

6.0 Significant Unavoidable Environmental Effects/Irreversible Changes

Sections 15126.2 (b) and (c) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines require that the significant unavoidable impacts of the project, as well as any significant irreversible environmental changes that would result from project implementation, be addressed in an Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

6.1 Significant Environmental Effects Which Cannot Be Avoided if the Project Is Implemented

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2 (b), any significant unavoidable impacts of a project, including those impacts that can be mitigated but not reduced to below a level of significance despite the applicant's willingness to implement all feasible mitigation measures, must be identified in the EIR.

For Scenario 1, impacts related to greenhouse gas emissions and traffic impacts to roadway segments and intersections within the traffic study area in 2035 would remain significant unavoidable effects of project implementation.

For Scenario 2, traffic noise impacts to existing roadway segments, permanent ambient noise increases associated with vehicular traffic, and impacts to roadway segments and intersections within the traffic study area in 2035 would remain significant unavoidable effects of project implementation.

For Scenario 3, impacts related to greenhouse gas emissions; traffic noise on new and existing roadways, along with a permanent increase in ambient noise associated with vehicular traffic; and traffic impacts to roadway segments and intersections within the traffic study area in 2035 would remain significant unavoidable effects of project implementation.

For Scenario 4, impacts related to historical resources, visual character; traffic noise on new and existing roadways, along with a permanent increase in ambient noise associated with vehicular traffic; and traffic impacts to roadway segments and intersections within the traffic study area in 2035 would remain significant unavoidable effects of project implementation.

Under all four scenarios, there would be the need for improvements (e.g., signalization) to intersections along Victoria Avenue. This is due to cumulative traffic impacts (see Section 3.11), which increase by the year 2035 consistent with General Plan 2025 buildout. Mitigation measures include signals, curbs, removal of vegetation, and replacement of medians. Victoria Avenue is a parkway lined with many species of trees that has long been recognized as an important local and regional scenic resource. The roadway corridor is also listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), and is thus considered a historic resource. Therefore, a significant impact to both historic resources and scenic resources from off-site improvements under all scenarios would occur. As no feasible mitigation exists, these impacts would remain significant and unavoidable for all four scenarios.

Sections 3.4 (Cultural/Paleontological Resources), 3.8 (Greenhouse Gases), 3.9 (Land Use and Aesthetics), 3.10 (Noise), and 3.11 (Transportation/Traffic) of this Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) provide more detail about the nature and extent of significant and unmitigable impacts. All other significant impacts for all scenarios identified in Section 3.0 of this DEIR, Environmental Analysis, as resulting from project implementation can be reduced to below a level of significance, with implementation of the mitigation measures identified in the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP), Section 9.0, of this DEIR.

6.2 Irreversible Environmental Changes Which Would Result if the Project Is Implemented

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2 (c):

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 improvements which provide 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.

Non-renewable resources generally include biological habitat, agricultural land, archaeological and paleontological resources, mineral deposits, water bodies, and some energy sources. As evaluated in Sections 3.1 (Agricultural Resources), 3.3 (Biological Resources), 3.4 (Cultural/Paleontological Resources), 3.5 (Drainage/Hydrology/Water Quality), and 3.6 (Energy Use and Conservation), and 7.0 (Effects Found Not to be Significant), of this DEIR, implementation of Scenarios 1, 2, or 3 would not result in

significant irreversible impacts to agricultural, biological, or cultural resources, energy, or water bodies. However, implementation of Scenario 3 would result in the significant irreversible consumption of natural resources and energy during construction activities. Implementation of Scenario 4 would not result in significant irreversible impacts to agricultural or biological resources, energy, or water bodies. However, implementation of this scenario would result in irreversible consumption of natural resources and energy during construction activities and adverse changes to historical resources.

For Scenarios 3 and 4, which propose construction, natural resource consumption would include lumber and other forest products, sand and gravel, asphalt, steel, copper, other metals, and water. Building materials, while perhaps recyclable in part at some long-term future date, would for practical purposes be considered permanently consumed. Energy derived from non-renewable sources, such as fossil and nuclear fuels, would be consumed during construction. However, construction is short-term (two months for the fill crossing, nine months for the bridge, and three months for the Proposed C Street), and, once constructed, the roadways would not require the consumption of natural resources and energy. During construction, required waste diversion measures and storm water regulations help to minimize the use of materials and water on-site. Further, to minimize the use of energy and water in the long term, the Project would incorporate landscaping in the median that does not have a high water demand.

THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY BLANK.