
5. GENERAL IMPACT CATEGORIES

1. IMPACTS DETERMINED TO BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT

1. INTRODUCTION

In addition to the environmental impact categories analyzed in detail in the DEIR, the City of Santa Clarita has determined that the development and operation of the Proposed Project would not result in potentially significant impacts to the environmental impact topics listed below. Section 15128 of the CEQA Guidelines states:

“An EIR shall contain a statement briefly indicating the reasons that various possible significant effects of a project were determined not to be significant and were therefore not discussed in detail in the EIR. Such a statement may be contained in an attached copy of an Initial Study.”

It has been determined that there is no evidence that the Proposed Project would cause significant environmental effects in the following areas and that no further environmental review of these issues is necessary for the reasons described below.

Agricultural Resources

The California Department of Conservation, Division of Land Protection, lists Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, and Farmland of Statewide Importance under the general category of “Important Farmland.” The Extent of Important Farmland Map Coverage maintained by the Division of Land Protection indicates that the Project Site is not included in the Important Farmland category.¹ In addition, locally the Project Site is zoned for a mix of commercial and residential uses and not “agricultural” uses. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in the conversion of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance to a non-agricultural use. Additionally, there are no known Williamson Act Contract agreements associated with the Project Site. The Project Area contains the following land use and zoning designations: “SP(3)” (Old Town Newhall Specific Plan) and MXN (Mixed Use Neighborhood). Therefore, the Project site would have no impact associated with the conversion of agricultural uses or forested lands. No further analysis of this issue is required.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

On August 28, 2012, the City of Santa Clarita adopted a Climate Action Plan (CAP), which provides policies and identifies actions intended to reduce GHG emissions within the City and assist in the fight against Climate Change. Overall the goal of the CAP is to reduce Santa Clarita’s community-wide GHG emissions below the 2005 baseline emissions by 2020. The CAP includes a set of strategies the City can use to reduce the amount of greenhouse gas emissions produced in the community. Implementation of the measures proposed in the Proposed CAP would result in an annual community-wide reduction in

¹ Source: State of California Department of Conservation, Division of Land Resource Protection, Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, Los Angeles County Important Farmland Map, 2002 Los Angeles Area Map.

GHG emissions of approximately 193,000 MTCO₂e by 2020 from local measures and an additional reduction of approximately 148,952 MTCO₂e by 2020 from statewide measures. This would reduce GHG emissions from the Business-as-usual projections for 2020 by 17 percent and would exceed the GHG reduction targets of 16 percent established by CARB in its revised scoping plan. Implementation of the strategies identified in the CAP would also exceed the City's goal to reduce 2020 GHG emissions to a level below the 2005 GHG emissions baseline by 4 percent.

The CAP defines a local threshold of significance for green house gas emissions (GHG) for project level submittals that are subject to environmental review under CEQA. Goals, objectives and policies approved under the General Plan are forecast to meet the GHG emission reduction targets mandated by AB 32. Therefore, development projects that are able to demonstrate consistency with the General Plan and zoning ordinance are by association consistent with the CAP and are not subject to further environmental review. Development proposals that are not consistent with the City's General Plan and/or Unified Development Code (Zone Changes/General Plan Amendments) must demonstrate a 12 percent reduction in the GHG emissions from the Controlled 2020 Business as Usual Scenario, to be deemed consistent with the CAP. Development proposals that are not consistent with the City's General Plan and/or Unified Development Code and that can not demonstrate a 12 percent reduction in GHG emissions from the Controlled Business as Usual Scenario shall be deemed to have a significant impact on GHG emissions.

The Project is consistent with the Circulation Element of the General Plan and will not require a zone change or General Plan amendment. As such, the Project's potential to generate GHGs will be less than significant with respect to consistency with all applicable plans, policies or regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases, and no further analysis of this issue is warranted.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

A significant impact may occur if a project involves the use or disposal of hazardous materials as part of its routine operations which may have the potential to generate toxic or otherwise hazardous emissions that could adversely affect sensitive receptors. Since the Project would not require the transport, use, and/or disposal of potentially hazardous materials, the potential for an impact to occur is considered low. In addition, California Government Code Section 65962.5 requires various state agencies to compile lists of hazardous waste disposal facilities, unauthorized releases from underground storage tanks, contaminated drinking water wells and solid waste facilities from which there is known migration of hazardous waste and submit such information to the Secretary for Environmental Protection on at least an annual basis. No properties within or immediately adjacent to the Project site appear on the State's list of hazardous materials sites. Therefore, further analysis of this issue is not warranted.

Mineral Resources

There are no known economic mineral resources located beneath the Project Site. The Project Site is not within a known source area for aggregate or other mineral resources. Additionally, the Project Site is not located in an area of potential petroleum resources. Therefore, development of the Proposed Project would not 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. In addition, development of the Proposed Project would not result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site. As the Proposed Project would not result in any potentially significant impacts to mineral resources, no further analysis of this issue is warranted.

