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Significant Unavoidable Impacts

15.1 SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

Based on the environmental analysis provided in Chapters 5-14 of this EIR, most of the impacts associated with the proposed project would be reduced to a level of insignificance through the implementation of mitigation measures. However, the project would result in significant unavoidable impacts as summarized below.

Traffic and Circulation

IMPACT The Proposed Project Would Add Vehicle Trips to State Route 68, which Currently Operates at Level of Service F (Significant and Unavoidable)

The proposed project would add about one AM peak hour trip and four PM peak hour trips to the two-lane section of SR 68 immediately west of the Toro Park interchange. Project traffic will dissipate along the SR 68 corridor at the many crossroads including Torero Drive, San Benancio Road, Corral de Tierra Road, and Laureles Grade, resulting in less than one AM peak hour trip and about two PM peak hour trips west of Laureles Grade. Project traffic would be at or below one peak hour trip west of SR 218. Project-related traffic would not have any effect on SR 68 traffic operations. However, SR 68 currently operates at LOS F and Monterey County and Caltrans consider the addition of a single peak hour trip to be a significant impact when adding to a LOS F situation. Therefore, based on this threshold, the project would have a significant impact on the two-lane section of SR 68 between Toro Park and SR 218. As previously discussed, TAMC, Caltrans, and Monterey County have funding and are studying a variety of operational improvements along the corridor.

There are no mitigation measures available to reduce project-level impacts to a less-than-significant level, based on the Monterey County and Caltrans threshold, because the proposed project would have no effect on traffic operations. However, the project would be required to pay regional traffic impact fees that would serve as some mitigation for impacts to SR 68. Nevertheless, the project would not be directly implementing any improvements to offset its impacts and will, therefore, have an unmitigated significant impact on SR 68. At this time, it is unknown whether any Caltrans/TAMC improvements to the corridor (e.g., widening and/or roundabouts along the route) would improve the level of service on SR 68.

Furthermore, the applicant has proposed to implement the following mitigation measures, which would reduce impacts to the traffic circulation in the vicinity of the project site.

- TRA-1 To reduce peak hour trip generation, specifically on SR 68, all employee shift changes for project site operations shall occur outside of morning and evening peak trip hours. A requirement to schedule all morning, day, and night shifts for project operations outside of peak hours shall be included as a condition of approval associated with the conditional use permit.
- TRA-2 To reduce overall trip generation to and from the project site, the project developer shall prepare a detailed plan for shuttle service. Shuttle services shall be offered to residents to access areas on the Monterey Peninsula and in Salinas from the project site. Additionally, shuttle service to nearby transportation hubs for employees shall be offered in the shuttle service plan. The shuttle service plan shall be submitted for review and approval to Monterey County prior to approval of any building permits on the project site.

Implementation of these mitigation measures would reduce impacts to traffic circulation in the vicinity of the project site. However, the mitigation measures would not alter the proposed project's significant and unavoidable impact to SR 68.

IMPACT At a Cumulative Level, the Proposed Project Would Add Vehicle Trips to State Route 68 (Significant and Unavoidable)

Under cumulative plus project conditions, SR 68 is projected to operate at LOS F. The proposed project would contribute to incremental increases in cumulative traffic volumes on SR 68 and would, therefore, contribute to a significant cumulative impact.

There are no mitigation measures available to reduce cumulative-level impacts to a less-than-significant level, based on the Monterey County and Caltrans threshold. However, the project would be required to pay regional traffic impact fees that would serve as some mitigation for impacts to SR 68 improvements. Nevertheless, the project would not be directly implementing any improvements to offset its impacts and would, therefore, have an unmitigated significant impact on SR 68. At this time, it is unknown whether any Caltrans/TAMC improvements to the corridor (e.g., widening and/or roundabouts along the route) would improve the level of service on SR 68.

Furthermore, the applicant has proposed mitigation measures TRA-1 and TRA-2, which would reduce impacts to the traffic circulation in the vicinity of the project site. Additionally, the applicant shall be required to pay TAMC and Monterey County traffic impact fees, per mitigation measure CTRA-1. However, the mitigation measures would not change the proposed project's significant and unavoidable impact to SR 68.