

## 4 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

### SCOPE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

Sections 4.1 through 4.12 of this Revised Draft EIR present the environmental impact analysis for the anticipated effects of the adoption of the Specific Plan. Issues evaluated in these sections consist of a full range of environmental topics originally identified for review in the NOP (Appendix A). The environmental issues and the sections in which they are discussed are:

- < Land Use and Planning
- < Population and Housing
- < Geology and Soils
- < Hydrology and Water Quality
- < Biological Resources
- < Air Quality
- < Traffic and Circulation
- < Noise
- < Public Services and Utilities
- < Visual Quality and Aesthetics
- < Historical, Cultural, and Archaeological Resources
- < Hazards and Hazardous Materials

### STRUCTURE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

Each section in this chapter presents a detailed evaluation of a particular resource area and includes a discussion of existing conditions (both physical and regulatory), potential environmental impacts associated with the Specific Plan, and revised or additional policies proposed to mitigate significant environmental impacts.

**Existing Setting.** The Existing Conditions subsection presents relevant information on both the regional and local physical environment and the regulatory/planning environment for the Specific Plan area. This subsection also presents information on the laws, regulations, and plans that relate to the resource area being evaluated.

**Environmental Impacts.** The Environmental Impacts subsection identifies the environmental impacts of implementation of the Specific Plan. Project-level impacts are presented first, followed by cumulative impacts. The relevant thresholds of significance used to identify impacts and methodology used in the analysis are presented before the evaluation of impacts. Throughout the discussion, impacts are identified numerically and sequentially. For example, impacts discussed in Section 4.1 are identified as 4.1-1, 4.1-2, and so on. An impact statement presented at the beginning of each impact discussion provides a summary of the impact and its level of significance. The impact analysis includes evidence and explanation supporting the conclusion on the level of significance for the impact. Growth-inducing impacts are presented in Section 5.1, Growth Inducing Impacts.

**Mitigation Measures.** The Mitigation Measures subsection proposes new Specific Plan policies to reduce significant and potentially significant impacts. Distinct mitigation measures are provided. Each mitigation measure is identified numerically to correspond with the number of the impact being reduced by the measure. For example, Impact 4.1-1 would be mitigated by Mitigation Measure 4.1-1. Mitigation measures for project-level impacts are presented first, followed by mitigation measures for cumulative impacts.

**Level of Significance After Mitigation.** This subsection describes whether any significant impacts on the specific resource area would remain after implementation of the mitigation measures presented. Significant and unavoidable impacts are identified in this subsection. (These impacts are also summarized in Section 5.2, Significant and Unavoidable Impacts and Significant and Irreversible Commitment of Resources.)

## **APPROACH TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS**

For each environmental impact identified in this Revised Draft EIR, a statement of the level of significance of the impact is provided. Each impact is assigned one of the following impact levels:

- < A **less-than-significant** impact is an impact that is considered to cause no substantial adverse change in the environment and for which no mitigation measures are required.
- < A **significant** impact is an impact that is considered to have a substantial or potentially substantial adverse effect on the environment but for which feasible mitigation measures are available to reduce it to a less-than-significant level. Impacts may also be considered potentially significant if the analysis cannot definitively conclude that an impact could be reduced to less-than-significant levels with mitigation.
- < A **significant and unavoidable** impact is an impact that is considered to cause a substantial or potentially substantial adverse effect on the environment and for which no feasible mitigation measures or alternatives are available to reduce it to a less-than-significant level.

## **POLICY CONSISTENCY**

According to State CEQA Guidelines §15125(d), an EIR “shall discuss any inconsistencies between the proposed project and applicable general plans and regional plans.” To this end, the Specific Plan has been analyzed for consistency with the Larkspur General Plan. As described in Section 4.1, Land Use and Planning, the Specific Plan is generally consistent with the General Plan. While the consistency of the General Plan is analyzed in this Revised Draft EIR, the final authority for interpretation of these policy statements, and determination of the Specific Plan’s consistency, rests with the City.