

West Los Angeles College Supplemental Environmental Impact Report

About the project

West Los Angeles College (WLAC) is one of the nine campuses of the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD). Located within unincorporated Los Angeles County, WLAC occupies approximately 70 acres overlooking Culver City, Marina Del Rey and Greater West Los Angeles. It currently offers paths to university transfer, career education and personal/professional growth to an active population of nearly 10,000 regular and extension students.

The WLAC campus reflects previous master planning efforts dating back to its opening in 1969. The primary purpose of the 2009 Master Plan, like prior Master Plans, is to guide the physical development of the college in order to create improved educational opportunities for its students and the local community.

Currently, LACCD is undergoing a voter-approved \$6-billion building program to improve and modernize its nine campuses through three bond measures. Measure J passed in November 2008 and will provide an additional \$3.5 billion in bond funds for the building program. These additional funds allow a number of unfunded facilities/buildings in WLAC's 2005 Master Plan to move

forward with minor revisions to proposed physical improvements.

WLAC has already had a significant positive impact on the local economy through its modernization program, which has employed hundreds of workers despite the region's overall economic downturn. As improvements continue, the college will increase its capacity to offer its students access to quality education and improved facilities to prepare them for emerging industries and careers.

Project refinements in the 2009 Master Plan include the following:

- The Watson Center, a media arts facility with a 400-seat theater;
- Allied Health and Wellness, a new 131,000-square-foot physical education facility, including laboratories, athletic space, locker space, meeting rooms, administrative offices, sheriff station and food service area;
- North Parking Structure, increasing on-campus parking by an additional 1,450 spaces;

- Teaching Learning Center, a seven story, 75,000-square-foot high-tech classroom building;
- Student Union, which will be home to the campus' various student services programs;
- Improvements to the campus to better the educational experience, increase sustainability and foster pedestrian and transit use;
- New softball field (replacing the new soccer field proposed in the 2005 Master Plan).

While there are few changes to the impacts proposed in the 2005 EIR versus the 2010 SEIR, WLAC has revised mitigation measures to reflect both completion of some projects (notably, the secondary access road) and on recent experience gained through working on the campus. Construction is expected to be completed in 2013. In the meantime, the improvements at WLAC continue to move through the development and technical process.

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How long will demolition activities last and when will construction on the campus be completed?

Demolition and earth moving will be completed by March 2011. Campus construction is expected to be completed by 2013.

What about dust issues related to demolition activities?

The grading for the secondary access road was the most extensive grading project. The remaining projects included in the 2009 Master Plan do not require extensive demolition or grading. As with the completed projects, watering of the demolition/construction sites will minimize dust to the maximum extent feasible.

When will the new access road open?

The new access road opened in late-February 2010.

How will local traffic impacts be minimized during demolition / construction?

All construction activities will be staged on the campus. Flag-personnel will be used as needed to ensure that trucks

utilizing the secondary access road, as well as on-campus construction sites, do not unreasonably delay traffic. Weekday construction activities will start earlier and reduce construction traffic impacts, as workers and some trucks can arrive before the peak hour.

Why did traffic back up on Overland during the first week of the Spring 2010 semester?

The first two weeks of classes of every semester are busy as students register and find their way. At the start of the Spring 2010 semester, traffic on Overland backed up as a result of congestion at the South Parking Structure entrance. Access to the parking structure was slowed by pedestrians crossing the incoming traffic. As a temporary measure spillover traffic was diverted to the soccer fields by the Sheriff. With the secondary access road now open future start of semester traffic will be improved; delays on Overland will not result from on campus student parking access. Also, once the North Parking Structure is opened (currently planned for 2011) the potential for traffic congestion will be further reduced as the traffic and parking will be split between the Overland entrance to the South

Parking Structure, and the Jefferson entrance to the North Parking Structure.

What has changed since certification of the 2005 FEIR?

Thanks to the voters of Los Angeles, Measure J was approved in November 2008, allowing a number of WLAC projects to be funded. These include the development of Watson Center (formerly Media Arts); an expanded Allied Health and Wellness physical education building (now 131,000 square feet); a North Parking Structure with 1,450 spaces; and a new Technology Learning Center (expanded to 75,000 square feet). Overall the on-campus building area would increase by 59,360 square feet compared to what was analyzed in the 2005 FEIR.

