

Chapter 5 OTHER CEQA CONSIDERATIONS

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15128 requires that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) contain a brief statement disclosing the reasons why various possible significant effects of a proposed project were found not to be significant and, therefore, would not be discussed in detail in the EIR. Environmental issue areas found to have potentially significant impacts are addressed in Chapter 4 of this EIR. Chapter 4 also discusses related issues that were found to have no potential for a significant impact under the sections titled “Issues with No Potential to Have a Significant Effect on the Environment.” However, some issues that were found to have no potential for a significant impact did not fall under the topics analyzed in Chapter 4 and, therefore, these issues are discussed below in Section 5.1.

Section 15126 of the CEQA Guidelines requires that all aspects of a project be considered when evaluating its impact on the environment, including planning, acquisition, development, and operation. As part of this analysis, the EIR must identify the following three components, which are also addressed in this chapter:

- Growth-inducing impacts of the proposed project (addressed below in Section 5.2);
- Significant environmental effects that cannot be avoided if the proposed project is implemented (addressed below in Section 5.3); and
- Significant irreversible environmental effects that would be involved in the proposed project should it be implemented (addressed below in Section 5.4).

5.1 Other Effects Found Not Significant

The proposed project does not have the potential to result in significant impacts related to the following issues and, therefore, further analysis in the EIR is not necessary: Agriculture and Forestry Resources, Mineral Resources, Noise, and Population and Housing.

Agriculture and Forestry Resources

Would the proposed project convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?

According to the San Dimas General Plan, no Class I prime agricultural soils are located within the entire city. According to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, no Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance occur on the proposed project site. Therefore, the proposed project site does not contain agricultural resources and would not result in the conversion of agricultural resources. No impact would occur and no further analysis is required.

Would the proposed project conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?

There are seven areas of agriculturally zoned land within the City, none of which are located within the proposed project site. Additionally, there are no lands under a Williamson Act contract within the City. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with existing agricultural zoning or a Williamson Act contract. No impact would occur and no further analysis is required.

Would the proposed project conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526, or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))?

As discussed in Section 4.9.3.1 (Land Use and Planning, Issue 1 – Applicable Land Use Plans, Policies, and Regulations), the project site is zoned for Specific Plan No. 25. The permitted land uses in Specific Plan No. 25 are residential use, grazing, public parks and open space, public and private trails, and public and/or quasi-public utility transmission, communication and/or service facilities. Forestry is not a permitted use on the project site. The project site is not zoned for Timberland Production. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with existing zoning for forest land or timberland. No impact would occur and no further analysis is required.

Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

The project site does not contain forest land as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g). The project site supports scattered native trees, as described in Section 4.3 (Biological Resources) but the project is not used for, nor does the existing zoning allow, the management of one or more forest resources. The Angeles National Forest, adjacent to the project site, is not used for forestry or timberland production (USDA 2005). It is a conservation area that allows for various recreational uses. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use. No impact would occur and no further analysis is required.

Would the proposed project involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

As described above, implementation of the proposed project would not convert agricultural lands to non-agricultural uses or the conversion of forest land to non-forest use. Additionally, no agricultural or forest lands are located in the vicinity of the proposed project site. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not result in impacts associated with the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural uses. No impact would occur and no further analysis is required.

Mineral Resources

Would the proposed project result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the State?

According to the San Dimas General Plan, the proposed project site is not designated as a State Aggregate Resources Area with significant mineral deposits. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not result in the loss of availability of valuable regional or state mineral resources. No impact would occur and no further analysis is required.

Would the proposed project result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?

According to the San Dimas General Plan, the proposed project site is not designated as a valuable mineral resource recovery site. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not result in the loss of a locally important mineral resource.

Noise

Would the proposed project result in the exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?

