

4.0 SETTING, IMPACTS, AND MITIGATION MEASURES

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the existing conditions and evaluates the potential environmental impacts that would occur with rehabilitation of the Fair Oaks Overhead Bridge (bridge). **Section 4.1** through **Section 4.12** of this chapter analyzes each resource topic that could be affected by the proposed Fair Oaks Avenue Overhead Bridge Rehabilitation Project (project). Each subsection describes the environmental setting as it relates to the specific resource topic; the impacts that could result from implementation of the proposed project; and mitigation measures that would avoid, reduce, or compensate for any significant impacts of the proposed project.

ISSUES ADDRESSED IN THE DRAFT EIR

The following topics are addressed in this chapter:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Energy
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Noise
- Traffic and Circulation
- Utilities and Service Systems

Please see **Chapter 7.0, CEQA Required Discussions**, for summary analysis of environmental effects not found to be significant (i.e., agriculture and forestry resources, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, mineral resources, population and housing, public services and recreation, and utilities and service systems).

FORMAT OF SECTIONS

In general, the analysis of each environmental issue consists of three subsections: Existing Conditions, Regulatory Setting, and Impacts and Mitigation Measures. An overview of the information included in these sections is provided below.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

According to Section 15125(a) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, existing conditions are the physical environmental conditions in the vicinity of a project at the time the Notice of Preparation (NOP) is published. The City published the NOP on April 23, 2013.

REGULATORY SETTING

The regulatory setting section provides a description of the relevant regulations and guidelines that pertain to the issue area. This setting section may contain information from a variety of sources, such as the Sunnyvale General Plan (General Plan), or other local, regional, state, or federal agency guidelines or regulations. A consistency analysis is also included, providing a brief evaluation of the project's conformity with applicable policies and regulations. These discussions are intended to comport with CEQA Guidelines Section 15125(d), which requires environmental impact reports (EIRs) to include a discussion of any inconsistencies between a proposed project and any pertinent adopted plan. Inconsistency with such policies is not necessarily a physical environmental impact.

IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

The analysis of potential impacts begins with a listing of the applicable significance criteria, followed by an evaluation of impact that would result from implementation of the proposed project.

Significance Criteria

Under CEQA (Section 21068), a significant effect is defined as a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in the environment. The CEQA guidelines direct that this determination be based on scientific and factual data. The significance criteria have been developed using Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines as a foundation, with some refining of the criteria based on local regulations and other applicable federal, state, and local agencies' guidelines and regulations.

Evaluation of Impacts

The evaluation of impacts considers the significance criteria and the level of environmental impact, and makes a determination as to whether there is: “no impact,” a “less-than-significant impact,” or a “significant impact.” Therefore, this subsection is divided into three categories: Discussion of No Impacts, Discussion of Less-than-Significant Impacts, and Discussion of Significant Impacts.

Any identified impacts are numbered and shown in bold type. For significant impacts, mitigation measures are provided that would reduce the effects of these impacts. Following the discussion of mitigation measures, there is an evaluation of “Significance after Mitigation.”

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