

9.0 SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

PURPOSE

Section 15126.2(c) of the State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines states that “Uses of nonrenewable resources during the initial and continued phases of a proposed project may be irreversible since a large commitment of these resources makes removal or nonuse thereafter unlikely.” This section of the EIR evaluates whether the project would result in the irretrievable commitment of resources, or would cause irreversible changes in the environment. Also, in accordance with Section 15126.2 of the State CEQA Guidelines, this section identifies any irreversible damage that could result from environmental accidents associated with the proposed project.

DISCUSSION

Buildout of the proposed project would represent a long-term commitment to a more intensive land use than currently occurs on the project site. The proposed project would, therefore, involve an irreversible commitment to the use of non-renewable resources during the construction and operation phases in the form of refined petroleum-based fuels, natural gas for space and water heating, and mineral resources used in construction materials. Once transformed into fuel or other energy forms, or into construction materials, these resources cannot be recovered. Some reuse of construction materials after the useful life of this project may be possible. It is anticipated that these resources would likely be committed to other projects, if not used for this one.

Irreversible long-term environmental changes would accompany the proposed conversion of the undeveloped portions of the project site with two roadway connections, 54 condominium units, and a water tank replacement. Additionally, irreversible long-term environmental changes would occur with development proposed within The Master’s College campus. These changes would include volumes of solid waste generation and conversion of natural open space areas that have significant biological habitat value to educational, residential and transportation land uses. It is not likely that the existing environmental conditions could be restored to their original condition subsequent to project development; however, mitigation measures are proposed throughout **Section 5.0** of this EIR to minimize the effects of the development impacts.

The *State CEQA Guidelines* also require a discussion of the potential for irreversible damage caused by an environmental accident associated with the project. The following discussion identifies the characteristics of the site and proposed future uses, which could be sources of potential accidents.

9.0 Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes

No unique hazards are found on the site, nor does the site contain any uniquely hazardous uses. The site is located within a seismically active region and would be exposed to ground shaking in the event of a seismic event. Conformance with the regulatory provisions of the City of Santa Clarita and the Unified Development Code pertaining to construction standards would minimize, to the extent feasible, damage and injuries in the event of such an occurrence. Geotechnical hazards can be mitigated by stabilization, removal, or redesign, and no significant impacts on the site are expected.

Uses proposed by the project (such as laboratories on The Master's College campus) would be expected to use and store chemicals and/or substances, which are typically found in such urban settings. Given the multitude of federal, state, and local regulations governing the use of such substances, the project development is not expected to involve activities that would damage the environment or pose a risk to public health.