

# **City of Grover Beach Lodge and Conference Center**

Addendum to the Revised Final Grover Beach Lodge &  
Conference Center Environmental Impact Report  
SCH No. 2010051002

**Prepared for:**

City of Grover Beach  
154 South 8<sup>th</sup> Street  
Grover Beach, California 93433  
Contact: Bruce Buckingham, Community Development Director  
(805) 473-4530

**Prepared by:**

SWCA Environmental Consultants  
1422 Monterey Street, Suite C200  
San Luis Obispo, California 93401  
Contact: Emily Creel, Project Manager  
(805) 543-7095

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# SECTION 1

## INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

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### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

The City of Grover Beach (City), serving as the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 (CEQA), certified the Revised Final Grover Beach Lodge & Conference Center Environmental Impact Report (Revised Final EIR) on March 5, 2012. Subsequently, the City Council approved the Grover Beach Lodge & Conference Center Project on April 7, 2014 submitted by Pacifica Hosts, Inc. The Grover Beach Lodge & Conference Center included a 150-room lodge complex within four main buildings, including an approximately 11,130 square foot conference center, improvements to on-site State Park facilities, and expansion of an existing RV sewer dump station.

Since certification of the Revised Final EIR and approval of the project, Pacifica Hosts, Inc. has requested minor modifications to the project design, as more fully described in Section 2 below. The requested modifications would require a Use Permit and an amendment to the Coastal Development Permit issued for the project.

The purpose of this review is to consider the requested modifications and determine if implementation of the modified project would create new significant impacts or impacts that would be substantially more severe than those disclosed in the Revised Final EIR for the Grover Beach Lodge & Conference Center. Additional CEQA review beyond this Addendum, in the form of a Supplemental EIR, would only be necessary if the proposed changes to the project created new significant impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of significant impacts identified in the Revised Final EIR used to approve the Grover Beach Lodge & Conference Center.

According to CEQA Guidelines section 15162:

- (a) *When an EIR has been certified or a negative declaration adopted for a project, no subsequent EIR shall be prepared for that project unless the lead agency determines, on the basis of substantial evidence in light of the whole record, one or more of the following:*
  - (1) *Substantial changes are proposed in the project which will require major revisions of the previous EIR or negative declaration due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects;*
  - (2) *Substantial changes occur with respect to the circumstances under which the project is undertaken which will require major revisions of the previous EIR or negative declaration due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects; or*
  - (3) *New information of substantial importance, which was not known and could not have been known with the exercise of reasonable diligence at the time the previous EIR was certified as complete or the negative declaration was adopted, shows any of the following:*
    - (A) *The project will have one or more significant effects not discussed in the previous EIR or negative declaration;*
    - (B) *Significant effects previously examined will be substantially more severe than shown in the previous EIR;*
    - (C) *Mitigation measures or alternatives previously found not to be feasible would in fact be feasible and would substantially reduce one or more significant effects of*

*the project, but the project proponents decline to adopt the mitigation measure or alternative; or*

- (D) Mitigation measures or alternatives which are considerably different from those analyzed in the previous EIR would substantially reduce one or more significant effects on the environment, but the project proponents decline to adopt the mitigation measure or alternative.*

Section 15164 provides the following guidance for preparation of an EIR addendum:

*“(a) The lead or responsible agency shall prepare an addendum to a previously certified EIR if some changes or additions are necessary but none of the conditions described in Section 15162 calling for preparation of a subsequent EIR have occurred...*

*(c) An addendum need not be circulated for public review but can be included in or attached to the final EIR or adopted negative declaration.*

*(d) The decision making body shall consider the addendum with the final EIR or adopted negative declaration prior to making a decision on the project.*

*(e) A brief explanation of the decision not to prepare a subsequent EIR pursuant to Section 15162 should be included in an addendum to an EIR, the lead agency’s findings on the project, or elsewhere in the record. The explanation must be supported by substantial evidence.”*

This addendum has been prepared consistent with CEQA Guidelines Sections 15162 and 15164 to document that the proposed project modifications would not result in new significant impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of a previously identified significant impacts, thus triggering the need for a Supplemental EIR.

## **1.2 SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS**

This Addendum to the Revised Final EIR demonstrates that the environmental analysis, impacts, and mitigation requirements identified in the Revised Final EIR for the project in 2012 remain substantively unchanged by the project modifications described herein, and supports the finding that the proposed project does not raise any new issues and does not exceed the levels of impact significance identified in the Revised Final EIR. Accordingly, a subsequent EIR is not necessary pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15164. Therefore, the City has elected not to prepare a Subsequent EIR pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15162. This decision is based on substantial evidence, as set forth in the following discussion of the proposed project modifications and the environmental impacts of those modifications.

