
17. CEQA-REQUIRED ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

This chapter summarizes the EIR findings in terms of the various assessment categories suggested by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines for EIR content. The findings of this EIR are summarized below in terms of Precise Plan-related potential "growth-inducing effects," "significant unavoidable impacts," "irreversible environmental changes," and "cumulative impacts."

17.1 GROWTH-INDUCING EFFECTS

CEQA Guidelines section 15126.2(d) requires that the EIR discuss "...the ways in which the proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment."

Central area (Downtown) growth inducement and revitalization are intended impacts (i.e., goals) of the proposed Downtown Precise Plan. The Draft Precise Plan is comprised of objectives, goals, strategies, actions, and development regulations formulated to achieve a City-desired "vision" for the Downtown area. The Draft Plan sets forth specific land use parameters, development standards, and urban design criteria which have been formulated to facilitate and guide growth and revitalization within the Downtown area over the next approximately 15 years in a manner that achieves the City-desired "vision."

The proposed overall Precise Plan objective is to assist the City and the City's Redevelopment Agency in providing for, and encouraging buildout of, a unique and robust Downtown. The stated intent is to provide for restructuring land use, density, architectural character, streetscapes, and parking provisions as necessary to create a well-designed, contemporary, and financially viable Downtown. The Draft Precise Plan includes standards (mandatory) and guidelines (preferred, not mandatory) for site development (e.g., land use, building heights, setbacks, frontages); streets, landscaping, and public space; parking; architecture; and signage in the Precise Plan area.

A stated specific objective of the Precise Plan is to provide for and facilitate more housing development in the Downtown. The Precise Plan, in concert with the City's new Draft General Plan *Housing Element*, is intended to provide for the expansion of city housing choices by encouraging compact, transit-accessible, pedestrian-oriented housing and mixed use (commercial/housing) development in the Downtown at densities and heights greater than currently permitted. The Draft Precise Plan stipulates that this housing and mixed use development be conveniently located near public transportation, shopping, employment, recreation, and other community facilities.

By proposing the Downtown Precise Plan, the City's goal is to intentionally concentrate housing and community-serving retail development in the Downtown to help avoid further suburban sprawl and the potentially growth-inducing extension of public services and infrastructure into outlying areas (including neighboring communities), thereby **actively encouraging a**

development pattern that inhibits growth inducement beyond the Precise Plan boundaries. As described in chapter 6 (Population and Housing) of this EIR, Precise Plan implementation would be expected to accommodate, within the 193-acre Precise Plan area, between approximately 56 percent (Moderate Intensity alternative) and 83 percent (Maximum Intensity alternative) of the *citywide* projected 15-year (year 2020) population growth increment.

Growth inducement associated with the Precise Plan-proposed increased Downtown development allowances and associated increases in Downtown and communitywide economic activity and investment, would be an inherent impact (i.e., a goal) of the proposed Precise Plan. The development of other, as-yet unidentified, projects in the Precise Plan vicinity (e.g., residential, retail, office, and/or industrial development outside the Plan area boundaries) could result indirectly from implementation of the Precise Plan. Development directly facilitated by the Precise Plan would be limited to Downtown infill. The primary growth-inducing impacts of the project would therefore be confined within the boundaries of the Precise Plan area. Within the existing urban environment of the project vicinity, such projects would also be considered infill development and would be subject to the established development regulations, standards, and requirements of the City of Redwood City (including the Strategic General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and City Code) and other responsible agencies (e.g., Regional Water Quality Control Board).

To a lesser degree, secondary growth-inducing impacts (the "multiplier" effect) could also be expected in other portions of the City and subregion. Such growth-inducing land use impacts of the project would occur in the form of future individual development proposals and associated applications. The majority of this primary and secondary growth inducement would be expected to occur in a manner consistent with the Redwood City Strategic General Plan and other adopted local general plans.

No substantial, detrimental growth-inducing effect is expected. With the exception of CEQA-exempt projects, any such future individual development proposals would require routine local review of associated development applications, including CEQA-mandated development-specific environmental review, to ensure that any adverse environmental impacts are adequately addressed. These existing requirements and procedures would be expected to reduce the environmental impacts of such secondary growth-inducement associated with the project to **less-than-significant levels**, except where specific statements of overriding consideration are adopted.

