

# CHAPTER 3

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## Environmental Setting, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures

### Introduction to the Environmental Analysis

This chapter of the environmental impact report (EIR) informs decision makers and the public of the type and magnitude of the change to the existing environment that could result from implementation of the Los Cerritos Wetlands Oil Consolidation and Restoration project (proposed project). Environmental topics addressed in this EIR were identified in the Notice of Preparation/Initial Study (NOP/IS) prepared by the City of Long Beach (City) for the project. The NOP/IS was issued by the City on April 28, 2016, and circulated for 30 days.

This EIR addresses the environmental impacts determined to be potentially significant pursuant to the NOP/IS, input from the public, and responses to the NOP/IS, including input at the NOP/IS scoping meeting and from the public and commenting agencies. This EIR addresses these environmental impacts as well as impacts that could result from implementation of the project in combination with other cumulative projects in the City and adjacent local jurisdictions in accordance with requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the provisions set forth in the *CEQA Guidelines*. This EIR also recommends feasible mitigation measures, where possible, that would reduce or eliminate significant environmental effects. Through this process, the City has determined that this EIR analysis should focus on the following environmental issues:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology, Seismicity, and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population and Employment
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation and Traffic
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Energy Consumption

All impacts associated with agricultural and forest resources were determined through the NOP/IS to have “no impact” associated with project implementation and are, therefore, not discussed in this EIR.

## Format of the Environmental Analysis

Each section of Chapter 3, *Environmental Setting, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures*, in this EIR includes a project-level analysis of the project's direct and indirect environmental impacts. Each section includes an introduction, the environmental setting, the regulatory framework, project-level impacts and proposed mitigation measures, and cumulative impacts. The following provides a brief description and overview of the six components of each section.

### Introduction

This subsection provides a brief description of the environmental issue along with an overview of the individual analyses that are provided in the sections and key reference and source documents.

### Environmental Setting

This subsection provides a description of existing (pre-project) conditions in terms of the physical environment that pertains to each respective environmental issue. This section also describes the baseline condition against which project-related impacts are compared.

### Regulatory Framework

This subsection provides a discussion of federal, state, and local laws, regulations, plans, and/or policies that pertain to the environmental topic being analyzed.

### Analysis of Impacts

The analysis of impacts evaluates both the project-specific direct and indirect environmental impacts and the potential environmental effects associated with cumulative development.

**Significance Criteria:** Significance criteria are thresholds applied by the Lead Agency to identify significant adverse environmental impacts. A threshold is defined by a Lead Agency based on scientific and factual data relative to the Lead Agency jurisdiction, views of the public in affected areas, the policy/regulatory environment of affected jurisdictions, and other factors.

**Methodology:** This subsection starts with a description of the methodology, including the key assumptions, used in the analysis. Environmental issues that have been scoped out during the scoping process (i.e., that have been reviewed and determined to not relate to a significant environmental project impact) are identified following the thresholds.

**Impact Evaluation:** Each impact is summarized in an "impact statement" that is separately numbered, corresponds with a significance threshold, and is followed by a detailed discussion. Where the impact analysis identifies potential significant adverse environmental effects that could be reduced or avoided through implementation of a mitigation measure or measures, the measure/s are presented after the relevant impact discussion. Mitigation measures identify the parties responsible for implementation, a timeframe for implementation, and any applicable public agency approval, oversight, or monitoring that may be required. Mitigation measures would usually be implemented by the project sponsor or applicant, with oversight by one or more public agencies, unless indicated otherwise.

This subsection concludes with a statement regarding whether the impact, after implementation of any identified mitigation measures and/or compliance with existing local, state, and federal laws and regulations, would remain significant or be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

A “significant effect” 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.*

This EIR uses the following terms to describe the level of significance of impacts identified during the course of the environmental analysis:

- **No Impact**—No adverse impact on the environment would occur, and mitigation is not required.
- **Less-than-Significant Impact**—A less-than-significant impact does not result in 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 (see *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15382). Impacts determined to be less than significant do not require mitigation measures.
- **Significant Impact**—Public Resources Code Section 21068 defines a significant impact as “a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in the environment.” The thresholds identified in each section of this EIR and the *CEQA* definition of “significant impact” are applied to reach this conclusion. Feasible mitigation measures or alternatives to the project must be identified and adopted if they would avoid or substantially reduce the significant impact.
- **Significant and Unavoidable Impact**—A significant and unavoidable impact is a substantial adverse effect on the environment that cannot be mitigated to a less-than-significant level. A project with significant and unavoidable impacts could still proceed, but the City would be required to adopt a statement of overriding considerations, pursuant to *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15093, explaining why the City would proceed with the project in spite of the potential for significant environmental impacts.

