

7.0 OTHER CEQA REQUIRED TOPICS

7.1 CEQA REQUIREMENTS

Section 15126 of the State CEQA Guidelines requires that all phases of a project must be considered when evaluating its impact on the environment, including planning, acquisition, construction, and operation. Further, the evaluation of significant impacts must consider direct and reasonably foreseeable indirect effects of the project over the short-term and long-term. As part of this analysis, the EIR must identify, to the extent relevant, (1) significant environmental effects of the proposed project, (2) mitigation measures proposed to minimize significant effects, (3) significant environmental effects that cannot be avoided if the proposed project is implemented, (4) significant irreversible environmental changes that would result from implementation of the proposed project, (5) growth-inducing impacts of the proposed project, and (6) alternatives to the proposed project.

Chapter 4, “Environmental Setting, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures,” and specifically Section 4.1 Transportation and Traffic present the proposed project’s environmental effects to this resource area, proposed mitigation measures, and conclusions regarding the level of significance of each impact both before and after mitigation. The balance of the environmental analysis for other environmental resource areas is contained the Initial Study Checklist (Appendix B) prepared for the project. Like the analysis on Transportation and Traffic, impacts to these resources were evaluated based on the CEQA Appendix G Checklist. It was determined there would be no impact, impacts would be less than significant, or impacts could be mitigated to less than significant; and therefore, these resources were not required to be evaluated as part of the EIR.

Chapter 6, Alternatives, presents a comparative analysis of alternatives to the proposed project. The other CEQA-required analyses described above are presented below.

7.2 SIGNIFICANT AND UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

Section 15126.2(b) of the State CEQA Guidelines requires that an EIR describe any significant impacts that cannot be avoided, even with the implementation of feasible mitigation measures. The environmental effects of the proposed project regarding the proposed project’s impact on transportation and traffic are discussed in detail in Chapter 4.1, Transportation and Traffic. The analysis concluded the proposed project would result in a cumulatively significant and unavoidable intersection impact at Mathilda Avenue/Sunnyvale Saratoga Road-Talisman Drive. No feasible mitigation measures have been identified to reduce potential impacts and impacts at this intersection would remain significant and unavoidable.

7.3 SIGNIFICANT AND IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

Under CEQA, an EIR must analyze the extent to which a project's primary and secondary effects would generally commit future generations to the allocation of nonrenewable resources and to irreversible environmental damage (State CEQA Guidelines section 15126.2(c); 15127). Specifically, section 15126.2(c) states:

Uses of nonrenewable resources during the initial and continued phases of the project may be irreversible, since a large commitment of such resources makes removal or nonuse thereafter unlikely. Primary impacts and, particularly, secondary impacts (such as highway improvement which provides access to a previously inaccessible area) generally commit future generations to similar uses. Also, irreversible damage can result from environmental accidents associated with the project. Irretrievable commitments of resources should be evaluated to assure that such current consumption is justified.

Generally, a project would result in significant irreversible environmental changes if:

- The primary and secondary impacts would generally commit future generations to similar uses;
 1. The project would involve a large commitment of nonrenewable resources;
 2. The project would involve uses in which irreversible damage could result from any potential environmental accidents associated with the project; or
 3. The proposed irretrievable commitments of nonrenewable resources is not justified (e.g., the project involves the wasteful use of energy).

Implementation of the proposed project would result in the long-term commitment of resources of the project site to developed land use. The proposed project would likely result in or contribute to the following irreversible environmental changes:

4. Conversion of existing developed land, approximately 40.4 acres, to a more intensive land use, thus precluding other alternative land uses in the future.
5. Increased ambient noise associated with an increase in traffic.
6. Irreversible consumption of goods and services associated with the increased employee base.
7. Degradation of air quality associated with project construction and operation.
8. Irreversible consumption of energy and natural resources associated with construction and operation of the project.

7.4 LONG-TERM COMMITMENT OF LAND AND RESOURCES

Development of the proposed project would result in conversion of the existing commercial and industrial site to a similar use but with increased building density. The proposed project; however, would remove the existing buildings and hardscape and result in a more environmentally sound design that provides certain benefits, yet the proposed project would preclude other less intensive uses for the lifespan of the project.

The State CEQA Guidelines also require a discussion of the potential for irreversible environmental damage caused by an accident associated with the proposed project. The project would result in the use, transport, storage, and disposal of hazardous wastes during construction and operation. In addition, known environmental conditions on the project site could expose workers or the public to impacts to human health and safety if the areas are not properly treated and remediated.

As described in the Initial Study Checklist attached as Appendix B to this TEIR, mitigation measures and project design features are in place to ensure the site and all recognized environmental conditions, and other potential environmental effects are appropriately remediated or minimized. Additionally, all project activities would comply with applicable state and federal laws. This would significantly reduce the likelihood and severity of accidents and other effects that could result in irreversible environmental effects.

Typically, implementation of a project such as that proposed would result in significant irreversible impacts from a reduction in natural vegetation for wildlife communities; increased generation of pollutants; and the commitment of non-renewable and / or slowly renewable natural and energy resources, such as lumber and other forest products, mineral resources, fossil fuels, consumption of natural gas and electricity, and water resources, needed for construction activities and the long-term operation of the project. The proposed project would result in a commitment of resources to enable the redevelopment of the site into the new commercial and industrial uses. The most notable demands would be an increase in natural gas and electrical energy and other non-renewable energy such as fuels for vehicles which is discussed in additional detail below. However, while the proposed project would redevelop the site with additional square footage and the size of the structures would increase, the project has been designed to minimize environmental effects and consumption of resources. Nonetheless, the proposed project would result in irreversible impacts, which are unavoidable consequences of urban growth and are described in detail in the applicable sections of the Initial Study Checklist.

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