

6.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE ANALYSIS

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Chapter 6.0 of the EIR contains individual sections that describe the potential environmental impacts of the Proposed Project and alternatives. Each topical section describes the existing setting and background information necessary to help the reader understand the conditions that would cause an impact to occur. In addition, each section includes a discussion that describes how an impact is determined to be significant or not significant. Finally, the individual sections recommend mitigation measures to reduce significant impacts.

SCOPE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

The environmental issues addressed within this EIR include:

- Parking Supply (6.2)
- Air Quality (6.3)
- Noise/Vibration (6.4)
- Tree Resources (6.5)
- Visual Resources (6.6)

The impacts and mitigation measures identified in the Master Plan (programmatic) portion of the analysis are based on the proposed Concept and Vision Plan defined in the Project Description chapter of this DEIR and included within **Appendix A**. The mitigation for the Master Plan is designed from a program level and will be applied depending on future phases within the Zoo. These future phases are dependent on the success of fund procurement by the Zoological Society. Future environmental analysis of the impacts and mitigation measures will be undertaken at the time the future phases are proposed.

The analysis also provides an assessment of the Phase I elements. These are elements of the Proposed Project that will be constructed if the City certifies the EIR and approves the Proposed Project. The mitigation measures for impacts related to Phase I are designed to the project specific level that will be implemented in the field once construction commences.

EVALUATION OF THE ALTERNATIVES IN THE EIR

As provided for in the CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6, the range of reasonable alternatives to be included in an EIR must consist of alternatives that would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project. Two alternatives studied in this EIR represent a range designed to avoid or substantially lessen the significant effects of the project.

SIGNIFICANCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Whenever possible and reasonable, significance criteria are established which serve as the benchmark for determining impacts. Significance criteria are identified for each environmental category to determine if the project will result in a significant environmental impact when evaluated against the environmental setting. The significance criteria vary depending on the environmental category. For example, the significance criterion for carbon monoxide in the air quality discussion is based on state and federally adopted parts per million (ppm) standards, while the noise significance criteria is based on decibel thresholds identified in the City's adopted General Plan. In general, effects can be either significant (above threshold), or less than significant (below threshold).

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

According to CEQA *Guidelines* Section 15355, "cumulative impacts refer to two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts." CEQA requires that cumulative impacts be discussed when the project's incremental effect is cumulatively considerable (*Guidelines* Section 15130(a)). These impacts are referenced where appropriate in the relevant sub-chapter by topic, and are also discussed in Chapter 8.0 Cumulative Impacts.

UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

An unavoidable impact is an impact that cannot be feasibly mitigated to a less than significant level. In each environmental section and Chapter 9.0, impacts that cannot be avoided are identified as *significant unavoidable impacts*.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACTS

In accordance with CEQA, this document focuses on potentially significant environmental consequences. Although there may be socio-economic consequences regarding the proposed project and alternatives, many of these issues relate to socio-economic concerns that do not clearly result in a physical impact. Section 15131 of the CEQA *Guidelines* states that an EIR may include economic or social information, however, "economic and social effects of a project shall not be treated as significant effects on the environment." An exception to this is in instances where a clear chain of cause and effect between the social or economic issues can be linked to a physical impact. In this case, the EIR discusses the physical impact that will result from the social or economic impact.