

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

This section discusses the possible environmental effects of the proposed project for the issue areas that were identified through the Initial Study and EIR scoping process as having the potential to experience significant impacts or effects. “Significant effect” is defined by Section 15382 of the *State CEQA Guidelines* as “a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any of the physical conditions within the area affected by the project including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise, and objects of historic or aesthetic significance. An economic or social change by itself shall not be considered a significant effect on the environment, but may be considered in determining whether the physical change is significant.” The issue areas covered in the EIR are air quality, biological resources, geophysical, safety, transportation/circulation, and water environment. In the Initial Studies prepared for this project, all other environmental issues were found not to be potentially significant, and so are not discussed further in this EIR.

The assessment of each issue area begins with a description of the current setting for the issue area being assessed, and the applicable policies that guide that issue area, followed by an analysis of the project’s effect within that issue area. The first subsection of the impact analysis identifies the methodologies used and the impact significance guidelines, which are those criteria used by the City, other agencies, generally recognized, or developed specifically for this analysis to determine whether potential effects are significant. The next subsection describes each impact of the proposed project, mitigation measures for significant impacts, and the level of impact significance after mitigation, or residual impacts. Each identified impact is numbered and described in bold text, followed by a discussion of the impact and explanation of its significance. The impact discussion includes a statement of the significance level of the environmental impact in bold and italic as follows:

Class I, unavoidably significant: *An impact that cannot be reduced to below the significance level given reasonably available and feasible mitigation measures. Such an impact requires a Statement of Overriding Considerations to be issued if the project is approved.*

Class II, potentially significant but mitigable: *An impact that is potentially significant, but that can be reduced to below the significance level given reasonably available and feasible mitigation measures. Such an impact requires findings to be made.*

Class III, less than significant: *An impact that may be adverse, but does not exceed the significance level and does not require mitigation measures under CEQA. However, mitigation measures that could further lessen the minor adverse environmental effect may be recommended, if available and feasible.*

Class IV, beneficial: An effect that would reduce existing environmental problems or hazards.

Following each environmental effect discussion is a listing of mitigation measures (if required or recommended) and the residual effects or level of significance remaining after the implementation of the measures. In those cases where the mitigation measure for an impact could have a significant environmental impact in another issue area, this secondary impact is discussed in the text. The impact analysis concludes with a discussion of policy consistency, and then cumulative effects, which evaluates the impacts associated with the proposed project in conjunction with other planned and pending development in the area.

The *State CEQA Guidelines*, Section 15145, note that, “If after thorough investigation, a Lead Agency finds that a particular impact is too speculative for evaluation, the agency should note its conclusion and terminate discussion of the impact.” In this EIR, some of the impact analysis is too speculative to make a final determination regarding the level of significance. In these situations, the environmental issue and the reasons for determining the analysis is too speculative are described.