Population and Housing

The Project involves the buildout of a proposed roadway alignment that was identified within the City's Circulation Element of the General Plan. No residential, commercial, or industrial land uses are proposed. Therefore, the Project would not have the potential to induce substantial population growth in the area. As such, the Proposed Project would not significantly impact the existing housing stock. Additionally, the Project would not displace any existing housing units, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. Therefore, no impact would occur and no further analysis is required.

Public Services (Fire and Police Protection, Schools, Parks, Libraries, and other Public Facilities)

Fire and Police Protection

A significant impact may occur if the County of Los Angeles Fire Department (LACoFD) and Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD) could not adequately serve the areas affected by the Project's circulation plan based upon response time, access, or fire hydrant/water availability. The Project would not directly increase the demands for fire and police protection as the Project does not include any new housing units or commercial uses. Emergency access to the Placerita Canyon community would be facilitated through the Project's alignment, which is consistent with the City's adopted Circulation Element. The Project's alignment would be an improvement to the current access route into the Placerita Canyon community via 13th Street. The potential upgrade or closure of the 13th Street at-grade crossing is a proposed safety feature aimed at reducing potential conflicts between pedestrians, vehicles and trains. The Project's impact upon fire and police services would be less than significant and no further analysis is warranted.

Schools

There are no residential properties on the Project Site and none are planned as part of the development of the Proposed Project. Therefore, development of the Proposed Project would not result in a direct increase in the resident population or in any associated school-aged children. Therefore, with respect to local schools, no impact would occur and no further analysis of this issue is warranted.

Parks

There are no residential properties on the Project Site and none are planned as part of the development of the Proposed Project. Therefore, development of the Proposed Project would not result in a direct increase in the resident population that would use park facilities. Therefore, no impacts on local parks would occur and no further analysis of this issue is warranted.

Libraries

As the Proposed Project does not include residential or commercial uses, no new residents or employees would utilize existing library services in the project area. Therefore, impacts on local libraries as a result of the development of the Proposed Project would not occur. No further analysis of this issue is warranted.

Other Public Facilities

Proposed Project operations would utilize and, to some extent, affect the maintenance of public roads. However, wear and tear on City streets resulting from project-related traffic is not expected to be excessive or beyond normal requirements. Furthermore, the City would be required to implement roadway improvements (including any required street repairs due to any relocation of public utilities, project construction damage, and traffic mitigation measures), as monitored and enforced by the City. Therefore, impacts to public facilities as a result of the development of the Proposed Project would be less than significant. No further analysis of this issue is warranted.

Recreation

The Proposed roadway alignment does not include the development of new residential or commercial uses. As such, the Proposed Project will not directly impact existing recreation facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facilities would occur or be accelerated in the existing neighborhood, regional parks or other recreational facilities. Therefore, no further analysis of this issue is warranted.

Utilities

The Proposed Project includes the development of a roadway alignment. The Proposed Project does not include the development of residential, commercial or industrial uses. As such the Proposed Project would not require any connections to a sanitary sewer. Thus, no impact to wastewater treatment facilities would be created. The drainage system of the Project will be developed so that post development peak runoff discharge rates are equal to or less than pre development peak runoff rates, as required by the City of Santa Clarita and the Countywide MS4 Permit. As such, the Project would not result in the construction of new stormwater drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities. The Project would not create a demand for potable water or for solid waste resources. Therefore impacts associated with the Proposed Project, with respect to utilities, would be less than significant and no further analysis is warranted.

5. GENERAL IMPACT CATEGORIES

2. SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

Section 15126.2(b) of the State CEQA Guidelines requires that an EIR describe any significant environmental impacts which cannot be avoided. Specifically, Section 15126.2(b) states:

“Describe any significant impacts, including those which can be mitigated but not reduced to a level of insignificance. Where there are impacts that cannot be alleviated without imposing an alternative design, their implications and the reasons why the project is being proposed, notwithstanding their effect, should be described.”

Based on the analysis contained in Section 4.0. Environmental Impact Analysis, of this Draft EIR, implementation of the Proposed Project would result in significant and unavoidable environmental impacts associated with the following environmental issues:

- Construction air quality (localized PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} emissions);
- Construction related noise impacts.

As discussed in greater detail in Section 4.2, Air Quality, the Proposed Project would result in significant localized air emissions in close proximity to residential land uses within 100 meters of the Project Site on a temporary and intermittent basis during construction. Localized NO_x and CO emissions would be below the significance thresholds at all sensitive receptor locations. However, localized thresholds would be exceeded for PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} emissions at two locations: (1) the single family residential land uses located immediately north of the Project Site (within a proximity of 100 meters) and (2) the residential land uses within 100 meters south of the Project Site in the vicinity of Market Street and Race Street. Localized emissions would be below the stated thresholds for any land use located further than 100 meters from the Project Site. Therefore, localized air quality impacts resulting from construction activities would be considered significant and unavoidable.

As discussed in greater detail in Section 4.8, Noise, the Proposed Project’s construction noise impacts would exceed the maximum allowable exterior noise levels. Thus, the Proposed Project’s construction noise impacts would be considered a significant impact on a short term and intermittent basis during the construction period.