The Addendum need not be circulated for public review (CEQA Guidelines §15164(c)); however, an addendum is to be considered by the decision making body along with the previously certified Final EIR prior to making a decision on the project (CEQA Guidelines 15164(d)).

# **SECTION 2**

## **PROJECT MODIFICATIONS**

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### **2.1 PROJECT LOCATION**

The project site is located between State Highway 1 and the Pacific Ocean in the city of Grover Beach, at the western terminus of West Grand Avenue within Pismo State Beach. The site encompasses 13.4 acres within Pismo State Beach near the West Grand Avenue entrance to the Oceano Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area. Existing uses onsite include public restrooms, picnic areas, a visitor drop-off area, parking, scenic paths and trails, passive use areas, and access to the beach. The project site is bounded by dunes and the Pacific Ocean to the west, the Pismo State Beach Golf Course to the north, Le Sage RV Park to the east, and West Grand Avenue and dunes to the South.

### **2.2 SUMMARY OF ORIGINAL PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The originally approved project proposed construction of a lodge complex with four major buildings. Building 1 would contain the lodge entry and lobby, check-in, gift shop, lodge maintenance facilities, offices, a restaurant and bar/lounge with outdoor seating, and a second story public viewing area. Buildings 2 and 3 would contain guest rooms. Building 4 would contain the conference center, including a ballroom, restroom facilities, a prep kitchen, outdoor viewing area, and pre-function areas. The average building height would not exceed 40 feet consistent with City requirements. The proposed lodge and conference center is required to obtain a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Silver certification.

The lodge complex has been designed to be integrated within the State Park, allowing seamless access between the two facilities. The entire lodge site will be accessible to the public with the exception of the guest rooms and swimming pool. Public use areas include the ground floor of Building 1, which includes the restaurant, shops, and lobby. In addition, a public viewing area will be located on the second level via a public elevator that is accessible from the public boardwalk connected to the public beachfront. Approximately 233 spaces are proposed for lodge parking only; approximately 160 parking spaces would be retained/replaced within the State Park. The approved project also included a designated area within the on-site parking areas for equestrian parking, including space for approximately five to seven trailers depending on the size and parking configuration.

The originally approved project included several improvements to the existing State Park facilities as required by a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) entered into on December 20, 2006 between the City of Grover Beach and the California Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks). Existing public areas would be upgraded, and paths would be reconfigured to incorporate the lodge facilities and would be constructed of similar materials as the lodge facility to provide a uniform appearance to the area. The existing public plaza would be reconfigured to reduce hardscape and enlarged to add picnic areas with picnic tables and native dune landscaping. In addition, the public bathroom and showers would be relocated within the same general vicinity and constructed to blend in with the rest of the proposed project. The public restrooms would be connected to existing City water and wastewater.

A public beach drop off area would be relocated to the Fin's Restaurant parking lot. This beach drop off would provide a temporary loading area for visitors to drop off passengers and supplies in the vicinity of the public restrooms and picnic areas.

Existing coastal access and pathways leading to and from the existing concessions and picnic facilities would be enhanced and expanded along the beach areas and within the lodge complex to encourage public access to the public areas of the lodge and conference center amenities and the beach. These access ways would also connect, through the proposed lodge facility, various locations throughout the development: (1) to the east, to connect Meadow Creek and parking lots through the lodge complex to the beach; (2) to the north, to connect the parking areas with the golf course uses; and (3) to the south and along West Grand Avenue, to connect the West Grand Avenue/Highway 1 intersection and the Amtrak Station (located at the southeast corner of the intersection) with the project site. The access ways and paths would be comprised of a variety of permeable and decorative paving materials, with a composite wood boardwalk and decks accessed from the public paths through the lodge complex. All access ways would be handicapped accessible.

The current RV sewer dump station located on the project site just south of Le Sage Drive would be relocated off-site as part of the proposed project improvements and the existing RV sewer dump station located in the North Beach Campground, approximately 0.5 mile to the north from the project site, would be improved to install additional sewer connections and expand the facility.

The approved project also included four lodge monument signs, a variety of interpretive signs discussing the dune complex throughout the site, safety signs, and safety lighting within the lodge complex and along public trails.

