

CHAPTER 4

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING, IMPACTS, AND MITIGATION MEASURES

This chapter discusses the environmental setting, impacts, and mitigation measures for the 14 fully evaluated environmental resource areas. The resource areas and individual topic areas that were adequately addressed through the Initial Study are discussed in Section 6.5.

This chapter includes an overview of the cumulative impact analysis process. The cumulative impacts are discussed under each resource area throughout this chapter.

This chapter presents analysis of each resource area identified through preliminary environmental analysis and public scoping as likely to be affected by the proposed 2014 LRDP. This introduction summarizes the analytical approach, including key assumptions and data used in the analysis. The cumulative analysis methodology is included in this introduction, and cumulative impacts are discussed under each resource area throughout this chapter.

Scope of the EIR

The following EIR sections evaluate 14 resource areas identified in the CEQA Environmental Checklist (Appendix G) of the *State CEQA Guidelines*, as amended by Senate Bill 97 (Public Resources Code - Section 21083.0). Based on the input received during the EIR scoping process, as described in Chapter 1, Introduction, this EIR addresses the following resource areas or categories of impact in detail:

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

For each resource area listed above, the EIR describes the existing and future setting, the potential for the resource area to be significantly impacted by the proposed project, and recommended mitigation measures that may avoid, reduce, or compensate for any significant or potentially significant adverse impacts of the proposed project. A prior Initial Study (included in Appendix A) determined that the 2014 LRDP would not impact agricultural, forest, or mineral resources and would not result in certain specific individual impacts (or topics) for the resource areas that are addressed in this chapter. Each of the resource sections that follows clearly identifies those impacts that were adequately addressed in the Initial Study and are therefore not evaluated further in this EIR.

Definition of Baseline and Year of Analysis

State CEQA Guidelines Section 15125 requires that EIRs include a description of project area physical environmental conditions that exist at the time the NOP is circulated. These “baseline” physical conditions are normally used by the lead agency to measure changes that would result

from project implementation. The NOP for this Draft EIR was issued on January 4, 2013. Therefore, environmental conditions as of January 2013 represent the project baseline for CEQA purposes.

This EIR presents comparisons of anticipated 2014 LRDP development with baseline conditions to help the lead agency determine whether project implementation would substantially degrade or impact resources and/or significantly impact the environment.

Level of Significance

Under CEQA, a variety of terms are used to describe the levels of significance of adverse impacts. The definitions of terms used in this EIR are presented below.

- **Significant and Unavoidable Impact.** An impact that exceeds the defined standards of significance and cannot be avoided or reduced to a less than significant level through implementation of feasible mitigation measures.
- **Potentially Significant Impact.** An impact that exceeds or may exceed the defined significance standard and that can be avoided or reduced to a less than significant level through implementation of feasible mitigation measures.
- **Less Than Significant Impact.** Impacts that are adverse but that do not exceed the specified standards of significance.
- **No Impact.** The project would not impact a specified environmental resource.

Format of Resource Topic Sections

Each resource topic considered in this chapter is addressed under five primary subsections: Introduction, Environmental Setting, Regulatory Considerations, Impacts and Mitigation Measures, and References. An overview of the information included in these sections is provided below.

Introduction

The introduction section describes the topic to be analyzed and the contents of the analysis. It also lists relevant issues and concerns identified by agencies and the public during the Draft EIR scoping process.

Environmental Setting

This section describes the existing site and surroundings and those features or conditions that may be affected by the proposed project (e.g., existing land uses, existing soil conditions, existing traffic conditions, etc.).

Regulatory Considerations

This section presents relevant federal, state, and local laws, regulations, plans, and policies. Only those laws, regulations, and policies that are pertinent to the impact analysis are included.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Standards of Significance. Each resource topic included in this section identifies standards of significance used to evaluate impacts derived from Appendix G of the *State CEQA Guidelines* and the UC CEQA Handbook.

CEQA Checklist Items Adequately Addressed in the Initial Study. This subsection identifies and discusses the individual checklist items (also referred to as standards of significance) that are not evaluated in detail in this EIR.

Analytical Methods. This section summarizes the methodology used to estimate and evaluate the impacts. Impacts are evaluated quantitatively where possible and qualitatively where quantification is not feasible.

RBC 2014 LRDP Policies. This section presents the 2014 LRDP policies that are relevant to the resource. Because these policies would be binding on all future RBC projects, they are considered a part of the proposed project; impact significance is evaluated after considering the mitigating effect of the policies.

