

## 5. OTHER CEQA CONSIDERATIONS

This chapter discusses the following topics in relation to the Seawall Lot 337 and Pier 48 Mixed-Use Project (Mission Rock Project or proposed project): growth inducement; significant environmental effects that cannot be avoided if the proposed project is implemented; significant irreversible environmental changes that would result if the proposed project is implemented; and areas of controversy and issues to be resolved.

### A. GROWTH-INDUCING IMPACTS

Section 15126.2(d) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines states that an environmental impact report (EIR) should 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." Growth can be induced in a number of ways, including through the elimination of obstacles to growth, through the stimulation of economic activity within the region, or through precedent-setting action. CEQA requires a discussion of how a project could increase population, employment, or housing in the areas surrounding a project as well as an analysis of the infrastructure and planning changes that would be necessary to implement the project.

The proposed project would induce growth by constructing a place of employment as well as new housing units where none exist at present. As discussed in Section 4.C, *Population and Housing*, under the High Commercial Assumption, the project site would house approximately 2,350 residents and directly employ 6,050 workers. Given that just over half of employees in San Francisco are also residents and that those employee/residents are included in households, the High Commercial Assumption could result in a total population increase of up to 7,660. Under the High Residential Assumption, the project site would house approximately 3,760 residents and directly employ 4,510 workers. Considering the employee/residents and their households, the estimated total increase in the city's population could be as high as 7,720. This addition to the city's population under the more intensive High Residential Assumption represents 8.8 percent of the city's projected population growth from 2015 to 2025, for a total of 942,520 people living in San Francisco in 2025.

Impacts typically related to growth-inducing projects include impacts on infrastructure (i.e., transportation, water supply, electricity, and wastewater conveyance infrastructure) and public services (i.e., emergency services, schools, parks, and libraries). The project site would be located in an area with connectivity to existing local and regional transit services. The proposed project would be designed to maximize transit, bicycle, and pedestrian modes of travel, as discussed in Section 4.E, *Transportation and Circulation*. Furthermore, Section 4.J, *Public Services*

*and Recreation*, and Section 4.K, *Utilities and Service Systems*, did not identify significant impacts that would result from project implementation. Given the small proportion of the city's population that the proposed project would represent (approximately 1 percent by 2025), its location within a transit-accessible area, and that no significant impacts related to infrastructure and public services have been identified, growth-inducing impacts are not anticipated to be adverse. Furthermore, it is unlikely that the proposed project could create precedent for other increases in heights along the waterfront because any such increases would require voter approval, pursuant to Proposition B.

## **B. SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS**

In accordance with Sections 21100 (b)(2)(A) and 21100.1(a) of the CEQA Statute and Section 15126.2(b) of the State CEQA Guidelines, an EIR is required to identify any significant environmental effects that cannot be avoided if a project is implemented. Many impacts identified for the proposed project would either be less than significant or could be mitigated to a less-than-significant level. However, the proposed project would also result in significant impacts that cannot be mitigated to less-than-significant levels, as listed below.

### **TRANSPORTATION IMPACTS**

- The proposed project would result in an adverse impact by increasing ridership by more than 5 percent on two individual Muni routes that exceed 85 percent capacity utilization under baseline conditions. (Impact TR-4)
- The proposed project would result in an adverse impact related to a substantial increase in transit delays on Third Street between Channel Street and Mission Rock Street. (Impact TR-6)
- The proposed project would have significant impacts on pedestrian safety at the unsignalized intersections of Fourth Street/Mission Rock Street and Fourth Street/Long Bridge Street. (Impact TR-9)
- The proposed project would contribute considerably to a significant cumulative transit impact because it would increase ridership by more than 5 percent on one individual Muni route that would exceed 85 percent capacity utilization. (Impact C-TR-4)
- The proposed project would contribute considerably to significant cumulative impacts related to transit delay. (Impact C-TR-6)
- The proposed project would contribute considerably to significant cumulative pedestrian impacts. (Impact C-TR-7)

## NOISE IMPACTS

- Construction of the proposed project would generate noise levels in excess of standards or result in substantial temporary increases in ambient noise levels. (Impact NOI-1)
- Operation of the proposed project could result in the exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of the San Francisco Noise Ordinance or a substantial permanent, temporary, or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity, above levels existing without the project. (Impact NOI-2.)
- Construction of the proposed project would expose persons to or generate excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels. (Impact NOI-3)
- Construction activities for the proposed project, in combination with other past, present, and reasonable future projects in the city, would result in a substantial temporary increase in noise or noise levels in excess of the applicable local standards. (Impact C-NOI-1)
- Construction activities associated with project-related development, in combination with other past, present, and reasonable future projects in the city, would expose sensitive receptors to excessive ground-borne vibration related to annoyance. (Impact C-NOI-2)
- Operation of the proposed project, in combination with other past, present, and reasonable future projects in the city, could result in the exposure of persons to noise in excess of the applicable local standards or a substantial permanent ambient noise level increase in the project vicinity. (Impact C-NOI-3)

## AIR QUALITY IMPACTS

- Construction of the proposed project would generate fugitive dust and criteria air pollutants, which for criteria air pollutants but not fugitive dust, would violate an air quality standard, contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation, or result in a cumulatively considerable net increase in criteria air pollutants. (Impact AQ-1)
- During project operations, the proposed project would result in emissions of criteria air pollutants at levels that would violate an air quality standard, contribute to an existing or projected air quality violation, or result in a cumulatively considerable net increase in criteria air pollutants. (Impact AQ-2)
- During combined project construction and operations, the proposed project would result in emissions of criteria air pollutants at levels that would violate an air quality standard, contribute to an existing or projected air quality violation, or result in a cumulatively considerable net increase in criteria air pollutants. (Impact AQ-3)
- The proposed project's construction and operation, in combination with other past, present, and reasonable future projects, would contribute to cumulative regional air quality impacts. (Impact C-AQ-1)

