

CHAPTER 4 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the environmental setting, evaluates the potential significant environmental impacts, and identifies appropriate mitigation measures for each environmental resource discussed in this Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES ANALYZED IN THIS EIR

The scope of this EIR is based on the project description outlined in Chapter 2 as well as comments received during the scoping process, focusing on environmental issues that potentially could result in significant impacts. This chapter of the EIR analyzes impacts from the Project as it relates to the nine environmental resources determined to be potentially significant in the Notice of Preparation (NOP) and during the scoping process:

- Section 4.1 Aesthetics and Visual Resources
- Section 4.2 Biological Resources
- Section 4.3 Cultural Resources
- Section 4.4 Geology and Soils
- Section 4.5 Hydrology and Water Quality
- Section 4.6 Land Use and Planning
- Section 4.7 Noise
- Section 4.8 Public Services
- Section 4.9 Utilities and Service Systems

The rationale for other resource areas eliminated from further analysis is included in Chapter 5.

ORGANIZATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

Each section (4.1 through 4.9) addresses the environmental resource areas listed above and contains the following information:

- **Existing Conditions.** This section describes the physical environmental conditions in the Project area as they relate to the resource being evaluated. California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines establish that existing conditions normally constitute the baseline physical conditions by which the lead agency (in this case, the City) determines whether or not an impact is significant.
- **Regulatory Framework.** This section summarizes the regulations, plans, and standards that apply to the Project and relate to the specific resource area being evaluated.
- **Thresholds of Significance.** This section identifies the thresholds of significance used to evaluate the Project's impacts. Significance thresholds can be quantitative or qualitative and are based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines and the City of Goleta's Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual (Thresholds Manual) (City of Goleta 2008). Where a

threshold of significance is not relevant to the Project, this is noted, and it is not discussed further.

- **Project Impacts.** The environmental analysis considers the Project's potential impacts resulting from short-term construction and long-term operation of the Project. While the criteria for determining significant impacts are unique to each issue area, the analysis applies a uniform classification of the impacts based on the following definitions:
 - A **significant impact** would cause a substantial adverse effect on the environment. An impact can be **significant and unavoidable (Class I)** because no feasible mitigation measures are available to reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level. An impact also can be **significant but mitigable to less than significant (Class II)** because feasible mitigation measures have been identified.
 - A **less-than-significant impact (Class III)** would cause an adverse effect on the environment, but it would not be substantial and would not exceed the significance criteria established for each resource.
 - A **beneficial impact (Class IV)** also could occur under some circumstances.
 - Additionally, it may be determined that **no impact** would result from the Project.
- **Cumulative Impacts.** This subsection identifies the potential for significant effects to occur as a result of the Project in combination with other development anticipated in the vicinity of the Project site. Where this potential exists, a determination is made as to whether or not the project's contribution to this impact would be cumulatively considerable and therefore significant.
- **Mitigation Measures.** Mitigation measures are identified for each significant Project-specific and cumulative impact that would result from the Project.
- **Residual Impacts.** This subsection identifies the level of significance for Project and cumulative impacts following the implementation of mitigation measures. Residual impacts either would be less than significant (mitigation measures are available that would reduce an impact below the established thresholds of significance) or significant (no feasible mitigation measures have been identified that would reduce an impact below the thresholds of significance; thus, the impact would remain significant and unavoidable). This section also identifies less-than-significant (Class III) impacts that do not require mitigation.