



## Firm picked to prepare Wal-Mart report

By Steve Dreyer  
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An Irvine-based company has been selected by the city to prepare a environmental impact report regarding Wal-Mart's announced plans to expand its Poway store.

LSA Associates will be paid \$252,400 for the work, according to Bob Manis, the city's development services director. Wal-Mart will also be required to deposit another \$25,000 with the city for reimbursement of costs associated with city staff review of the environmental report.

Wal-Mart proposes to add about 54,700 square feet to its 15-year-old Poway store, bringing the total to 197,700 square feet. The company proposes to turn the store into a "supercenter" with a full grocery department.

Manis said LSA Associates was one of five companies expressing an interest in preparing the report, and was one of three firms interviewed by a panel of city employees. The firm was founded in 1978 and has experience with Wal-Mart projects, including the expansion of the Foothill Ranch store in Lake Forest. Manis said LSA also has experience in handling legal challenges to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The company has offices across the state, including one in Carlsbad.

The EIR's preparation is expected to take about one year and will begin in a couple of months with a public "scoping meeting," where Poway residents will be invited to suggest specific issues that should be researched as part of the report. Likely candidates for inclusion include the impact of the proposed expansion on traffic, noise, air quality and the local economy.

The consulting firm will incorporate suggested topics into research that will be included in a draft EIR. That document will be the subject of further public meetings, where more questions can be raised. Responses to those questions will be incorporated into a final EIR, which will be presented to the City Council for certification.