



**CITY OF CORTLAND, NEW YORK
ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**RECOMMENDED INCLUSIONS IN THE SCOPING DOUCMENT
FOR THE
DRAFT GENERIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
FOR
SUCF PROJECT NO. 04339, STUDENT LIFE CENTER
STATE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE AT CORTLAND**

Pursuant to the New York State Environmental Conservation Law Article 8, State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA): and Part 617 of Chapter 6 of the New York Code of Rules and Regulations, and at the request of the Mayor of the City of Cortland, the Environmental Advisory Committee of the City of Cortland, NY respectfully requests that the Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (DGEIS) for the SUNY Cortland Student Life Center address the below listed potentially adverse environmental impacts.

The below adverse impacts have been cross referenced to the Draft Scoping Document issued by the State University Construction Fund (SCF) on February 22, 2012. Where the impacts proposed by the City are included in the SCF draft Scope Document the following notation has been included (SCF Section 3.X)

Unless otherwise specified, all potentially adverse impacts recommended for inclusion in the Scoping Document pertain to activities during both the construction and ongoing operations of the Student Life Center. All assessments shall apply equally in breath and detail to both.

POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE IMPACTS

Potentially significant adverse impacts to be addressed are associated with the following environmental issues:

- Impact on Land
- Impact on Water
- Impact of Drainage
- Impact on Air
- Impact on Climate Change
- Impact on Plants and Animals
- Impact on Aesthetic Resources
- Impact on Historical and Archeological Resources
- Impact on Open Space and Recreation

- Impact on Transportation
- Impact on Energy
- Impact on Noise and Odors
- Impact on Public Health and Safety
- Impact on Community Character and Land Use

The nature of potential impacts in these topic areas is presented below; The Environmental Committee requests that each be further developed and addressed in the Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement. Impacts addressed should include construction and operational impacts.

1. Impact on Land

This topic relates to impacts on soils, geology, and topography and involves the following considerations as a result of the Student Life Center:

Soils

- Excavation, grading and restoration following demolition of existing buildings and facilities
- Excavation and grading for the construction of new buildings
- Landscaping or landscape rehabilitation following project implementation
- Disturbance of potentially contaminated subsurface areas
- Erosion potential of existing soils
- Loss of topsoil
- Modification or impairment of rainfall infiltration to ground water
- Impacts on stability of existing buildings

Geology

- Subsidence effects (SCF Section 3.1)
- Seismic or vibration risk (SCF Section 3.1)

Topography

- Changes in slope or elevation during or after project implementation (SCF Section 3.1)
- Increase in runoff potential (SCF Section 3.1)
- Alterations of drainage patterns (SCF Section 3.1)

Information needs

To the extent possible, information from the Soil Survey of Cortland County, NY published by the Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) (formerly the U.S. Soil Conservation Service) and all other available resources will be utilized to describe surface and subsurface soil and bedrock conditions. Topographic data will be obtained from existing surveys of campus and the immediately surrounding area. Other sources of relevant information will be developed, if and as necessary, to insure that the impacts on the issues named above are adequately addressed.

2. Impact on Water Resources

This topic relates to impacts on surface waters or ground water and involves the following considerations as a result of the Student Life Center:

Surface Waters

- Affects to flow rate, periodicity or volume
- Affects to course, banks or substrate
- Affects to water quality
- Modification of the existence, duration or intensity of flooding
- Withdrawal
- Accessibility
- Modification or impairment of use
- Modification of evaporation rate
- New or modified discharges to surface waters
- Affects to water supplies

Ground Waters

- Ground water quality
- Withdrawal demand
- Recharge capacity
- Sole source aquifer status
- Proximity to water supply well fields (SCF Section 3.2)
- Well head protection
- Modification or impairment of use
- Modification of hydrologic system
- New or modified discharge to ground waters
- Disturbance or existing contaminated ground waters
- Monitoring plan for groundwater being installed as part of the Student Life Center project including but not limited to consulting with the City in the design of the sampling frequency and test parameters.

Information Needs

To the extent possible, existing available information will be relied upon to assess impacts on water resources. Sources of information may include, but not limited to, city and county planning, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) (water body class and standard, ground water resources and quality), the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), and SUNY Cortland. Other sources of relevant information will be developed, if and as necessary, to insure that the impacts on the issues named above are adequately addressed.

