

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING, IMPACTS, AND MITIGATION MEASURES

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This section contains an analysis of each environmental issue that has been identified through preliminary environmental analysis and the public scoping and circulation processes for the proposed project. Each section describes the environmental setting of the project as it relates to that specific issue; the impacts resulting from implementation of the project; and mitigation measures that would avoid, reduce, or compensate for impacts of the project.

Under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), a significant impact is defined as a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change to the environment. The *State CEQA Guidelines* direct that this determination be based on scientific and factual data. These criteria have been developed based on the County of San Mateo thresholds of significance incorporating the requirements of Appendix G of the *State CEQA Guidelines*.

4.2 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Under CEQA, a variety of terms are used to describe the levels of significance of impacts. The definition of terms used in this environmental impact report (EIR) is presented below.

- **Significant and Unavoidable Impact.** An impact that exceeds the defined standards of significance and cannot be avoided or reduced to a less-than-significant level through implementation of feasible mitigation measures.
- **Significant Impact.** An impact that exceeds the defined standards of significance and that can be avoided or reduced to a less-than-significant level through implementation of feasible mitigation measures.
- **Potentially Significant Impact.** A significant impact that may ultimately be determined to be less than significant; the level of significance may be reduced through implementation of policies or guidelines (that are not required by statute or ordinance), or through further definition of the project detail in the future. Potentially significant impacts may also be impacts for which there is not enough information to draw a firm conclusion; however, for the purpose of this EIR, they are considered significant. Such impacts are equivalent to Significant Impacts and require the identification of feasible mitigation measures.
- **Less-Than-Significant Impact.** Impacts that are adverse but that do not exceed the specified standards of significance.
- **No Impact.** The project would not create an impact.

4.3 FORMAT OF ENVIRONMENTAL TOPIC SECTIONS

Each environmental topic considered in **Section 4.0** is comprised of four primary sections: Introduction; Environmental Setting; Regulatory Considerations; and Impacts and Mitigation Measures. An overview of the general organization and the information included in the sections is provided below.

4.3.1 Introduction

The introduction section describes the topic to be analyzed and the contents of the analysis. It also provides the sources used to evaluate the project's impacts. Copies of the sources used in this EIR are available at the Planning and Building Division of San Mateo County, at 455 County Center, 2nd Floor in the Redwood City.

4.3.2 Environmental Setting

According to Section 15125(a) of the *State CEQA Guidelines*, the environmental setting, that is the physical environmental conditions in the vicinity of the project, is the on-the ground condition at the time the Notice of Preparation (NOP) is published. The environmental setting normally constitutes the baseline relative which a lead agency determines whether an impact is significant. The NOP for the Highland Estates EIR was published on May 10, 2007. The baseline condition for the project is the condition of the site (e.g., existing land uses, existing soil conditions, existing traffic conditions) at the time the NOP was released, and is described in the environmental setting section for each resource topic.

4.3.3 Regulatory Considerations

The overview of regulatory considerations for each environmental topic is organized by agency including applicable federal, state, regional, and local (County) policies. The San Mateo County General Plan (General Plan) policies, goals, and actions relevant to each environmental topic are detailed.

4.3.4 Impacts and Mitigation Measures

This subsection begins with a discussion of criteria of significance followed by a discussion of the impacts that would result from implementation of the project. Impacts are numbered and shown in bold type, and the corresponding mitigation measures are also numbered and the significance after mitigation is identified for every significant impact.

4.4 APPROACH TO CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS

The analysis of cumulative impacts for each environmental factor can employ one of two methods to establish the effects of other past, current, and probable future projects. A lead agency may select a list of projects, including those outside the control of the agency, or, alternatively, a summary of projections. These projections may be from an adopted general plan or related planning document, or from a prior environmental document that has been adopted or certified, and these documents may describe or evaluate regional or area-wide conditions contributing to the cumulative impact. This EIR evaluates cumulative impacts using a combined approach of a list of reasonably foreseeable projects along with the specifications of the adopted General Plan. For environmental topics such as traffic, noise, and air quality, where specific quantification of future impacts is required for analysis, a list of reasonably foreseeable projects, as shown below in **Table 4.0-1, Reasonably Foreseeable Projects**, was utilized. For other impact topics such as geology and aesthetics, where impact analysis is based on more general principles, the specifications of the County General Plan were used to determine cumulative impacts.