17.2 SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

CEQA Guidelines section 15126.2(b) requires that the EIR discuss "significant environmental effects which cannot be avoided if the proposed project is implemented." Significant unavoidable impacts are those that would not be reduced to less-than-significant levels by the mitigation measures recommended in this EIR.

Mitigation measures have been identified to reduce identified significant and potentially significant effects associated with the proposed Downtown Precise Plan to less-than-significant levels, with the exception of the following significant unavoidable impacts:

- **Impact 8-2: Potential Destruction or Degradation of Historic Resources** (see chapter 8--Cultural and Historic Resources--of this EIR);

- **Impact 9-1: Impact on Broadway/Woodside Road (SR 84) Intersection--Maximum Intensity Precise Plan Alternative** (see chapter 9--Transportation and Circulation--of this EIR);
- **Impact 9-2: Impact Middlefield Road/Woodside Road (SR 84) Intersection--Maximum Intensity Precise Plan Alternative** (see chapter 9--Transportation and Circulation--of this EIR);
- **Impact 9-3: Impact on Middlefield Road/Jefferson Avenue Intersection--Maximum Intensity Precise Plan Alternative** (see chapter 9--Transportation and Circulation--of this EIR; if the City chooses to avoid EIR-identified intersection modification needs in the interest of protecting the pedestrian environment, this impact would be significant and unavoidable under current City and CEQA criteria for "Intersection Impacts");
- **Impact 9-4: Impact on Broadway/Jefferson Avenue Intersection--Maximum Intensity Precise Plan Alternative** (see chapter 9--Transportation and Circulation--of this EIR; if the City chooses to avoid EIR-identified intersection modification needs in the interest of protecting the pedestrian environment, this impact would be significant and unavoidable under current City and CEQA criteria for "Intersection Impacts");
- **Impact 9-5: Impact Broadway/Middlefield Road Intersection--Maximum Intensity Precise Plan Alternative** (see chapter 9--Transportation and Circulation--of this EIR; if the City chooses to avoid EIR-identified intersection modification needs in the interest of protecting the pedestrian environment, this impact would be significant and unavoidable under current City and CEQA criteria for "Intersection Impacts");
- **Impact 9-6: Impacts on US 101 Freeway Segments--Maximum Intensity Precise Plan Alternative** (see chapter 9--Transportation and Circulation--of this EIR);
- **Impact 9-7: Impact on Middlefield Road/Jefferson Avenue Intersection--Moderate Intensity Precise Plan Alternative** (see chapter 9--Transportation and Circulation--of this EIR; if the City chooses to avoid EIR-identified intersection modification needs in the interest of protecting the pedestrian environment, this impact would be significant and unavoidable under current City and CEQA criteria for "Intersection Impacts");
- **Impact 9-8: Impact on Broadway/Jefferson Avenue Intersection--Moderate Intensity Precise Plan Alternative** (see chapter 9--Transportation and Circulation--of this EIR; if the City chooses to avoid EIR-identified intersection modification needs in the interest of protecting the pedestrian environment, this impact would be significant and unavoidable under current City and CEQA criteria for "Intersection Impacts");
- **Impact 9-9: Impact Broadway/Middlefield Road Intersection--Moderate Intensity Precise Plan Alternative** (see chapter 9--Transportation and Circulation--of this EIR; if the City chooses to avoid EIR-identified intersection modification needs in the interest of protecting the pedestrian environment, this impact would be significant and unavoidable under current City and CEQA criteria for "Intersection Impacts");
- **Impact 9-10: Impacts on US 101 Freeway Segments--Moderate Intensity Precise Plan Alternative** (see chapter 9--Transportation and Circulation--of this EIR);

