



AB 837: SLA Exemption for the City of Chula Vista's Entitled University Land

Summary:

AB 837 provides a legislative exemption from the Surplus Land Act for the City of Chula Vista's University-Innovation District (UID) development project on approximately 383 acres of land acquired and entitled by the city for that purpose prior to January 1, 2019.

Background:

Since the adoption of the Otay Ranch General Development Plan in 1993, the City of Chula Vista has maintained a goal of locating a university within the boundaries of eastern Chula Vista. Over the past three decades, the city has taken actionable steps to make this goal a reality and has also codified these efforts within the city's 2005 General Plan and 2018 Sectional Planning Area Plan ("SPA") which approved the entitlements for a University-Innovation District ("UID").

Since the adoption of the development plan, the city has worked on assembling 383 acres of land for the UID. The first acquisition of approximately 201 acres occurred in December 2001; the most recent acquisition of approximately 130.7 acres occurred in December 2014. The UID property was acquired subject to privately imposed covenants that require it to be used for "University" purposes and/or impose restrictions on the types of allowed residential development. Despite this, HCD staff has interpreted AB 1486 to apply to the UID property. This has materially impeded the city's efforts to implement the UID project as contemplated. The city has a high-quality plan for a needed public amenity and has faithfully executed that plan.

Furthermore, the city has consistently been a top producer of quality housing and is a regional leader in compliance with Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) numbers across all income categories,

including low and very low. Meanwhile, the UID plan includes significant housing, including affordable housing and student and faculty housing

Additionally, Chula Vista is the only city in California with a population greater than 200,000 residents that does not have a nonprofit or state university within its city limits, which perpetuates issues of inequitable access to higher education to the population that stands to benefit from it the most. Furthermore, the South Bay communities of San Diego County are home to over 500,000 residents whose educational attainment is needed to sustain and grow the state's economy.

The city is focused on supporting the development of a bi-national, multi-institutional educational model on the UID site but will not be able to do so without this exemption.

Proposal:

AB 837 will make the requisite statutory changes to exempt from the SLA, the parcels comprising the City of Chula Vista's UID project site provided that the land is developed in a manner substantially consistent with the city's existing land use entitlements for the project.

Benefits:

Chula Vista's university effort is positioned to greatly benefit the region. A university presence in the South Bay would be a key player within the regional economy, producing graduates who occupy regional jobs, employing thousands of local workers and contributing to the regional and state economies. A South Bay university presence would also provide more equitable access to higher education. Bachelor's degree holders have greater earning power and are able to earn about \$32,000 more on an annual basis

than those whose highest degree is a high school diploma. Approximately 4,000 residential units are projected to be developed as part of the mixed-use UID project. City policies for the UID will require at least 5% of these units to be affordable to moderate income households, 5% to be affordable to low-income households, and 5% to be affordable to very-low-income households.

Support:

City of Chula Vista (sponsor)

Opposition:

None received

Staff Contact:

Vincenzo Caporale, Legislative Aide
Assemblymember David Alvarez, District 80
Office: 916-319-2080

Vincenzo.Caporale@asm.ca.gov

