

II. SUMMARY

This chapter provides an overview of the Draft General Plan, and the findings outlined in this EIR, including a discussion of alternatives and cumulative project impacts.

A. PROJECT UNDER REVIEW

In compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), this Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) describes the environmental impacts associated with implementation of the City of Albany Draft 2035 General Plan (Draft General Plan). This Draft EIR is designed to fully inform decision-makers in the City of Albany, other responsible agencies, and the general public of the potential environmental consequences of approval and implementation of the Draft General Plan. This Draft EIR analyzes the potential environmental impacts of the Draft General Plan. A more detailed description of the project can be found in Chapter III, Project Description. This Draft EIR also examines alternatives to the Draft General Plan, which are summarized below and described in detail in Chapter V, Alternatives.

The City of Albany (City) is the Lead Agency for environmental review of the project. This Draft EIR will be used by City staff and the public in their review of the Draft General Plan. The effects of the Draft General Plan land uses and implementation actions are analyzed in this document as specifically and comprehensively as possible, consistent with State law.

B. SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

This summary provides an overview of the analysis contained in Chapter IV, Setting, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures. CEQA requires a summary to include discussion of: 1) potential areas of controversy; 2) significant impacts; 3) recommended mitigation measures; 4) alternatives to the project; and 5) cumulative impacts.

1. Potential Areas of Controversy

A total of eight letters received on the Notice of Preparation (NOP) raised issues that were then further evaluated in the Draft EIR, including historic preservation of cultural resources, traffic on Caltrans facilities, railroad crossing safety, community art, provision of utilities and water conservation, shoreline development and land use, sea level rise, public access and recreation along the shoreline, water quality, scenic views. The NOP and comments received in response to the NOP are included in Appendix A of this EIR.

2. Significant Impacts

Under CEQA, a significant impact on the environment is defined as "...a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any of the physical conditions within the area affected by the project, including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise, and objects of historic or aesthetic

significance.” Impacts in the following areas would be significant without the implementation of mitigation measures, but would be reduced to a less-than-significant level if the mitigation measures recommended in this report are implemented:

- Transportation and Circulation
- Cultural Resources

3. Significant and Unavoidable Impacts

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in any significant and unavoidable impacts.

4. Alternatives to the Project

The following alternatives were evaluated within the EIR:

- The CEQA-required **No Project alternative**. This alternative assumes that development would occur in the City of Albany, and specifically on available opportunity sites identified in the Housing Element, as allowed under the current General Plan and zoning designations. While approximately the same number of future residents (1,800) and employees (850) are anticipated to occur with implementation of this alternative as with the Draft General Plan, the No Project alternative does not include the new goals, policies, and actions of the Draft General Plan that would provide environmental and community benefits.
- The **Increased Density Near Transit alternative**. This alternative assumes that the City would identify and implement policies and land use regulations to encourage more density, infill development and redevelopment of underutilized parcels along major transit corridors and near transit nodes. Four stories of development would be allowed with a bonus of up to five stories, under the State Density Bonus law, along San Pablo and Solano Avenues and on land within 0.5 miles of the El Cerrito BART Station. This alternative would include the elimination of a parking requirement for the San Pablo and Solano Avenue corridors and within 0.5 miles of the El Cerrito BART station. This alternative is expected to result in an increase in the number of new residents and employees compared to the Draft General Plan.
- The **Reduced Density and Development alternative**. This alternative assumes that the City would reduce the allowable floor area on residential and commercial parcels, maintain its current parking standards, and encourage development practices that retain the one- and two-story profile of the San Pablo Avenue commercial district.

5. Cumulative Impacts

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in any cumulatively significant impacts.

C. SUMMARY TABLE

Information in Table II-1, Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures, has been organized to correspond with environmental issues discussed in Chapter IV. The table is arranged in four columns: (1) impacts; (2) level of significance prior to mitigation; (3) mitigation measures; and (4) level of significance after mitigation. Levels of significance are categorized as follows:

SU	Significant and Unavoidable
S	Significant
LTS	Less Than Significant

For a complete description of potential impacts and recommended mitigation measures, please refer to the specific topical discussions in Chapter IV.

