
IV. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

A. IMPACTS FOUND TO BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT

Section 15128 of the CEQA Guidelines states the following:

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.

Based on the information included below, implementation of the Project would not result in significant impacts related to the specific environmental impact issues listed below from Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, and therefore, additional analysis of these topics is not included in Section IV of this EIR. (Certain aspects of the impact areas identified in this section were determined to be potentially significant and are discussed further in Sections IV.B through IV.P.)

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

The Project would not convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use. The Farmland of Statewide Importance map for Riverside County shows the designation of the Project site is Farmland of Local Importance;¹ Figure 7-1 of the City's General Plan shows the designation of the site is Mixed-Use. Thus, development of the Project site with the Project would not result in the conversion of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use. Therefore, no further analysis of this issue is required.

The Project would not conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220[g]), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104[g]). The Project site is not zoned as forest land or timberland. Thus, the Project would not conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220[g]), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104[g]). Therefore, no further analysis of this issue is required.

¹ *Riverside County Important Farmland, State of California Department of Conservation, 2010.*

The Project would not result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use. The Project site does not contain any forest land. Thus, the Project would not result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use. Therefore, no further analysis of this issue is required.

The Project would not involve other changes in the existing environment, which due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use. The Project site is undeveloped and contains highly disturbed ruderal land. Historically, the majority of the site primarily has been used for growing field crops. As discussed previously, the Project site is not designated as Farmland. Thus, the Project would not result in the conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use. Therefore, no further analysis of this issue is required.

Project impacts related to other agriculture resource issues are discussed in Section IV.C (Agricultural Resources).

CULTURAL RESOURCES

The Project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5. No historic structures are located on the Project site.² Thus, no further analysis of this issue is required.

Project impacts related to other cultural resource issues are discussed in Section IV.F (Cultural Resources).

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

The Project would not expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42. The Project site is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Zone. Thus, no further analysis of this issue is required.

The Project would not expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides. The Project site and surrounding area are relatively flat

² Cultural Resources Report, Discovery Works, Inc., November 2, 2006.

and are not located within an area that is prone to landslides.³ Thus, no further analysis of this issue is required.

The Project would not have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater. The Project site is located in a developed area of the City that is served by a municipal wastewater collection, conveyance, and treatment system. No septic tanks are proposed. Thus, no further analysis of this issue is required.

Project impacts related to other geology and soils issues are discussed in Section IV.G (Geology and Soils).

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

The Project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. The Project includes development of residential, commercial, educational, and recreational land uses. The types and amounts of hazardous materials associated with routine, day-to-day operation of the Project would include typical cleaning, building maintenance, and landscaping materials and landscaping chemicals. The transport, use, and disposal of these materials would not pose a significant hazard to the public or the environment. Thus, no further analysis of this issue is required.

The Project would not emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school. Although schools are located within one-quarter mile of the Project site, and an elementary school could be developed on the Project site as part of the Project potentially could as discussed above, the Project includes development of residential and commercial uses. The types and amounts of hazardous materials associated with routine, day-to-day operation of the Project would include typical cleaning, building maintenance, and landscaping materials and landscaping chemicals. The use of these common cleaning, maintenance, and landscaping materials would not affect any of the schools in the vicinity of the Project or the potential school on the Project site. Thus, no further analysis of this issue is required.

The Project site is not located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, the Project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment. The Project site is not included on the list of hazardous materials

³ Preliminary Geotechnical Evaluation for Garrett Ranch, City of Hemet, Riverside County, California, GeoTek, August 16, 2006.

sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5.⁴ Thus, no further analysis of this issue is required.

The Project would not result in a safety hazard related to a private airstrip for people residing or working in the project area. The Project site is not located within the vicinity of a private airstrip. Thus, no further analysis of this issue is required.

The Project would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. No aspects of the Project would inhibit access to hospitals, emergency response centers, school locations, communication facilities, highways and bridges, or airports. Further, the Project would comply with all applicable City policies related to disaster preparedness and emergency response. Thus, no further analysis of this issue is required.

Project impacts related to other hazards and hazardous materials issues are discussed in Section IV.I (Hazards and Hazardous Materials).

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

The Project would not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements. The Project would not include any point-source discharge. Thus, no further discussion of this issue is required. (Project impacts related to water quality are addressed in Section IV.J [Hydrology and Water Quality]).

The Project would not substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted). The Project would include development of vacant land with a mix of residential and commercial land uses. Groundwater flow in the Project site area typically trends south-southwest. Elevations at the Project site range from 1,502 feet above mean sea level (msl) to 1,507 feet above msl. As part of a Preliminary Geotechnical Investigation previously prepared for the Project site, 15 exploratory borings were performed at a maximum depth of 51.5 feet. Groundwater was encountered below ground surface in 4 of the 15 borings. In all four borings, groundwater was likely encountered near the alluvium/bedrock contact beneath the Project site. Based on the variable depth to groundwater, the relatively “dry” soil intervals encountered below the final measured groundwater depths and the absence of groundwater in some borings, the groundwater encountered is considered in a “perched” condition. Additionally, due to the relatively flat topography of the Project site, cuts and fills of less than 5 feet in depth would occur. Therefore, due to the depths of the groundwater encountered and the minimal excavation depths anticipated (approximately 25 feet below grade), no significant impacts on groundwater would occur.

⁴ Phase I Environmental Site Assessment, RBF Consulting, October 2006.

Thus, no further discussion of this issue is required. (Groundwater as a source of water supply is addressed in Section IV.N [Public Services – Water]).

The Project would not place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map. Although a portion of the Project site along Florida Avenue is located within a 100-year flood hazard area, no residential development would occur within this area. Thus, no further discussion of this issue is required.

