

9.0 CEQA MANDATED SECTIONS

9.1 IRREVERSIBLE CHANGES DUE TO THE PROJECT

Pursuant to Section 15126.2(c) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, this Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) must consider significant irreversible environmental changes that would be caused by the Project, should it be implemented. The Project would result in irreversible environmental changes related to topography/landform, site character, loss of open space, and commitment to non-renewable resources. The analysis and determination of the significance of these changes is discussed below.

9.1.1 TOPOGRAPHY

The existing topography on the Project site would be irreversibly changed with implementation of the Project. Manufactured slopes would be constructed; contoured to conform to the existing topography to the greatest extent feasible; and landscaped to help reduce visual impacts from the change in topography. However, as discussed in Section 5.13, Visual Resources, the Project would result in significant and unavoidable impacts related to a change in visual character of the Project site, in part due to the alteration of topography. Accordingly, the required changes to the existing topography would be considered a significant irreversible environmental change.

9.1.2 SITE CHARACTER AND LOSS OF OPEN SPACE

The overall character of the Project site would be irreversibly changed through conversion from rural, agricultural, and natural open space areas to urban development. Developed portions of the property would no longer be available for grazing activities or other existing rural and agricultural land uses. These changes would also affect the visual character of the site as seen from surrounding properties and public roadways.

Of the 12,323-acre Project site, approximately 5,624 acres are designated as Open Space. Of the 5,624 acres of designated Open Space, approximately 5,116 acres (42 percent of the site) would (1) remain in their original natural condition; (2) be restored; and/or (3) be enhanced by weed abatement, fencing, and native species planting, among other means. Of this amount, approximately 3,861 acres are designated as Significant Ecological Area (SEA) 17 to be preserved in perpetuity within the Project site boundaries. Additionally, approximately 23,547 acres of off-site areas would be set aside for preservation to mitigate impacts to biological resources (see Section 5.7, Biological Resources) to ensure preservation of the total 27,412-acre open space preserve in perpetuity. Some open space would be re-created through the development of the passive open space areas, parks, and a greenway trails and other trails on the Project site. However, the rural character of the site and open space areas being developed would be irreversibly altered. As discussed above, there would be significant and unavoidable impacts to the visual character of the Project site. Accordingly, the change from a rural or urban character and the loss of open space is considered a significant irreversible environmental change.

9.1.3 NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCES

Non-renewable resources, such as construction aggregate (e.g., sand, gravel) and fossil fuels, would be committed to the Project, which future generations would be unable to reverse. Non-renewable materials would be used in the construction of the Project; fossil fuels would be used in the construction phase of the Project and would be consumed by the Project inhabitants over the long term.

However, the Project's residential and other land uses are proposed in order to fill an existing need that is based on estimates of future population growth; it would not be creating a need for jobs or housing. Therefore, the non-renewable resources that would be used in the construction of the Project would be expected to be consumed by housing and land development in other locations to eventually fulfill the housing and employment demand that is anticipated, and that is still unfilled, for Los Angeles County. Additionally, the land uses proposed are not unusually wasteful or excessive in terms of construction materials and fossil fuel use. Further, the Project takes advantage of the potential for protecting natural resources, increasing energy efficiency, and promoting sustainable development, through the creation of a master planned community that would include a variety of housing types, business and employment opportunities and a range of civic and recreation uses. Therefore, the Project's consumption of non-renewable resources is not considered a significant irreversible environmental change.

9.2 SUMMARY OF PROJECT IMPACTS

A summary of the impacts of each category are below.

9.2.1 LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS

Through the analysis presented in this EIR, many environmental factors were found to be less than significant with the implementation of Project Design Features. No mitigation measures are required for these issues, which include:

- Land Resources (forest land/timberland; mineral resources)
- Land Use, Entitlements, and Planning
- Geotechnical
- Population, Housing, and Employment (household displacement)
- Visual Resources (scenic highways)
- Water Resources (groundwater)

9.2.2 LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS WITH MITIGATION

The environmental factors that were found to be significant or potentially significant prior to mitigation include the following:

- Hydrology and Flood

- Hazards and Fire Safety
- Water Quality
- Cultural and Tribal Resources
- Biological Resources
- Noise (except traffic noise along segments of State Route [SR] 138)
- Visual Resources (views from trails/bikeways, scenic highways)
- Parks and Recreation
- Education
- Fire and Law Enforcement Services
- Other Public Services (libraries and County facilities)
- Water Resources (water supply)
- Wastewater
- Dry Utilities

However, these direct and/or indirect impacts would be mitigated to a less than significant level with incorporation of the recommended mitigation measures.

