

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING AND IMPACT EVALUATION

This section describes the existing environmental conditions on-site and in the vicinity of the Project Site, and the regulatory environment, and describes the Project's characteristics related to each of the topical environmental issues and states the significant criteria used to evaluate potentially significant effects of the Proposed Project. It also provides an evaluation of environmental effects, identifies mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate effects found to be significant, and determines the level of significance of the effect after measures have been implemented.

The following topics are evaluated for environmental impacts:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Greenhouse Gas
- Cultural Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Noise
- Traffic and Circulation

Format of Environmental Topic Sections

Each topic identified above is addressed in a section of this chapter. Sections are outlined following the consistent format as follows:

- Introductory paragraph describing the focus of the analysis and summary of background material used to prepare the analysis;
- Description of the environmental setting as it relates to the specific environmental topic;
- Identification of the thresholds of significance;
- Evaluation of project-specific impacts for the commercial development; and a determination of significance based on documented threshold levels;
- Identification of mitigation measures; and
- Determination of the level of significance after mitigation measures are implemented.

The **Introduction** describes the purpose of the section, identifies background reports used to prepare the section, and summarizes the main focus of the analysis.

The **Environmental Setting** describes existing conditions at the local level as well as the regulatory environment where applicable policies, plans and regulations apply to the proposed project. As set forth in CEQA Guidelines Section 15125 (a)(d)(e), the EIR includes a description of the physical environmental conditions in the vicinity of the project as they exist at the time the Notice of Preparation (NOP) was published, from both a local and regional perspective. The EIR discusses any inconsistencies between the proposed project and applicable local and regional plans, and examines the existing physical conditions as well as potential future conditions discussed in these plans.

Thresholds of Significance are used to determine the level of significance of impacts by environmental topic are identified as required by CEQA Guidelines. Thresholds are identifiable quantitative, qualitative, or performance levels of a particular environmental effect.

The **Impact Analysis** focuses on changes in the existing physical environment that would be caused by the proposed project identifying direct and indirect adverse effects of development of the proposed commercial project and development potential associated with the North Portion.

The **Mitigation Measures** to reduce any significant impacts are identified.

Finally, a determination of the **Level of Significance** following implementation of the recommended mitigation measures is provided.