3. Impact on Drainage

This topic relates to impacts on erosion, drainage, inundation or flooding and involves the following considerations as a result of the Student Life Center:

- Changes in slope or elevation during or after project implementation
- Increase in runoff potential
- Alterations of drainage patterns
- Erosion potential of existing soils

- Loss of topsoil
- Modification or impairment of rainfall infiltration to ground water
- Increase in flooding potential
- Completion of a Storm water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) (SCF Section 3.2) for review by a qualified professional familiar with local issues
- Storm water runoff and its impact upon the City's Water Work Property and well heads from the SUNY-Cortland's student parking lot west of the Stadium

Information Needs

To the degree possible, existing available information will be relied upon to assess drainage impacts, including, but not limited to, the NRCS, which publishes information relating to soils, permeability and erosion potential; city and county planning departments, which may have locally developed information resources; and SUNY Cortland, which may have information from other campus activities. Other sources of relevant information will be developed, if and as necessary, to insure that the impacts on the issues named above are adequately addressed.

4. Impact on Air

This topic relates to impacts on air emissions and air quality and involves the following considerations as a result of the Student Life Center:

- Emissions and dust from construction vehicles and operations (SCF Section 3.3)
- Modifications of transportation patterns and other activities as a result of construction activities
- Nature, concentration, mass and frequency of potential stationary source emissions
- Nature, concentration, mass and frequency of potential mobile source emissions
- Odors from on-site food preparation and processing (SCF Section 3.3)
- Air quality modifications
- National Ambient Air Quality Standards
- New York State Ambient Air Quality Standards
- Consistency with New York State SIP
- Nature of sensitive receptors
- Exposure of, and impacts to, sensitive receptors
- Temporary construction/demolition impacts for noise, dust and vibration

Information Needs

To the degree possible, existing available information will be relied upon to assess impacts on air, including, but not limited to, data from NYSDEC and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). Other sources of relevant information will be developed, if and as necessary, to insure that the impacts on the issues named above are adequately addressed.

5. Impact on Climate Change

This topic relates to impacts on greenhouse gas emissions and involves the following considerations as a result of the Student Life Center:

- Use of construction machinery
- Modifications of transportation patterns and other activities as a result of construction activities

- Modifications in the nature of fossil fuel use
- Modification of the nature of combustion sources
- Increased fossil fuel energy use
- Modification of woodlands
- Modifications of modes, intensity or nature of transportation
- Supply chain issues: use and availability of materials
- Landscaping/Greenfields opportunities
- Building design considerations
- Consistency with ACUPCC Guidelines
- Consistency with climate change policies
- Consistency with campus sustainability planning

Information Needs

To the degree possible, existing viable information will be relied upon to assess impacts on climate change, including but not limited to sources from SUNY Cortland. Other sources of relevant information will be developed, if and as necessary, to insure that the impacts on the issues named above are adequately addressed.

6. Impact on Plants, Animals and Habitats

This topic relates to impacts on plants, wildlife and their habitat and involves the following considerations as a result of the Student Life Center:

Wildlife

- Temporary or permanent displacement of wildlife
- Temporary or permanent harassment of wildlife
- Interference with migratory patterns
- Interference with wintering, foraging, breeding or nursery habitats
- Habitats of rare, threatened endangered species, or species of special concern
- Introduction of invasive species
- Degradation of amount or quality of habitat
- Fragmentation of habitat
- Modification or loss of habitat

Vegetation

- Loss or elimination of woodlands, forest, fields, or other habitats
- Introduction of invasive species
- Degradation of amount or quality of habitat
- Fragmentation of habitat
- Habitats of rare, threatened endangered species, or species of special concern

Habitats

- Loss or degradation of wetlands
- Loss or disturbance of areas with wetland characteristics
- Damage to New York State-designated Critical Environmental Areas

Information Needs

To the degree possible, existing, available information will be relied upon to assess impacts on plants, animals and habitats, including, but not limited to, from the following resource documents:

- NYSDEC. 1990. Ecological Communities of New York State. Albany, NY
- Wetland mapping (NYSDEC Freshwater, National Wetland Inventory maps)

The following information resources will be consulted:

- City of Cortland
- Cortland County Planning Department
- NYSDEC
- USEPA
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)
- Natural Areas Commission
- SUNY Cortland

Other sources of relevant information will be developed, if and as necessary, to insure that the impacts on the issues named above are adequately addressed.