## **2.3 PROPOSED PROJECT**

The currently proposed project includes all major components of the original project, but incorporates modifications to Building 1, the main lodge building that includes the lodge entry and lobby, gift shop, lodge maintenance facilities, meeting space, offices, restaurant and bar/lounge, and a second story public viewing area. No changes to the public State Park improvements or RV sewer dump station components of the project have been proposed. The proposed modifications to Building 1 are limited to the following:

1. The stepped building design was changed to a single level. The original proposed stepped floor was not consistent with site conditions and presented an operational obstacle.
2. The overall building area was increased by approximately 6,348 square feet, primarily due to the need to increase the size of the kitchen and additional cold storage room to serve the conference center. The fitness room was also enlarged and additional bathrooms were added to serve the pool on the ground level. The meeting space on the ground floor was decreased from 2,183 square feet to 1,000 square feet and a hospitality suite on the second floor has been replaced with a spa.
3. A 6,790-square-foot roof deck has been added to Building 1, including three elevators, two staircases, a mechanical room, glass guard rails, roof mounted equipment screens, circulation areas, and a net useable area of 4,597 square feet. The roof deck would serve as a multi-purpose outdoor area that would be utilized by the general public and private parties. Use of the roof deck would generally be limited between the hours of 10:00 am to 9:00 pm.

As a result of the roof deck addition, various mechanical, screening, and safety elements would exceed the City's 40-foot maximum building height as measured from

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natural grade. The extent to which new components will exceed the 40-foot height limit are detailed below:

- An elevator and stair tower that would include three elevators and one staircase enclosed in a 620-square-foot mechanical room would extend 13 feet, 2 inches above the 40-foot limit.
  - A glass guardrail would extend 2 feet, 0 inches above the 40-foot limit. The guardrail would be clear glass with a patterned, ultraviolet reflective coating making it visible to birds to avoid bird strikes while remaining transparent to the human eye.
  - Standing seam metal roof projections would extend up to 2 feet, 0 inches above the 40-foot height limit in four locations.
  - Two frosted glass panels would extend 4 feet, 6 inches above the 40-foot height limit for screening roof-mounted mechanical equipment.
  - Additional standard roof-mounted mechanical equipment and units (e.g., heating, ventilation, etc.) – 5 feet, 0 inches.
4. The building additions would change the building footprint from a total of 25,920 square feet to the current configuration of 27,644 square feet, an increase of 1,724 square feet (less than 0.04 acre), representing a 6.6% increase in footprint.

The revised project would not change occupancy at the lodge, increase the number of rooms, or create a new use at the site beyond that originally approved.

Height increases are proposed for the roof deck elevator and stairs mechanical room, railings, frosted glass screen, accent roof projections, and mechanical units. Height increases are necessary for vertical circulation to the roof deck, except that the accent roofs were raised to maintain the original building design aesthetic. The mansard roof heights were also increased, but kept within the City's 40-foot building height limit.



# SECTION 3

## IMPACT ANALYSIS

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The City reviewed the previously certified Revised Final EIR for the Grover Beach Lodge and Conference Center in conjunction with the current proposal and determined that the proposed modifications described in this Addendum would not result in any new or significantly adverse environmental impacts or a substantial increase in severity of previously identified significant impact. The analysis supporting this finding is outlined in the following sub-sections.

### **3.1 OVERVIEW AND EVALUATION OF POTENTIAL NEW OR SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASED SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS**

The proposed revisions to the Grover Beach Lodge and Conference Center project are generally limited to the addition of a rooftop deck onto Building 1 and modifications to the overall size, configuration, footprint, and layout of Building 1. The revised project includes an additional 6,348 square feet in overall building area, which accounts for an approximate 10% increase in the size of Building 1 (and a 6.1% increase in the size of the lodge complex in total). The revised project also includes an additional 1,724 square foot increase in the Building 1 footprint, which accounts for an approximate 6.6% increase in Building 1 over the approved project. Therefore, the revised project would increase the size of Building 1 by roughly 10%.

Although the increase in building size is not insignificant, the proposed revisions would have little to no effect on almost all of the issue areas and environmental resources discussed pursuant to CEQA. The revisions would not change the occupancy of the lodge, increase the number of rooms or create a new or different use at the site that was not previously analyzed. Therefore, no additional long-term traffic trips would be generated, and no substantial increase in operational air emissions would occur. Noise from use of the rooftop deck would not be noticeable over more dominant noise sources at the project site and in the surrounding areas (i.e., traffic from State Route 1 and West Grand Avenue, noise from mechanical HVAC units). The revised project would not increase demand on public services (i.e., fire, police, roads, emergency services) or utilities (i.e., water, wastewater, trash collection, electrical services). The proposed revisions would not affect geologic conditions at the site or result in a change to the use, storage, and handling of common hazardous materials at the site. Because use of the site is not changing, the revised project would not result in land use inconsistencies or conflicts, or create incompatible land uses, beyond the level identified in the Revised Final EIR.