Traffic associated with the proposed project would increase the ambient noise level along existing adjacent local roadways beyond existing conditions. However, the development of 61 homes would generate only 584 daily trips, with a maximum of 46 vehicles per hour during the AM peak hour and 62 vehicles per hour during the PM peak hour (Urban Crossroads 2010). Due to the low number of vehicle trips generated from the proposed project and the fact that these trips would be distributed throughout the city's roadways and throughout the day, traffic generated by the project would not increase the traffic noise level above the City's noise standards (Section 8.36 of the San Dimas Municipal Code). The existing residences located along Cataract Avenue currently experience traffic noise generated from the existing residences located along Dalepark Drive and Country Club Drive, and the project proposes similar residential uses that would generate similar volumes of traffic noise. Residences do not typically include sources of substantial noise, such as truck delivery areas, or noise-generating equipment such as generators or commercial heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems. Noise generated by residential developments is typically nuisance noise, such as loud music or barking dogs. These noises would be intermittent and temporary and would not permanently increase ambient noise levels. Additionally, the residences are located throughout the project site, so that many homes would be spaced too far apart to generate noise that would be audible at a neighbor's residence. The variations in topography on the project site would also provide noise attenuation between homes. The nearest off-site noise receptor is a residence located 0.25-mile from the nearest proposed residential lot. Due to distance and topography, nuisance noise from the project site would not be audible at this residence. Additionally, nuisance noise is regulated by Section 8.36.070 and Section 8.36.110 of the San Dimas Noise Ordinance. Loud noises such as barking dogs are prohibited in the Noise Ordinance. Any person that violates the Noise Ordinance is guilty of an infraction. Noise impacts associated with development on the proposed project site were also previously addressed within the General Plan EIR. Based upon the General Plan and General Plan EIR's analysis, the proposed project site is not located within an area where the proposed land uses would result in noise levels exceeding city standards. Construction noise

associated with the proposed project would comply with the provisions of Chapter 8.36.100 of the San Dimas Municipal Code, which would mitigate any construction noise impacts. The Construction Noise Ordinance states that it is unlawful for any person within a residential zone to operate construction equipment or perform any construction between the hours of 8:00 p.m. of one day and 7:00 a.m. of the next day, at any time on Sunday, or at any time on any public holiday in such a manner that a reasonable person of normal sensitivity residing in the area is caused discomfort or annoyance. Because compliance with these code provisions is required for any construction in the City, impacts related to noise levels generated by the project would be considered less than significant and no further analysis is required.

Would the proposed project result in exposure of persons to or generation of excessive ground borne vibration or ground borne noise levels?

During the construction phase, on-site stationary sources, heavy-duty construction vehicles, and construction equipment, would generate vibration. However, the proposed project would adhere to the vibration standard requirements of the San Dimas Municipal Code (Section 8.36.110) for all construction activities, which would mitigate the intermittent vibration impacts of construction activity. The ordinance prohibits the operation of any device that creates a vibration which is above the vibration perception threshold of an individual at or beyond the property boundary of the source if on private property or at 150 feet from the source if on a public space or public right-of-way. Therefore, impacts related to vibration would be less than significant.

Would the proposed project result in a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?

According to the General Plan, the primary sources of ambient noise within the city are traffic and train movement in areas near a rail line. As discussed above, implementation of the proposed project would not significantly increase traffic noise and the proposed project site would not be located near a rail line. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise. This impact would be considered less than significant and no further analysis is required.

Would the proposed project result in a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?

During the construction phase of the proposed project, on-site stationary sources, heavy-duty construction vehicles, and construction equipment, would generate noise. However, the proposed project would adhere to the noise standard requirements of the San Dimas Municipal Code (Section 8.36.100) for all construction activities, as discussed above, which would mitigate the intermittent noise impacts of construction activity. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in a significant temporary increase in ambient noise. This impact would be considered less than significant and no further analysis is required.

For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

The proposed project site is not located within an airport land use plan. The nearest airport to the proposed project site is Brackett Field, located approximately four miles away. The proposed project site is not within the flight path of Brackett Field and would not expose people residing in the project area to excessive noise levels. No impact would occur and no further analysis is required.