Table II-1: Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures from the EIR

Environmental Impacts	Level of Significance Without Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance With Mitigation
A. LAND USE, PLANNING POLICY, AND AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES			
<i>There are no impacts related to land use, planning policy or agricultural resources.</i>			
B. POPULATION AND HOUSING			
<i>There are no impacts related to population or housing.</i>			
C. TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION			
<u>TRANS-1</u> : Potential traffic calming strategies could result in a significant traffic-related impact.	S	<u>TRANS-1</u> : Prior to approving traffic calming projects, such as a roadway closure, that may divert substantial traffic to other streets, the City shall conduct a transportation impact study to evaluate the potential impacts of the proposed traffic calming project on access and circulation for all travel modes in the vicinity. The study shall identify potential design solutions and/or alternatives to ensure that the proposed traffic calming project would minimize any secondary significant impacts, such as a substantial increase in traffic volumes on nearby streets.	LTS
<u>TRANS-2</u> : The parking policies of the Draft General Plan may cause secondary significant impacts on the environment.	S	<u>TRANS-2</u> : Prior to adopting specific changes to parking requirements, conduct a parking and transportation study to evaluate the potential effects of these changes. Since parking is not considered an environmental topic under CEQA, these studies shall ensure that the changes to parking policies would not result in secondary significant impacts on traffic circulation, safety, noise, and/or air quality. As a result of the study and if necessary, the City shall modify the policy changes and/or identify other measures to minimize potential secondary significant impacts.	LTS
D. AIR QUALITY			
<i>There are no impacts related to air quality.</i>			
E. GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE			
<i>There are no impacts related to global climate change.</i>			
F. NOISE AND VIBRATION			
<i>There are no impacts related to noise and vibration.</i>			

Table II-1: Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures from the EIR

Environmental Impacts	Level of Significance Without Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance With Mitigation
G. GEOLOGY, SEISMICITY, AND SOILS			
<i>There are no impacts related to geology, seismicity, or soils.</i>			
H. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY			
<i>There are no impacts related to hydrology or water quality.</i>			
I. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS			
<i>There are no impacts related to hazards or hazardous materials.</i>			
J. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES			
<i>There are no impacts related to biological resources.</i>			
K. CULTURAL RESOURCES			
<p>CULT-1: Potential development under the Draft General Plan could impact archaeological deposits that may qualify as historical resources. (S)</p>	<p>S</p>	<p>CULT-1a: Prior to approval of development permits for projects that include significant ground-disturbing activities, City staff may require that the applicant review the most recent and updated Northwest Information Center (NWIC) list: Historic Property Directory to determine if known archaeological and paleontological sites underlie the proposed project. If it is determined that known cultural resources are within ¼ mile of the project site, the City shall require the project applicant to conduct a records search at the NWIC at Sonoma State University to confirm whether there are any recorded cultural resources within or adjacent to the project site. The NWIC will provide recommendations based on previously identified resources, as well as environmental and archival indicators of sensitivity (e.g., proximity to watercourses or historic map information). The studies may include identification efforts for historical buildings and structures, archaeological resources, fossils, and human remains. Consistent with Policy LU-5.4, coordination with local Native American communities shall be done when significant prehistoric archeological sites are identified as part of pre-approval site analysis. Based on that research, the City shall determine whether field study by a qualified cultural resources consultant is recommended.</p>	<p>LTS</p>

Table II-1: Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures from the EIR

Environmental Impacts	Level of Significance Without Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance With Mitigation
CULT-1 <i>Continued</i>		<p><u>CULT-1b</u>: Should City staff determine that field study for cultural resources is required, the project applicant shall have a cultural resource professional meeting the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards in history and/or archaeology conduct a pre-construction survey to identify significant cultural resources – including archaeological sites, paleontological resources, and human remains – in the project site and provide project-specific recommendations, as needed.</p> <p>Pursuant to the recommendations of the consulting archaeologist, and in consultation with City officials and potential stakeholders such as tribal representatives, additional mitigation to offset potential impacts to cultural resources shall be required should the resources at issue qualify as historical or unique archaeological resources under CEQA (cf. PRC Section 21084.1 and 21083.2, respectively). Such mitigation may include further intensive recording/documentation or excavation and analysis according to professional archaeological standards.</p>	
<u>CULT-2</u> : Ground-disturbing activities associated with development allowed under the Draft General Plan could adversely affect significant paleontological deposits under CEQA.	S	<u>CULT-2</u> : Implement Mitigation Measure CULT-1 to determine the potential for paleontological deposits within a project site and, if present, to ensure project-specific mitigations for such resources are identified and incorporated as conditions of project approval.	LTS
L. PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION			
<i>There are no impacts related to public services or recreation.</i>			
M. UTILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE			
<i>There are no impacts related to utilities or infrastructure.</i>			
N. VISUAL RESOURCES			
<i>There are no impacts related to visual resources.</i>			

Source: LSA Associates, Inc., 2015.