

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

4.0.1 ENVIRONMENTAL TOPICS ADDRESSED

The City of Ventura completed a preliminary review, as described in Section 15060 of the *California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines*, of the proposed Westside Community Planning project and determined an EIR should be prepared for this project. A Notice of Preparation (NOP) of this EIR was then prepared and circulated for public review to gather input from other public agencies and the public to determine the environmental topics to be evaluated in this EIR.

These environmental issues and their corresponding section numbers are:

- 4.1 Aesthetics
- 4.2 Air Quality
- 4.3 Biological Resources
- 4.4 Cultural (Historic) Resources
- 4.5 Geology and Soils
- 4.6 Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- 4.7 Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- 4.8 Hydrology and Water Quality
- 4.9 Land Use and Planning
- 4.10 Noise
- 4.11 Population and Housing
- 4.12 Service Systems (Police Protection, Fire Protection, Public Schools, Parks and Recreation, Libraries, Solid Waste)
- 4.13 Transportation and Traffic
- 4.14 Utilities and Service Systems (Water, Wastewater, Energy Conservation)

Sections 4.1 through 4.14 provide a detailed discussion of the regulatory and environmental setting, impacts associated with the proposed project, cumulative impacts, and mitigation measures designed to reduce significant impacts.

Where appropriate, this Draft EIR incorporates information and analysis from the comprehensive Final EIR prepared by the City for the 2005 General Plan in the assessment of the potential environmental effects of the proposed Westside Community Planning Project. This EIR is tiered off the City of Ventura General Plan Final EIR dated August 2005 (SCH#2004101014), which is incorporated by reference. The General Plan FEIR can be read at the City of Ventura Planning Counter located at 501 Poli Street, Room,

#117, Ventura, CA. Community Plans area adopted by resolution as an amendment to the General Plan under Government Code Sec. 65350, et seq. In order to reduce redundancy, the reader is directed to the General Plan EIR for more detailed discussion of various issue areas. This EIR focuses the discussion of General Plan issues as they pertain to the Westside Community Planning project area.

4.0.2 ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS FOUND TO BE NOT SIGNIFICANT

Through the preliminary review and review of the comments received on the NOP, the City determined the proposed project would result in either no impact, or a less than significant impact; potential effects related to the topics identified below were determined to either be less than significant, or potentially significant, but capable of being mitigated to a less than significant level with the implementation of policies and actions identified in the City's 2005 General Plan EIR and mitigation measures identified in the Final EIR for the City's Downtown Specific Plan:

- Agricultural Resources
- Cultural (Archaeological and Paleontological) Resources
- Mineral Resources

In addition to these three topics, potential geology effects from use of septic tanks and hazards, noise, and traffic effects related to proximity to airports, were also determined to be not significant.

Section 8.0, Effects Found Not to be Significant, provides a discussion of these topics that do not require detailed analysis in this EIR because potential impacts were determined to be less than significant.

4.0.3 ORGANIZATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

To assist the reader in comparing information about the various environmental issues, each section contains the following information:

- Introduction
- Environmental Setting
 - Physical Setting
 - Regulatory Framework
- Impact Analysis
 - Thresholds of Significance
 - Methodology

- Analysis, Mitigation Measures, and Residual Impacts
- Cumulative Impacts

4.0.4 TERMINOLOGY USED IN THIS ANALYSIS

For each threshold of significance evaluated in the EIR, a statement of the level of significance of the impact is provided. Impacts are categorized as follows:

Class I, Significant and Unavoidable. An impact that cannot be reduced to below the threshold level given reasonably available and feasible mitigation measures. Such an impact requires a Statement of Overriding Considerations to be issued if the project is approved per Section 15093 of the *State CEQA Guidelines*.

Class II, Significant but Mitigable. An impact that can be reduced to below the threshold level given reasonably available and feasible mitigation measures. Such an impact requires findings to be made under Section 15091 of the *State CEQA Guidelines*.

Class III, Not Significant. An impact that may be adverse, but does not exceed the threshold levels and does not require mitigation measures. However, mitigation measures that could further lessen the environmental effect may be suggested if readily available and easily achievable.

Class IV, No Impact or Beneficial. No change in environmental conditions would occur or an effect that would reduce existing environmental problems or hazards.

4.0.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS

The term “cumulative impacts” refers to the combined effect of project impacts with the impacts of other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects. Both CEQA and the *State CEQA Guidelines* require that cumulative impacts be analyzed in an EIR. As set forth in the *State CEQA Guidelines*, the discussion of cumulative impacts must reflect the severity of the impacts, as well as the likelihood of their occurrence; however, the discussion need not be as detailed as the discussion of environmental impacts attributable to the project alone. As stated in CEQA, “a project may have a significant effect on the environment if the possible effects of a project are individually limited but cumulatively considerable.”

According to the *State CEQA Guidelines*:

Cumulative impacts” refer to two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable and which compound or increase other environmental impacts:

- (a) *The individual effects may be changes resulting from a single project or a number of separate projects.*
- (b) *The cumulative impact from several projects is the change in the environment, which results from the incremental impact of the project when added to other closely related past, present, and reasonable foreseeable probable future projects. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant projects taking place over a period of time.*

In addition, as stated in *State CEQA Guidelines*, it should be noted that:

Either:

- *A list of past, present, and probable future projects producing related or cumulative impacts, including, if necessary, those projects outside control of the agency, or*
- *A summary of projections contained in an adopted general plan or related planning document, or in a prior environmental document which has been adopted or certified, which described or evaluated regional or area wide conditions contributing to the cumulative impact. Any such planning document shall be referenced and made available to the public at a location specified by the lead agency.*

For this environmental impact report (EIR), the City updated the projections in the 2005 City of Ventura General Plan for growth and development in the Westside Community Planning Project area through the year 2025. The General Plan EIR was conducted at a program level of detail. A program EIR allows the Lead Agency to consider broad policy alternatives and program-wide mitigation measures early in the program process; subsequent project-specific activities conducted under the general plan are evaluated in light of the program EIR to determine if additional environmental documentation is required (*State CEQA Guidelines* Sections 15168(b) and (c)). In cases where further compliance is required, the environmental analysis will tier from the program EIR.

The City of Ventura prepared updated projections of the amount of growth likely to occur within the Westside Community Planning Project area through the 2025 planning horizon year of the City's General Plan to serve as the basis of the environmental analysis in this EIR. These updated growth projections include the 2005 General Plan growth projections for the Westside Community Planning Area through 2025, additional development identified in the 2006 Westside Economic Development Strategy, and adjustments based on pending and approved projects since the adoption of the 2005 General Plan that represent an increase over the amount of growth projected in the General Plan.

The amount of additional development anticipated through 2025 in the Westside Community Planning Project area, including development in the 36 acres of the area subject to the Downtown Specific Plan, is summarized in **Table 3.0-6, Westside Community Planning Area – Existing (2011) Development and Development Projections (2025)** in **Section 3.0, Project Description**. This updated growth projection for the Westside Community Planning Project area is greater than the projection in the General Plan for the project area by 150 dwelling units, 49,005 square feet of retail space, and 54,450 square feet of office space. The environmental analysis in this EIR evaluates the potential impacts of this amount of growth within the Community Planning Area through the year 2025.