The Project would not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam. The Project site is located within the Diamond Valley Combined Dam inundation area. In compliance with General Plan policy PS-2.7 (Evacuation Plans), the City maintains and implements its own emergency evacuation plan. Through adherence to the City's emergency evacuation plan, Project impacts related to potential dam failure would be less than significant. Thus, no further discussion of this issue is required.

The Project would not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow. Project site is not located near the ocean or any other substantial body of water or hillsides. Thus, no further discussion of this issue is required.

Project impacts related to other hydrology and water quality issues are discussed in Section IV.J (Hydrology and Water Quality).

LAND USE AND PLANNING

The Project would not physically divide an established community. The boundaries of the Project site are well established by existing roadways (Florida Avenue to the South, Myers Street to the east, Celeste Road to the north, and Warren Road to the west). Although the Project site and some of the surrounding areas are not developed, existing residential and commercial land uses are developed in all directions in close proximity to the Project site. The Project includes development of residential and commercial land uses similar to those found within the area and within the boundaries of the Project site. Thus, the Project would not physically divide an established community, and no further discussion of this issue is required.

Project impacts related to other land use issues are discussed in Section IV.K (Land Use and Planning).

MINERAL RESOURCES

The 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. According to the mineral resources section of the City's General Plan Resource Management Element, no mineral deposits of statewide or regional importance exist within the City's boundary, which includes the Project site. Additionally, according to Figure OS-5 (Mineral Resources) of the Riverside County General Plan, the Project site and surrounding areas are located within Mineral Resource Zone 3 (MRZ-3), where the available geologic information indicates that

mineral deposits are likely to exist. However, the significance of the deposit is undetermined. The Project site and surrounding areas are not recognized as sources of important mineral resources. No significant impacts would occur to mineral resources of regional or statewide importance as a result of the Project. Thus, no further discussion of this issue is required.

The Project would not result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan. The Project site is not delineated as the City's General Plan and any other land use plan as a recovery site for locally-important mineral resources. Thus, no further discussion of this issue is required.

NOISE

The Project would not expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels associated with a private airstrip. The Project site is not located near any private airstrips. Thus, no further discussion of this issue is required.

Project impacts related to other noise issues are discussed in Section IV.L (Noise).

POPULATION AND HOUSING

The Project would not displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. The Project site does not contain any existing housing. Thus, no further discussion of this issue is required.

The Project would not displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. No people currently live at the Project site. Thus, no further discussion of this issue is required.

Project impacts related to other population and housing issues are discussed in Section IV.M (Population and Housing).

TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC

The Project would not result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks. The Project site is located within the Airport Influence Area (Zone III) of the adopted Hemet-Ryan Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan. The Hemet-Ryan Airport is located one-half mile southeast of the Project site. The Hemet-Ryan Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan is overseen by the Riverside County Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC). The Project would be subject to review by the ALUC for airport compatibility with Hemet-Ryan Airport operations, which include Federal Aviation Association (FAA) building height restrictions within Zone III. According to the Hemet-Ryan Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan, structures over 200 feet above ground surface are a presumed hazard to air navigation. The Project does not include any structures that

would exceed 200 feet above ground surface. The maximum building heights associated with the Project would be 50 feet above ground surface. Additionally, Zone III allows for development and operation of a range of uses, including (but not limited to) residential, commercial, educational, and recreational land uses, similar to those proposed as part of the Project. Furthermore, the Project would be required to acquire avigation easements from the ALUC. Through compliance with the avigation easement requirements, the Project would not interfere or conflict with any air traffic patterns of the Hemet-Ryan Airport, and no significant impacts would occur. Thus, no further discussion of this issue is required.

The Project would not substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment). All ingress/egress associated with the Project would be designed and constructed in conformance to all applicable City Building and Safety Department and City Fire Department standards. Additionally, the Project site is not located near any sharp curves or dangerous intersections, and the Project does not include land uses that are incompatible with surrounding land uses. Thus, no further discussion of this issue is required.

The Project would not result in inadequate emergency access. As discussed above, all ingress/egress associated with the Project would be designed and constructed in conformance to all applicable City Building and Safety Department and City Fire Department standards and requirements for design and construction. Thus, no further discussion of this issue is required.

The Project would not conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks). The Project would not conflict with adopted policies supporting alternative transportation. The Riverside Transit Authority (RTA) provides public transportation to the Project area. RTA's Route 27 provides bus services along SR-74, which forms the Project site's southern boundary. The project includes a pedestrian and bicycle trail system of parkway, including separated walkways, paseos, and bicycle lanes. Figure 4.5 (Bikeway Circulation Plan) of the Hemet General Plan Circulation Element designates a Class II on-street bike lane along SR-74. The Project would provide the required bike lane along its southern boundary on SR-74. Bicycle activity also would be promoted via the installation of bicycle racks within the commercial areas and uses of the Project. The pedestrian and bicycle trail system would provide for alternative modes of transportation and would promote pedestrian activity and opportunities for residents and visitors of the Project site and surrounding areas. Access to the pedestrian and bicycle trail system would be provided at key points within the Project to provide accessibility between residential neighborhoods, the commercial center, recreational areas, and off-site areas. For these reasons, no significant impacts related to this issue would occur as a result of the Project. Thus, no further discussion of this issue is required.

Project impacts related to other transportation/traffic issues are discussed in Section IV.O (Transportation/Traffic).

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

The Project would not exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable regional water quality control board. All wastewater associated with the Project would discharge to the local City sewer and would not discharge to any surface or ground water sources. The Project would comply with all the applicable standards of the Regional Water Quality Control Board. Thus, no further discussion of this issue is required.

The Project would comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste. The Project would participate in the City's recycling and waste reduction programs. Thus, no further discussion of this issue is required.

Project impacts related to other utilities and service systems issues are discussed in Section IV.P (Utilities and Service Systems).