3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

Organized by environmental resource category, ***Section 3.0, Environmental Impact Analysis***, provides an integrated discussion of the affected environment including regulatory and environmental settings and environmental impacts and mitigation measures to reduce or avoid potentially significant impacts associated with implementation of the Project. ***Section 6.0, Other CEQA Considerations***, discusses mandatory findings of significance and other required California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) topics.

3.0.1 SECTION CONTENT AND DEFINITION OF TERMS

The environmental setting, impacts, and mitigation measures related to each environmental impact area are described in ***Sections 3.1*** through ***3.16***. ***Section 3.0*** is organized into the following environmental topic areas:

- Section 3.1, Aesthetics
- Section 3.2, Air Quality
- Section 3.3, Biological Resources
- Section 3.4, Cultural Resources
- Section 3.5, Energy
- Section 3.6, Geology and Soils
- Section 3.7, Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Section 3.8, Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Section 3.9, Hydrology and Water Quality
- Section 3.10, Land Use and Planning
- Section 3.11, Noise
- Section 3.12, Public Services and Recreation
- Section 3.13, Transportation
- Section 3.14, Tribal Cultural Resources
- Section 3.15, Utilities and Service Systems
- Section 3.16, Wildfire

The following environmental topics are not discussed in detail in this EIR because the Project would not impact these resources: Agriculture and Forestry Resources, Mineral Resources, and Population and Housing. See ***Section 5.0, Effects Not Found to Be Significant*** for detailed information.

Each potentially significant environmental issue area is addressed in a separate EIR Section (3.1 through 3.16) and is organized into the following Subsections:

- "Environmental Setting" provides an overview of the existing physical environmental conditions in the study area that could be affected by implementation of the Project (i.e., the "affected environment").
- "Regulatory Setting" identifies the plans, policies, laws, and regulations that are relevant to each resource area and describes permits and other approvals necessary to implement the Project. As noted above, the EIR needs to address possible conflicts between the Project and the requirements of Federal, State, regional, or local agencies, including consistency with adopted land use plans, policies, or other regulations for the area. Therefore, this subsection summarizes or lists the potentially relevant policies and objectives, such as from the applicable City of Beaumont General Plan and Municipal Code.
- "Significance Criteria" provides the criteria used in this document to define the level at which an impact would be considered significant in accordance with CEQA. Significance criteria used in this EIR are based on the checklist presented in Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, factual or scientific information and data, and regulatory standards of Federal, State, and local agencies.
- "Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures" are listed numerically and sequentially throughout each section, for each Project component. A bold font impact statement precedes the discussion of each impact and provides a summary of each impact and its level of significance. The discussion that follows the impact statement includes the analysis on which a conclusion is based regarding the level of impact.
- "Significant Unavoidable Impacts" identifies environmental impacts that may remain significant even with implementation of reasonable and feasible mitigation measures.
- "Cumulative Impacts" identifies potential environmental impacts of past, present and reasonably foreseeable future projects, in combination with the Project;

"Mitigation Measures" are recommended where feasible to avoid, minimize, offset, or otherwise compensate for significant and potentially significant impacts of the Project, in accordance with the State CEQA Guidelines (14 California Code of Regulation [CCR] § 15126.4). Each mitigation measure is identified by resource area, numerically, and sequentially. For example, mitigation measures in ***Section 3.1, Aesthetics***, are numbered AES-1, AES 2, AES-3 and so on. Pursuant to CEQA, the EIR provides a brief discussion of potential significant impacts of a given mitigation measure, if applicable.

The level of impact of the Project is determined by comparing estimated effects with baseline conditions, in light of the thresholds of significance identified in the EIR. Under CEQA, the existing environmental setting normally represents baseline conditions against which impacts are compared to determine significance. The environmental baseline is typically set as the date of Notice of Preparation distribution, unless more recent data is determined appropriate for utilization in the EIR. Project component-specific analyses are conducted to evaluate each potential impact on the existing environment. This assessment also specifies why impacts are found to be significant, potentially significant, or less than significant, or why there is no environmental impact.

14 CCR § 15382 and Public Resources Code (PRC) § 21068 defines a significant effect on the environment as a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any of the physical conditions within the

area affected by the Project. A potentially significant effect is one that, if it were to occur, would be considered a significant impact; however, the occurrence of the impact is uncertain. PRC § 21100(b)(3) states that mitigation measures proposed to minimize significant effects on the environment, including, but not limited to, measures to reduce the wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary consumption of energy, shall be included in the EIR. Subsection (d) of PRC § 21100 adds that for the purposes of this section (PRC § 21100), any significant effect on the environment shall be limited to substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse changes in physical conditions which exist within the area as defined in PRC § 21060.5. Therefore, a "potentially significant" effect and "significant" effect are treated the same under CEQA in terms of procedural requirements and the need to identify feasible mitigation. 14 CCR § 15364 and PRC § 21061.1 states that "feasible" means capable of being accomplished in a successful manner within a reasonable period of time, taking into account economic, environmental, social, and technological factors. A mitigation measure is determined to be feasible if it would avoid or substantially lessen a significant effect on a resource (PRC § 21082.3). A "less than significant" impact is one that would not result in a substantial adverse change in the physical environment (applicable significance thresholds would not be exceeded in consideration of Project Design Features and existing laws, ordinances, standards or regulations).