## WIND IMPACTS

- The proposed project would alter wind in a manner that would substantially affect public areas. (Impact WS-1)
- The proposed project, in combination with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects, would alter wind in a manner that would substantially affect public areas. (Impact C-WS-1)

## C. SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE CHANGES

In accordance with Section 21100(b)(2)(B) of the CEQA Statute and Section 15126.2(c) of the CEQA Guidelines, an EIR must identify any significant irreversible environmental changes that could result from implementation of a project. This may include current or future uses of nonrenewable resources and secondary or growth-inducing impacts that commit future uses of nonrenewable resources. Also included are secondary or growth-inducing impacts that commit future generations to similar uses. According to the CEQA Guidelines, irretrievable commitments of resources should be evaluated to ensure that current consumption is justified. In general, such irreversible commitments include the use of resources, such the materials to construct a project, as well as the energy and natural resources (including water) that would be required to sustain a project and its inhabitants or occupants over the usable life of the project.

The consumption of nonrenewable resources includes conversion of agricultural lands and lost access to mining reserves. As discussed in Chapter 4, *Environmental Setting and Impacts*, the California Department of Conservation designates the site as “Urban and Built-Up Land,” and the project site is located in an urbanized area of San Francisco. Therefore, no existing agricultural lands would be converted to non-agricultural uses. In addition, the project site does not contain known mineral resources and does not serve as a mining reserve; therefore, development of the proposed project would not result in the loss of access to mining reserves.

No significant environmental damage, such as accidental spills or explosions of hazardous materials, is anticipated with implementation of the proposed project. Compliance with federal, state, and local regulations would ensure that this potential impact would be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

The project sponsor would be required to demonstrate compliance with the performance standards outlined in the Maher Ordinance, including the preparation of a site-specific site mitigation plan, subject to review and approval by the San Francisco Department of Public Health. As such, no irreversible changes, such as those that might result from construction of an industrial project, would result from development of the proposed project.

Construction of the proposed project would require the use of energy, including energy produced from nonrenewable resources. Energy consumption would also occur during the operational period of the proposed project. The proposed project would be required to incorporate green building features, consistent with the City and County of San Francisco's (City's) Green Building Ordinance, to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. As discussed in Section 4.H, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*, the proposed project would not result in any significant impacts associated with an increase in GHG emissions or conflict with measures adopted for the purpose of reducing such emissions because the proposed project would be compliant with the City's Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategy. Additionally, the proposed project would not require the construction of major utility lines to deliver energy or natural gas because these services are already provided in the area.

The consumption of other nonrenewable or slowly renewable resources would occur during construction and operation. These resources include, but are not limited to, lumber, concrete, sand and gravel, asphalt, masonry, metals, and water. The Project would irreversibly use water and solid waste landfill resources. However, the Project would not involve a large commitment of those resources relative to supply, nor would it consume these resources in a wasteful manner, because all resources would be used to achieve the project objectives. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in a significant impact associated with the consumption of nonrenewable resources.

## D. AREAS OF KNOWN CONTROVERSY AND ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED

This EIR analyzes the potential environmental effects of the proposed project, as identified in the notice of preparation (NOP), which was issued on December 11, 2013 (Appendix 1 of this EIR). On the basis of public comments submitted following publication of the NOP, it was determined that the potential areas of controversy and unresolved issues for the proposed project include:

- **Project Description:** Comments raised concerns about the provision of transportation infrastructure; height, scale, and design of the proposed project; uses that would be present on the project site; and provision of affordable housing. These topics are discussed in detail in Chapter 2, *Project Description*.
- **Aesthetics:** Comments raised concerns about the potential impacts on views. This is discussed in Section 4.B, *Aesthetics*.
- **Cultural Resources:** Comments raised concerns about the potential impacts on submerged cultural resources, which is discussed in Section 4.D, *Cultural Resources*.

- **Transportation and Circulation:** Comments raised concerns about the potential increases in traffic congestion and changes to circulation patterns and parking; public transportation availability; pedestrian safety; and potential impacts on game days. These topics are discussed in Section 4.E, *Transportation and Circulation*.
- **Noise:** Comments raised concerns about the potential noise impacts, which is discussed in Section 4.F, *Noise*.
- **Air Quality:** Comments raised concerns about the potential impacts on operational air quality, discussed in Section 4.G, *Air Quality*.
- **Greenhouse Gas Emissions:** Comments raised concerns about GHG emissions, discussed in Section 4.H, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*.
- **Wind and Shadow:** Comments raised concerns about the potential impacts on shade/shadow, discussed in Section 4.I, *Wind and Shadow*.
- **Public Services and Recreation:** Comments raised concerns about the potential impacts on emergency service providers; potential loss of green space/recreational areas; and potential impacts on schools. These topics are discussed in Section 4.J, *Public Services and Recreation*.
- **Utilities and Service Systems:** Comments raised concerns about the potential impacts on water supply and wastewater services, discussed in Section 4.K, *Utilities and Services Systems*.
- **Biological Resources:** Comments raised concerns about the potential impacts on the marine environment and listed species, discussed in Section 4.L, *Biological Resources*.
- **Hydrology and Water Quality:** Comments raised concerns about the effects of sea-level rise on the proposed project; and potential impacts on water quality. These topics are discussed in Section 4.N, *Hydrology and Water Quality*.
- **Alternatives:** Comments raised concerns about the consideration of alternatives, discussed in Chapter 7, *Alternatives*.