- **Impact 9-11: Project Contribution to Cumulative Impacts at the Alameda de las Pulgas/Woodside Road Intersection** (see chapter 9--Transportation and Circulation--of this EIR);
- **Impact 9-12: Project Contribution to Cumulative Impacts at the El Camino and Whipple Avenue Intersection** (see chapter 9--Transportation and Circulation--of this EIR);
- **Impact 9-13: Project Contribution to Cumulative Impacts at the El Camino Real/Jefferson Avenue Intersection** (see chapter 9--Transportation and Circulation--of this EIR);
- **Impact 9-14: Project Contribution to Cumulative Impacts at the Middlefield Road/Woodside Road Intersection** (see chapter 9--Transportation and Circulation--of this EIR);
- **Impact 9-15: Project Contribution to Cumulative Impacts at the Middlefield Road/Jefferson Avenue intersection** (see chapter 9--Transportation and Circulation--of this EIR; if the City chooses to avoid EIR-identified intersection modification needs in the interest of protecting the pedestrian environment, this impact would be significant and unavoidable under current City and CEQA criteria for "Intersection Impacts");
- **Impact 9-16: Project Contribution to Cumulative Impacts at the Broadway/Jefferson Avenue Intersection** (see chapter 9--Transportation and Circulation--of this EIR; if the City chooses to avoid EIR-identified intersection modification needs in the interest of protecting the pedestrian environment, this impact would be significant and unavoidable under current City and CEQA criteria for "Intersection Impacts");
- **Impact 9-17: Project Contribution to Cumulative Impacts at the Broadway/Middlefield Intersection** (see chapter 9--Transportation and Circulation--of this EIR; if the City chooses to avoid EIR-identified intersection modification needs in the interest of protecting the pedestrian environment, this impact would be significant and unavoidable under current City and CEQA criteria for "Intersection Impacts");
- **Impact 9-18: Project Contribution to Cumulative Impacts at the Bay Road/Woodside Road Intersection** (see chapter 9--Transportation and Circulation--of this EIR);
- **Impact 9-19: Project Contribution to Cumulative Impacts at the Veterans Boulevard/Whipple Avenue Intersection** (see chapter 9--Transportation and Circulation--of this EIR);
- **Impact 9-20: Project Contribution to Cumulative Impacts at the Veterans Boulevard/Brewster Avenue Intersection** (see chapter 9--Transportation and Circulation--of this EIR; if the City chooses to avoid EIR-identified intersection modification needs in the interest of protecting the pedestrian environment, this impact would be significant and unavoidable under current City and CEQA criteria for "Intersection Impacts");

- **Impact 9-21: Project Contribution to Cumulative Impacts at the Veterans Boulevard/Woodside Road Intersection** (see chapter 9--Transportation and Circulation--of this EIR);
- **Impact 9-22: Project Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on US 101** (see chapter 9--Transportation and Circulation--of this EIR); and
- **Impact 12-2: Maximum Intensity and Moderate Intensity Project Scenarios--Long-Term Regional Emissions Increases** (see chapter 12--Air Quality--of this EIR).

The above supplemental impacts have been identified in this EIR as **significant and unavoidable**, as described in their respective environmental issue chapters (chapters 8, 9, and 12).

17.3 IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

CEQA Guidelines section 15126.2(c) requires that the EIR discuss "significant irreversible environmental changes which would be caused by the proposed project should it be implemented." Irreversible environmental changes caused by the proposed Downtown Precise Plan would include the following:

- As discussed in chapters 3 (Project Description) and 5 (Land Use and Planning), the Downtown Precise Plan is intended to provide for the expansion of city housing choices by encouraging compact, transit-accessible, pedestrian-oriented housing and mixed use (commercial/housing) development in downtown Redwood City at densities and heights greater than currently permitted. The Precise Plan stipulates that this housing and mixed use development be conveniently located near public transportation, shopping, employment, recreation, and other community facilities.
- The project may result in the loss of historic resources, as described in chapter 8 (Cultural and Historic Resources) of this EIR.
- The project may result in the loss of heritage trees as defined by the City's Tree Preservation Ordinance (Municipal Code chapter 35), as discussed in chapter 14 (Biological Resources) of this EIR.

For practical purposes, these environmental changes would be permanent and irreversible.

17.4 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Section 15130(a) of the CEQA Guidelines requires that the EIR "discuss cumulative impacts of a project when the project's incremental effect is cumulatively considerable...." The CEQA Guidelines (section 15355) define "cumulative impacts" as "...two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts."