For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

There are no private airstrips within five miles of San Dimas. Therefore, the proposed project would not expose people residing on the project site to excessive noise levels from private airstrips. No impact would occur and no further analysis is required.

Population and Housing

Would the proposed project induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?

The proposed project would construct 61 new residences on the proposed project site, which is located entirely within the City. Generally, the project area lies north of Foothills Boulevard, and is bounded by the corporate boundary of the City of Glendora to the west, with the exception of one portion of the project's western boundary which abuts a private residence and a vacant lot. Properties to the north and east of the project contain a mix of private and public lands, and are largely undeveloped; additionally, further east, residential, agricultural and recreational uses occur (including park and golf course uses). The southern portion of the project site is bounded by single-family residential development (see Figure 2-1). The proposed project's construction of 61 new residences would not result in any substantive increase in the City's population growth that would create a direct significant impact on the environment (see Section 5.2 below). Construction activities at the site would be short-term and would not attract new permanent employees to the area. Utility connections would service only the project site and would connect to existing off-site infrastructure. Sections 4.1 through 4.12 of this EIR address the potential impacts of the proposed project that are indirectly related to population growth, including impacts to air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, public services, and utilities, service systems and energy. Therefore, for the reasons listed above, the project would not induce substantial population growth directly or indirectly in the project area and no further evaluation is required.

Would the proposed project displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

The proposed project site is primarily undeveloped with the exception of one caretaker residence, which would be removed as part of the proposed project. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not displace substantial numbers of existing housing or require the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. This impact would be considered less than significant and no further analysis is required.

Would the proposed project displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

The proposed project site is primarily uninhabited, with the exception of one caretaker that maintains the land. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not displace substantial numbers of persons or require the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. This impact would be considered less than significant and no further analysis is required.

5.2 Growth Inducement

As required by the CEQA Guidelines, an EIR must include a discussion of the ways in which the proposed project could directly or indirectly foster economic development or population growth, or the construction of additional housing and how that growth would, in turn, affect the surrounding environment (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2[d]). Growth can be induced in a number of ways, including the elimination of obstacles to growth, or through the stimulation of economic activity within the region. The discussion of removal of obstacles to growth relates directly to the removal of infrastructure limitations or regulatory constraints that could result in growth unforeseen at the time of project approval. According to CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(d), "it must not be assumed that growth in any area is necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment."

Population Growth

The proposed project would directly influence population in the city by providing 61 new single-family residences on the project site. According to the California Department of Finance, in 2010, there was an average of 2.91 persons per household within the city. Using this number, development of the proposed project would increase the city's population by approximately 178 persons. The project's population would increase the city's existing population of 36,946 persons (year 2010) to approximately 37,124, or by approximately one half of one percent. This population increase is relatively small and would not be likely to adversely impact the city or its services. The physical environmental impacts associated with the proposed project's construction and operation as a residential development are analyzed in Sections 4.1 through 4.14 of this EIR.

Economic Growth

The proposed project involves private residential development and does not include any commercial or industrial development. Therefore, other than short-term residential construction, it would not directly generate jobs or economic activity. Based on a factor of 2.91 persons per dwelling unit, the 61-unit project would be expected to add approximately 178 residents to the city's population. The estimated new 178 residents that would be added on the project site would incrementally increase activity in nearby commercial establishments and may generate demand for such services as landscaping, gardening, and home cleaning and maintenance. However, the population that would be generated by the proposed project constitutes approximately one half of one percent of the 2010 population for San Dimas. Project residents are expected to draw on existing retail and commercial services already available in the area rather than inducing new service providers to relocate to the area. As a result, no significant physical effects are anticipated to result from economic growth generated by the proposed project. However, the proposed project is expected to have minor beneficial economic effects on local retailers and service providers. The proposed project would provide upper-income households, which may attract business owners/executive officers that ultimately relocate their businesses to the city.

