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16.0
Irreversible Impacts

16.1 CEQA Requirements

CEQA Guidelines section 15126.2(c) requires a discussion of significant and irreversible changes that would be caused by the project if implemented. The use of non-renewable resources during the initial and continued phases of the project may be irreversible, since a large commitment of such resources makes removal or nonuse in the future unlikely. Primary impacts and, particularly, secondary impacts (such as highway improvements that provide access to previously inaccessible areas generally commit future generations to similar uses. Also, irreversible damage can result from environmental accidents associated with the project. Irretrievable commitments of resources should be evaluated to assure that such current consumption is justified. Public Resources Code Section 21100(b)(2)(B) requires an EIR to include a detailed statement setting forth any significant effects on the environment that would be irreversible if a proposed project is implemented. Examples of irreversible environmental changes, as set forth in CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(c), include the following:

- The proposed project would involve a large commitment of nonrenewable resources such that removal or nonuse thereafter is unlikely;
- The primary and secondary impacts of a proposed project would generally commit future generations to similar uses (e.g., a highway providing access to a previously inaccessible area); or
- The proposed project involves uses in which irreversible damage could result from any potential environmental accidents associated with the proposed project.

Irretrievable commitments of resources should be evaluated to assure that such current consumption is justified.

16.2 Proposed Project Effects

The proposed project would include the consumption of non-renewable building materials and energy resources during the construction phase, as well as the ongoing consumption of energy for lighting, air conditioning, space and water heating, and travel to and from the site during the life of the project. The consumption of such resources is typical of this type of development and would result in an irreversible commitment of natural resources for

construction and operations of the proposed project. The proposed project does not involve uses in which irreversible damage could result from any potential environmental accidents associated with the project.