The Building 1 location currently consists of a disturbed dirt lot used for overflow parking. The area was surveyed for sensitive biological and cultural resources at the time of preparation of the Revised Final EIR. Survey results were negative and the potential for the Building 1 location to contain sensitive biological or cultural resources was determined to be low.

The expanded footprint would slightly alter on-site drainage patterns and stormwater flows; however, consistent with the original approved project, the revised project will maintain the existing peak volume, area, and runoff quantity as to not imbalance the existing environment downstream of the proposed project area. Consistent with the approved project, on-site retention basins would be sized to accommodate the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile rainfall depth and provide a safe overland escape route while ensuring the proposed finished floors are more than 1 foot above the 100-year flood plain elevation. Therefore, expansion of the project footprint into

additional areas of the disturbed project site would not result in new or increased environmental impacts.

Construction of the rooftop deck and the larger building would marginally increase construction-related noise, emissions, dust, disturbance, and traffic. However, the incremental increase in construction-related impacts that would result from construction of these new project elements would be marginal in the context of overall project construction. This incremental increase would also be minimized through implementation of the mitigation measures identified in the Revised Final EIR. Therefore, no new or substantially more severe construction-related impacts would result from the revised project.

It was determined by the City that the project revisions could result in new or increased impacts to visual resources, due to the increased height, mass, and sizing of Building 1. Therefore, this issue is analyzed in detail below.

## **3.2 AESTHETIC RESOURCES**

The Revised Final EIR included a comprehensive analysis of visual resources, including photo-simulations. The analysis also identified applicable visual policies and ordinances that relate to the project site. The revised project was analyzed to determine whether new or more severe significant impacts to visual resources in the project area would occur. The analysis also includes discussion regarding the revised project's consistency with applicable visual policies.

### **3.2.1 Consistency with the City of Grover Beach Plans and Policies**

The City planning documents do not contain specific criteria for determining thresholds of significance regarding aesthetic resources. However, in comparing the project to the thresholds identified in Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, substantial consideration was given to the project's consistency with public policies, plans, goals, and regulations concerning scenic vistas, scenic roadways, visual character, and night lighting. The Revised Final EIR analyzed the following goals, policies, and guidelines as a basis for determining levels of potential impact as well as an indication of aesthetic values and sensitivity to visual change. This analysis includes a re-evaluation of the revised project's consistency with these plans and policies, which were in effect at the time the Revised Final EIR were prepared.

#### The City of Grover Beach Local Coastal Program Section 2.2 Part II.

The Local Coastal Program Section 2.2.2 defines nine "Visual Resource Areas" within the city having distinct visual qualities and characteristics. The majority of the project site lies within Visual Resource Area 3, which generally includes the area north of West Grand Avenue and east of the dunes, including the Highway 1 and railroad corridor. The Local Coastal Program also identifies policies intended to protect and enhance the visual quality of each of the Visual Resource Areas as follows:

Section 2.2.4 Recommendations state:

#### **C. AREA 3**

- 1. Policy: As the Coastal Planned Commercial area west of Highway 1 redevelops into consistent visitor serving uses, the allowed development shall be sited and designed to protect the existing view corridors perpendicular to Highway 1, along Grand Avenue and Le Sage Drive, and*

*create one to three additional view corridors perpendicular to Highway 1 north of Le Sage Drive. The development in this area shall be complimentary and subordinate to the character of the shoreline and dune setting to the fullest extent feasible.*

### The City Of Grover Beach General Plan Land Use Element

*LU-6.2 Beachfront Lodge. The City will actively pursue development of the Beachfront Lodge site with a hotel/convention center that incorporates at least the following general features:*

- a. The hotel/convention center design should be in context with the surrounding dune complex and beach. The project should consist of more than one building with staggered heights and bulk to break up the building mass and allow for view corridors from the site.*
- f. Protection of sensitive biological, scenic, and cultural resources;*