Removal of Obstacles

The proposed project does not meet other criteria for being considered growth inducing because it would not remove obstacles to growth or encourage growth through the provision of new and essential public services or access opportunities. Nor would it result in urbanization of land in a remote location, resulting in “leapfrog” development. The proposed project site is located in an area designated for residential development and located adjacent to developed areas that are served by an existing network of electricity, water, sewer, storm drain, communications, roadways, and other infrastructure sized to accommodate or allow existing and planned future growth.

5.3 Significant and Unavoidable Environmental Impacts

Pursuant to Section 15126.2(b) of the CEQA Guidelines, this section identifies significant impacts that would not be avoided, even with the implementation of feasible mitigation measures. As identified in Chapter 4, the proposed project would result in significant and unavoidable impacts associated with Aesthetics, Air Quality, Hazards and Hazardous Materials and Transportation and Traffic. The final determination of significance of impacts and of the feasibility of mitigation measures will be made by the San Dimas City Council as part of their certification action for the EIR. Sections 4.1 through 4.12 of this EIR provide a comprehensive identification of the proposed project’s potentially significant adverse environmental effects and any necessary mitigation measures, as well as the level of significance both before and after mitigation. A summary of the environmental impacts and mitigation measures is contained in the Executive Summary of this EIR. The project’s significant and unavoidable impacts associated with Aesthetics, Air Quality, Hazards and Hazardous Materials and Transportation and Traffic are discussed below.

Aesthetics (Visual Character and Quality)

Implementation of the proposed project would substantially degrade the existing visual character and quality of the project site due to the significant grading and landform alteration that would occur and the change in the character of the site from semi-rural and undeveloped to large-lot residential. Although the proposed project would incorporate project design features to lessen visual impacts, preserve an 83-acre parcel of open space on the project site which would maintain a portion of the natural environment, and implement mitigation measure Aes-1A that requires architectural guidelines that reduce impacts to visual character and quality, these measures would not reduce the project’s overall impact to a less than significant level. Implementation of the project would result in a significant and unavoidable impact to visual character and quality. This impact would also be cumulatively considerable and unavoidable.

Air Quality (Construction-related Air Quality Emissions and Impacts to Local Sensitive Receptors)

Construction of the proposed project would exceed the significant thresholds for NO_x , PM_{10} , and $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ during mass grading. Grading would occur over a six month period, with a total of 132 working days. A total of 1.3 million cubic yards of soil would be graded and replaced on site. Implementation of mitigation measure AQ-2A during the mass grading phase of construction of the proposed project would minimize emissions of NO_x , PM_{10} , and $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ by requiring implementation of construction best management practices to minimize fugitive dust and NO_x emissions. Mitigation measure AQ-2A would reduce NO_x emissions to a level below the significance threshold. Emissions of PM_{10} and $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ would be

reduced, but would still exceed the significance thresholds. Therefore, impacts related to emissions of PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ would be significant and unavoidable, even with implementation of mitigation. This impact would also be cumulatively considerable and unavoidable.

Additionally, emissions of PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ during grading would exceed the localized significance thresholds for local sensitive receptors. Mitigation measure AQ-2A would minimize the proposed project's emissions of PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$, although not to below a level of significance. Therefore, impacts to local sensitive receptors from PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ emissions during construction would be significant and unavoidable.

Hazardous Materials (Emergency Response and Evacuation Plans)

