
V. GENERAL IMPACT CATEGORIES

A. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

Section 15126.2(b) of the State CEQA Guidelines requires that an EIR describe any significant impacts which cannot be avoided. Specifically, Section 15126.2(b) states:

Describe any significant impacts, including those which can be mitigated but not reduced to a level of insignificance. Where there are impacts that cannot be alleviated without imposing an alternative design, their implications and the reasons why the project is being proposed, notwithstanding their effect, should be described.

Based on the analysis included in Section IV (Environmental Impact Analysis) of this Draft EIR, the project would result in significant unavoidable environmental impacts with respect to aesthetics (visual character, light/glare, and shade/shadow), air quality (construction and operation), noise (construction and operation), public services (parks/recreation), and traffic (intersections).

Alternative designs to the proposed project and their implications are discussed in Section VI (Alternatives to the Proposed Project). As indicated therein, none of the alternative designs would reduce all of the significant unavoidable impacts associated with the proposed project to a less-than-significant level. However, the Retail Only Alternative (Alternative C) would reduce the significant and unavoidable impacts associated with the visual character of the site to a less-than-significant level. Alternative C is the only other alternative (in addition to Alternative A) that would avoid a significant impact that would occur under the proposed project. Although Alternative C would not entirely avoid the significant shadow impact associated with the proposed project, it would substantially lessen this impact because it would result in impacts to fewer off-site shade-sensitive uses than the proposed project.

The Reduced Density Alternative (Alternative B) would reduce the intensity of most impacts under the proposed project; however, it would not entirely avoid any significant impacts. The Residential Only Alternative (Alternative D) would result in significant and unavoidable impacts with respect to aesthetics (visual character, light/glare, and shade/shadow, to a lesser extent), air quality (construction and operation), land use consistency, noise (construction and operation), public services (police protection), and traffic (intersections). Therefore, this alternative would result in two more significant and unavoidable impacts than the proposed project. This alternative would increase the environmental impacts associated with the proposed project for several environmental issue areas (e.g., air quality (construction), land use consistency, noise (construction), public services (police protection), traffic (intersections), etc.). As also discussed in Section VI, although Alternative A would result in the fewest adverse impacts, it would not satisfy the objectives of the proposed project.

B. SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

Section 15126.2(c) of the State CEQA Guidelines states that the “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.” Section 15126.2(c) further states that “irretrievable commitments of resources should be evaluated to assure that such current consumption is justified.”

The types and level of development associated with the proposed project would consume limited, slowly renewable and non-renewable resources. This consumption would occur during construction of the proposed project and would continue throughout its operational lifetime. The development of the proposed project would require a commitment of resources that would include (1) building materials, (2) fuel and operational materials/resources and (3) the transportation of goods and people to and from the project site.

Construction of the proposed project would require consumption of resources that are not replenishable or which may renew slowly as to be considered non-renewable. These resources would include certain types of lumber and other forest products, aggregate materials used in concrete and asphalt (e.g., sand, gravel and stone), metals (e.g., steel, copper and lead), petrochemical construction materials (e.g., plastics) and water. Fossil fuels, such as gasoline and oil, would also be consumed in the use of construction vehicles and equipment.

The commitment of resources required for the type and level of proposed development would limit the availability of these resources for future generations for other uses during the operation of the proposed project. However, this resource consumption would be consistent with growth and anticipated change in the Los Angeles region.

C. GROWTH INDUCING IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECTS

Section 15126.2(d) of the State CEQA Guidelines requires a discussion of the ways in which a proposed project could induce growth. This includes ways in which a project would foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Section 12126.2(d) of the State CEQA Guidelines states:

Discuss the ways in which the proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Included in this are projects which would remove obstacles to population growth (a major expansion of a waste water treatment plant might, for example, allow for more construction in service areas). Increases in the population may tax existing community service facilities, requiring construction of new facilities that could cause significant environmental effects. Also discuss the characteristic of some

projects which may encourage and facilitate other activities that could significantly affect the environment, either individually or cumulatively. It must not be assumed that growth in any area is necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment.

The proposed project could foster economic growth by increasing the number of residents at the project site who could patronize local businesses and services in the area. In addition, employment opportunities would be provided during the construction and operation of the proposed project. As discussed in Section IV.I (Population and Housing), the proposed project would contribute a total of approximately 2,670 new individuals, including residents, employees and their families, to Panorama City. This population growth represents approximately 22 percent of the overall population growth expected to occur in the Community Plan Area between 2004 and 2010. The 504 proposed multi-family residences would represent approximately five percent of the remaining housing growth expected to occur in the Community Plan Area between 2004 and 2010. This growth would be consistent with area-wide population and housing forecasts.

As also discussed in Section IV.I, the roadways and other infrastructure (e.g., water facilities, electricity transmission lines, natural gas lines, etc.) associated with the proposed project would not induce growth because they would only serve the proposed project. In addition, all of the project site would be developed with the implementation of the proposed project and would not be available for future development.