LRDP Impacts and Mitigation Measures. This section presents the environmental effects from the construction and operation of the 2014 LRDP using the standards of significance. All impacts are numbered (for instance, LRDP Impact AES-1 refers to the first impact under Aesthetics and Visual Quality) and shown in bold type. For each impact, a summary impact statement is presented along with a conclusion with respect to the impact's significance before and after mitigation. Mitigation measures are numbered to correspond to the impact. Impacts and mitigation measures are numbered consecutively within each resource topic. This section also identifies and describes environmental protection practices, essentially measures that could be implemented to further reduce the magnitude of impacts that already fall below the standard of significance. Unlike mitigation measures, these practices are not required to be implemented as part of the project. Projects will, however, be asked to consider and incorporate these measures, and implementation will be monitored in the ongoing mitigation monitoring and reporting program.

Cumulative Impacts and Mitigation Measures. Cumulative impacts that may result from the project are discussed at the end of each resource section. The approach used to evaluate cumulative impacts is summarized in Cumulative Impact Analysis section below.

References

This section lists the references used to prepare the environmental setting and impact analysis for each resource section.

Cumulative Impact Analysis

CEQA Guidelines Section 15355 defines cumulative impacts as two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are substantial or which compound or increase other environmental impacts. A cumulative analysis describes the “incremental impact of the project when added to other, closely related past, present, or reasonably foreseeable probable future projects” which can result from “individually minor but collectively significant projects taking place over a period of time.”

Cumulative impacts that may result from or be compounded by the project are discussed in the appropriate Chapter 4 sections. Each Chapter 4 section describes the cumulative setting for the individual resource area along with cumulative growth under specific projects and long-term development plans.

To project a cumulative framework to the LRDP planning year of 2050, the EIR cumulative impact analysis relies on long-range planning and policy documents that forecast population, employment, and land use patterns. This includes all relevant general plans, specific plans, and other long-range planning documents for which a jurisdiction has adopted growth, development, and land use policies. In this case, such documents include the City of Richmond General Plan 2030 and the South Shoreline Specific Plan (under development). This approach is consistent with CEQA Guidelines Sec. 15130(b), which recommends analysis of a “summary of projections

from adopted local, regional, statewide plan, or related planning documents, that describes or evaluates conditions contributing to a cumulative effect.”

The Richmond General Plan 2030 includes policies, land use goals, and population, employment, and housing forecasts through 2030. Since full LRDP development is expected to occur through 2050, the cumulative analysis may consider other regional or statewide planning and land use documents that include forecasts through the 2050 timeframe. The South Shoreline Specific Plan tiers off the General Plan 2030 and proposes land use categories and densities to enhance the economic, residential, and recreational vitality of this area. The General Plan is discussed in detail below.

Although local plans project well into the future, they do not correspond to the development time frame of the 2014 LRDP. In many instances, such plans also lack sufficient detail to enable thorough aggregation of area-wide growth and impacts with LRDP growth and impacts. The risk that these plans may become outdated, may no longer be accurate due to changed circumstances, or may be based on a shorter planning horizon must be factored when considering this analysis.

Pursuant to CEQA requirements, the cumulative impacts analysis should also consider relevant past, present, and probable future projects for the 2014 LRDP programmatic project components. The South Shoreline Specific Plan is expected to tier off the General Plan 2030 and propose land use categories and densities to enhance the economic, residential, and recreational vitality of this area.

For the 2014 LRDP, the cumulative setting includes foreseeable development plans and policies in the Richmond Southern Shoreline Planning Area and other areas where plan or specific projects may contribute to the cumulative setting, given the timeframe applicable to development under the LRDP. The cumulative development assumptions include several projects in the vicinity of the RBC site that either are under construction or are approved and awaiting construction. In addition, the cumulative development assumptions include projects anticipated under applicable zoning and development ordinances and provisions and under the land use goals and policies of the previous and current general plans.

Cumulative Plans and Projects

The following is a list of past, present, or reasonably foreseeable plans and projects that comprise components of the cumulative setting that are considered for analysis of the impacts associated with the 2014 LRDP.

Information for Alameda is provided below in support of the impacts analysis of project alternatives presented in Chapter 6.

Richmond

Richmond General Plan 2030. This general plan was adopted by the City of Richmond in 2012. The RBS site is within the Southern Shoreline Planning Area, one of five designated planning areas under the General Plan.

The General Plan 2030 has an approximately 20-year planning horizon. However, the Plan does not anticipate when the development identified in the Plan would occur. In addition, the Plan’s designation of a site or area for a certain use does not necessarily mean the site will be built or redeveloped within the next 20 years. Therefore, to determine a more realistic projection for

future development in the City, the Plan's population and job growth estimates use a "regional share" approach assuming that Richmond will capture a particular share of Contra Costa County's projected regional population and employment growth.