### Municipal Code - Zoning Regulations

#### **Part 22 - Coastal Planned Commercial District or "C-P-C" District**

##### **Sec. 9122.1. Purpose. (C-P-C)**

*The Coastal Planned Commercial District is intended to provide for visitor-serving needs in a manner that is sensitive to the environmental, visual, and archaeological resources within and adjacent to the boundaries of the District by sensitively siting and designing structures. (Am. Ord. 10-04)*

##### **Sec. 9122.6. Maximum Allowable Height. (C-P-C)**

*The maximum allowable height in the "C-P-C" District shall be three (3) stories but not to exceed forty (40) feet for sixty (60) percent of any project and shall be two (2) stories but not to exceed twenty-eight (28) feet for the remaining forty (40) percent of any project. In each case the protection of existing view corridors shall be required. (Am. Ord. 10-04)*

##### **Sec. 9122.12. Development Standards. (C-P-C)**

*All development plans and subsequent construction shall implement the following standards:*

- (A) That all development in this area be sited and designed to protect existing view slots or corridors from Highway 1 and upland areas to the dunes and shoreline.*
- (B) That all development in this area be sited and designed to enhance or create new view slots from Highway 1 to the dunes and shoreline.*
- (E) That native plant material shall be the major theme in all landscape designs.*

- (F) *That all roads, parking lots, and structures shall be sited and designed to prevent impacts which would significantly degrade the adjacent environmentally sensitive area.*
- (G) *That the architectural theme of development in this area shall generally follow the criteria set forth in the adopted Advisory Architectural Design Guidelines and additionally said architectural theme shall be compatible and complimentary to the existing natural vegetation and land forms. The architecture and site design shall include the following characteristics, in order to reduce massing and reduce the sense of verticalness of structures:*
- (1) Use of structural, architectural design elements, i.e., corridors, heavy beams, posts, arches, columns, colonnades, canopies, cornices, etc.*
  - (2) Strong textured look, using woods, tiles, pavers, stuccos, stones, blocks and bricks, colors, plant material, recesses, etc.*
  - (3) Strong feeling or overhead treatment such as roof overhangs, balconies, or dark facias.*
  - (4) Earthen colors. Colors with warm, natural tones. Colors range from whites, yellows, browns, clays, slates, etc.*
  - (5) Wall relief (graphic, three dimensional design, landscaping, heavy textured stucco, wood tiles, etc.).*
  - (6) Strong window statement (treatment of frame, mullions, border, etc.).*
  - (7) The minimum distance separating buildings shall be equal to the sum of the height of any two adjacent buildings divided by two, but in no case less than ten (10) feet between buildings.*

### Discussion

The Revised Final EIR found that the project would be consistent with City of Grover Beach plans and policies related to visual quality with implementation of mitigation measures. In particular, the project was consistent with Municipal Code Zoning Regulation Sec. 9122.6. *Maximum Allowable Height*, because no proposed building was over 40 feet in height. Proposed revisions to the project would increase the height of portions of Building 1 to 52 feet, resulting in the requirement for a Use Permit to allow for mechanical equipment and/or architectural features that exceed 40-feet in height.

While CEQA requires a discussion of consistency with public plans, inconsistency does not necessarily lead to a significant impact. Inconsistency with public plans creates significant impacts under CEQA only when an adverse physical effect would result from the inconsistency. The potential for significant visual impacts to result from the revised project are discussed below.

## 3.2.2 Project-Specific Impacts and Mitigation Measures

The Final EIR included a comprehensive analysis of visual resources based on thresholds identified within Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines. The following discussion includes a comparison of the potential visual impacts identified in the Revised Final EIR, and the impacts that would occur as a result of the proposed project revisions.

### 3.2.2.1 Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

#### Previous Revised Final EIR Analysis

The Revised Final EIR described that the most visible components of the project would be the four buildings associated with the lodge and conference center. Building 1 would be located near the center of the site and would be the tallest of the structures, at approximately 40 feet in height. Buildings 2 and 3 would extend approximately 37 feet in height (Building 2 was subsequently reduced to 26 feet in height).

As described in the Revised Final EIR, the proposed buildings would affect a small portion of the ocean views from elevated areas in the vicinity of Third Street. Because of the viewing height and distance, however, the project would occupy only a small portion of the overall viewshed, and quality ocean views would remain over the tops of the buildings and to the north and south. As seen from viewpoints along Highway 1, West Grand Avenue, Le Sage Drive, and the eastern portion of the site, existing views to the ocean and beach are already substantially limited, and the addition of the new buildings would have minimal effect on scenic vistas from those areas. As seen from the beach area and the boardwalk, the lodge improvements would not block or adversely affect scenic vistas of the ocean, dunes, or coastline.

