

CHAPTER FOUR

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA) EVALUATION

In July 2006, both the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and the Doyle Drive Executive Committee recommended a Preferred Alternative. The Preferred Alternative consists of a refined Presidio Parkway Alternative with the Modified Hook Ramp Option at the Park Presidio Interchange and the Diamond Interchange Option for the east end of the project alignment. The Preferred Alternative resulted from several design refinements made to the Presidio Parkway Alternative (Alternative 5) to reduce construction costs and address various environmental concerns. Additional environmental analysis was conducted on the slight modifications and shared with the responsible agencies. Ultimately, no additional environmental impacts would result from the Preferred Alternative. This chapter describes those potential environmental effects for all alternatives, including the Preferred Alternative, identified in Chapter 3 that would be considered significant under the *California Environmental Quality Act* (CEQA).

This combined *Final Environmental Impact Statement/Report* (FEIS/R) has been prepared in accordance with CEQA and the *National Environmental Policy Act* (NEPA). While CEQA requires that identification of the level of significance for each impact be stated in an *Environmental Impact Report* (EIR), NEPA regulations do not require such a discussion. Because of this difference, the CEQA significance criteria and the determination of significant impacts have not been included in other sections of this combined NEPA/CEQA EIS/R. These criteria and determinations are identified and described in this chapter.

4.1 Determining Significance under CEQA

The *CEQA Guidelines* (§15000, et seq., California Code of Regulations, 2001) define a “significant effect” 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 and aesthetic significance. An economic or social change by itself shall not be considered a significant effect on the environment. A social or economic change related to a physical change may be considered in determining whether the physical change is significant” (CEQA Guidelines §15382, 2001).

The *CEQA Guidelines* further state that “An ironclad definition of significant effect is not possible because the significance of an activity may vary with the setting. For example, an activity which may not be significant in an urban area

may be significant in a rural area” (*CEQA Guidelines* §15064, 2001). Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines* describes impacts that the California Resources Agency has determined are normally considered significant. These guidelines require that physical changes in the environment be evaluated based on factual evidence, reasonable assumptions supported by facts, and expert opinion based on fact.

4.1.1 Significance Criteria

Analysis of each project alternative was conducted to determine if there would be an impact to a particular environmental resource. This review included a determination of whether an impact occurring from the implementation of an alternative would be rated as “significant” under CEQA. **Exhibit 4-1**, on the following two pages, summarizes the significance of temporary, long-term, and cumulative environmental impacts of the Doyle Drive Project alternatives under CEQA. Levels of significance stating “less than significant with mitigation incorporated” are based on the application of successful mitigation measures, meaning the impact would not be diminished until mitigation successfully accomplishes the desired goals.

Chapter 3 of this document provides a detailed discussion of the impacts for each resource category. Significant impacts were not identified for the No-Build Alternative which is used as the baseline for comparison with other alternatives.

4.2 Potentially Significant Impacts

This section discusses the resources which will experience significant impacts as a result of the Doyle Drive Project.

4.2.1 Cultural Resources

As outlined in Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines*, would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?

Significant cultural resources for the purposes of CEQA are those resources that are eligible for or are listed in the *California Register of Historical Resources* (CRHR). All resources that have been determined eligible for or are listed in the *National Register of Historic Places* (NRHP) are automatically eligible for the CRHR and as such, are considered historical resources for the purposes of CEQA. In addition, cultural resources included in local registers of historical resources, as defined in *Public Resource Code* (PRC) 5020.1(k) or 5024.1(g), are also considered to be historical resources for the purposes of CEQA. CEQA states that “a project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment.”