Table 4.0-1
Reasonably Foreseeable Projects

<u>Project Name</u>	<u>Project Type</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Size</u>	<u>Status</u>
<u>San Mateo County</u>				
<u>N/A</u>	<u>Water supply pipeline improvement</u>	<u>East of Polhemus Road Alignment</u>	<u>N/A</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
<u>N/A</u>	<u>Facilities Master Plan</u>	<u>College of San Mateo</u>	<u>Campus-wide</u>	<u>Approved</u>
<u>N/A</u>	<u>Bridge demolition and reconstruction</u>	<u>Skyline Boulevard, about 250 feet south of Crystal Springs Road</u>	<u>Entire bridge</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
<u>Crystal Springs Bypass Tunnel (SFPUC)</u>	<u>Tunnel improvements</u>	<u>South side of Crystal Springs Road about 240 feet west of Polhemus Road</u>	<u>Tunnel-associated improvements</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
<u>Crystal Springs Pipeline #2 (SFPUC)</u>	<u>Water supply pipeline improvement</u>	<u>From Crystal Springs Pump Station north along Crystal Springs Road to El Camino Real</u>	<u>Pipeline segment</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
<u>Crystal Springs/San Andreas Transmission Upgrade (SFPUC)</u>	<u>Dam improvements</u>	<u>South of Skyline Boulevard near Crystal Springs Dam</u>	<u>Dam-associated improvements</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
<u>Lower Crystal Springs Dam</u>	<u>Dam reconstruction</u>	<u>Skyline Boulevard, approximately 250 feet south of Crystal Springs Road</u>	<u>Existing dam</u>	<u>Proposed</u>

4.0 Environmental Setting, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures

<u>Project Name</u>	<u>Project Type</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Size</u>	<u>Status</u>
<u>City of San Mateo</u>				
<u>Ascension Heights</u>	<u>Residential</u>	<u>Eastern corner of Ascension Drive and Bel Aire Road</u>	<u>25 du</u> <u>13.25 acres</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
<u>Bay Meadows II – SPAR I</u>	<u>Mixed Use</u>	<u>2600 South Delaware Street</u>	<u>392 du</u> <u>750,000 sf Office</u> <u>93,000 sf Commercial</u>	<u>Approved</u>
<u>Bay Meadows II – SPAR II</u>	<u>Residential</u>	<u>2600 South Delaware Street</u>	<u>330 du</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
<u>Bay Meadows II – SPAR III</u>	<u>Residential</u>	<u>2600 South Delaware Street</u>	<u>344 du</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
<u>Chesapeake Point Apartments</u>	<u>Residential</u>	<u>1633 Marina Court</u>	<u>30 du</u> <u>6.78 acres</u>	<u>Approved</u>
<u>Clock Tower Building</u>	<u>Mixed Use</u>	<u>221 South El Camino Real</u>	<u>23,462 sf Office</u> <u>11,426 sf Commercial</u>	<u>Approved</u>
<u>Hacienda Mateo</u>	<u>Residential</u>	<u>613 & 701 2nd Street</u>	<u>8 du</u>	<u>Approved</u>
<u>Mariner’s Island Condominiums</u>	<u>Residential</u>	<u>400 Mariner’s Island Boulevard</u>	<u>76 du</u>	<u>Approved</u>
<u>Norfolk Townhomes</u>	<u>Residential</u>	<u>2868 South Norfolk Street</u>	<u>10 du</u>	<u>Approved</u>
<u>One Engle Road</u>	<u>Residential</u>	<u>1 Engle Road at (El Camino Real)</u>	<u>6 du</u>	<u>Approved</u>
<u>Peninsula Station Affordable Housing</u>	<u>Mixed Use</u>	<u>2901 – 2905 South El Camino Real</u>	<u>68 du</u> <u>2,917 sf Commercial</u>	<u>Approved</u>
<u>Sadigh Mixed Use</u>	<u>Mixed Use</u>	<u>4300 South El Camino Real</u>	<u>10 du</u> <u>4,000 sf Commercial</u>	<u>Approved</u>
<u>San Mateo– Executive Park</u>	<u>Office</u>	<u>3001 & 3155 Clearview Way</u>	<u>22 acres</u>	<u>Under Construction</u>
<u>San Mateo Drive Condominiums</u>	<u>Residential</u>	<u>117 – 121 North San Mateo Drive</u>	<u>34 du</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
<u>Station Park Green</u>	<u>Mixed Use Residential/Commercial</u>	<u>1700 South Delaware Street</u>	<u>12 acres</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
<u>Verona Ridge</u>	<u>Residential</u>	<u>Near SR 92, Campus Drive, and Peninsula Golf and Country Club</u>	<u>34 du</u> <u>5.5 acres</u>	<u>Under Construction</u>
<u>Villa Hotel</u>	<u>Senior housing facility</u>	<u>400 South El Camino Real</u>	<u>135 du</u>	<u>Approved</u>

Notes:

du = dwelling units

sf = square feet

N/A = not available

Source: County of San Mateo, Planning and Building Division, June 2009.