The proposed emergency evacuation points to the project site include a main access via Cataract Avenue and four currently existing fire roads and motorways that traverse the site. The proposed project would improve all on-site roadways and motorways to Los Angeles County Fire Department (LaCoFD) standards. Outside the project site boundary, existing off-site roads and motorways that would provide secondary access to the project site would not undergo improvements and would remain in existing conditions, with the possible exception of the 0.18-acre emergency vehicle turnaround. Currently, these off-site roadways do not meet LaCoFD standards, which require access roads to meet a 24-foot minimum roadway width and be all weather accessible. While the proposed project provides a number of benefits to firefighting capability in the area, including the provision of emergency access points, additional water availability, and fuel modification measures, the condition of the off-site roadways presents a potential hazard associated with project site evacuation from an event such as a wildfire. Therefore, because the proposed off-site emergency evacuation routes do not meet LACoFD standards, they are considered to be inadequate. This would result in a significant impact. Implementation of mitigation measure Tra-3A would reduce impacts associated with emergency response and evacuation plans, to a level below significant. However, if mitigation measure Tra-3A is found to be infeasible then the impact would remain significant and unavoidable. This impact would not be cumulatively considerable.

Transportation and Traffic (Emergency Access)

The proposed emergency access points to the project site include a main access via Cataract Avenue and four currently existing fire roads and motorways that traverse the site. The proposed project would improve all on-site roadways and motorways to LaCoFD standards. Outside the project site boundary, existing off-site roads and motorways that would provide secondary access to the project site are not currently proposed to be further improved and would remain in existing conditions, with the possible exception of the 0.18-acre emergency vehicle turnaround. Currently, these off-site roadways do not meet LACoFD standards, which require access roads to meet a 24-foot minimum roadway width and be all weather accessible. While the proposed project provides a number of benefits to firefighting capability in the area, including the provision of emergency access points, additional water availability, and fuel modification measures, the existing condition of the off-site roadways presents a potential hazard associated with project site evacuation from an event such as a wildfire. Therefore, the proposed project would result in a significant impact related to emergency access. Implementation of mitigation measure Tra-3A would reduce impacts associated with emergency access to a level below significant. However, if mitigation measure Tra-3A is found to be infeasible then the impact would remain significant and unavoidable. This impact would not be cumulatively considerable.

5.4 Significant Irreversible Environmental Effects

Section 15126.2(c) of the CEQA Guidelines requires a discussion of any significant irreversible environmental changes that would be caused by the proposed project. Specifically, Section 15126.2(c) states:

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 highway 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. Irrecoverable commitments of resources should be evaluated to assure that such current consumption is justified.

Generally, a project would result in significant irreversible environmental changes if:

- The primary and secondary impacts would generally commit future generations to similar uses;
- The project would involve a large commitment of nonrenewable resources;
- The project involves uses in which irreversible damage would result from any potential environmental accidents associated with the project; or
- The proposed consumption of resources is not justified (e.g., the project involves the wasteful use of energy).

Development of the proposed project would result in the commitment of the project site to residential uses. Restoration of the project site to pre-developed conditions would not be feasible given the degree of disturbance, the urbanization of the area, and the level of capital investment that would result from implementation of the proposed project.

Resources that would be permanently and continually consumed by implementation of the proposed project include water, electricity, natural gas, and fossil fuels; however, the amount and rate of consumption of these resources would not result in significant environmental impacts or the unnecessary, inefficient, or wasteful use of resources. Construction activities related to the proposed project, though previously analyzed, would result in the irretrievable commitment of nonrenewable energy resources, primarily in the form of fossil fuels (including fuel oil), natural gas, and gasoline for automobiles and construction equipment.

With respect to operational activities of the proposed project, compliance with all applicable building codes, as well as EIR mitigation measures, would ensure that all natural resources are conserved to the maximum extent practicable. It is also possible that new technologies or systems would emerge, or would become more cost-effective or user-friendly, to further reduce the project reliance upon nonrenewable energy resources.

The CEQA Guidelines also require the EIR include a discussion of the potential for irreversible environmental damage caused by an accident associated with the proposed project. However, development of the proposed project site with residential land uses would not involve the substantial use, transport, storage, or disposal of hazardous wastes. Everyday household hazardous wastes, such as

cleaners, paints, and fertilizers would be used and disposed of in accordance with applicable regulations and laws. Therefore, the potential for the proposed project to cause significant irreversible environmental damage from an accident or upset of hazardous materials would be less than significant.

5.5 References

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