

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

This section contains a discussion of the possible environmental effects of the proposed project for the specific issue areas that were identified through the Initial Study process as having the potential to experience significant impacts.

“Significant effect” is defined by the State CEQA Guidelines §15382 as “a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any of the physical conditions within the area affected by the project including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise, and objects of historic or aesthetic significance. An economic or social change by itself shall not be considered a significant effect on the environment, but may be considered in determining whether the physical change is significant.”

The assessment of each issue area begins with an italicized introduction that summarizes the environmental effects considered for that issue area for the Agricultural Residential Cluster Subdivision and Future Development Program. This is followed by the setting and impact analysis. Within the impact analysis, the first subsection identifies the methodologies used and the “significance thresholds”, which are those criteria adopted by the State, County, other agencies, universally recognized, or developed specifically for this analysis to determine whether potential effects are significant. The next subsection describes each impact of the proposed Agricultural Residential Cluster Subdivision, mitigation measures for significant impacts, and the level of significance after mitigation, followed by a description of each impact of the Future Development Program, mitigation measures for significant Future Development Program impacts, and the level of significance after mitigation. Each effect under consideration for an issue area is separately listed in bold text, with the discussion of the effect and its significance following. Each bolded impact listing also contains a statement of the significance determination for the environmental impact as follows:

Class I. Significant and Unavoidable: An impact that cannot be reduced to below the threshold level given reasonably available and feasible mitigation measures. Such an impact requires a Statement of Overriding Considerations to be issued if the project is approved per §15093 of the State CEQA Guidelines.

Class II. Significant but Mitigable: An impact that can be reduced to below the threshold level given reasonably available and feasible mitigation measures. Such an impact requires findings to be made under §15091 of the State CEQA Guidelines.

Class III. Not Significant: An impact that may be adverse, but does not exceed the threshold levels and does not require mitigation measures. However, mitigation measures that could further lessen the environmental effect may be suggested if readily available and easily achievable.

Class IV. Beneficial: An effect that would reduce existing environmental problems or hazards.

Following each environmental effect discussion is a listing of recommended mitigation measures (if required) and the residual effects or level of significance remaining after the implementation of the measures. In those cases where the mitigation measure for an impact



could have a significant environmental impact in another issue area, this impact is discussed as a residual effect. The impact analysis concludes with a discussion of cumulative effects, which evaluates the impacts associated with the proposed project in conjunction with other future development in the area.

It should be noted that the environmental impacts of the proposed Agricultural Residential Cluster Subdivision are assessed at a “project” level of detail that corresponds to the level of detail available for the project (e.g., site plans, development plans, application materials, etc.). In contrast, the environmental impacts of the Future Development Program, which is envisioned but has not been formally proposed, are assessed at a “program” level of detail that is more conceptual and general, because the Future Development Program land uses and locations are conceptual. A range of potential future land uses and corresponding site locations have been identified. However, only generalized Future Development Program land use locations are available at this time, and no site plans or other project-level details have been provided by the applicant. Conceptual plans for Future Development Program uses are considered examples of possible future uses that require future environmental review, including preparation of additional EIRs pursuant to CEQA, if applications for future projects are submitted. This EIR evaluates and mitigates a reasonable worst-case scenario of potential impacts associated with the Future Development Program. The design and planning of specific future development projects and/or infrastructure improvements (e.g., wastewater treatment plant, detention basin, school siting, etc.) on the property is beyond the scope of this EIR. Evaluation of constraints may inform site selection process, but separate infrastructure and services planning will ultimately dictate site selection. Since project-level information and active applications for the Future Development Program components have not been provided, future development in accordance with the program will likely require additional environmental review, pursuant to the requirements of CEQA.

Please refer to the Executive Summary for this EIR, which clearly summarizes all impacts and mitigation measures that apply to the project.

