

# CHAPTER 4 Environmental Analysis

## 4.0 INTRODUCTION TO THE ANALYSIS

Sections 4.1 through 4.17 of this EIR chapter contain a discussion of the potential environmental impacts of implementation of the General Plan Update, including information related to existing site conditions, analyses of the type and magnitude of project-related and cumulative environmental impacts, and feasible mitigation measures that could reduce or avoid environmental impacts.

### 4.0.1 Format of the Environmental Analysis

Each environmental resource section in Chapter 4 contains the following headings and related discussions.

#### ■ Environmental Setting

An EIR must include a description of the existing physical environmental conditions to provide the “baseline condition” that may be subject to change as a result of implementation of the General Plan Update. This section provides the context against which project-related impacts are compared (CEQA Guidelines Section 15125).

#### ■ Regulatory Framework

The Regulatory Framework provides a summary of regulations, plans, policies, and laws that are relevant to each environmental issue area. Federal, state, regional, and local regulations that are designed to ensure protection of resources, public and private property, and the local population have been reviewed and incorporated as appropriate.

#### ■ Project Impacts and Mitigation

This section is further divided into the following subsections, as described below.

##### ***Analytic Method***

This section describes the method by which impacts are described, identifies how data are calculated for those impacts that can be quantified, and sets forth the basis for the significance determination.

##### ***Thresholds of Significance***

Thresholds of significance are criteria used to determine whether potential environmental effects are significant. This subsection defines the type, amount, and/or extent of impact that would be considered a significant adverse change in the environment. Some thresholds (such as air quality, traffic, and noise) are quantitative, while others, such as visual quality, are qualitative. The thresholds are intended to assist

the reader in understanding how and why the EIR reaches a conclusion that an impact is significant or less than significant.

Thresholds of Significance used for the evaluation of impacts include those thresholds adopted by the City of Simi Valley and are based on Appendix G of the 2011 CEQA Guidelines. The City of Simi Valley relies on these thresholds as appropriate for evaluation of the significance of impacts within the City.

Thresholds of significance are provided both in the “Thresholds of Significance” section and immediately before the relevant impact analysis for ease of correlation.

### ***General Plan Update Policies***

Prior to the discussion of impacts, the applicable list of General Plan Update policies related to the specific resource are presented, along with the applicable implementation program(s). These General Plan policies, through their implementation programs, ensure that potential impacts are avoided, minimized, and/or mitigated appropriately. Where appropriate in the analysis, the specific policies that are proposed as a part of the General Plan Update that serve to reduce an environmental impact are cited.

### ***Effects Not Found to Be Significant***

Certain impacts are determined to be “Effects Not Found to Be Significant” under Section 15128 of the CEQA Guidelines. This section of the CEQA Guidelines requires that an EIR contain a brief statement indicating the reasons that various possible significant effects of a project are determined not to be significant and, therefore, are not discussed in detail in the EIR.

### ***Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures***

This subsection describes the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project and, based on the thresholds of significance, determines whether the environmental impacts would be considered significant and unavoidable or less than significant. Each impact is summarized in an “impact statement” that is separately numbered, followed by a more detailed discussion of the potential impacts and the significance of each impact before mitigation. Impact numbers are not provided for Effects Not Found to Be Significant.

Each impact area under consideration is also listed with a statement of the significance determination for the environmental effect as follows:

- **Significant and Unavoidable**—Constitutes a substantial adverse change to existing environmental conditions that cannot be fully mitigated by implementation of all feasible mitigation measures, or by the selection of an environmentally superior project alternative.
- **Less Than Significant, with or without Mitigation Measures**—This class includes impacts that will not be adverse to the environment that may or may not require mitigation to reach this level. For example, this includes an impact that may be adverse, but does not exceed the threshold levels before or after implementation of mitigation measures. For circumstances where an impact does not exceed a threshold, mitigation measures may be suggested, if readily available, to further reduce environmental effects. Additionally, this class includes impacts that constitute a

substantial adverse change to existing environmental conditions that can be mitigated to less-than-significant levels by implementation of feasible mitigation measures.

- **No Impact**—Results in no adverse change to existing environmental conditions.

A “significant impact” is defined by CEQA Guidelines Section 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.”

When appropriate, following each environmental impact discussion, recommended mitigation measures and residual effects or the level of significance after implementation of mitigation measures are discussed. Additionally, references to appropriate goals and policies of the General Plan Update are provided.

### ***Cumulative Impacts***

Following the discussion of the Thresholds of Significance for each project-related impact, a cumulative impact discussion is provided. However, a cumulative impact analysis is only provided for those thresholds that result in a less-than-significant or significant and unavoidable impact. A cumulative impact analysis is not provided for Effects Found Not to Be Significant, which result in no project-related impacts.

### ■ **References**

This section contains all references used in preparation of the technical section.

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