



5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

The subsequent subsections of the Program EIR contains an identification of the existing conditions; an evaluation of potential General Plan Update impacts (including direct and indirect, short-term and long-term, and cumulative); the recommendation mitigation measures; and the identification of unavoidable significant impacts. This Program EIR analyzes those environmental issue areas identified in the State CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G, Environmental Checklist where potentially significant impacts have the potential to occur.

The Program EIR examines the following environmental topics:

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

Each environmental issue is addressed in a separate section of the Program EIR, and is organized into subsections, as follows:

“Regulatory Setting” identifies and summaries the laws, ordinances, regulations, and standards that apply to the General Plan Update at the federal, State, and local levels, in affect at the time the Notice of Preparation (NOP) was published.

“Environmental Setting” describes the physical environmental conditions in the City of Yorba Linda and its Sphere of Influence (collectively, the General Plan Planning Area or Planning Area) that may influence or affect the environmental topics being assessed, from both a local and regional perspective, as they exist at the time the NOP was published. The environmental setting is the baseline physical conditions by which the determination of significance is made.

“Significance Threshold Criteria” provides the thresholds that are the basis of conclusions of environmental significance. Primary sources used in identifying the thresholds and criteria include



Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations §§ 15000 – 15387); local, State, federal, or other standards applicable to an impact category; and officially adopted significance thresholds. “An ironclad definition of significant effect is not possible because the significance of any activity may vary with the setting” (CEQA Guidelines § 15064[b]). Principally, “...a substantial or potentially substantial adverse change in any of the physical conditions within an area affected by the project including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise and objects of historic and aesthetic significance” constitutes a significant impact (CEQA Guidelines § 15382).

“Impacts and Mitigation Measures” evaluates the General Plan Update’s potential environmental impacts in consideration of all phases of future development contemplated in this General Plan Update, including planning, acquisition, development, and operation. This subsection also discusses the potential changes to the existing physical environmental conditions which may occur if future projects are implemented as set forth in the proposed General Plan Update. All potential direct and reasonably foreseeable indirect effects are considered. The exact magnitude, duration, extend, frequency, range, or other parameters are ascertained, to the extent possible, to determine significance.

Direct and indirect significant impacts of the General Plan Update on the environment are identified and described, giving consideration to both the short-term and long-term effects.

“Mitigation Measures” are measures that may be necessary in the future project-level CEQA analysis to avoid a significant adverse impact; to minimize a significant adverse impact; to rectify a significant adverse impact by restoration; to reduce or eliminate a significant adverse impact over time by preservation and maintenance operations; or to compensate for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environment.

“Cumulative Impacts” describes potential environmental changes to the existing physical conditions that may occur as a result of the proposed project together with all other reasonably foreseeable, planned and approved future projects producing related or cumulative impacts, as set forth in Section 4.0, Cumulative Impacts. A cumulative impact analysis is provided only for those thresholds that result in a less than significant, potentially significant, or significant unavoidable impact.

The “Level of Significance” presents the significance determination. This statement identifies which impacts would remain after the application of mitigation and whether the remaining impacts are or are not considered significant. “Significant Unavoidable Impacts” describes impacts that would be significant and cannot be feasibly mitigated to less than significant, so would therefore be unavoidable. To approve a project with unavoidable significant impacts, the lead agency must adopt a Statement of Overriding Considerations. In adopting such a statement, the lead agency is required to balance the benefits of a project against its unavoidable environmental impacts in determining whether to approve the project. If the benefits of a project are found to outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental effects, the adverse effects may be considered “acceptable” (CEQA Guidelines § 15093[a]).