

5.0 OTHER CEQA REQUIRED TOPICS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Section 15126 of the State CEQA Guidelines require 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 Sections 4.1 through 4.16 provide a comprehensive presentation of the proposed project’s environmental effects, proposed mitigation measures, and conclusions regarding the level of significance of each impact both before and after mitigation.

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

5.2 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 on various aspects of the environment are discussed in detail in Chapter 4, Environmental Setting, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures. The analysis in Chapter 4.2 Air Quality and Chapter 4.15 Transportation, concluded there would be significant and unavoidable impacts associated with (i) exceeding operational NO_x emissions (project level and cumulative) and (ii) traffic impacts at seven intersections (project level) and seven intersections and one freeway segment on I-80 (cumulative) associated with the proposed project, respectively. Mitigation measures have been identified to reduce potential impacts to the maximum extent practicable, but some impacts would remain significant and unavoidable.

5.3 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;
- The project would involve a large commitment of nonrenewable resources;
- The project would involve uses in which irreversible damage could result from any potential environmental accidents associated with the project; or
- The proposed irretrievable commitments of nonrenewable resources are 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 uses. The proposed project would likely result in or contribute to the following irreversible environmental changes:

- Conversion of existing undeveloped land, approximately 51.3 acres, to developed uses, thus precluding other alternative land uses in the future.
- Increased ambient noise associated with an increase in traffic.
- Irreversible consumption of goods and services associated with future residents.
- Degradation of air quality associated with project construction and operation.
- Irreversible consumption of energy and natural resources associated with construction and operation of the project, as well as by the future residential population.

Development of the proposed project would result in the dedication of the project site to commercial and residential uses, thereby precluding other conflicting uses for the lifespan of the project. Restoration of the site to pre-developed conditions would not be feasible given the degree of disturbance, the urbanization of the site, and the level of capital investment.

The State CEQA Guidelines also require a discussion of the potential for irreversible environmental damage caused by an accident associated with the proposed project. While the project could result in the use, transport, storage, and disposal of hazardous wastes during construction and operation, as described in Chapter 4.7, Hazards & Hazardous Materials, all activities would comply with applicable state and federal laws related to hazardous materials, which significantly reduce the likelihood and severity of accidents that could result in irreversible environmental damage.

Implementation of the proposed project would result in the long-term commitment of resources to development of the site into commercial and residential uses. The most notable significant irreversible impacts are 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, and water resources during construction activities. Operations associated with future uses would also consume natural gas and electrical energy. These irreversible impacts, which are unavoidable consequences of urban growth, are described in detail in the appropriate technical sections of this Draft EIR (see Chapters 4.1 through 4.15).

5.4 GROWTH INDUCING IMPACTS

As required by Section 15126.2(d), an EIR must discuss ways in which a proposed project could foster economic or population growth or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. The EIR must also discuss the characteristics of the project that could encourage and facilitate other activities that could significantly affect the environment, either individually or cumulatively. Growth can be induced in a number of ways, such as through the elimination of obstacles to growth, through the stimulation of economic activity within the region, or through the establishment of policies or precedents that directly or indirectly encourage additional growth.

In general, a project may foster growth in a geographic area if the project removes an impediment to growth (e.g., the establishment of an essential public service, the provision of new access to an area, a change in zoning or general plan approval) or economic expansion occurs in response to the project (e.g., changes in revenue base, employment expansion etc.).

The project would involve the construction of 178 residential units, a 152,138 sf Costco, and 27,500 sf for new local commercial on a project site of approximately 51.3 acres. The project would not extend new roads or infrastructure to any adjacent properties where such facilities are not currently available. The project would not remove any barriers to growth in the surrounding area.

Construction of the proposed project would generate temporary employment opportunities for construction workers, heavy equipment operators, engineers, surveyors, building inspectors, and several other types of workers related to construction activities. After completion of project construction, these construction jobs would be relocated to other areas in the region as the demand arose. Operation of the proposed project would require new employees and would result in new permanent employment growth related to staff hired operate the businesses, maintain the grounds, and provide services to both the commercial and residential portions of the project. The proposed Costco is anticipated to require approximately 330 employees, of which 60 will be new employees, because most of the existing 270 employees at the existing Costco are anticipated to relocate to the new store approximately 0.75 miles away. The new local commercial uses are anticipated to generate approximately 32 new jobs. This would total approximately 92 new commercial employees. In addition, new interim and very short-term jobs would be generated by the residential uses. This increase, however, has a limited duration and would include persons needed for home repairs, landscaping, maintenance, etc.; work which is intermittent in nature and does not constitute full-time employment. Overall, the number of people needed to fill full

and part-time labor demand would not create a substantial increase in population in Solano County or within the City of Vallejo such that a substantial demand in new housing or infrastructure would occur.

