
4.0 INTRODUCTION TO THE ANALYSIS

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Chapter 4 analyzes the potential impacts of the Brentwood Downtown Specific Plan on a range of environmental issue areas. Sections 4.1 through 4.4 describe the focus of the analysis, references and other data sources for the analysis, the environmental setting as it relates to the specific issue, project-specific impacts and mitigations measures, and cumulative impacts of the proposed project for each issue area. The format of each of these sections is described below.

DETERMINATION OF SIGNIFICANCE

Under CEQA, a significant effect is defined as a substantial or potentially substantial adverse change in the environment (Public Resources Code §21068). The Guidelines implementing CEQA state that this determination be based on scientific and factual data. The specific criteria for determining the significance of a particular impact are identified within the impact discussion in each section, and are consistent with significance criteria set forth in the CEQA Guidelines.

INITIAL STUDY

The Initial Study (see Appendix C) prepared for the Brentwood Downtown Specific Plan as a part of this EIR includes a detailed environmental checklist addressing a range of technical environmental issues. For each technical environmental issue, the Initial Study identifies the level of impact for the proposed project. The Initial Study identifies the environmental effects as either “no impact,” “less-than-significant,” “potentially significant with mitigation incorporated,” and “potentially significant.”

Impacts identified in the Initial Study as less-than-significant or nonexistent, which do not require mitigation, are presented below. All remaining issues identified in the Initial Study as potentially significant, are discussed in the subsequent technical chapters of this Draft EIR.

- *Agricultural Resources:* The project area is not under Williamson Act contract, and the area is zoned for residential uses. Therefore, development of the area with single-family units would not conflict with a Williamson Act contract or existing zoning for agriculture, resulting in no impact to agricultural resources.
- *Biological Resources:* The Brentwood Downtown Specific Plan is a policy-level document that does not include any site-specific plans that would adversely affect biological resources within the project area. The Specific Plan

would not conflict with local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, including tree preservation policies or ordinances. Additionally, the project area is not located within any of the areas identified in the City of Brentwood 2001 General Plan as areas of expected significant natural open space or expected Habitat Conservation Plan areas. Therefore, a less-than-significant impact would occur.

- *Cultural Resources:* The City of Brentwood Downtown Specific Plan indicates that Downtown Brentwood contains a large collection of notable historic buildings, including a number of Victorian houses and Craftsman bungalows, as well as historic churches and other buildings generally dating from the 1880s through the 1930s. The Brentwood 2001 General Plan EIR states that structures, sites, buildings, district, and objects over 50 years of age can be listed on the National Register as significant historic resources. Implementation of the Downtown Specific Plan would not adversely affect historic resources within the project area, however, because the Downtown Specific Plan is a policy-level document not resulting in the project-specific impacts. In addition, because the policies of the Downtown Specific Plan encourage historic preservation, the project would have beneficial impacts on Cultural Resources.
- *Geology and Soils:* The Downtown Specific Plan indicates the project area is not susceptible to landslides because the project area is essentially flat. The policy implementation of the Downtown Specific Plan does not include any construction-related activities that could put additional structures at risk of structural damage as a result of expansive soil activities. In addition, the proposed project involves policy implementation only, not construction-related activities. Therefore, impacts related to soil erosion would be less-than-significant.
- *Hazards and Hazardous Materials:* The project area is not identified on any government databases as a hazardous materials site, nor is it known to be adjacent to any such sites. The Downtown Specific Plan region lies within a highly developed area that is predominately urbanized. Implementation of the plan does not include any construction-related activities that would introduce persons to asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) or lead-based paint. Additionally, the Brentwood Downtown Specific Plan indicates that construction-related activities would not affect any existing on-site wells or septic tanks, nor would the development interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. Finally, the project area is not located within an area where wildland fires occur. Therefore, the proposed project would result in less-than-significant impacts pertaining to the aforementioned aspects of hazards and hazardous materials.
- *Hydrology and Water Quality:* The Initial Study found that the Downtown Specific Plan could have potential impacts on drainage within the City of

Brentwood; however, implementation of the mitigation measures identified for this impact would reduce the effects of drainage to a less-than-significant level. Some portions of the Downtown planning area fall within the 100-year floodplain; however, because the Downtown Specific Plan is a policy-level document, site-specific plans are not included as part of the Specific Plan. Future construction and development projects within the project area would be subject to further environmental review to address concerns about development within the 100-year floodplain. Furthermore, the project area is not located within an area subject to damage by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would result in no impact relating to these phenomena.

- *Mineral Resources:* The 2001 Brentwood General Plan EIR does not identify any mineral resources in the project area. Therefore, the proposed project would have no impact to mineral resources.
- *Noise:* Because the Downtown Specific Plan is a policy-level document, it would not result in site-specific buildout. Future buildout within the Downtown planning area would be evaluated for consistency with the noise policies of the Downtown Specific Plan, which is consistent with the City of Brentwood General Plan. Therefore, the proposed project would have less-than-significant noise-related impacts.
- *Public Services:* The proposed project is currently provided services by the Brentwood Police Department and the East Diablo Fire Protection District. Policy implementation of the Downtown Specific Plan would not expand their district boundaries and therefore not add to the overall demand for public services or an increase in public service requirements. Thus, the Downtown Specific Plan would result in a less-than-significant impact.
- *Recreation, Utilities, and Service Systems:* The City of Brentwood General Plan encourages an urban development form that is based on open space throughout and around established communities. Implementation of the Downtown Specific Plan would not increase the demand for neighborhood, community, regional parks, and other recreation facilities. Therefore, because the proposed project does not have the potential to create an immediate excess demand for park facilities, a less-than-significant impact would occur.

ISSUES ADDRESSED IN THIS DRAFT EIR

The Initial Study identified several environmental impacts as potentially significant and required further analysis. This EIR provides the additional analysis necessary to address the technical environmental impacts not fully resolved in the Initial Study. Consistent with the conclusions of the Initial Study, the following environmental issues are addressed in this chapter of the Draft EIR:

- land use;
- aesthetics;
- transportation and circulation; and
- air quality.

In addition, population and housing impacts are discussed under “Growth-Inducing Impacts” within the Statutorily Required Sections chapter of this EIR.

SECTION FORMAT

Each section in Chapter 4 addressing a specific environmental issue begins with an **introduction** describing the purpose of the section. The introduction is followed by a description of the project’s **environmental setting** as it pertains to that particular issue. The setting description is followed by the **regulatory context** and the **impacts and mitigation measures** discussion. This discussion contains the **significance criteria**, followed by the **methods of analysis**. The **impact and mitigation** discussion includes impact statements prefaced by a number in bold-faced type. An explanation of each impact and an analysis of its significance follow each impact statement. All mitigation measures pertinent to each individual impact follow directly after the impact statement (see below). The degree of relief provided by identified mitigation measures is also evaluated. An example of the format is shown below:

4.x-1 Statement of Impact

Discussion of impact for the proposed project in paragraph format.

Statement of *level of significance* of impact prior to mitigation is included at the end of each impact discussion.

Mitigation Measure(s)

Statement of *level of significance* after the mitigation is included immediately preceding mitigation measures.

4.x-1(a) *Recommended mitigation measure(s) presented in italics and numbered in consecutive order.*

4.x-1(b) *Mitigation Measure.*