

5. Environmental Analysis

Chapter 5 examines the environmental setting, impacts, and mitigation measures associated with the Proposed Project. This chapter is divided into sections for respective environmental issue areas that were determined to need further study in the DEIR as part of the scoping process.

The scope of the environmental analysis was determined using the Initial Study and Notice of Preparation (NOP) that were published March 2015, as well as incorporating public and agency comments received concerning the NOP comment period (March 9 to April 7, 2015; see Appendix A). Environmental issues and their corresponding sections are:

- 5.1 Aesthetics
- 5.2 Air Quality
- 5.3 Cultural Resources
- 5.4 Geology and Soils
- 5.5 Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- 5.6 Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- 5.7 Hydrology and Water Quality
- 5.8 Land Use and Planning
- 5.9 Noise
- 5.10 Population and Housing
- 5.11 Public Services
- 5.12 Recreation
- 5.13 Transportation and Traffic
- 5.14 Utilities and Service Systems

Sections 5.1 through 5.14 provide a detailed discussion of the environmental setting, impacts associated with the Midtown Specific Plan, and mitigation measures designed to reduce significant impacts where required and when feasible. The residual impacts following the implementation of any mitigation measure are also discussed.

As presented in the Initial Study prepared for the Proposed Project (see Appendix A), some environmental topics (agricultural and forest resources, biological, cultural, and mineral resources) and specific issues under each of the environmental topics were determined not to be significantly affected by implementation of the Proposed Project and therefore are not included for further discussion in the DEIR. Refer to the Initial Study and Chapter 8, *Impacts Found Not To Be Significant*, for a summary of and additional discussion regarding impacts that were found to be less than significant.

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Organization of Environmental Analysis

To assist the reader in comparing information about the respective environmental issues, each section (Sections 5.1 to 5.14) is organized as follows:

- Environmental Setting
- Thresholds of Significance
- Environmental Impacts
- Cumulative Impacts
- Existing Regulations
- Level of Significance Before Mitigation
- Mitigation Measures
- Level of Significance After Mitigation
- References

In addition, Chapter 1, *Executive Summary*, includes a table summarizing all the impacts by environmental issue.

Terminology Used in This Draft EIR

For each impact identified in this DEIR, a statement of the level of significance of the impact is provided. While criteria for determining significant impacts are unique to each issue area, the environmental analysis applies a uniform classification of the impacts based on the following definitions consistent with CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines:

- “No impact”: The project would not change the environment.
- “Less than significant”: The project would not cause any substantial, adverse change in the environment.
- “Less than significant with mitigation incorporated”: The EIR includes mitigation measures that avoid substantial adverse impacts on the environment.
- “Significant and unavoidable”: The project would cause a substantial adverse effect on the environment, and no feasible mitigation measures are available to reduce the impact to a less than significant level.