The elimination of physical or regulatory obstacles to growth is considered a growth-inducing effect. A physical obstacle to growth often involves a lack of public service infrastructure. The extension of public service infrastructure, including roadways, water mains, and sewer lines, into areas that are not currently provided with these services, would be expected to support new development. Similarly, the elimination or change to a regulatory obstacle, including existing growth and development policies, could result in new growth.

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in the elimination of growth obstacles. The storm drainage system for the proposed project would include on-site detention and would not add capacity to existing off-site infrastructure that would be used by additional projects. The wastewater plan for the proposed project would direct flows to existing infrastructure at Turner Parkway but would not add capacity to the existing system for additional projects. Improvements to off-site storm drainage and wastewater systems are not planned and improvements would only be made to on-site systems to safely convey water to existing infrastructure. Improvements may be made by the City or others regardless of whether the proposed project is developed, but these improvements would not be required to serve the proposed project. The proposed project also would not require an enlargement of capacity for the existing water conveyance infrastructure in the area. Therefore, the proposed project would not encourage growth by adding water conveyance capacity to the area.

5.5 EFFECTS FOUND NOT TO BE SIGNIFICANT

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines §15128, this section briefly describes the potential impacts found to be less than significant that do not require mitigation. In the course of this evaluation, certain impacts of the proposed project were found to be less than significant because of the inability of a project of this scope to create such impacts or the absence of project characteristics producing effects of this type. The effects determined not to be significant are not required to be included in primary analysis sections of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

AG-a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?

No Impact. The proposed project site has not been historically used for agricultural purposes such as growing crops, but has been used for grazing although not in recent decades. The project site does not possess prime classified soils for agricultural production, and the site is not located within an area of Prime, Unique, or Statewide Importance Farmland as identified by the California Department of Conservation's Important Farmland Series Mapping and Monitoring Program.

AG-b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act Contract?

No Impact. The proposed project site is not under a current Williamson Act contract. Therefore, project implementation would not result in conflicts with existing agricultural zoning.

AG-c) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use?

No Impact. See discussions AG-a and AG-b, above.

MINERAL RESOURCES

Would the project:

MR-a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the State?

No Impact. A mineral resource is land on which known deposits of commercially viable mineral or aggregate deposits exist. The designation is applied to sites determined by the State Division of Mines and Geology as being a resource of regional significance and is intended to help maintain any quarrying operations and protect them from encroachment of incompatible uses. The project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the State since no mineral resources are either identified to exist by the City's General Plan, or located within any "Critical Mineral Resource Overlay" area, on or near the proposed project site.

MR-b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local General Plan, specific plan or other land use plan?

No Impact. The proposed project would not result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a City's General Plan, specific plan or other land use plan. No impact has been identified.

WILDFIRE

Would the project:

WF-a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?**WF-b) Due to Slope, Prevailing Winds, and Other Factors, Exacerbate Wildfire Risks, and Thereby Expose Project Occupants to, Pollutant Concentrations from a Wildfire or the Uncontrolled Spread of a Wildfire?****WF-c) Require the Installation or Maintenance of Associated Infrastructure (Such As Roads, Fuel Breaks, Emergency Water Sources, Power Lines or Other Utilities) That May Exacerbate Fire Risk or That May Result In Temporary or Ongoing Impacts to The Environment?****WF-d) Expose People or Structures to Significant Risks, Including Downslope or Downstream Flooding or Landslides, as a Result of Runoff, Post-Fire Slope Instability, or Drainage Changes?**

No Impact. The project would have no impact associated with thresholds WF-a through WF-d above. The 51.3-acre site is located within an urban area and is predominantly surrounded by residential and commercial uses. The proposed project is not designated as a moderate, high, or very high wildfire Risk Area within the Vallejo General Plan 2040 (Map NBE-4). The nearest mapped fire hazard severity zones are moderate and high zones approximately 0.6 miles to the northeast across Columbus Parkway. The project site is located within a Local Responsibility Area (LRA) in which primary fire protective services are provided by the local jurisdiction. The nearest State Responsibility Area (SRA) is located approximately 2.0 miles to the east Columbus Parkway. The project site has experienced some nuisance fires due to unauthorized encampments on the site but were extinguished by the fire department before threatening any adjacent uses. In addition, construction of the proposed project would result in the construction of residential and commercial uses that would take the place of most of the undeveloped areas. This would reduce the potential for grass fires and reduce the susceptibility to nuisance fires.

The City and Solano County coordinate for response in emergency situations. The City and the County have adopted separate but consistent Emergency Operations Plans used for pre-emergency planning and emergency response to natural and humanmade disasters. Additionally, the Vallejo Fire Department offers Citizens Emergency Response Training (CERT) to community members for disaster preparedness. The City has also adopted an Emergency Operations Plan, which includes standard operating procedures for hazards, including urban/wildland interface fires. The Plan identifies the responsibilities of City personnel and coordination with other agencies to ensure the safety of Vallejo citizens in the event of a fire, geologic, or other hazardous occurrence.