9.2.3 SIGNIFICANT AND UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

Through the analysis contained in this EIR, the environmental factors that were found to be directly and/or indirectly significant and unavoidable even with the incorporation of mitigation include following:

- Land Resources (loss of Prime Farmland)
- Air Resources (short-term VOC and NO_x; short-term PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5} [near previously completed residences only]; and long-term CO, VOC, NO_x, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5} emissions)
- Noise (traffic noise along segments of SR-138)
- Population, Housing, and Employment (population and housing growth; growth-inducing impacts)
- Traffic, Access and Circulation (mitigation outside jurisdiction of Lead Agency)
- Visual Resources (visual character, nighttime light and glare)
- Other Public Services (solid waste)
- Water Resources (regional water supplies beyond 2035)
- Climate Change

Regarding the analysis of traffic impacts, mitigation measures have been established to reduce the Project's significant impacts; as such, these impacts may be considered less than significant with mitigation. However, these mitigation measures call for improvements to California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) facilities, which are outside the control of the County of Los Angeles. The proposed Centennial Transportation Improvement Program (CTIP) Agreement provides a mechanism that makes it reasonably likely that such improvements will be implemented by providing advance funding for planning, design, and construction of certain improvements and establishing a funding program to collect fair share for other improvements.

Accordingly, pursuant to Section 21081 of CEQA, the County determines the following:

- (a) Changes or alterations have been requested or incorporated into the Project which mitigate the traffic effects to a less than significant level, and
- (b) The mitigations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of Caltrans and can and should be adopted by Caltrans.

It is recognized that, if Caltrans does not implement the improvements outlined in the mitigation measures in the manner or within the timeframe needed to serve the Project, significant and unavoidable direct impacts to traffic circulation may result.

The anticipated significant and unavoidable impacts of the Project are further detailed in Section 1.0, Executive Summary. As stated in Section 15093 of the State CEQA Guidelines, when a lead agency approves a project that would result in significant effects that are not avoided or substantially lessened by feasible mitigation measures, the lead agency shall, based on substantial evidence in the record, state in writing the specific reasons to support its action despite these effects. This document is called a Statement of Overriding Considerations and shall be required for the significant and unavoidable impacts identified above.

9.2.4 CUMULATIVELY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS

Through the analysis contained in this EIR, the environmental factors that were found to be cumulatively significant and unavoidable include following:

- Biological Resources (regional wildlife movement, loss of native grasslands)
- Land Resources (loss of Prime Farmland)
- Population, Housing, and Employment (population and housing growth)
- Traffic, Access and Circulation (mitigation outside jurisdiction of Lead Agency)
- Air Resources (short-term VOC and NO_x; and long-term CO, VOC, NO_x, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5} emissions)
- Noise (traffic noise along segments of SR-138)
- Visual Resources (visual character, nighttime light and glare)
- Other Public Services (solid waste)

- Water Resources (regional water supplies beyond 2035)
- Climate Change

Regarding the analysis of traffic impacts, it is recognized that, if Caltrans does not implement the improvements outlined in the mitigation measures in the manner or within the timeframe needed to serve the Project, significant and unavoidable cumulative impacts to traffic circulation may result.

9.3 MITIGATION OUTSIDE THE AUTHORITY OF THE LEAD AGENCY

The environmental impacts below were found to be significant, or potentially significant, prior to mitigation, but the implementation of the needed mitigation in these cases is outside the jurisdiction of the lead agency. If the applicable jurisdictional agency decides to adopt mitigation, these impacts would be less than significant. These impacts include the following, as discussed above:

- Traffic, Access, and Circulation (cumulatively significant without pending highway and freeway improvements by Caltrans).

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