Why were Allied Health and Wellness and the Technology Learning Center expanded?

With the additional funding, the Allied Health and Wellness building was proposed (as compared to a 20,000 square foot expansion of existing facilities) to provide a state-of-the-art physical education facility to faculty and students.

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Similarly, the expanded Technology Learning Center will be a state-of-the-art teaching facility that provides improved resources and training to on-campus students.

How do the grandstand/bleachers differ from those considered in the 2005 FEIR?

The 2009 Master Plan drawings label the football field bleachers as a “Grandstand.” This is just another term for the same structure that was proposed in the 2005 master Plan and analyzed in the 2005 FEIR. Since no changes are proposed no additional analysis is included in the 2010 Draft SEIR.

How will changes to the Master Plan affect the construction timetable?

New construction will extend through 2013. The prior construction timetable for the 2005 FEIR projects is nearing completion.

What is the baseline for the SEIR analysis?

The 2010 Draft SEIR “supplements” the 2005 FEIR future year analyses to reflect changes that have occurred in the

project and better anticipate future conditions at WLAC. The baseline for all impact analyses is the same as that used in the 2005 EIR (i.e. 2004).

How will traffic impacts change compared to those analyzed in the 2005 FEIR?

Traffic impacts are expected to remain the same or decrease because the projected on-campus student population is declining as a result of on-line learning. The college anticipates 3,600 fewer students commuting to campus than previously projected in the 2005 FEIR.

Will there be sufficient parking available?

Based on analysis and survey data, WLAC’s two on-campus parking structures are anticipated to exceed demand through 2022. The upcoming Expo Line in Culver City (expected to open in 2011) and increased transit ridership will also continue to have a significant impact on reducing campus parking needs.

What if students can’t afford parking?

The LACCD Board of Trustees has established minimal parking rates for students (\$20 per semester). WLAC also encourages students to park on campus and, whenever possible, takes reasonable steps to ensure students are not parking in nearby neighborhoods. Eligible students may apply for transportation costs to be included in financial aid and/or grants.

How can we be assured that mitigation measures are implemented?

The District implements mitigation measures and oversees their implementation through the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program. An ombudsman is available to work with the public to follow-up on complaints and investigate them.

How will the Mitigation Hotline work?

The Mitigation Hotline (telephone and e-mail) will replace the old ombudsman process. Calls will be acted on as soon as feasible and a response, reporting on what actions have been taken, will be provided to callers in a timely manner, usually within 24 hours or on the first

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construction day following a weekend or holiday. This process will allow calls to be routed to the appropriate person more efficiently so they may respond to issues as they arise. Calls will be logged and District staff will monitor activity to ensure compliance on mitigation measures and that community concerns addressed.

How/why have mitigation measures changed?

Mitigation measures are steps taken to reduce environmental impacts of construction activities. In preparing the 2010 Draft SEIR, the District has analyzed the projects in the 2009 Master Plan and tailored the mitigation measures to those projects. Some mitigation measures under the 2005 FEIR related to completed activities and are not relevant or suitable to future construction activities. Other changes may have arisen from on-site experience improving the District's understanding as to what steps are workable and effective.

What about sustainability?

The Los Angeles Community College District is committed to creating a sustainable future. On the West LA

campus, this will include the use of solar panels on the new north and south parking structures, building roofs and elsewhere. In addition Allied Health, the Technology Learning Center and the Watson Center are expected to be LEED Platinum certified.

The Expo Light Rail Line is anticipated to open in Culver City in the year 2011. The campus shuttle will provide connectivity to this line and the rest of the region, greatly expanding the transit accessibility of the campus.

Why is construction noise now considered potentially significant where it was found less than significant in the 2005 FEIR?

In speaking with the local community – and understanding the potential expansion of construction hours – this impact is now identified as potentially significant.

How does the 2010 SEIR relate to the (2005) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with adjacent Homeowner Associations (HOAs)?

The 2010 SEIR focuses on the newly funded projects set forth in the 2009 Master Plan and builds upon the

District's recent practical experience with mitigation of campus construction impacts.

Therefore, the 2010 SEIR supersedes mitigation measures set forth in the 2005 FEIR. Likewise, as the MOU related to 2005 FEIR activities, it is concluded and superseded.

The District intends to implement practical feasible measures that effectively reduce impacts in accordance with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).