

October 7, 2022

TO: Interested Agencies and Individuals

LEAD AGENCY: Riverside Community College District

SUBJECT: **Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Riverside Community College District Solar Plan Project**

COMMENT PERIOD: October 7, 2022, to November 7, 2022

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act, the Riverside Community College District (RCCD) has prepared an Initial Study and Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) to analyze the potential environmental impacts of its proposed Solar Plan (Project) that would be located at Moreno Valley College and Norco College in the County of Riverside, California. The Initial Study and Draft MND reflect the independent judgment of RCCD.

Project Location: The project sites are located at 2001 Third Street in Norco, California at Norco College and 16130 Lasselle Street in Moreno Valley, California at Moreno Valley College.

Project Description: The Norco College Project component includes installation of a 2.1-megawatt (MW), ground-mounted fixed tilt photovoltaic (PV) array approximately 6 acres in size on the undeveloped hillside to the northeast of the main Norco College campus. The Project includes installation of a new alternating current (AC) station at the southwest corner of the array and a 12-kilovolt (KV) underground transmission line running southwest from the AC station to a new battery storage/battery switchboard that will be located on the site of an existing fuel cell, which will be demolished as part of the Project. Electricity will run from the new 500 kilowatt battery site through an existing 12KV underground transmission line along the northern edge of the main campus. The existing line will connect to a new Project 12KV underground transmission line at the location of a new power pole at the northwest corner of the main campus. The new line will run along the western edge of the main campus where it will connect to a new AC station at the southwest corner of campus which will then be connected to new AC conduit for an EV charger switchboard.

Norco College, including the Project site, is encumbered with a Land Use Covenant (LUC). According to the covenant, "hazardous substances, including antimony, cadmium, copper, lead, silver, zinc, dioxins, and furans remain at the Property above levels acceptable for unrestricted land use. Additionally, the Property has not been fully surveyed and characterized to determine if other hazardous substances above levels acceptable for unrestricted land use also remain in soils, soil gases, or groundwater." A Historical Hazards Evaluation conducted to assess the property did not identify any historical sites of contamination that overlap with the Project site. The nearest historically contaminated site is a landfill site located to the south of the Project site where John F. Kennedy Middle College High School is currently located. Remediation of this area was completed in 2005 for construction of the school. However, one of the

requirements of the LUC is that a soil management plan, approved by the Department of Toxic Substances Control, is required prior to disturbance of soils at or below 4 feet below ground surface in developed areas or any soils in undisturbed areas on the campus. Any soils brought to the surface must be managed according to applicable provisions of state and federal law. The Proposed Project involves ground disturbing activities. The depth of subsurface disturbances for installation of the PV array is estimated to be 8 feet below grade for the single footing. As such, the Project will be required to comply with the applicable restrictions outlined in the LUC. The subject property is also currently under a voluntary cleanup agreement, initiated in 2011 and updated in 2019. Multiple requirements are included in the voluntary cleanup agreement, such as requirements for completion of work plans, health risk assessments, soil management plans, and remediation work plans for activities conducted on the subject property which require excavation/disturbance of soil. These requirements are applicable to the Proposed Project

The Moreno Valley College Project component includes installation of a 0.9- megawatt ground-mounted fixed tilt PV array approximately 2.7 acres in size on undeveloped land on the easternmost edge of the campus, including a solar switchboard at the northern edge of the array. The array will tie into an existing 12KV underground transmission line via a new 12KV underground transmission line running west from the new switchboard and a 400-kilowatt battery storage facility. This Project component includes installation of a new battery storage/switchboard at the northern edge of the main campus and a new 12KV underground transmission line connecting the new battery storage/switchboard to new PV canopies in the parking lots which are not part of the Proposed Project. The Moreno Valley College Project site is not included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5.

Public Review Period: The Initial Study/MND is being made available for public review for a period of 30 days beginning October 7, 2022, and concluding November 7, 2022. A hard copy of the Initial Study/MND may be viewed at the RCCD office located at 3801 Market Street, Riverside, California. An electronic version of the Initial Study/MND may also be viewed at the following website address: www.rccd.edu.

Printed copies of the Initial Study/MND are also available for review at the Moreno Valley Public Library located at 25480 Alessandro Boulevard, Moreno Valley, California 92553 and the Norco Public Library located at 3240 Hamner Avenue #101B Norco, California 92860.

Comments on the Initial Study/MND must be received in writing or via email no later than November 7, 2022, and sent to:

Mehran Mohtasham, Director Capital Planning, Facilities, Planning and Development
3801 Market Street, 3rd Floor
Riverside, California 92501
Mehran.Mohtasham@rccd.edu

A public hearing at which the project and the Initial Study/MND will be considered has not yet been scheduled. All comments received related to issues in the Initial Study/MND will be included in the final package that is forwarded to the Board of Trustees for final consideration at this future, currently unscheduled, public hearing. Once a public hearing has been scheduled, the agenda for the meeting at which the project will be considered will be posted 72 hours prior to the meeting at each campus/college within the District pursuant with the noticing requirements set forth by RCCD Administrative Procedure No. 2310.

Please note that all comments and materials received, including names and addresses, will become part of the administrative record and may be released to the public. Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. If RCCD finds that the Project will not have a significant effect on the environment, it may adopt the Initial Study/MND. This means that RCCD may proceed to consider the project without the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report.


HUSSAIN AGHA

Hussain Agah
Associate Vice Chancellor,
Facilities Planning & Development

OCTOBER 6, 2022

Date