**Cumulative Impacts:** *CEQA* requires that EIRs discuss a project’s potential contribution to cumulative impacts, in addition to project-specific impacts. In accordance with *CEQA*, the discussion of cumulative impacts must reflect the severity of the impacts and the likelihood of their occurrence; however, the discussion need not be as detailed as the discussion of environmental impacts attributable to the proposed project alone.

According to *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15355:

*“Cumulative impacts” refer to two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts.*

- (a) The individual effects may be changes resulting from a single project or a number of separate projects.*
- (b) The cumulative impact from several projects is the change in the environment, which results from the incremental impact of the project when added to other closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable probable future projects. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant projects taking place over a period of time.*

*CEQA Guidelines* Section 15130(a)(1) further states, “A cumulative impact consists of an impact which is created as a result of the combination of the project evaluated in the EIR together with other projects causing related impacts.” Other projects include past projects (existing conditions), present projects (projects under construction), and reasonably foreseeable future projects (proposed, approved, or reasonably expected).

*CEQA Guidelines* Section 15130(a) also requires that EIRs discuss the cumulative impacts of a project when the proposed project’s incremental effect is “cumulatively considerable.” Under *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15065(a)(3), “cumulatively considerable” means that “the incremental effects of an individual project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.” Where a Lead Agency is examining a proposed project with an incremental effect that is not cumulatively considerable, it need not consider the effect significant but must briefly describe the basis for its conclusion. If the combined cumulative impact associated with a project’s incremental effect and the effects of other projects is not significant, *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15130(a)(2) requires a brief discussion in the EIR of why a cumulative impact is not significant and why it is not discussed in further detail. *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15130(a)(3) requires supporting analysis in the EIR if a determination is made that a project’s contribution to a significant cumulative impact is rendered less than cumulatively considerable and, therefore, is not significant. CEQA recognizes that the analysis of cumulative impacts need not be as detailed as the analysis of project-related impacts, but instead should “be guided by the standards of practicality and reasonableness.” (*CEQA Guidelines* Section 15130(b)). The discussion of cumulative impacts in this EIR focuses on whether the impacts of the project are cumulatively considerable.

The fact that a cumulative impact is significant does not necessarily mean that project-related contribution to the cumulative impact analysis is significant, as well. Instead, under CEQA, a project-related contribution to a significant cumulative impact is only significant if the contribution is “cumulatively considerable.” To support each significance conclusion, this EIR provides a cumulative impact analysis, and where project-specific impacts have been identified that, together with the effects of other related projects, could result in cumulatively significant impacts, these potential impacts are documented.

*CEQA Guidelines* Section 15130(b) defines consideration of the following two elements as necessary to provide an adequate discussion of cumulative impacts: “(A) a list of past, present, and probable future projects producing related or cumulative impacts, including, if necessary, those projects outside the control of the agency, or (B) a summary of projections contained in an adopted local, regional, or statewide plan, or related planning document, that describes or evaluates conditions contributing to the cumulative effect.” In this EIR, each environmental impact area looks at a list of past, present, and probable future projects, and in some cases, a combination of the related projects list and the summary of projections is used. Cumulative study areas are defined based on an analysis of the geographical scope relevant to each particular environmental issue. Therefore, the cumulative study area for each individual environmental impact issue may vary and will be defined in each section. For example, cumulative aesthetic considerations encompass only the surrounding areas with direct views of the proposed project, while air quality is a regional issue that is analyzed on a broader scale.

Additionally, to determine which related projects may contribute to cumulative impacts, the City of Long Beach considered known projects within Long Beach and the adjacent jurisdictions and special districts. To address regional growth, adopted plans (such as the SCAG 2016–2040 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy Growth Forecast, and the City of Long Beach General Plan) are used

in the cumulative impact analysis. The Long Beach section of the *2016–2040 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy Growth Forecast* (SCAG 2016) was reviewed.

