

9. Significant Irreversible Changes Due to the Proposed Project

Section 15126.2(c) of the CEQA Guidelines requires that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) describe any significant irreversible environmental changes that would be caused by the proposed project should it be implemented. Specifically, the CEQA Guidelines state:

Uses of nonrenewable resources during the initial and continued phases of the project may be irreversible since a large commitment of such resources makes removal or nonuse thereafter unlikely. Primary impacts and, particularly, secondary impacts (such as highways improvement which provides access to a previously inaccessible area) generally commit future generations to similar uses. Also, irreversible damage can result from environmental accidents associated with the project. Irretrievable commitments of resources should be evaluated to assure that such current consumption is justified.

In the case of the Proposed Project, its implementation would involve a land use, development, and implementation framework to support up to approximately 3,695 residential units and 3.0 million square feet of commercial and employment uses, including medical uses, over existing conditions. Significant irreversible changes that would be caused by the Proposed Project if it is implemented would be:

- Implementation of the Proposed Project would include construction activities that would entail the commitment of nonrenewable and/or slowly renewable energy resources; human resources; and natural resources such as lumber and other forest products, sand and gravel, asphalt, steel, copper, lead, other metals, water, and fossil fuels. Operation of the Proposed Project would require the use of natural gas and electricity, petroleum-based fuels, fossil fuels, and water. The commitment of resources required for the construction and operation of the Proposed Project would limit the availability of such resources for future generations or for other uses during the life of the project.
- An increased commitment of social services and public maintenance services (e.g., police, fire, schools, libraries, and sewer and water services) would also be required. The energy and social service commitments would be long-term obligations in view of the low likelihood of returning the land to its original condition once it has been developed.
- Population and employment growth related to project implementation would increase vehicle trips over the long term. Emissions associated with such vehicle trips would continue to contribute to the South Coast Air Basin's nonattainment designation for ozone and particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}), nonattainment for lead (Los Angeles County only) under the California and National Ambient Air Quality Standards (AAQS), and nonattainment for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) under the California AAQS.

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- Future development that would be accommodated under the Proposed Project is a long-term irreversible commitment of vacant parcels of land or redevelopment of existing developed land in the City of Long Beach.

Given the low likelihood that the land would revert to lower intensity uses or to its current form, the Proposed Project would generally commit future generations to these environmental changes.