

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

This section discusses the possible environmental effects of the proposed Project for the specific issue areas that were identified through the Initial Study and NOP process as having the potential to experience significant impacts. “Significant effect” is defined by the CEQA Guidelines §15382 as “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 historic or aesthetic significance. An economic or social change by itself shall not be considered a significant effect on the environment, but may be considered in determining whether the physical change is significant.”

The assessment of each issue area begins with a discussion of the setting relevant to that issue area. Following the setting is a discussion of the Project’s impacts relative to the issue area. Within the impact analysis, the first subsection identifies the methodologies used and the “significance thresholds.”

The criteria used to establish thresholds of significance are based primarily on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines (14 California Code of Regulations §§ 15000 et seq.) and thresholds included in the City’s Environmental Thresholds and Guidelines Manual. Each threshold is identified by consecutive numbering (for example, AES-1). The significance threshold numbering corresponds with the associated impact numbering (i.e., Impact AES-1) to illustrate the nexus between the threshold and impacts. In certain situations, more than one impact can relate to the same impact (e.g., threshold AES-3 has two impacts: Impact AES-3.1 and Impact AES-3.2).

The next subsection describes each impact of the proposed Project, mitigation measures for significant impacts, and the level of significance after mitigation. Each impact under consideration for an issue area is separately listed in bold text, with the discussion of the impact and its significance following. Each bolded impact listing also contains a statement of the significance determination for the environmental impact as follows:

Class I, Significant and Unavoidable: An impact that cannot be reduced to below the threshold level given reasonably available and feasible mitigation measures. Such an impact requires a Statement of Overriding Considerations to be issued if the project is approved.

Class II, Significant but Mitigable: An impact that can be reduced to below the threshold level given reasonably available and feasible mitigation measures. Such an impact requires findings to be made.

Class III, Not Significant: An impact that would be potentially adverse, but does not exceed the threshold levels and does not require mitigation measures. However, mitigation measures that could further lessen the environmental effect may be suggested if readily available and easily achievable.

Class IV, No Impact or Beneficial: Implementation of the Project would potentially result in no impact to aspects of certain environmental issue areas, or would result in an impact that is beneficial.

Following each environmental impact discussion is a listing of required mitigation measures or standard conditions as specified by CEQA Guidelines §15126.4, and the residual effects or level of significance remaining after the implementation of the measures. In those cases where implementation of the mitigation measure for an impact could have a significant environmental impact in another issue area, this impact is discussed as a residual effect.

The impact analysis concludes with a discussion of cumulative effects, which evaluates the impacts associated with the proposed Project in conjunction with other past, recently approved, planned and pending development in the area as specified by CEQA Guidelines §15130.^[LM1]