The Revised Final EIR also determined that the spacing of the buildings and the associated gaps would allow views through the site at certain locations. Generally, the heights of the buildings would not be a factor in the project's effect on scenic vistas, except from the distant views to the east. From those viewpoints however, the visual effect of the building heights would be minimal relative to the overall viewshed and view quality. The upper floors of Buildings 1, 2 and 3 are expected to provide increased opportunities for viewing the ocean, beach, dunes, and scenic vistas.

The Revised Final EIR determined that no significant impacts to existing scenic vistas would result from Building 1 or the other buildings associated with the lodge and conference center. The only potentially significant impacts to a scenic vista identified in the Revised Final EIR were related to construction of the proposed equestrian staging and parking area within an area of disturbed dunes at the south end of the project site (south of West Grand Avenue). This project component was not approved as part of the originally approved project (the approved project included relocated equestrian parking within the larger lodge and conference center parking lot); therefore, the potential impact to the scenic vista was avoided.

#### Additional Impact Analysis

The revised project would alter the massing of Building 1, and would add a rooftop deck, build an elevator tower, stairway and mechanical buildings to serve the rooftop deck. The elevator and stair tower would be the most visible component of the revised project, consisting of 620 square feet and extending 13 feet, 2 inches above the 40-foot height limit. The elevator and

stair tower has been centrally situated on the roof away from the edge of the building to reduce visibility and prominence of the structure.

The addition of the rooftop deck, including the 620-square-foot elevator and stair tower, balcony railing, and other elements would be seen to varying degrees from other portions of the project site as well as public vantage points in the community. As described in the Revised Final EIR, existing views to the Pacific Ocean from the surrounding community are already substantially limited. The addition of the proposed rooftop elements would increase the visual profile of Building 1 a maximum of approximately 3 percent as viewed from inland viewpoints. From most public viewpoints this increase in visual profile would be seen against the sky and would not block views of the ocean, dunes, or other coastal scenic resources. A small portion of ocean views would be lost as seen from the distant neighborhoods to the east, but quality views would remain over and beyond the project. Although the height of a portion of Building 1 would be taller than the approved project, because of the viewing distances and relatively small size of the additions, the changes would be minor and would not result in a noticeable alteration of the project's effect on scenic resources as described in the Revised Final EIR.

As a result the revised project would not substantially increase potential impacts nor create new impacts to scenic vistas beyond those identified in the Revised Final EIR.

### **3.2.2.2 Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?**

As identified in the Revised Final EIR, this CEQA threshold does not apply because the project is not within the view corridor of any officially designated State Scenic Highway. Highway 1 is not classified as "Eligible" or "Officially Designated" within the State Scenic Highway system. No new or more severe impacts would occur.

### **3.2.2.3 Would the project substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?**

#### Previous Revised Final EIR Analysis

The Revised Final EIR described that any development of the existing disturbed dirt lot would include an inherent change of visual character, due to the proposed complete alteration of the number, size and massing of structures, reconfigured spatial qualities, new landcover and surfaces, and new uses, use patterns and intensity of development.

The Revised Final EIR stated that the four lodge complex buildings would be the most dominant visual elements of the project, with Building 1 being the tallest at 40 feet in height. The maximum building height currently allowed by the City Building Code for this site is 40 feet above natural grade, unless approved by a Use Permit.

The visual character of the project is influenced by both natural and developed elements. The dunes, creek and open areas are seen in the same vicinity as the golf course and restaurant, RV and equestrian staging areas, paved parking lots, material storage, lighting and overhead utilities. Although the architectural style of the golf course clubhouse and the public restroom are similar, the existing project site lacks a unified visual identity. The visual quality of much of the project site is only moderate, and the site serves as a visual transition between the natural dune and beach areas and the built character of the city to the east.

The Revised Final EIR described the architectural style of the proposed project as tending toward an urban, modern appearance, with flat and shed roof forms and generous use of clerestory windows. The building exterior materials include hardie-plank siding and stucco with wood trellises. The proposed colors range from off-white to earth tones. Roofing materials would be a combination of standing seam metal and asphalt shingles.

The Revised Final EIR stated that the visual scale of the proposed buildings would greatly contrast with the immediate surroundings, both in terms of height and mass. The building heights analyzed by the Revised Final EIR did not exceed the City zoning standard, and the structure designs effectively utilized a great deal of form and surface articulation in order to reduce the overall perceived scale and visual mass of the buildings. The Revised Final EIR also determined that the scale of the structures would not be uncharacteristic of many hotel and resorts in other urban/beach settings. The structures would inherently dominate the visual character of the site; however, the scale of the buildings would likely be accepted by many viewers as being consistent with a resort-style project of this type in a semi-urban setting.

