

5.0 SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

INTRODUCTION

Section 15126.2(c) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines states that use of nonrenewable resources during the initial and continued phases of a proposed project may be irreversible if a large commitment of these resources makes their removal, indirect removal, or non-use thereafter unlikely. This section of the EIR evaluates whether the project would result in the irretrievable commitment of resources, or would cause irreversible changes in the environment. Also, in accordance with Section 15126.2 of the CEQA Guidelines, this section identifies any irreversible damage that could result from environmental accidents associated with the proposed project.

IRREVERSIBLE COMMITMENT OF RESOURCES

Implementation of the proposed Verdugo Gardens project would include a mixed-use development consisting of 287 for-sale housing units, ground floor retail-commercial uses, a public open space plaza and park, landscaping, lighting, utilities, subterranean and above-grade parking, which would be screened from public streets with perimeter housing, and associated amenities. The residential units are designed in a variety of layouts and sizes ranging from one to three bedrooms in flat, townhouse, loft, and penthouse configurations. Development of the proposed project would require the demolition and removal of two on-site buildings located along the northern and southern portions of the site. Overall, the proposed project would commit the subject property to a new type of urban development and would be of greater intensity than currently exists on site.

Construction and operation of the proposed project would contribute to the incremental depletion of resources, including renewable and non-renewable resources. Resources, such as lumber and other forest products, are generally considered renewable resources. Such resources would be replenished over the lifetime of the project. For example, lumber supplies are increased as seedlings mature into trees. As such, the development of the project would not result in the irreversible commitment of renewable resources. Nevertheless, there would be an incremental increase in the demand for these resources over the life of the project.

Non-renewable resources, such as natural gas, petroleum products, asphalt, petrochemical construction materials, steel, copper and other metals, and sand and gravel are considered to be commodities that are available in a finite supply. The processes that created these resources occur over a long period of time. Therefore, the replacement of these resources would not occur over the life of the project. To varying

degrees, the aforementioned materials are all readily available and some materials, such as asphalt or sand, and gravel, are abundant. Other commodities, such as metals, natural gas, and petroleum products, are also readily available, but they are finite in supply, given the length of time required by the natural process to create them.

The demand for all such resources is expected to increase regardless of whether or not the project is developed. The State Department of Finance indicates that the population of Southern California will increase 62 percent over the 30-year period between 1990 and 2020. These increases in population would directly result in the need for more retail, commercial and residential facilities in order to provide the needed services associated with this growth. If not consumed by this project, these resources would likely be committed to other projects in the region intended to meet this anticipated growth. Furthermore, the investment of resources in the project would be typical of the level of investment normally required for residential and retail-commercial uses of this scale. Mitigation measures have been included in this EIR to reduce and minimize project and cumulative impacts.

IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

Irreversible long-term environmental changes associated with the proposed project would include a change in the visual character of the site as a result of the conversion of an older downtown area to newer residential and retail-commercial uses. Additional irreversible environmental changes would include the increase in local and regional vehicular traffic, and the resultant increase in air pollutants and noise emissions generated by this traffic, among other impacts. Design features have been incorporated into the development proposal and mitigation measures are proposed in this EIR that would minimize the effects of the environmental changes associated with the development of the project to the maximum degree feasible. In addition, the project site is an urban site already and the implementation of the project would improve this location of the City. Even with this being the case, the project would result in significant and unavoidable short-term air quality and noise impacts during construction and significant and unavoidable long-term population, noise, sewer, and recreation impacts during operation.

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGE FROM ACCIDENTS

The project proposes no uniquely hazardous uses, and its operation would not be expected to cause environmental accidents that would affect other areas. The project site is located within a seismically active region and would be exposed to ground shaking during a seismic event. Conformance with the regulatory provisions of the City of Glendale and the Uniform Building Code pertaining to construction standards would minimize, to the extent feasible, damage and injuries in the event of such an occurrence. Given the existence of older structures on the project site asbestos-containing building material (ACBM),

lead paint, light ballasts/polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB), and soil contamination maybe of concern on the project site. Because development of the project would require the demolition/dismantling and removal of all the existing structures located on the project site, these materials could cause health and safety problems to on-site construction workers and the community. Project design features as outlined in the Notice of Preparation/Initial Study contained within **Appendix 1.0(a)**, and provided below, are included and would be implemented as part of the project. The inclusion of these features would reduce potential impacts to a less than significant level.

- All buildings to be demolished shall be surveyed and sampled for ACBM by a licensed asbestos abatement contractor. If ACBM are determined to be present in the structures to be demolished, the licensed asbestos abatement contractor, prior to demolition, shall remove all ACBM under acceptable engineering methods and work practices. These practices include, but are not limited to, containment of the area by plastic, negative air filtration, wet removal techniques, and personal respiratory protection and decontamination. The process shall be designed and monitored by a California Certified Asbestos Consultant. The abatement and monitoring plan shall be developed and submitted for review and approval by the appropriate regulatory agencies (currently the City Building Official and South Coast Air Quality Management District) and shall include all on-site structures with ACBMs.
- Prior to the demolition of the buildings, all loose and peeling paint shall be removed and disposed of by a licensed and certified lead paint removal contractor, in accordance with local, state, and federal regulations.
- The contractor shall be informed that all paint on the buildings shall be considered to contain lead unless testing procedures prove otherwise. The contractor shall take appropriate precautions to protect his/her workers, the surrounding community, and to dispose of construction waste containing lead paint in accordance with local, state, and federal regulations.
- All on-site fluorescent light ballasts and electrical transformers that are not marked "No PCBs" shall be assumed to contain PCBs and shall be removed prior to demolition activities and disposed of by a licensed and certified PCB removal contractor, in accordance with local, state, and federal regulations.