

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter defines the terminology used in this document and the CEQA requirements related to the alternatives analysis. The 13 sections contained within this chapter discuss the possible environmental effects of the proposed Project for an environmental issue (or resource) area. Sections 3.1 through 3.13 discuss both environmental issues found to be potentially significant and those found not to be significant. Chapter 6, Analysis of Alternatives, discuss the possible environmental effects of the alternatives identified by LAHD that would avoid or substantially lessen significant impacts for an environmental issue (or resource) area and the potentially environmental

To assist the reader in comparing information about the various environmental issues, Sections 3.1 through 3.13 each present the following information for their specific resource area:

- Environmental setting (the environmental setting or baseline for this Draft EIR is the physical condition that existed for the 12-month period preceding the NOP date [September 2009 to August 2010]);
- Applicable regulations;
- Impact assessment methodology;
- Thresholds of significance (i.e., the criteria against which the significance of impacts is judged);
- Impact determination;
- Mitigation measures;
- Residual impacts;
- Summary of impact determinations;
- Mitigation monitoring; and
- Significant unavoidable impacts.

Although not required by CEQA, Chapter 4, Environmental Justice, is an assessment of potential disproportionate environmental effects to low-income or minority populations consistent with the environmental justice guidelines for NEPA. Significant cumulative impacts for the proposed Project for each environmental resource area are summarized in Chapter 5, Cumulative Analysis, of this Draft EIR. The proposed Project alternatives are presented and analyzed in Chapter 6, Analysis of Alternatives. The CEQA baseline and

1 its application to the analysis of potential impacts from the proposed Project is explained  
2 in detail in Section 1.6.5 (Chapter 1, Introduction) and Section 2.6 (Chapter 2, Project  
3 Description) in this Draft EIR.

## 4 **3.2 Terminology Used in This Environmental** 5 **Analysis**

6 In evaluating the potential impacts of the proposed Project and the Project alternatives,  
7 the level of significance is determined by applying the threshold of significance  
8 (significance criteria) presented for each resource evaluation area. The following terms  
9 are used to describe each impact:

- 10 • *No Impact*: A designation of no impact is given when no adverse changes in the  
11 environment are expected.
- 12 • *Less-than-Significant Impact*: A less-than-significant impact would be identified  
13 when the proposed Project or alternatives would cause no substantial adverse  
14 change in the environment (i.e., the impact would not reach the threshold of  
15 significance).
- 16 • *Significant Impact*: A significant impact would create a substantial or potentially  
17 substantial adverse change in any of the physical conditions within the area  
18 affected by the proposed Project or alternatives. Such an impact would exceed  
19 the applicable significance threshold established by CEQA but would be reduced  
20 to a less-than-significant level by the required application of a mitigation  
21 measure.
- 22 • *Significant Unavoidable Impact*: As required by Section 15126.2(b) of the CEQA  
23 Guidelines, this is used when a residual impact that would cause a substantial  
24 adverse effect on the environment could not be reduced to a less-than-significant  
25 level through any feasible mitigation measure(s).
- 26 • *Mitigation*: Mitigation refers to measures that would be implemented to avoid or  
27 lessen potentially significant impacts. Mitigation includes:
  - 28 ○ avoiding the impact completely by not taking a certain action or parts of  
29 an action;
  - 30 ○ minimizing the impact by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action  
31 and its implementation;
  - 32 ○ rectifying the impact by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the affected  
33 environment;
  - 34 ○ reducing or eliminating the impact over time by preservation and  
35 maintenance operations during the life of the action; and
  - 36 ○ compensating for the impact by replacing or providing substitute  
37 resources or environments.

1                                   The mitigation measures would be proposed as a condition of project approval  
2                                   and would be monitored to ensure compliance and implementation.

- 3                                   • *Residual Impacts:* This is the level of impact after the implementation of  
4                                   mitigation measures.

### 5   **3.3           Requirements to Evaluate Alternatives**

6                                   CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6 requires that an EIR describe a range of reasonable  
7                                   alternatives to the proposed Project, or to the location of the Project that could feasibly  
8                                   attain most of the basic project objectives but would avoid or substantially lessen any  
9                                   significant environmental impacts. The EIR should compare merits of the alternatives  
10                                  and determine an environmentally superior alternative. Chapter 6, Analysis of  
11                                  Alternatives, of this Draft EIR sets forth potential alternatives to the proposed Project and  
12                                  evaluates their suitability, as required by CEQA Guidelines (Section 15126.6).

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