Additional, reasonably foreseeable development projects in the project vicinity are identified in chapter 5 (Land Use and Planning) of this EIR. In conjunction with these reasonably

foreseeable projects, the various changes to the Precise Plan area, as outlined in EIR chapter 3 (Project Description), would cause the following significant cumulative impacts, each of which is discussed in its respective, identified EIR chapter:

- **Impact 9-11: Project Contribution to Cumulative Impacts at the Alameda de las Pulgas/Woodside Road Intersection** (see chapter 9--Transportation and Circulation--of this EIR);
- **Impact 9-12: Project Contribution to Cumulative Impacts at the El Camino and Whipple Avenue Intersection** (see chapter 9--Transportation and Circulation--of this EIR);
- **Impact 9-13: Project Contribution to Cumulative Impacts at the El Camino Real/Jefferson Avenue Intersection** (see chapter 9--Transportation and Circulation--of this EIR);
- **Impact 9-14: Project Contribution to Cumulative Impacts at the Middlefield Road/Woodside Road Intersection** (see chapter 9--Transportation and Circulation--of this EIR);
- **Impact 9-15: Project Contribution to Cumulative Impacts at the Middlefield Road/Jefferson Avenue intersection** (see chapter 9--Transportation and Circulation--of this EIR; if the City chooses to avoid EIR-identified intersection modification needs in the interest of protecting the pedestrian environment, this impact would be significant and unavoidable under current City and CEQA criteria for "Intersection Impacts");
- **Impact 9-16: Project Contribution to Cumulative Impacts at the Broadway/Jefferson Avenue Intersection** (see chapter 9--Transportation and Circulation--of this EIR; if the City chooses to avoid EIR-identified intersection modification needs in the interest of protecting the pedestrian environment, this impact would be significant and unavoidable under current City and CEQA criteria for "Intersection Impacts");
- **Impact 9-17: Project Contribution to Cumulative Impacts at the Broadway/Middlefield Intersection** (see chapter 9--Transportation and Circulation--of this EIR; if the City chooses to avoid EIR-identified intersection modification needs in the interest of protecting the pedestrian environment, this impact would be significant and unavoidable under current City and CEQA criteria for "Intersection Impacts");
- **Impact 9-18: Project Contribution to Cumulative Impacts at the Bay Road/Woodside Road Intersection** (see chapter 9--Transportation and Circulation--of this EIR);
- **Impact 9-19: Project Contribution to Cumulative Impacts at the Veterans Boulevard/Whipple Avenue Intersection** (see chapter 9--Transportation and Circulation--of this EIR);
- **Impact 9-20: Project Contribution to Cumulative Impacts at the Veterans Boulevard/Brewster Avenue Intersection** (see chapter 9--Transportation and Circulation--of this EIR; if the City chooses to avoid EIR-identified intersection

modification needs in the interest of protecting the pedestrian environment, this impact would be significant and unavoidable under current City and CEQA criteria for "Intersection Impacts");

- **Impact 9-21: Project Contribution to Cumulative Impacts at the Veterans Boulevard/Woodside Road Intersection** (see chapter 9--Transportation and Circulation--of this EIR);
- **Impact 9-22: Project Contribution to Cumulative Impacts on US 101** (see chapter 9--Transportation and Circulation--of this EIR); and
- **Impact 12-2: Maximum Intensity and Moderate Intensity Project Scenarios--Long-Term Regional Emissions Increases** (see chapter 12--Air Quality--of this EIR).

This EIR recommends mitigation measures that would reduce the project's contribution to these cumulative impacts to less-than-significant levels, with the exception of *Impacts 9-11, 9-12, 9-13, 9-14, 9-18, 9-19, 9-21 and 9-22*, which are identified as *significant unavoidable impacts*.

17.5 EFFECTS FOUND NOT TO BE SIGNIFICANT

Section 15128 of the CEQA Guidelines requires that the EIR "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."

During the City's Initial Study process for the proposed Downtown Precise Plan, it was determined that a number of possible environmental effects of the project would be insignificant or could be adequately addressed through the City's normal development review process with no need for further environmental assessment in this EIR. These determinations, which are explained in the Initial Study checklist narrative and included in appendix 20.2 of this EIR, include effects on agricultural resources and mineral resources.