According to the General Plan, Richmond's share of regional population growth was 8.39 percent between 1980 and 2005. The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) projects Richmond will capture 10.91 percent of regional population growth through 2030. However, because the goals and policies of the General Plan are geared to stimulate higher intensity development within the City, the General Plan assumes that Richmond will capture 13 percent of the regional population growth through 2030. The number of jobs that would be generated was calculated based on ABAG projected ratio of jobs to population for Richmond in 2030 (0.48 jobs per person). Based upon this methodology, the City estimated that there would be an increase in population of 30,147 and an additional 22,488 jobs under the General Plan. The City also estimated that approximately 15,548 housing units would be added under the General Plan.

The General Plan 2030 designates the RBC site as "Change Area 16: Southern Gateway." The Southern Gateway area is south of Interstate 580 (I-580) and east of Regatta Boulevard. The Southern Gateway area is envisioned as a revitalized area that would include a mixture of high-intensity light industrial and commercial uses anchored by a large-scale research and development campus at the RBC site. The General Plan envisions a vibrant mix of new and existing uses that would harmonize with ecologically-sensitive areas, maximizing Bay views and providing efficient connections to regional transportation routes, including I-80 and I-580, as well as the multimodal San Francisco Bay Trail. The area has been designated Business/Light Industrial consistent with this vision.

South Shoreline Specific Plan. The RBC site is within the Southern Shoreline Planning Area of the City of Richmond General Plan 2030. The South Shoreline Specific Plan is currently under preparation. The Plan area comprises the southeastern portion of the City of Richmond that is west and south of I-580. It includes areas designated for light industrial, commercial, and residential uses, and it includes the entire RBC site and adjacent sites. This plan tiers off the recently adopted City of Richmond General Plan 2030; therefore, it is anticipated that the Specific Plan will include policies promoting higher residential densities as well as policies promoting the continuation of industrial, research, and development uses. Given the location and size of the RBC site within the Specific Plan area, the planning efforts for the 2014 LRDP would be complemented by those for the Specific Plan, which anticipates development of the RBC through 2050.

Bio-Rad Laboratories Office/R&D Lab Upgrade Project. The project would construct one 16,888 square foot building to enclose office, research and development laboratory uses. The project site is located at 3110 Regatta Boulevard, adjacent to the RBC site, and is 3.95 acres in size. The proposed building would replace six existing dilapidated metal structures and accessory buildings with one structure. The new structure would be used for the same activities and sited within the same location on the property.

Marina Bay Ferry Terminal. The Water Emergency Transportation Authority is considering the construction of a ferry terminal on Richmond's south shoreline in the vicinity of Marina Way and Sheridan Point, west of the Ford Assembly Building. The project is currently undergoing environmental review with the City of Richmond.

Marina Bay/Trails Landscaping. The Richmond Public Works Department, in coordination with the Marina Bay Neighborhood Council, Parks and Recreation, and the Harbor Master, is

constructing pathway and public trail improvements that include landscaping, lighting, sidewalks, and parks. These improvements are being implemented in accordance with City's Landscape Management Master Plan.

Officer Bradley A. Moody Memorial Underpass. The Officer Bradley A. Moody Memorial Underpass project would construct a roadway undercrossing in place of the existing grade crossing on Marina Bay Parkway between Regatta Boulevard and Meeker Avenue. With increased rail activity in recent years and forecasts for growth in the future, long trains are more frequently traversing Richmond grade crossings. In the South Richmond Shoreline area, low maximum train speeds result in traffic blockages for 20-30 minutes at a time with no alternate access, as all north-south ingress and egress to this area is impacted at closely-spaced grade crossings.

The underpass at Marina Bay Parkway will reduce traffic congestion and allow emergency vehicles to access the Marina Bay Area unimpeded. Additionally, the project would improve access to proposed Water Emergency Transportation Authority ferries and improve air quality by reducing emissions of idling vehicles.

Ford Building Rehabilitation Project. The Ford Building Rehabilitation Project is redeveloping the former Ford Assembly Plant at the foot of Harbor Way into a mixed-use facility along the Richmond southern shoreline. The proposed mixture of uses would include offices, retail centers, industrial / research and development sites, restaurants, residential areas, the Rosie the Riveter Visitor Center, and the Craneway Pavilion event center. The building size is approximately 460,000 square feet.

Terminal One Development Project. The Terminal One Development Project would redevelop approximately 13.8 acres of shoreline property immediately east of Ferry Point and Miller/Knox Regional Shoreline Park and west of the Richmond Yacht Club and Brickyard Cove. Current development plans include constructing approximately 285 luxury condominiums on approximately 11 acres of the site. In addition, the project would develop an approximately 1.5-acre park and an open space area along the shore adjacent to and including the terminal pier. A new segment of the Bay Trail would be developed as part of this project.

