

## 5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires consideration and discussion of significant environmental effects. Sections 15126-15126.2 of the *CEQA Guidelines* states, “All phases of a project must be considered when evaluating its impact on the environment: planning, acquisition, development, and operation...an EIR shall identify and focus on the significant environmental effects of the proposed project.”

This Draft Program EIR (PEIR) analyzes those environmental issue areas as stated in the Notice of Preparation (NOP) (Appendix A of this Draft PEIR) where significant impacts have the potential to occur. No Initial Study was prepared for the proposed Beaumont 2040 Plan and Revised Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map (collectively the proposed Project or Project) as the City has determined that a comprehensive PEIR is clearly required for the Project (permissible under State *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15063[a]), and that the Project has the potential to result in significant environmental effects. Sections 5.1 through 5.20 of the Draft PEIR, examine the potential environmental impacts associated with implementation of the proposed Project and focuses on the following issues:

- Aesthetics
- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Energy
- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation and Traffic
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Wildfire

### Technical Studies

Technical studies providing detailed technical analyses that were used in this Draft PEIR were prepared for various environmental issues, such as air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, greenhouse gas emissions, noise, and traffic. These documents are identified in the discussion for the individual environmental issue, and included as technical appendices on a CD attached to the Draft PEIR.

### Analysis Format

The Draft PEIR assesses how the proposed Project would impact the issue areas identified above. Each environmental issue addressed in this Draft PEIR is presented in terms of the following subsections:

- **Setting:** Provides information describing the existing setting on or surrounding the Project site which may be affected as a result of the implementation of the Project and provides a description of the “baseline” conditions from which potential impacts are assessed. This section

describes the physical conditions that existed when the NOP was published and sent to responsible agencies and the State Clearinghouse.

- **Related Regulations:** Provides a discussion of the applicable Federal, State, regional, and local regulations with respect to each environmental issue.
- **Beaumont 2040 Plan:** Identifies the goals and policies of the Beaumont 2040 Plan with regard to each environmental issue that could reduce impacts.
- **Thresholds of Significance:** Defines and lists specific criteria used to determine whether an impact is or is not considered to be potentially significant. The City of Beaumont has not established local CEQA significance thresholds as described in Section 15064.7 of the State *CEQA Guidelines*. Therefore, significance determinations utilized in these sections rely primarily upon Appendix G of the 2019 *CEQA Guidelines*.
- **Environmental Impacts before Mitigation:** Provides evidence, based on factual and/or scientific data, for the cause and effect relationship between the proposed Project and the potential changes in the environment as they relate to each thresholds of significance. The exact magnitude, duration, extent, frequency, range, or other parameters of a potential impact are ascertained to the extent reasonable, to determine whether impacts may be significant. All of the potential effects, including direct effects, reasonably foreseeable indirect effects, and considerable contributions to cumulative effects, are considered. Cumulative effects are discussed in Section 7.0, Other CEQA Topics.
- **Proposed Mitigation Measures:** Identifies the means by which potentially significant impacts could be reduced or avoided in case where the PEIR analysis determines such impacts to be potentially significant. Standard existing regulations, requirements, programs, and procedures that are applied to all similar projects, as well as relevant Project components such as Beaumont 2040 Plan Policies and Downtown Specific Plan Policies, are considered in identifying additional feasible mitigation that may be needed to reduce potentially significant impacts. Mitigation, in addition to measures that the lead agency will implement, can also include measures that are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15091[a][2]).
- **Levels of Significance After Mitigation:** Identifies the impacts that will remain after application of mitigation measures, if any feasible mitigation measures exist, and whether the remaining impacts are or are not considered significant. When these impacts, even with the inclusion of mitigation measures, cannot be mitigated to a level considered less than significant, they are identified as unavoidable potentially significant impacts. To approve a project with significant, unavoidable impacts, the lead agency must adopt a Statement of Overriding Considerations. In adopting such a statement, the City Council is required to balance the benefits of a project against its unavoidable environmental impacts in determining whether to approve the Project. If the benefits of a project are found to outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental effects, the adverse effects may be considered “acceptable” and the project approved (CEQA Guidelines Section 15093[a]).