The Revised Final EIR determined that no significant impacts to the visual character of the site or surroundings would result from Building 1 or the other buildings associated with the lodge and conference center. The only potentially significant impacts to visual character identified in the Revised Final EIR would be caused by construction of the proposed equestrian staging area (not part of the approved project), non-native revegetation of Meadow Creek, and the visual clutter of overhead power lines along Grand Avenue west of Highway 1.

#### Additional Impact Analysis

The revised project would slightly alter the massing and form of Building 1, and would add rooftop features such as stairway, elevator and mechanical buildings, and balcony railings. The addition of these rooftop elements would increase the height of a portion of Building 1 by as much as 13 feet.

The proposed revisions to the Building 1 exterior and the rooftop additions would likely appear to the casual observer as variations of the building analyzed in the Revised Final EIR, rather than major deviations to the original design. Because of the overall size of Building 1 and its varied exterior surfaces and articulation, the addition of the relatively small rooftop elements would be perceived as logical components of Building 1, and would not greatly change the visual scale or architectural style of the structure and the project.

As a result, the revised project would not substantially increase potential impacts nor create new impacts to the existing visual character of the site and its surroundings beyond those identified in the Revised Final EIR.

#### **3.2.2.4 Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.**

##### Previous Revised Final EIR Analysis

At the time of preparation of the Revised Final EIR, no specific information had been provided regarding lighting proposals. The project description analyzed in the Revised Final EIR stated that the lighting objectives were as follows:

*Lighting would be provided along the trails and within the complex. Lighting would be focused inward or downward and would be shielded where necessary*

*to avoid nuisance lighting affecting the nearby RV campground and the Le Sage Riviera Mobile Home Park, as well as ambient lighting discouraged by LEED design guidelines. Since the parking areas would be occupied at night, lighting directed downward in the parking areas would be provided. Lighting would be kept to a minimum necessary to ensure safety of guests at the lodge and the public in public areas accessible during nighttime hours. Beachfront access ways and picnic areas are not anticipated to be lighted since these are day-use areas only.*

The Final EIR concluded that because of the project's multi-story configuration, size, public safety requirements, and its proximity to public viewing areas, night lighting would be seen from the surrounding area. Unshielded light sources or bright-lights reflected on exterior walls would result in potential impacts. The large buildings, bright interior and exterior lights, large windows and wall openings, parking, and pedestrian areas may result in highly visible illumination as seen from Highway 1, Pismo Beach State Park, and the surrounding area. Fog is a common atmospheric condition of the area and increases the "glow-effect" as potentially seen from great distances. Daytime reflection and glare from south and west facing surfaces would be highly noticeable.

As a result, the Final EIR determined that Building 1 (which is in Area A) would result in the following visual impact and would be subject to the following related mitigation measures:

**AES Impact 5** Visibility of night lighting and daytime glare in Areas A and B would adversely affect views resulting in a direct long-term impact.

**AES/mm-4** *Prior to issuance of a grading permit for Areas A and B, a comprehensive lighting plan shall be submitted for review and approval. The lighting plan shall be prepared by a qualified engineer who is an active member of the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America. The lighting plan shall be prepared using guidance and best practices endorsed by the International Dark Sky Association. The lighting plan shall address all aspects of the lighting, including but not limited to all buildings, infrastructure, parking lots and driveways, paths, recreation areas, safety, and signage. The lighting plan shall also consider effects on wildlife in the surrounding area. The lighting plan shall include the following in conjunction with other measures as determined by the illumination engineer:*

- a. *The point source of all exterior lighting shall be shielded from off-site views.*
- b. *Light trespass from exterior lights shall be minimized by directing light downward and utilizing cut-off fixtures or shields.*
- c. *Lumination from exterior lights shall be the lowest level allowed by public safety standards.*
- d. *Exterior lighting shall be designed to not focus illumination onto exterior walls.*
- e. *"White" colored light shall not be used for exterior lighting.*
- f. *Any signage visible from off-site shall not be internally luminated.*
- g. *Monument signs shall not be internally luminated.*

- h. Any required lighting poles shall be colored dark to reduce reflectivity.*

**AES/mm-5** *Prior to issuance of a grading permit for Areas A and B, the applicant shall submit building plans and elevations for review and approval consistent with the following conditions:*

- a. No highly reflective glazing or coatings shall be used on west and south facing windows.*
- b. No highly reflective exterior materials such as chrome, bright stainless steel, or glossy tile shall be used on the south and west facing sides of the development where visible from off-site locations.*

The Revised Final EIR determined that with implementation of mitigation measures AES/mm-4 and AES/mm-5, potentially significant impacts due to lighting and glare would be reduced to less than significant; therefore, this impact was considered significant but mitigable.

