



South Campus Plan

Planned Unit Development Permit (PUD) Project

Final Environmental Impact Report Key Findings

After years of extensive analysis, the City of Oakland has released the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for the proposed Head-Royce School Planned Unit Development Permit (PUD) Project, known informally as the Head-Royce South Campus Plan.

The FEIR reflects the robust feedback provided during the draft public comment period and culminates years of thoughtful input gathered from experts, neighbors and community stakeholders to proactively address specific concerns and potential impacts. The Head-Royce team is pleased to see the FEIR affirms that all environmental impacts from the project can be reduced to a level of “less than significant” with standard conditions of approval and mitigation measures.

FEIR Updates and Key Findings

TRANSPORTATION

Head-Royce currently surpasses alternate transportation requirements for trips to and from the School, with 65% of students relying on carpools, transit and other modes of transportation—far above the required 30%. Once the School’s enrollment begins to gradually increase over a 20-year period, the School will be required to maintain an average of 34.5% of students traveling by modes other than single occupancy vehicles.



TRAFFIC

A key element of the South Campus Plan is the proposed internal Loop Driveway, which the FEIR confirms would eliminate all personal vehicle drop-offs and pick-ups along Lincoln Avenue. The FEIR also stipulates that the School adopt a revised Transportation Policy Guide to help ensure that the Loop Driveway is used as intended and that traffic no longer spills over into the neighborhood, including use of the neighborhood’s “Alida Loop,” which would be discontinued.

PARKING

Head-Royce proposes adding 25 new on-site parking spaces and retaining the 129 spaces that currently exist, for a net of 154 total parking spaces on the proposed South Campus, and a total of 308 spaces school-wide. To accommodate the expected need for a total of 344 spaces at full-build out, the School has agreed to either provide stacked parking or to limit some or all students from driving to the School.

WILDFIRE MITIGATION

The FEIR finds that there is no evidence that the School’s expansion increases wildfire risk in the neighborhood and reaffirms the project will have less than significant environmental impacts related to wildfires and emergency evacuation. Additionally, the FEIR notes that the School is well-situated along a direct evacuation route and that after a 20-year period of gradually increasing enrollment, the additional student population would account for a mere 4% increase in the neighborhood population likely to use Lincoln. Further, because Head-Royce is relying upon a pedestrian evacuation strategy, the School’s students and staff would not add additional vehicle congestion or delay. Lastly, the project has been updated to incorporate recommendations made by wildfire experts and is adding additional measures and evacuation protocols that go above and beyond what is required. Some of these include a more robust Emergency Evacuation Plan which will be vetted by fire experts, including the Oakland Fire Department, an updated Vegetation Management Plan, enhanced connections with emergency alert systems, improved ADA access and updated training and accountability protocols.

NOISE

Comprehensive monitoring and analysis conducted by professional noise consultants confirms that noise from the Commons, outdoor classrooms, the Performing Arts Center (PAC) and traffic from the Loop Driveway are all less than significant and substantially below thresholds. The one exception is an amplified event, such as graduation, therefore the FEIR requires the School to have an acoustic engineer design and install a specialized speaker array system for outdoor events to reduce any noise “spillover” to nearby homes. Additionally, Head-Royce is choosing to construct a noise buffering wall along the Loop Driveway as a gesture of goodwill to neighbors, even though one is not required.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

In response to comments about historic preservation, the project plans have been updated to now include the retention of the original windows on Building 0 and the removal of the ADA ramps at Building 2. While neither is required to mitigate a significant impact, further inspection revealed that these changes are doable and in keeping with best practices in historic preservation.

PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

The City of Oakland has agreed that the Performing Arts Center (PAC) will not be used for public events, in keeping with the desires of the neighbors. All School-sponsored events will conclude by 9:00 pm to ensure that clean-up and departure end by 10:00 pm in order to minimize late evening noise. Further, the loading dock has been removed from the PAC and all loading will occur in the lower drop-off area, farther away from nearby homes.

PEDESTRIAN CROSSING

Safety will always be one of Head-Royce’s top priorities. To that end, three at-grade pedestrian crossings are integral to the South Campus plan: the existing crossing at the northern parking lot, a relocated crossing at the new Loop Driveway exit and a new crossing at the Loop Driveway entrance. In the later phases of the project, the School plans to construct a pedestrian tunnel which would be open only to the School community and the three at-grade crossings would remain in use for all.