7. Impact on Aesthetic Resources

This topic relates to impacts on aesthetic resources, such as ambient noise, lighting and visual resources or views, and involves the following considerations as a result of the Student Life Center

Noise

- Changes in mobile source noise
- New stationary source noises
- Changes in stationary source noises
- Impact of noise from all sources on the surrounding residential neighborhood during construction and operations (SCF Section 3.11)

Light

- Introduction of new or modified sources
- Consistency with New York State's Dark Sky Initiative
- New lighting patterns
- Daytime or nighttime views
- Surrounding communities

Visual

- Impairment by obstruction or physical change to a scenic resource or view shed
- Damage to scenic resources (historic or unique natural areas or structures)
- Impairment of the enjoyment of visual resources

Information Needs

To the degree possible, existing available information will be relied upon to assess impacts on aesthetic resources. Other sources of relevant information will be developed, if and as necessary, to insure that the impacts on the issues named above are adequately addressed.

8. Impact on Cultural, Historical and Archeological Resources

This topic relates to impacts on cultural, historical and archaeological resources, and involves the following considerations as a result of the Student Life Center:

- Historical resources (a historic building,, district, site, structure, or object) (SCF Section 3.7)
- Archaeological sensitive areas and archaeological resources
- Resources listed on New York or federal Registers of Historic Places
- National Historic Landmarks
- Properties of religious or Native American significance
- Resources significant in architecture, engineering or science, or local culture

To the degree possible, existing available information will be relied upon to assess impacts on Cultural, Historical and Archeological Resources. Other sources of relevant information will be developed, if and as necessary, to insure that the impacts on the issues named above are adequately addressed.

9. Impact on Transportation

This topic relates to impacts on transportation and traffic, and involves the following considerations as a result of the Student Life Center:

- Changes in traffic volume (SCF Section 3.9)
- Changes in traffic flow patterns (SCF Section 3.9)
- Modifications in level of service
- Public transportation options and opportunities
- Safety issues
- Pedestrian opportunities
- Vehicle traffic and increase on on-street parking in City streets in the vicinity on the Student Life Center
- Changes in pedestrian traffic on City walkways in the vicinity of the Student Life Center
- Temporary construction-related closures and detours for traffic (autos and trucks) and public transit.

Information Needs

To the degree possible, existing available information will be relied upon to assess impacts on transportation. Highway/roadway jurisdictions, including the NYSDOT will be consulted to identify and compile available highway data relating to road conditions, highway capacity, level of service, and accident levels. Other sources of relevant information will be developed, if and as necessary, to insure that the impacts on the issues named above are adequately addressed. The necessity to supplement existing information will be evaluated and any supplemental information acquired shall be used to aid in assessment of transportation impacts.

10. Impact on Energy

This topic relates to impacts on sources of energy and energy use, and involves the following considerations as a result of the Student Life Center:

- Amount of energy used
- Nature of energy source
- Constraints on energy availability and any resultant need to construct additional electrical substations, transmission towers, transformers and other apparatus.

Information Needs

To the degree possible, existing information will be relied upon to assess impacts on energy. Other sources of relevant information will be developed, if and as necessary, to insure that the impacts on the issues named above are adequately addressed.

11. Impact on Public Health and Safety

This topic relates to impacts on community services, and involves the following considerations as a result of the Student Life Center:

- Fire safety (SCF Section 3.11)
- Police services (SCF Section 3.11)
- Medical and healthcare facilities and services
- Emergency services (SCF Section 3.11)
- Schools (SCF Section 3.11)
- Community infrastructure(SCF Section 3.11)

Information Needs

To the degree possible, existing available information will be relied upon to assess impacts on public health and safety. The Cortland County Health Department and Board of Health will be requested to act as a resource and to submit any concerns, recommendations, or comments that they deem relevant. Other sources or relevant information will be developed, if and as necessary, to insure that the impacts on the issue enumerated above are adequately addresses. The following resources will be given an opportunity to submit comments, concerns, recommendation and supporting data: the Fire Departments from the City of Cortland and the Town of Cortlandville; Police agencies including but not limited to the City of Cortland, Cortland County Sherriff, NYS Police, SUNY Cortland Public Safety; Medical (CRMC, Cortland County Health Department), Cortland Regional Medical Center; City of Cortland Departments of Public Works, Public Safety, Water, and Waste Water Treatment; Town of Cortlandville Department of Public Works; all Cortland County School Districts.

