



5.0 Approach to Environmental Analysis



5.0 APPROACH TO ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Sections 5.1 through 5.19 of this Environmental Impact Report (EIR) contain discussions of the existing conditions, project impacts (including direct/indirect, short-term/long-term, and cumulative), recommended mitigation measures, and significant and unavoidable impacts. The EIR sections listed below examine the environmental issues, as identified in Appendix G, *Environmental Checklist Form*, of the *California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines* (CEQA Guidelines), and as concluded in Appendix A, Notice of Preparation.

- 5.1 Land Use and Planning
- 5.2 Population, Housing, and Employment
- 5.3 Aesthetics and Light/Glare
- 5.4 Traffic and Circulation
- 5.5 Air Quality
- 5.6 Noise
- 5.7 Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- 5.8 Geology and Soils
- 5.9 Hydrology and Water Quality
- 5.10 Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- 5.11 Tribal and Cultural Resources
- 5.12 Biological Resources
- 5.13 Fire Protection
- 5.14 Police Protection
- 5.15 School Facilities
- 5.16 Parks and Recreation
- 5.17 Water Supply
- 5.18 Wastewater
- 5.19 Solid Waste

Each environmental issue/section is organized into subsections, as follows:

- “Purpose” describes the purpose of the section.
- “Existing Regulatory Setting” identifies and summarizes the laws, ordinances, regulations, and standards that apply to the project, at the local, State, and Federal levels, as they exist at the time the Notice of Preparation (NOP) is published.
- “Existing Environmental Setting” describes the physical environmental conditions in the project vicinity that may influence or affect the issue under investigation, from both a local and regional perspective. For purposes of the General Plan Update and this EIR, baseline conditions are 2016 when existing conditions were identified to support and inform the General Plan Update. The environmental setting constitutes the baseline physical conditions by which the determination of significance is made.
- “Significance Thresholds and Criteria” provides the thresholds that are the basis of conclusions of significance. Primary sources used in identifying the thresholds and criteria include Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines (California Code of



Regulations, Sections 15000 – 15387); local, State, Federal, or other standards applicable to an impact category; and officially adopted significance thresholds. "...An ironclad definition of significant effect is not possible because the significance of any activity may vary with the setting" (CEQA Guidelines Section 15064[b]). Principally, "...a substantial or potentially substantial adverse change in any of the physical conditions within an area affected by the project including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise and objects of historic and aesthetic significance" constitutes a significant impact (CEQA Guidelines Section 15382).

- "Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures" evaluates the project's environmental impacts in consideration of all phases, including planning, development, and operation. This subsection also discusses the potential changes to the existing physical environmental conditions, which may occur if the proposed project is implemented. Evidence, based on factual and scientific data, is presented to show the cause and effect relationship between the proposed project and the potential changes in the environment. Potential direct and reasonably foreseeable indirect effects are considered. The exact magnitude, duration, extent, frequency, range, or other parameters are ascertained, to the extent possible, to determine their significance.

The project's environmental effects are categorized as either "less than significant" or "potentially significant impact." For the less than significant category, a brief discussion is provided of the reasons that the project's possible significant effects were found not to be significant. For the potentially significant category, the discussion identifies and focuses on the project's significant environmental effects. The project's direct and indirect significant environmental effects are clearly identified and described, giving due consideration to both the short- and long-term effects.

The "Proposed General Plan Update Goals and Policies" outlines applicable General Plan Update Goals and Policies (project features) that would contribute towards avoiding, reducing, or eliminating a significant adverse impact.

The "Mitigation Measures" are project-specific measures that would be required of the project to avoid a significant adverse impact; to minimize a significant adverse impact; to rectify a significant adverse impact by restoration; to reduce or eliminate a significant adverse impact over time by preservation and maintenance operations; or to compensate for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environment.

The "Level of Significance After Mitigation" presents the significance determination. This statement identifies which impacts would remain after the application of mitigation measures and whether the remaining impacts are or are not considered significant. When impacts, despite the inclusion of mitigation measures cannot be mitigated to a level considered less than significant, they are identified as "significant unavoidable impacts."



- “Cumulative Impacts” describes potential environmental changes to the existing physical conditions that may occur as a result of the proposed project together with all other reasonably foreseeable, planned and approved future projects producing related or cumulative impacts, as set forth in Section 4.0, *Basis of Cumulative Analysis*. A cumulative impact analysis is provided for those thresholds that result in a less than significant, potentially significant, or significant unavoidable impact. A cumulative impact analysis is not provided for Effects Found Not to be Significant, which result in no project-related impacts.
- “Significant Unavoidable Impacts” describes impacts that would be significant and cannot be feasibly mitigated to less than significant, so would therefore be unavoidable. To approve a project with significant unavoidable impacts, the lead agency must adopt a Statement of Overriding Considerations. In adopting such a statement, the lead agency is required to balance the benefits of a project against its unavoidable environmental impacts in determining whether to approve the project. If the benefits of a project are found to outweigh the significant unavoidable environmental effects, the adverse effects may be considered “acceptable” (CEQA Guidelines Section 15093[a]).
- “Sources Cited” cites the sources used during the course of the issue analysis.



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