Adjacent jurisdictions were contacted (see below) to determine if “related projects” within their respective jurisdictions should be considered in the cumulative analysis. Established databases (such as [www.CEQAnet.ca.gov](http://www.CEQAnet.ca.gov)) were used to identify projects that were being evaluated by agencies within southern/coastal Los Angeles County. This information was then sent to the jurisdictions with a request for confirmation that the list was comprehensive or, if it was found not to be comprehensive, with a request to identify projects that had not been included on the list. The jurisdictions contacted in June 2016 are as follows:

- City of Long Beach Planning Bureau
- Long Beach Department of Public Works
- City of Seal Beach

Follow-up phone calls and/or emails were made to the jurisdictions contacted to obtain input. The Los Angeles County Department of Beaches and Harbors and City of Seal Beach Department of Community Development did not respond to the request for information; however, some projects within Seal Beach were deemed appropriate for inclusion in the cumulative impacts analysis due to their proximity to the project site.

**Table 3-1, List of Cumulative Projects**, list the cumulative projects, and **Figure 3-1, Approximate Locations of Cumulative Projects**, shows their approximate locations.

**Table 3-1 List of Cumulative Projects**

Project No.	Project Name	Location	Distance from Project Site	Description	Size	Status
1	Pacific Coast Highway (PCH) & 2nd Street	6400 PCH	0.14 mile	The proposed project would demolish the existing Seaport Marina Hotel and construct a commercial center totaling 245,000 square feet, which would include approximately 95,000 square feet of retail uses, a 55,000-square-foot grocery store, a 25,000-square-foot fitness/health club, and approximately 70,000 square feet of restaurant uses, as well as 1,150 parking spaces. The proposed commercial structures would be one- and two-story buildings with a maximum height of 35 feet.	10.93 acres	Final public hearing fall 2017
2	Southeast Area Specific Plan	Southeast edge of the City of Long Beach	0.3 mile northwest of project site	The project would replace the current 1,475-acre PD-1 zoning district with a new Specific Plan covering 1,466 acres and remove 9 acres from the PD-1 boundaries to convert to conventional zoning. Therefore, the project would change the boundaries of PD-1 so that the project would consist of two separate areas: (1) 1,466 acres within the boundaries of the current 1,475-acre PD-1, and (2) 9 acres within the current PD-1 directly west of the Marina Vista Park (or "Conventional Zoning Area"). Both of these areas combined constitute the project area.	1,466 acres	Draft EIR
3	Alamitos Generating Station Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Project	690 Studebaker Road	0.82 mile northwest of project site	The project would construct 300 megawatts of battery energy storage at the existing Alamitos Generating Station. The proposed BESS facility is an energy storage warehouse utilizing advanced technology batteries and control systems to provide electrical service to Southern California Edison. This storage facility would consist of three 100-megawatt containment buildings, similar in appearance to server farms, located within the existing surface parking lot between existing Units 1 through 4 and the switchyard. Each building would be 65 feet in height, 270 feet in length, and 165 feet in width, comprising three levels: two battery storage levels separated by a mezzanine level. The mezzanine level would contain mechanical equipment such as electrical controls and heating, ventilation, and air conditioning units.	71.2 acres	Approved public hearing summer 2017
4	AES Alamitos Energy Center	South of State Route 22 (7th Street), west of the San Gabriel River, north of 2nd Street, and east of Studebaker Road	1.10 miles northwest of project site	The project, which involves modernizing the existing Alamitos Generating Station, consists of two gas turbine power blocks. Power Block 1 would provide two natural-gas-fired combustion turbine generators in a combined cycle configuration, two unfired heat recovery steam generators, one steam turbine generator, an air-cooled condenser, an auxiliary boiler, and related ancillary equipment. Power Block 2 would consist of four simple cycle combustion turbine generators with fin-fan coolers and ancillary facilities.	21 acres	Under environmental review

