sq. ft.), three-story Swan Hall and construct a, 22,700 sq. ft. three-story addition. No change in student or faculty population is anticipated as a result of the project. Originally designed by Myron Hunt as a dormitory for the original campus, Swan Hall was constructed in 1914 and remodeled and

repurposed in 1960 as a faculty office building. The building is a contributory structure to a potential Historic District. Today, Swan Hall houses one-third of Occidental's faculty for six academic departments. The renovation of Swan Hall would provide a necessary seismic upgrade and provide full ADA-compliant accessibility. Currently, most of the building is not ADA-compliant. The existing office space is substandard; the renovation would provide modern offices of adequate size for existing faculty and staff, along with faculty lounge areas, seminar rooms, flexible instruction areas, informational meeting spaces, and new psychology experiment and interview rooms. The proposed addition would incorporate a design and scale similar to, but distinct from, the original Swan Hall. The expansion would allow for modern offices and other spaces of adequate size for existing faculty and staff.

During the renovation of Swan Hall and the construction of the new 3-story addition, the offices of faculty and staff in existing Swan Hall would be relocated into temporary trailers in order that the academic and administrative functions of the College continue uninterrupted. Approximately 12,762 square feet of temporary trailer space would be used during construction activities.

Project Objectives

The proposed project, which consists of the renovation of Swan Hall and construction of a connecting building and addition, is guided by the following goals and objectives:

- To address seismic safety concerns associated with a building that is nearly 100 years old.
- To remodel, reconfigure and renovate a dysfunctional building in order to improve accessibility and support the campus need for faculty offices and lounge areas, modern teaching facilities including seminar rooms, flexible instruction areas, informal meeting spaces, and new/expanded psychology experiment and interview rooms.
- To preserve the historic Swan Hall Building in a cost effective manner that will allow it to be a vital part of campus operations while maintaining the appearance of the historic quadrangle located east of Swan Hall.
- To provide additional faculty offices and meeting space in a building that encourages and supports communication between faculty and students in a pleasant and efficient manner.
- To abate hazardous lead paint and asbestos present in building materials.
- To undertake renovation activities in a timely manner in order to allow faculty and staff to move back in to the building as quickly as possible.
- Meet sustainability objectives for the campus by designing the renovation and addition to meet LEED Silver Standards.

Areas of Controversy

Section 15123(b)(2) of the *CEQA Guidelines* requires that an EIR summary identify areas of controversy known to the Lead Agency, including issues raised by other agencies and the public. For the proposed project changes to the historic Swan Hall are controversial among some neighbors and preservation groups because the project does not include compliance with Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

Environmental Impacts

Chapter 3 of this DEIR considers the environmental impacts associated with renovation of the historic Swan Hall building and construction of the proposed building addition. The following Table ES summarizes impacts and mitigation measures of the proposed project.

Alternatives to the Project

CEQA requires that “an EIR shall describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project...” (*CEQA Guidelines*, Section 15126.6 (a)). The discussion must focus on alternatives to the project or its location, which are capable of lessening significant impacts, even if these alternatives would impede to some degree the attainment of project objectives, or be more costly (Section 15126.6 (b)). The EIR is required to briefly describe the rationale for selecting the alternatives to be discussed and also identify any alternatives that were considered by the Lead Agency, but rejected as infeasible during the scoping process.

The “No Project” alternative must be evaluated along with its impacts. If the “No Project” alternative is determined to be the environmentally superior alternative, the EIR shall also identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives. A Preservation Only (i.e. preservation of Swan Hall alone without accompanying addition) Alternative was rejected, as it would not meet the critical project objective of providing additional faculty offices and meeting space. In addition, the range of alternatives presented herein would be sufficient to achieve a reduction of impacts below a level of significance.

Alternatives analyzed in this EIR are as follows:

- No Project/No Build Alternative
- Preservation Alternative with Three Story Addition
- Preservation Alternative with Two-Story Addition

Environmentally Superior Alternative

The focus of the alternatives analysis is on reducing potentially significant impacts of the proposed project. The proposed project would result in one significant impact and that would be the impact on historic resources through the loss of historic fabric.

An EIR must identify the environmentally superior alternative. While the No Project/No Build Alternative may result in the least impact in the short-term, it is likely that over time the building would deteriorate and would not continue to be a vital part of the campus. An earthquake could result in serious damage to the building. Alternative 3, Preservation Alternative with Two-Story Addition would result in the least environmental impact and would therefore be the Environmentally Superior Alternative. However, this alternative reduces impacts further than necessary to achieve a less than significant impact. Alternative 2: Preservation Alternative with Three Story Addition would result in Less than Significant impacts on the Historic resource Swan Hall. This alternative is currently under consideration by the College.