### Additional Impact Analysis

At the time of preparation of this Addendum, no specific information has been provided regarding lighting proposals for the revised project. It is reasonable to assume however that the revised project would add the potential for lighting on the rooftop. Resort-related usage and events, as well as public health and safety codes would likely require some degree of lighting at the rooftop level. Accordingly, because of the higher elevation of the rooftop uses, visibility of night lighting and glare would be increased as a result of the revised project.

Mitigation measures AES/mm-4 and AES/mm-5 identified in the Revised Final EIR would effectively reduce potential increased lighting and glare impacts caused by the revised project by requiring that the project cannot proceed to the grading phase until a lighting plan is approved which demonstrates no off-site visibility of point-source lighting, and requires that light trespass is minimized to the greatest extent possible.

As a result the implementation of mitigation measures AES/mm-4 and AES/mm-5 identified in the Revised Final EIR would also reduce lighting and glare caused by the revised project to a less than significant level. Therefore, no new or substantially more severe significant impacts above those identified in the Revised Final EIR would occur.

### **3.2.2.5 Cumulative Impacts**

The Revised Final EIR states that the project's location and size would have a great influence on the community's identity and visual character. In addition the Revised Final EIR determined that the visual change may appear substantial to viewers currently familiar with the area, but to many casual observers the project would likely not be considered out of character for a semi-urban coastal and gateway setting such as the project site. It is also acknowledged that City and State Parks planning, zoning, and visioning documents anticipate and support the use of the site for a large-scale conference center development.

The revised project would not substantially increase the visual perception of the site alteration or the developed character of the area, beyond what was determined in the Revised Final EIR. As a result, the revised project, in conjunction with the mitigation measures recommended in

the Revised Final EIR, would result in less than significant cumulative visual impacts to community. No new or substantially more severe significant cumulative impacts would occur.

## **SECTION 4 CONCLUSION**

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The applicant is requesting modifications that require a Use Permit and amendment to the Coastal Development Permit for the Grover Beach Lodge and Conference Center. For all impact areas, review of the revised project indicates that the proposed modifications are in substantial conformance with both the area affected by and nature of the original design of the project addressed in the Revised Final EIR. Based on the impact comparison provided above, the revised project would not result in new significant impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of significant impacts under CEQA. Thus, the revised project would not: a) result in increased impacts related to degradation of the environment; b) result in increased cumulative impacts; or c) result in increased substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly. No significant, adverse, and unavoidable impacts to the environment as a result of this project have been identified when considering the mitigation measures included as part of the original project.

Approval of the project is not expected to have any significant, adverse, and unavoidable impacts, either long-term or short-term, nor will it cause substantial adverse effect on human beings, either directly or indirectly, provided the original mitigation measures and project conditions are implemented. The Mitigation Monitoring Program remains valid and in force as approved with the original project. In summary, the analysis concludes that none of the conditions described in Section 15162 of the CEQA Guidelines calling for preparation of a subsequent EIR or negative declaration have occurred, and thus an Addendum to the Revised Final EIR is appropriate to satisfy CEQA requirements for the revised project. The evidence in the file supports the finding that no circumstances or conditions requiring the preparation of a subsequent EIR or negative declaration are present in this case.

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# SECTION 5

## REFERENCES

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SWCA Environmental Consultants. 2012. *Revised Final Grover Beach Lodge & Conference Center Environmental Impact Report, SCH No. 2010051002*. Prepared for the City of Grover Beach. January 2012.

RRM Design Group. 2016. *Architectural Site Plan, Public Improvement Plans, Grading and Drainage Plan, Building Height Study, Average Existing Ground Elevation Exhibit, Exterior Elevations, Building Sections, Building Footprint Comparison, Comparative Floor Plan, Comparative Elevation, Overall Roof Plan, and Perspective Exhibits*. December 2016.

RRM Design Group. 2016. *Memorandum: Preliminary Hydrology Study for Grover Beach Lodge, Stormwater Retention and Storage Volumes*. October 14, 2016.