III. Basis For Cumulative Analysis

III. BASIS FOR CUMULATIVE ANALYSIS

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that Environmental Impact Reports (EIRs) analyze cumulative impacts. As defined in CEQA *Guidelines* Section 15355, a cumulative impact consists of an impact which is created as a result of the combination of the project evaluated in the EIR together with other projects causing related impacts. CEQA *Guidelines* Section 15130(a) states that an EIR must discuss cumulative impacts of a project when the project's incremental effect is cumulatively considerable, as defined in Section 15065(a)(3). Where a lead agency is examining a project with an incremental effect that is not "cumulatively considerable," a lead agency need not consider that effect significant, but must briefly describe its basis for concluding that the incremental effect is not cumulatively considerable. However, an EIR should not discuss impacts which do not result in part from the project evaluated in the EIR. Furthermore, when the combined cumulative impact associated with the project's incremental effect and the effects of other projects is not significant, the EIR must briefly indicate why the cumulative impact is not significant and is not discussed in further detail in the EIR. A lead agency must identify facts and analysis supporting the lead agency's conclusion that the cumulative impact is less than significant.

In addition, CEQA *Guidelines* Section 15130(b) indicates that the analysis of cumulative impacts shall reflect the severity of the impacts and the likelihood of occurrence, but the discussion need not provide as great detailed as is provided for the effects attributable to the project alone. Instead, the discussion should be guided by the standards of practicality and reasonableness, and should focus on the cumulative impact to which the identified other projects contribute rather than the attributes of the other projects which do not contribute to the cumulative impact.

As indicated above, "cumulative impacts" are defined as "two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or compound or increase other environmental impacts." Cal. Pub. Res. Code § 21083(b); CEQA Guidelines § 15355. A project has "cumulatively considerable" impacts when its incremental effects "are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects. Cal. Pub. Res. Code § 21083(b); see also CEQA *Guidelines* § 15355(b).

For an adequate discussion of significant cumulative impacts, the CEQA *Guidelines* (Section 15130(b)(1)(A) and (B)) allow an environmental impact report to determine cumulative impacts and reasonably foreseeable growth based on either of the following methods:

- A list of past, present, and probable future projects producing related or cumulative impacts; or
- A summary of projections contained in an adopted general plan or related planning document, or in a prior environmental planning document which has been adopted or certified, which described or evaluated regional or area-wide conditions contributing to the cumulative impact.

For the purposes of the cumulative impacts analysis for the proposed project, the City has opted to use the list approach for evaluating cumulative effects. Given the nearly completely developed nature of the City of Long Beach, the development and redevelopment projects occurring within the project area (including within the City of Long Beach and City of Seal Beach) would have the highest potential for cumulative effects in relation to the proposed project. This list of “related projects” was developed by the City by reviewing the most current list of pending projects in the City’s project status database. Projects identified within a four-

mile radius of the project site were confirmed by City staff to be current or probable future developments with the potential to contribute to cumulative effects in conjunction with the proposed project. The City identified five (5) of these projects, one of which is located in the City of Seal Beach, when the list was originally developed in December 2009. However, for the purposes of this Recirculated Draft EIR, the City's project status database was again reviewed in December 2010, at which time no additional potential related projects were listed. Nonetheless, public comments received on the April 2010 Second+PCH Draft EIR indicated that another project within the City should be considered a related project: the Veteran's Affairs (VA) Hospital Expansion Project. However, no project application for this project was on file with the City and no information was provided by the VA regarding the project development details. The City set a cut-off date of January 3, 2011 for receipt of requested information on the project, after which the project would not be considered a related project if no response was received. Having not received any information on the project from the VA, and given the lack of an application on file with the City, the development was eliminated as a related project. Therefore, the same five related projects that were included in the April 2010 Second+PCH Draft EIR are included in the related projects list in this Recirculated Draft EIR.

The Second+PCH project is anticipated to be implemented through the year 2015, as discussed in Chapter II, *Project Description*. As noted above, the City identified various current and future development projects in the area that could potentially contribute to cumulative effects in conjunction with the proposed project. This data is used in this EIR, as a supplemental basis and in conjunction with the City's other efforts to identify past, present, and probable future projects, for conducting the analysis of cumulative impacts for the individual environmental issues addressed in Chapter IV, *Environmental Impact Analysis*.