**Table 3-1 List of Cumulative Projects**

Project No.	Project Name	Location	Distance from Project Site	Description	Size	Status
5	Alamitos Bay Bridge Replacements	The Alamitos Bay Bridge, over the Los Cerritos Channel	0.2 mile south of project site	<p>The Alamitos Bay Bridge is located on State Route 1, in the City of Long Beach a north-south arterial that provides interregional, recreational, commuter, and truck access and local travel through an urban corridor. The bridge was built in 1959 and has been subjected to harsh wear and tear. It is seismically vulnerable at the joints and columns. In addition, it has substructure vulnerabilities which include scour, differential settlement and erosion of the channel banks. Considering all of the above, the bridge is identified as seismically deficient and is highly likely to fail during a maximum credible earthquake.</p> <p>Improvements to the bridge are needed to enhance the safety of the structure and to maintain the level of service.</p> <p>The Bridge Replacement Project would replace the bridge with a new, wider bridge that meets current AASHTO standards and CALTRANS seismic standards.</p>	Not available (n/a)	Planning phase
6	Alamitos Bay Landing Shuttle	Marina Drive corridor, between 2nd Street and Alamitos Bay Landing	0.7 mile southwest of project site	Alamitos Bay Landing Shuttle Services will be ongoing from November 2017 to November 2018.	n/a	Ongoing Nov 2017–Nov 2018
7	Bridge Preventive Maintenance Program—Group 4	2nd Street bridges over the San Gabriel River and Hanes Steam Plant Channel	0.2 mile east of project site	The Bridge Preventive Maintenance Program-Group 4 project includes the improvements of the 2nd St bridges over the San Gabriel River and Hanes Steam Plant Channel.	n/a	In approval process
8	7th Street Gateway Landscaping	7th Street	0.53 mile north of project site	The project includes landscaping of the 7th Street Gateway.	n/a	Estimated construction winter/spring 2017
9	AES Southland Sewer Interconnect Alignment	Loynes Drive Bridge spanning over the Los Cerritos Channel	0.05 mile north of project site	The project is a proposed Sewer Interconnect Alignment impacting Loynes Drive Bridge spanning over the Los Cerritos Channel.	n/a	Planning phase

**Table 3-1 List of Cumulative Projects**

Project No.	Project Name	Location	Distance from Project Site	Description	Size	Status
10	Major & Secondary Highway Program	Atherton Street between Outer Traffic Circle and Clark Avenue  Broadway between Alamos Avenue and Junipero Avenue  Junipero Avenue between Ocean Boulevard and Broadway	2.1 miles northwest of project site  2.9 miles west of project site  3 miles west of project site	The project would reconstruct and resurface City streets to extend their useful life, provide incidental curb, gutter and sidewalk improvements, construct curb ramps and bus pads, and replace pavement markings.	n/a	Estimated construction Jan 2017–Sep 2017
11	Citywide Slurry Seal Program	Various locations including Peralta Avenue	0.4 mile north of project site	The project would repair residential streets through pavement sealing and slurry sealing. Repair work would also include patching the street pavement and installation of traffic striping and marking.	n/a	
12	Bridge Deck Repair	Studebaker	0.02 mile east of project site	In conjunction with the County of Los Angeles and CALTRANS, the project would inspect, repair, upgrade, and retrofit City of Long Beach owned bridges.	n/a	Estimated construction in 2017
13	Belmont Pool Revitalization Project	4000 East Olympic Plaza	1.8 miles	The project would revitalize a pool complex.	125,000 square feet (sf)	Estimated construction beginning 2017 (for 18 months)
14	5744 East 2nd Street	5744 East 2nd Street	1.3 miles	The project includes commercial retail.	1,122 sf	n/a
15	Ocean Place Residential Project	1st Street and Marina Drive	0.6 mile	The project includes a single-family home project and a neighborhood park.	6.4 acres	n/a
16	Main and PCH Mixed-Use Center Project	350 Main Street	0.6 mile	The project includes retail, office, a coffee shop, and a dojo.	6,808 sf 5,593 sf 999 sf 1,600 sf	Complete
17	Seal Beach Residential Project	Southwest of 1st Street and PCH	0.25 mile	The project includes a 28-home residential subdivision.	n/a	Approved



SOURCE: ESRI

Long Beach Cerritos Wetland . 150712

**Figure 3-1**  
Approximate Location of Cumulative Projects

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