

**SECOND ADDENDUM TO INITIAL STUDY/
MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION
(SCH No. 2020059026)**

**SAN MATEO UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
MILLS HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS COMPLEX PROJECT**

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1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This environmental document is an Addendum to the San Mateo Union High School District's (SMUHSD or District) Mills High School Athletics Complex Project Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND), State Clearinghouse No. 2020059026, adopted in October 2020 by the SMUHSD. The SMUHSD is the lead agency under CEQA.

This Addendum addresses refinements to the project plans that result in the removal of eight additional trees. As demonstrated in this Addendum, the IS/MND continues to serve as the appropriate document addressing the environmental impacts of these improvements pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

1.2 BACKGROUND

The IS/MND was prepared to address construction and operational impacts of the proposed Mills High School Athletics Complex Project (Approved Project). The IS/MND evaluated potential environmental effects on aesthetics, agriculture and forestry resources, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, mineral resources, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation/traffic, utilities and service systems, and mandatory findings of significance. All impacts identified in the IS/MND were either less than significant or have been mitigated to below a level of significance through implementation of mitigation measures identified in the document and subsequently incorporated into the project by IS/MND the District. Two of the mitigation measures, Mitigation BIO-1 and BIO-2, addressed loss of bird nests and bat roosting habitat associated from the previously proposed tree removal. The aesthetics analysis in the IS/MND also addressed the impacts of tree removal on visual quality.

1.3 PURPOSE OF ADDENDUM TO THE IS/MND

When a proposed project is changed, there are changes in environmental setting, or additional analysis is required, a determination must be made by the Lead Agency as to whether an Addendum or Subsequent EIR or MND is prepared. CEQA Guidelines Sections 15162 and 15164 set forth criteria to assess which environmental document is appropriate. The criteria for determining whether an Addendum or Subsequent MND is prepared are outlined below. If the criteria below are true, then an Addendum is the appropriate document:

- No new significant impacts will result from the project or from new mitigation measures.
- No substantial increase in the severity of environmental impact will occur.
- No new feasible alternatives or mitigation measures that would reduce impacts previously found not to be feasible have, in fact, been found to be feasible.

Based upon the information provided in Section 3.0 of this document, the changes to the Approved Project will not result in new significant impacts or substantially increase the severity of impacts previously identified in the IS/MND, and there are no previously infeasible alternatives that are now feasible. None of the other factors set forth in Section 15162(a)(3) are present. Therefore, an Addendum is appropriate. This Addendum addresses the environmental effects of the revised tree removal plan.

2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 Project Location And Setting

Mills High School is located at 400 Murchison Drive in the southeastern area of the City of Millbrae adjacent to the City of Burlingame, in San Mateo County. Regionally, the campus is accessed via from US Highway 101, via Millbrae Avenue and the Millbrae BART Station which is located approximately a quarter of a mile northeast of the campus.

The Mills High School campus is located north of Sequoia Avenue, southeast of Millbrae Avenue, southwest of South Magnolia Avenue, and northwest of Murchison Avenue. The project site, which encompasses the baseball field, multi-use field, tennis courts, and swimming pool, is at the northeastern and northwestern edges of the campus.

2.2. Previously Approved Project

The previously approved project is a reconfigured and improved athletics complex for the school including:

- Replacement of the existing practice field with a baseball field including a PA system and lighting;
- Replacing the tennis courts with a new soccer and softball field, with a PA system and lighting;
- Upgrades to the existing multi-use field;
- Construction of seven replacement tennis courts; and
- Adding lighting to the existing swim complex.

With respect to trees, the Final IS/MND included the following description:

Tree Protection, Planting and Removal. Figure 5 illustrates the proposed tree protection, removal, transplant, and replacement plan. An arborist's report¹ was prepared for the project which determined the following:

- There are 96 trees located in and around the project area, none of which are street trees – they are all located on the Mills campus. The Project would protect 76 trees, transplant 18 trees, replace 32 trees, and remove 20 trees, four of which are dead. The 16 living trees expected to be removed include three coast live oaks, three pittosporum, three blue gum eucalyptus, two holly oaks, two coast redwoods, one red maple, one chinquapin oak, and one Monterey cypress.
- As shown in Figure 5, two of the 20 trees to be removed are located at the northeastern corner of the site near the proposed baseball outfield eight are located on or near the location of the proposed tennis courts between the new baseball field and the soccer and softball field, and the remaining ten are located at the periphery of the soccer and softball field. Removal of the four dead trees and 16 living trees is required to accommodate three of the new tennis courts and soccer field and associated improvements.
- Thirty-two new trees would be planted and 20 removed as part of the project, resulting in a net increase of 12 trees. Or, not counting the removal of the four dead trees, a net increase of 16 trees.

2.2 PROPOSED PROJECT REVISIONS

The current project proposes minor adjustments to the site plan described in the IS that would result in the removal of eight additional trees (see Attachment 1 to this Addendum). These include two trees near the project fenceline near Murchison Drive, one additional tree at the edge of the softball field, and five trees at the eastern edge of the tennis courts. The five trees are part of a larger group of trees previously proposed for removal. No other changes to the project would occur.

Additional analysis has been conducted on the potential impact of this tree removal on aesthetics and biological resources. The results of this analysis are discussed below.

