

5.0 SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

INTRODUCTION

Section 15126.2(c) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines states that use of nonrenewable resources during the initial and continued phases of a proposed project may be irreversible if a large commitment of these resources makes their removal, indirect removal, or non-use thereafter unlikely. This section of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) evaluates whether the proposed 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.

IRREVERSIBLE COMMITMENT OF RESOURCES

Implementation of the proposed Broadway Lofts Project would include 248 studio and loft residential apartment units, a 12,585-square-foot restaurant/entertainment use and a 14,057-square-foot restaurant, subterranean and off-site parking located within the existing Glendale Marketplace parking garage.

Construction and operation of the proposed project would contribute to the incremental depletion of resources, including renewable and non-renewable resources. Resources, such as lumber and other forest products, are generally considered renewable resources. Such resources would be replenished over the lifetime of the proposed project. For example, lumber supplies are increased as seedlings mature into trees. As such, the development of the proposed project would not result in the irreversible commitment of renewable resources. Nevertheless, there would be an incremental increase in the demand for these resources over the life of the proposed project.

Non-renewable resources, such as natural gas, petroleum products, asphalt, petrochemical construction materials, steel, copper and other metals, and sand and gravel are considered to be commodities that are available in a finite supply. The processes that created these resources occur over a long period of time. Therefore, the replacement of these resources would not occur over the life of the proposed project. To varying degrees, the aforementioned materials are all readily available and some materials, such as asphalt or sand, and gravel, are abundant. Other commodities, such as metals, natural gas, and petroleum products, are also readily available, but they are finite in supply, given the length of time required by the natural process to create them.

The demand for all such resources is expected to increase regardless of whether or not the proposed project is developed. The State Department of Finance indicates that the population of Southern California will increase 62 percent over the 30-year period between 1990 and 2020. These increases in population would directly result in the need for more retail, commercial and residential facilities in order to provide the needed services associated with this growth. If not consumed by this proposed project, these resources would likely be committed to other projects in the region intended to meet this anticipated growth. Furthermore, the investment of resources in the proposed project would be typical of the level of investment normally required for commercial uses of this scale. Mitigation measures have been included in this EIR to reduce and minimize project and cumulative impacts.

IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

Irreversible long-term environmental changes associated with the proposed project would include a change in the visual character of the site as a result of the conversion of the project site to a new mixed-use development. Additional irreversible environmental changes would include the increase in local and regional vehicular traffic, and the resultant increase in air pollutants and noise emissions generated by this traffic, among other impacts. Design features have been incorporated into the development proposal and mitigation measures are proposed in this EIR that would minimize the effects of the environmental changes associated with the development of the proposed project to the maximum degree feasible. In addition, the project site is an urban site already and the implementation of the proposed project would improve this location of the City.

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGE FROM ACCIDENTS

The project proposes no uniquely hazardous uses, and its operation would not be expected to cause environmental accidents that would affect other areas. The project site is located within a seismically active region and would be exposed to ground shaking during a seismic event. Conformance with the regulatory provisions of the City of Glendale, the International Building Code (IBC), and all other applicable building codes pertaining to construction standards would minimize, to the extent feasible, damage and injuries in the event of such an occurrence. The inclusion of these features would reduce potential impacts to a less-than-significant level.