

3 Settings, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures

Introduction to Environmental Analysis

Chapter 3 of this Draft EIR contains a discussion of potential environmental effects as a result of the implementation of the proposed General Plan. Chapter 3 includes information related to existing conditions for each issue area, method of analysis, summary of impacts, and detailed analyses of the type and magnitude of individual and/or cumulative environmental impacts. CEQA Guidelines require that this draft EIR include a description of the physical environmental conditions in the vicinity of the project, with special emphasis placed on environmental resources that are rare or unique to the region and that would be affected by the proposed General Plan.

Organization of the Chapter

Sections 3.1 through 3.13 cover environmental issue areas that were determined to have impacts that were potentially significant and therefore required further analysis in this Draft EIR. These issue areas include: Aesthetics; Air Quality; Biological Resources; Geology and Soils; Greenhouse Gases and Energy; Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology, Flooding and Water Quality; Land Use and Housing; Noise; Public Services and Facilities; Traffic and Circulation; and Utilities and Service Systems.

Because there are no agriculture and forestry resources or mineral resources within Daly City, there are no potentially significant impacts, as discussed in Section 3.14.

Format of Environmental Analysis

Each environmental issue area contains the following components.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Physical Setting

This describes the existing specific, issue area physical environmental conditions to provide the baseline condition against which plan-related impacts are compared. In most cases, the physical study area for each environmental issue is the city limits. Where the study area for an environmental issue is different, this is also established in the Physical Setting text.

Regulatory Setting

This includes general and regional plans or local, State or federal agency regulations applicable to the proposed General Plan and relevant to the specific issue area. This section only includes plans and regulations related to the identified impacts, and it does not include a comprehensive list of all the plans and regulations that pertain to each environmental issue area addressed within the city.

IMPACT ANALYSIS

This includes analysis of potential environmental impacts associated with implementation of the proposed General Plan. The impact analysis in this EIR assumes implementation of the proposed General Plan through 2030 and does not include an analysis of interim development phases.

Significance Criteria

Thresholds of significance, beyond which impacts are considered to be significant, are established for each environmental issue analyzed. The thresholds of significance are based on generally accepted standards for environmental review, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines. While the criterion for determining significant impacts is unique to each environmental topic, the classification of the impacts is uniformly applied in accordance with the following definitions:

No Impact—Impact does not apply to the proposed General Plan. “No Impact” findings are included in the Summary of Impacts section rather than as impact statements.

Less Than Significant Impact—Impact would not result in a substantial adverse change in the environment or does not surpass thresholds of significance, and would not require mitigation.

Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation – Impact may result in a substantial or potentially substantial, adverse change in the environment; the incorporation of mitigation measures would reduce the potentially significant impact to a less than significant level.

Significant and Unavoidable Impact—Impact may result in a substantial or potentially substantial, adverse change in the environment, which cannot be reduced to a less than significant level even with implementation of feasible mitigation measures.

Cumulatively Significant Impact, Project Contribution Less than Considerable – Impact that exceeds the defined threshold of cumulative based on projected growth for the region; however, analysis indicates that the project’s contribution to the impact is less than considerable.

Methodology and Assumptions

This subsection identifies the methodology and major assumptions used to analyze potential environmental impacts.

Summary of Impacts

This subsection summarizes the analysis and finding of significance for each issue area.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Each impact includes the numbered impact statement followed by the ultimate finding of significance in parentheses. The level of significance is determined by considering the predicted magnitude of the project's potential for substantial impacts in each area. Policies in the proposed General Plan that would avoid or reduce impacts are also considered for purposes of assessing impacts. Following the discussion of each stated impact, feasible mitigation measures that could avoid or reduce the severity of identified impacts are identified as appropriate. If an impact is not identified for specific significance criteria listed in the section, a brief explanation is provided within the Summary of Impacts section. Citations for this chapter are contained within the relevant discussion.

Assumptions

This EIR represents the best effort to evaluate the potential environmental effects of the proposed General Plan given its long-term planning horizon. It can be anticipated that conditions will change; however, the assumptions used are the best available at the time of preparation and reflect existing knowledge of patterns of development and travel patterns.

This EIR is based on the following assumptions:

- **Full Implementation.** All policies in the proposed General Plan would be fully implemented.
- **Buildout by 2030.** Buildout of the proposed General Plan will occur by 2030. It is understood that development under the proposed General Plan will be incremental. For a full explanation and projection of buildout, see Chapter 2: Project Description.
- **Cumulative Impacts.** Cumulative impacts are defined by CEQA Guidelines Section 15355 as "...two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts." CEQA Guidelines permit the use of either a "list" or "projections" approach for definition of area-wide conditions for use in the cumulative analysis. That is, either a list of all past, present and reasonably foreseeable future projects that could collectively contribute to significant cumulative impacts, or regional growth projections from adopted planning documents relevant to the project, to define an area-wide set of future conditions for cumulative analysis. The proposed General Plan is a planning document; therefore, regional growth projections are considered more appropriate for a program-level cumulative impact analysis.

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