3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

As explained in Section 1.0, this Addendum has been undertaken pursuant to the provisions of CEQA Sections 15162 and 15164 to provide the District with the factual basis for determining whether any changes in the project, any changes in circumstances, or any new information since the IS/MND was certified require additional environmental review or preparation of a Subsequent MND or EIR to the IS/MND previously prepared.

The environmental analysis provided in the IS/MND remains current and applicable to the proposed project in all areas, as summarized below:

Aesthetics – Regarding trees, the IS/MND concluded:

IS Aesthetics Question 1 c): The project would also result in the removal of 20 of the 96 trees in and adjacent to the project area. Most of the trees to be removed are located between the baseball field and the existing tennis courts/proposed soccer and baseball field to accommodate three of the new tennis courts and soccer field and associated improvements. In addition, 18 of the trees that are not being removed would be transplanted. The project also includes the planting of 32 new trees in the project area, resulting in a net increase of 12 trees.

And...

*As indicated above, the project would not generally be visible from public vantagepoints along South Magnolia Avenue and Murchison Drive. The project would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site from the adjacent streets, because the project features would (1) either not be visible from these public vantage points due to vegetative screening, other buildings on campus, or changes in grade; or (2) would introduce minor features, such as light poles and new bleachers that, while visible, would not significantly detract from the existing visual quality of the high school campus. Moreover, the planting of 32 new trees (12 net when counting for the removal of 20) and transplanting of 16 trees would further limit any adverse visual impacts. Views from the 300 Murchison Drive apartments, while not public, would be impacted by the new baseball field. However, because of the substantial number of trees that would be planted between the baseball field and the rear of the apartments, impacts on these private views would be softened and would not be considered significant. Because the project would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings the impacts on visual quality would be **less than significant**.*

Removal of the eight additional trees would not substantively affect overall views of the school frontages- five are in a group of trees previously proposed for removal, and the other three are

isolated and minor components of the visual environment. In no views are all of these trees visible from off-site, and the group of five to be removed near the tennis courts are prominent only in views internal to the school, so their removal would represent minor alterations to visual character in from off-campus viewpoints. Additionally, proposed planting plans, as described in the IS/MND, would still exceed the trees to be removed (net of four additional trees rather than the net of 12 trees previously proposed).

Biological Resources – regarding trees, the Biological Resources analysis in the IS/MND stated:

IS Bio Resources Question IV a) The project has the potential to affect migratory and nesting protected bird species by tree removal and noise impacts on active nests. Roosting or nesting special-status bat species also may be affected. Twenty trees would be removed (four of which are already dead) and 32 replacement trees would be planted. This potentially significant impact would be reduced to a less-than-significant level by implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO- 1 and BIO-2, below.

IV. e) The project would remove four dead trees and removal of 16 additional trees including three coast live oaks, three pittosporum, three blue gum eucalyptus, two holly oaks, two coast redwoods, one, red maple, one chinquapin oak, and one Monterey cypress. The City of Millbrae requires a permit for removal of street trees and replacement of any tree removed. However, the City does not have jurisdiction over the trees on the Mills campus since it is under the jurisdiction of the SMUHSD. Therefore, the District would not be required to obtain a tree removal permit from the City of Millbrae for their removal. No impact would occur.

The IS/MND also included the following mitigation measures for tree removal:

Mitigation Measures

Measure BIO-1: Prevent Loss of Active Bird Nests. *A pre-construction survey for nesting birds shall be conducted by a qualified biologist within two weeks of construction activities, if activities are to occur within nesting/breeding season of native bird species (February- August). If active nests are identified within 300 feet of construction and would be exposed to prolonged construction-related noise above normal levels, a buffer shall be implemented around nests during the breeding season, or until a biologist determines the young have fledged. The size of the buffer and the type of*

construction activity will depend on multiple factors including relative change in noise and disturbance during construction activity, amount of vegetative screening between activity and nest, and sensitivity of species.

Measure BIO-2: Prevent Loss of Roosting Habitat for Bat Species. *The potential of the large trees to provide suitable roosting habitat shall be assessed by a qualified bat biologist, and if necessary, a roosting bat protection plan shall be implemented. If bats are determined to be using the site, minimization measures shall include prohibiting night work activities (between 10pm and sunrise) and minimizing work activities to outside of the most sensitive breeding (non-volant) period of April to August.*

The trees proposed for removal have similar biological resource value as those previously proposed for removal. The primary biological values would be for nesting birds and bats. Mitigation measures BIO-1 and BIO-2, above, and in the adopted IS/MND, also would mitigate any impacts resulting from removal of these trees on these species. Therefore no new or substantially more severe biological resource impacts would occur from the proposed project.

3.1 CONCLUSIONS

Based on the information provided above, the newly evaluated impacts of the removal of the eight additional trees would not substantially alter impacts previously identified in the adopted IS/MND for the project. Mitigation measures included in the adopted IS/MND also would apply to removal of these trees, and would reduce any impacts to a less-than-significant level. The conclusions of this Addendum remain consistent with those made in the IS/MND. No new significant impacts have been identified, nor is the severity of newly identified impacts substantially greater than the conclusions of the IS/MND.

Based upon the evidence included in the above analysis, the proposed project as described in Section 2.0 would not result in a substantial change in the conclusions and analysis included in the IS/MND, and no additional CEQA review is required.

**Attachment A- Site Plan Showing Previously Approved and Currently Proposed Tree
Removal**

