

2.3.10 Public Hearing

While the CEQA Guidelines include an optional public hearing process (*CEQA Guidelines Section 15202* http://ceres.ca.gov/topic/env_law/ceqa/guidelines/art13.html), the Amended University Procedures for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act requires a mandatory public hearing during the public review period for the Draft EIR.

“The University shall conduct a public hearing on all projects for which an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will be prepared. The hearing will be conducted following the publication of the Draft EIR; the purpose of the hearing will be to provide the public with an opportunity to comment upon and present evidence relating to the proposed project and the Draft EIR.” (See *UC CEQA Handbook, Appendix A.*)

Comments submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing become part of the administrative record for a project and are responded to in writing in the response to comments document (Final EIR).

The purpose and format of the hearing should be carefully explained so the public understands that the hearing serves as a forum for recording public comments and receiving testimony on the project and Draft EIR, and not as a forum in which the University of California answers questions or engages in a dialogue with the public. All comments made at the time of the hearing should be recorded. It is helpful to have a court reporter perform this function. A written transcript made by the court reporter of all comments and written responses to these comments is provided in the text of the Final EIR.

Steps for Conducting the Mandatory Public Hearing

- Publicize the location of the public hearing in community and student newspapers.
- State the ground rules for the hearing. Indicate that all comments will be recorded and that responses to comments will be given in the Final EIR.
- Record all comments and names and addresses of people commenting on the Draft EIR (Court reporter’s transcript will be helpful).