Alameda

City of Alameda General Plan 2010. The general plan establishes the City of Alameda's development policies for the period 1990-2010. Its purpose is to guide residents, businesses, policymakers and elected officials in making choices about public and private activities that shape the City's physical environment. The general plan's policies reinforce five themes:

- Maintain the City's island setting, by making the shoreline more visible and accessible.
- Maintain the City's small town feeling by not constructing tall buildings, freeways, highway commercial strips, or vast tracts of look-alike housing.
- Respect the City's history by emphasizing restoration and preservation as essential to Alameda's economic and cultural environment.
- De-emphasize the automobile by supporting transit improvements, ferry service, reduction of peak-hour use of single-occupant vehicles, and creating enjoyable pedestrian environment.

- Support multi-use development on the Northern Waterfront by priority space for boating activities, retention of seaports and related industries, and extension of an existing residential neighborhood to a new 10-acre park.

The City has updated its general plan in recent years including the Housing Element in 2012 and the Transportation Element in 2011. Alameda Point is an individual element in the general plan.

Alameda Point Element. The cumulative setting for Alameda Point is generally the entire Alameda Point site (formerly NAS Alameda) and areas in the City of Alameda within half a mile of the site. The site has a land use designation of “Mixed Use.” Goals and policies in the Alameda Point element are similar to those of the general plan. Additional themes include:

- Transportation—increase accessibility to local and regional transit systems, integrate pedestrian and bicycle usage, and preserve view corridors.
- Open Space, Conservation and Cultural Resources—provide open space and recreational opportunities to serve new residents and employees, and preserve Alameda Point’s Historic District, buildings, development patterns, and open spaces.
- Health and Safety (including flood control, fire hazards, environmental cleanup, emergency management)—support improvement programs that address water quality, urban runoff, and flooding; mitigate factors that are conducive to fire hazards and identify effective means of dealing with fire hazards; continue support of cleanup of contaminated lands; and support integration of Alameda Point into the City of Alameda’s Emergency Operations Plan.

Most of the former NAS Alameda runway area is now a National Wildlife Refuge. Approximately 50 acres of this area, located in the southwest corner of the current National Wildlife Refuge, are within the City and County of San Francisco. One of the guiding policies of the Alameda Point Element is to help maintain a National Wildlife Refuge that balances natural conservation with public access, education, and ship navigation.

Northern Waterfront General Plan Amendment. The Northern Waterfront General Plan Amendment was adopted in March 2007 to address the redevelopment of the area. It requires that development in the Northern Waterfront is sensitive to the character of Alameda and the unique waterfront setting. Guiding policies for housing are to provide a mix of housing types, densities, and affordability levels throughout the plan area, to support the development of “for-rent” and “for-sale” affordable housing units throughout the plan area, and to encourage and support the development of senior housing in the Northern Waterfront.

The plan also discusses specific policies for commercial development, such as to prohibit drive-through facilities, to encourage maritime and waterfront related job and business opportunities, and to encourage retail uses that offer recreational products and services. Traffic circulation is also an important theme in the plan, which aims to facilitate movement of vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians.

Encinal Del Monte Master Plan. This master plan is intended to guide the repurposing and redevelopment of the Encinal Terminals, Del Monte Warehouse, and Chipman/Marina Cove II (Chipman) sites consistent with the General Plan Northern Waterfront goals and policies adopted in 2007. In 2009, the Alameda City Council rezoned the Encinal Terminals and Del Monte Warehouse sites for mixed-use development consistent with the General Plan policies for the area. The mixed-use zoning requires preparation of a master plan that will serve as the zoning code for the area and guide the redevelopment of the property consistent with the policies and

goals of the General Plan. This master plan also includes updated standards and requirements for the development of the Chipman site, which was previously planned and rezoned for residential use in 2000 as part of the adjacent Marina Cove neighborhood.

Marina Cove II Subdivision. The City of Alameda proposes to construct a residential subdivision of single family homes and below-market-rate duplexes on an approximately 7-acre waterfront site. The project site is located between the waterfront and Buena Vista Avenue, east of Entrance Road. Four new residential streets would extend across the project site. Each home would have an attached two-car garage and driveways would provide an additional 198 off-street parking spaces. As part of the project, an additional 0.15-acre lot would be developed along the west side of the site as public open space.

Webster Street Vision Plan. The vision plan for Webster Street was proposed by the City of Alameda in 2010. The plan seeks to improve the Webster Street area as a recognized, regional arterial as identified in the general plan. The plan proposes to divide Webster Street – which is currently a single commercial district – into four distinct districts. The four districts are Gateway (Tubes to Atlantic Avenue), Avenue (Atlantic to Lincoln Avenue), Main Street (Lincoln to Central Avenue), and Anchor (Central Avenue to Crab Cove). The plan includes specific recommendations for street improvements, such as curb extensions, pedestrian scale street lights, banners, street trees, and street furniture.