The list of identified related projects is provided in **Table III-1,** *Related Projects List,* with the locations of each of the related projects listed in **Figure III-1**, *Related Projects Map*.

Table III-1

Related Projects List

Map No.	Location	Description
1	5638 East Second Street, Long Beach	700 SF Tutoring Center
2	4401Pacific Coast Highway, Long Beach	13,000 SF CVS with drive-thru, 7,400 SF retail and 2,911 SF Fast Food with drive-thru
3	4201 East Willow Street, Long Beach	9,500 SF retail and 8,000 SF automated car wash
4	1720 North Bellflower Boulevard, Long Beach	8,500 SF YMCA expansion
5	1st Street and Marina Drive, (Seal Beach)	55 single-family homes and 75 hotel rooms

Source: Linscott, Law and Greenspan Engineers, Inc., Traffic Impact Analysis, Second+PCH Project. February 2011.

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0 .5 Miles

Related Projects Map

Second+PCH Development

Source: ESRI, 2010; PCR Services Corporation, 2010.

FIGURE

III-1

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Although the projects listed above serve as the primary bases for evaluation of cumulative impacts, the approach to these analyses vary for certain environmental issues. According to CEQA *Guidelines* Section 15130 (b)(3), the City established a general geographic scope of the area affected by the potential cumulative effects based on the potential for the proposed project and related projects to contribute impacts within a particular distance from the project site, jurisdiction, viewshed, watershed, air basin, service area, or other geography, as applicable. The specific geographic scope for each environmental issue analyzed in this EIR is provided below.

The scope for cumulative analysis of impacts related to aesthetics and views is the viewshed surrounding the project site, as only those projects that can be viewed in the context of the proposed project could contribute to cumulative visual effects. With regard to air quality and global climate change effects, the geographic scope of cumulative effects is the South Coast Air Basin, since all regional air emissions from development within the area occur within the Basin. The cumulative analysis of effects on biological resources considers species and habitats within a specific geographic area in which one would expect to find such resources, in this case the coastal portion of the Los Angeles Basin. The geographic scope for archaeological and paleontological resources is the southern California region, based on the historic extent of Native American settlements and the wide distribution of fossil-bearing geologic formations in the region. Cumulative historic resources impacts are evaluated in the context of local, State, and national significance, as historic resources can be considered significant at each of these levels; however, cumulative impacts are generally evaluated in terms of whether or not impacts would contribute directly or indirectly to cumulative effects on resources eligible for listing on the California or National registers. Geology and soils effects are limited to localized impacts on each individual development, and therefore cumulative effects are evaluated based on the overall risks to people or structures within the seismically active southern California region. Similarly, cumulative impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials are evaluated in the context of the larger metropolitan area in which cumulative development occurs, which includes the coastal areas of southern Los Angeles County and northern Orange County. Cumulative effects related to hydrology and water quality are limited to the watershed within which a project is located, and therefore the geographic scope for cumulative analysis is the San Gabriel River watershed. Land use and planning impacts generally affect the jurisdiction in which projects are located, and therefore the geographic context for cumulative analysis is the City of Long Beach, County of Los Angeles, and the southern California region (Southern California Association of Governments jurisdiction). Noise effects are by nature localized, and therefore potential cumulative noise impacts are analyzed for those identified related projects in close enough proximity to the project site to increase noise levels on-site. Cumulative population, housing, and employment impacts are assessed for all development within the southern California region (i.e., SCAG jurisdiction). The geographic scope for cumulative effects on public services and utilities (including police, fire, schools, parks/recreation, libraries, water, wastewater, and solid waste) are limited to each respective service area; generally, these service areas are limited to the City of Long Beach (police, fire, parks/recreation, water), Long Beach Unified School District (schools), County of Los Angeles (libraries, wastewater, solid waste). The geographic context for cumulative traffic and circulation impacts is the area within which related projects could contribute 50 or more peak hour trips to the street network serving the project site. In addition to the traffic associated with the identified related projects, the cumulative traffic analysis also includes an overall growth factor of one percent (1%) per year to account for smaller projects and other ambient growth in the project area.

The cumulative analysis of each environmental issue, are identified in the applicable environmental issue section in Chapter IV, *Environmental Impact Analysis*, of this EIR.