
4.0 DESCRIPTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING, PROJECT IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Chapter 4 of the Revised Draft PEIR discusses the environmental setting, evaluates the potential of the project to result in significant impacts to the environment as a result of implementation of the proposed elements of the Updated Plan, and identifies mitigation measures.

Each section contains a discussion of the local and regional environmental setting to "constitute the baseline physical conditions by which a lead agency determines whether an impact is significant" (CEQA Guidelines Section 15125(a)). The applicable federal, state, and local statutes and regulations that govern individual environmental resources must be considered by the Town in the decision making process and therefore, are included in the regulatory framework described for each environmental resource. Thresholds of significance, which are based primarily on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, are presented in each section and are used to determine whether or not the implementation of the Updated Plan would result in a significant impact. Under CEQA, an EIR should identify and analyze the possible significant environmental impacts of a proposed project (CEQA Section 21100(b)(1); CEQA Guidelines Section 15126(a), 15126.2(a)). A significant effect on the environment means "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 historical or aesthetic significance..." In addition, "a social or economic change related to a physical change may be considered in determining whether the physical change is significant" (CEQA Guidelines Section 15382). "The significant effects should be discussed with emphasis in proportion to their severity and probability of occurrence (CEQA Guidelines Section 15143; see also CEQA Sections 21003.1(e), 21100(c); CEQA Guidelines Section 15128).

The Updated General Plan policies and implementation measures applicable to each threshold are provided. In many instances the policies and implementation measures in the Updated Plan serve to minimize or reduce potential impacts to the environment. If a significant impact is identified, mitigation measures to reduce the identified impact are presented. An analysis of the impacts after the implementation of mitigation measures is also provided. Any unavoidable significant adverse impacts (i.e., those effects that either cannot be mitigated or remain significant even after mitigation) are identified in the section and are summarized in Section 6.D of this EIR.

In certain instances, mitigation measures for potentially significant impacts could create their own secondary effects from implementation. According to the CEQA Guidelines (Section

15126.4(D)), [“If a mitigation measure would cause one or more significant effects in addition to those that would be caused by the project as proposed, the effects of the mitigation measure shall be discussed but in less detail than the significant effects of the project as proposed.”] Therefore, Section 6.E of this Revised Draft PEIR provides an analysis of mitigation measure contained in Chapter 4 of this EIR.