12. Impact on Community Character and Land Use

This topic relates to impacts on nature and intensity of land uses, and consistency of land uses with existing land use plans and policies, and may occur as a result of the following types of activities that may occur as a result of the Student Life Center:

- Consistency with land use plans (SCF Section 3.12)
- Consistency with the City of Cortland's Wellhead Protection Zoning
- Consistency with site inclusion in a NYS designated Critical Environment Area

- Consistency/Incompatibility with community character and public expectations for the site and surrounding area
- Displacement of a land use
- Alteration of a land use
- Impairment or restriction of surrounding land uses
- Modification of land use density
- Socioeconomic impacts, including employment, economics, demographics, housing
- Jurisdictional modifications
- Modifications in development density
- Modifications in intensity of use
- Restrictions on use opportunities or future uses
- Recreational opportunities
- Use of the facility by the general public
- Loss or modification of open space
- Environmental justice – presence of populations of concern
- Adverse effects on quality of life of residents in surrounding neighborhoods
- Construction-related impacts:
 - Demolition and construction will require temporary development of staging areas;
 - Temporary construction-related closures and detours for pedestrians.
 - Temporary loss of existing parking lots and or spaces
 - Increase need for temporary parking for construction personnel
 - Increase use of roads and land by trucks.

Information Needs

To the degree possible, existing available information will be relied upon to assess impacts on community character and land use. The following information resources will be consulted:

- City of Cortland
- Cortland County Planning Department
- NYSDEC
- USEPA
- SUNY Cortland.
- Residents of impacted neighborhood: The impact on residents residing in neighborhoods immediately adjacent to or in proximity to the Student Life Center is substantially greater than on residents of the community at large. Potentially adverse impacts include, but are not limited to, impacts on their quality of life as well as the value of their property. Whereas, these impacts must be weighed against SUNY Cortland's legitimate interests and the greater public good served by fostering the continued viability of the College, the impacts upon neighboring residents must nevertheless be addressed. Informational materials distributed by and public meetings conducted by SUNY Cortland and the SUNY Construction Fund, while potentially useful, are inadequate and lack credibility unless supplemented by additional opportunities for these residents to express their concerns and opinions. Therefore the City of Cortland shall solicit additional input from residents of effected neighborhoods, which efforts shall be supported by SUNY Cortland and the SUNY Construction Fund in the form of information and staff resources.

Other sources of relevant information will be developed, if and as necessary, to insure that the impacts on the issues named above are adequately addressed.

13. Sustainability

This topic relates to impacts on sustainability and the consistency of plans and designs with sustainability principles, plans and policies, and may occur in connection with the Student Life Center

- LEED principles in design, construction, operation
- Adaptive reuse of buildings rather than demolition
- Reuse, recycling of materials where demolition occurs

Information Needs

To the degree possible, existing available information will be relied upon to assess impacts on sustainability. Other sources of relevant information will be developed, if and as necessary, to insure that the impacts on the issues named above are adequately addressed.

14. Legitimacy and Credibility

The construction of the Student Life Center, particularly in the proposed location and of the proposed size, will have significant impacts on the surrounding environment. Some of those impacts, such as water quality, are broad reaching and will affect the entire community currently and for generations to come. Others, like impacts on surrounding neighborhoods, while less global, are still of legitimate concern. For the environmental review process to be legitimate and credible, it must be adequately address the technical issues identified above. However it must do this in a way that effectively solicits honestly and in good faith incorporates community concerns, including those of neighborhood residents. It is, therefore necessary, and in the best interest of the State of New York, The City of Cortland, the County of Cortland, and the Town of Cortlandville, the SUNY Construction Fund, SUNY Cortland and the integrity of the SQER process, to involve and engage residents, their elected representatives and relevant community agencies and entities created by them, such as this committee in a transparent, inclusive, comprehensive, and well managed process. The recommendations put forth above are tendered in this spirit of cooperation and good faith.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Environmental Advisory Committee for the City of Cortland, New York,

BY _____
Chairperson

Date _____