**TABLE ES-1:
SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES**

Description of Impact	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
Impact	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
3A. Cultural Resources		
<p>The project would result in aesthetic changes to an historic building in a potential historic district. The project would result in significant loss of historic fabric and would include reconstruction of historic features as well as the construction of a building addition that would be larger than the existing building.</p> <p>The proposed project would cause a substantial adverse change in significance of a historical resource (Swan Hall) as defined in State CEQA §15064.5.</p>	<p>Measure 3A.1: Archival photographic documentation. Prior to any demolition, fence enclosure or board-up, Occidental College should prepare full building archival photo documentation similar to HABS Level II guidelines with minimum 2-1/4" negative and 8 x 10 archivally processed black and white prints. The photography should be extensive including overall views, exterior façade, interior and details. The documentation will also include outline narrative information about the building and copies of original drawings. Two original hardcopies and electronic versions on media such as CD shall be prepared. One hardcopy and electronic file shall be deposited with the Los Angeles Public Library and the other should be retained by Occidental College.</p> <p>Measure 3A.2: As-built Documentation. The project implementation team for Occidental College shall provide extensive documentation of the existing building for rehabilitation and replication. Field measurements including detailed drawings of openings and decorative elements will be necessary for reconstruction of historic elements. These dimensions and drawings should be part of the documents used for bidding and construction. Use of laser imaging or other technique may support the effort although final documentation should be in a format that is typically used for bidding and construction.</p> <p>Measure 3A.3: Inventory Procedures. The project implementation team for Occidental College shall provide Construction Documents that include specifications for documentation and inventory procedures to record condition and location of each item that is removed and to be re-installed. Contractor should photo document and inventory all items. A secure and appropriately protected area is to be designated by the Contractor in cooperation with the College for storage of items for re-use.</p> <p>Measure 3A.4: Design and Construction Monitoring. Occidental College shall engage a qualified historic preservation consultant reviewer/monitor with at least 5 years practical experience in evaluation and application of historic preservation construction techniques in projects of similar size and scope, the monitor shall also meet the National Park Service standards for qualified preservation architect with at least 10 years experience in design review and collaboration for application of the Secretary's Standards and Guidelines. During the remaining design, documentation and plan review phases, the reviewer/monitor should review the proposed design, and make suggestions as to where preservation elements can be more fully integrated according to the Standards, particularly for the design issues and features outlined in this evaluation. Furthermore, the reviewer/monitor shall review and comment on treatments for rehabilitation, reconstruction and new construction and shall comment upon whether the design, documentation and construction is implemented in accordance with the mitigation measures contained in the Draft EIR and with accepted professional preservation practice. Prior to approval of final construction plans, the reviewer/monitor shall submit a report to Occidental College and the City Planning</p>	<p>Significant.</p>

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	<p>Department summarizing critical historic preservation issues and addressing unforeseen circumstances. The reviewer/monitor shall also outline the role he/she will play during construction. Occidental College shall complete construction in a manner consistent with the historical preservation report as adapted and final construction plans. The reviewer/monitor will periodically monitor construction for consistency with the historic preservation report and final construction plans, and will participate in regular and special pre-construction meetings as well as regular construction meetings with the project implementation team.</p>	
<p>The proposed project is not anticipated to cause a substantial adverse change in significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to State CEQA §15064.5. Standard mitigation is proposed to ensure the impact remains less than significant.</p>	<p>Measure 3A.5: Archaeological Resources. If buried cultural resources, such as chipped or ground stone, historic debris, building foundations, or human bone, are inadvertently discovered during ground-disturbing activities, work shall cease in that area and within 100 feet of the find until a qualified archaeologist can assess the significance of the find and, if necessary, develop appropriate treatment measures in consultation with Occidental College, the City, and other appropriate agencies.</p> <p>If any archaeological materials are encountered during the course of the project development, the project shall be halted, and the services of an archaeologist shall be secured by contacting the Center for Public Archaeology - Cal State University Fullerton, or a member of the Society of Professional Archaeologist (SOPA) or a SOPA-qualified archaeologist to assess the resources and evaluate the impact. Copies of the archaeological survey, study or report shall be submitted to the South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC) at Cal State Fullerton. A covenant and agreement reflecting this measure shall be recorded prior to obtaining a grading permit.</p> <p>Any potentially significant archaeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.</p>	<p>Less than significant.</p>
<p>The proposed project is not anticipated to disturb human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries. Standard mitigation is proposed to ensure the impact remains less than significant.</p>	<p>Measure 3A.6: Human Remains. In the event of discovery or recognition of any human remains on the site, there shall be no further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent remains until the coroner of Los Angeles County has been contacted, per Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code. If the coroner determines that the human remains are of Native American origin, it is necessary to comply with state laws relating to the disposition of Native American burials, which fall within the jurisdiction of the Native American Heritage Commission (Public Resources Code Section 5097). If any human remains are discovered or recognized in any location other than a dedicated cemetery, there shall be no further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent human remains until</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The coroner of the County has been informed and has determined that no investigation of the cause of death is required; and b. If the remains are of Native American origin, <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The descendants of the deceased Native Americans have made a recommendation to the landowner or the person responsible for the excavation work, for means of treating or disposing of, with appropriate 	<p>Less than significant.</p>

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Description of Impact	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance After Mitigation
	<p>dignity, the human remains and any associated grave goods as provided in Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, or</p> <p>2. The Native American Heritage Commission was unable to identify a descendant or the descendant failed to make a recommendation within 24 hours after being notified by the commission.</p>	
<p>The proposed project is not anticipated to directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature. Standard mitigation is proposed to ensure the impact remains less than significant.</p>	<p>Measure 3A.7: Paleontological Resources If any paleontological materials are encountered during the course of the project development, the project shall be halted, and the services of a paleontologist shall be secured by contacting the Center for Public Paleontology - USC, UCLA, Cal State Los Angeles, Cal State Long Beach, or the Los Angeles County Natural History Museum to assess the resources and evaluate the impact. Copies of the paleontological survey, study or report shall be submitted to the Los Angeles County Natural History Museum. A covenant and agreement reflecting this measure shall be recorded prior to obtaining a grading permit.</p>	<p>Less than significant.</p>