Both direct and indirect effects of the Project are evaluated for each environmental resource area (14 CCR § 15126.2 and PRC § 21065.3). Direct effects are those that are caused by the action and occur at the same time and place. Indirect effects are reasonably foreseeable consequences that may occur at a later time or at a distance that is removed from the Project area, such as growth-inducing effects and other effects related to changes in land use patterns, population density, or growth rate, and related effects on the physical environment.

Cumulative impacts are discussed below and throughout ***Section 3.0***, at the end of each individual resource section.

There are no mitigation measures proposed when there is "no impact" or the impact is determined to be "less than significant" prior to mitigation (14 CCR § 15126.4(a)(3)). Where sufficient feasible mitigation is not available to reduce impacts to a less than significant level, the impacts are identified as remaining "significant and unavoidable."

3.0.2 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS ANALYSIS

CEQA REQUIREMENTS

Under the CEQA Guidelines, "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" (14 CCR § 15130(a)(1)). According to CEQA, an EIR must discuss cumulative impacts if the incremental effect of a project, combined with the effects of other projects is "cumulatively considerable" (14 CCR § 15130(a)). Together, these projects compose the cumulative scenario which forms the basis of the cumulative impact analysis.

Cumulative impacts analysis should highlight past actions that are closely related either in time or location to the Project being considered, catalogue past projects, and discuss how they have harmed the

environment and discuss past actions even if they were undertaken by another agency or another person. Both the severity of impacts and the likelihood of their occurrence are to be reflected in the discussion, "but the discussion need not provide as great detail as is provided for the effects attributable to the Project alone. The discussion should be guided by standards of practicality and reasonableness, and should focus on the cumulative impact to which the identified other projects contribute rather than the attributes of other projects which do not contribute to the cumulative impact" (14 CCR § 15130(b)).

For purposes of this EIR, the Project would cause a cumulatively considerable and therefore significant cumulative impact if:

- The cumulative effects of other past, current, and probable future projects without the Project are not significant and the Project's incremental impact is substantial enough, when added to the cumulative effects, to result in a significant impact.
- The cumulative effects of other past, current, and probable future projects without the Project are already significant and the Project would result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to the already significant effect. The standards used herein to determine whether the contribution is cumulatively considerable include the existing baseline environmental conditions, and whether the Project would cause a substantial increase in impacts, or otherwise exceed an established threshold of significance.

The approach and geographic scope of the cumulative impact evaluation vary depending on the environmental topic area being analyzed. The individual "Cumulative Impacts" subsections within each environmental topic present impacts and mitigation measures for the Project. Each section of the DEIR begins with a summary of the approach and the geographic area relevant to that environmental topic area. For most environmental topic areas, the list approach is used. The list of potentially relevant projects as well as methodology and relevant planning documents are discussed in each impact section's discussion of "Cumulative Impacts."

The cumulative analysis must be in sufficient detail to be useful to the decision-maker in deciding whether, or how, to alter the Project to lessen cumulative impacts. ***Table 3-1: Cumulative Projects*** provides a list of projects that were used in assessing the potential for cumulative impacts from the Project. Most of the projects included in the cumulative analysis are undergoing, or will be required to undergo, their own independent environmental review under CEQA. Significant adverse impacts of the cumulative projects would be required to be reduced, avoided, or minimized through the application and implementation of mitigation measures. The net effect of these mitigation measures is assumed to be a general lessening of contribution to cumulative impacts. This discussion, found at the end of each impact section, provides an analysis of overall cumulative effects of the Project taken together with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable probable future projects.

GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE

In respect to this EIR analysis, cumulative effects can generally be geographically classified as localized, site-specific resource issues, regional, watershed level resource issues and global resource issues. At the localized, site-specific resource scale, the Project's cumulative impacts have been analyzed for all 16 resource topics.

Each of the cumulative impact categories (EIR ***Section 3.0***) is analyzed and regulated by different agencies and associated regulatory or policy documents, in order to best protect the resource in question. The analysis of cumulative effects considers a number of variables, including geographic (spatial) limits, time (temporal) limits, and the characteristics of the resource being evaluated. The geographic scope of each analysis is based on the topography surrounding the Project site and the natural boundaries of the resource affected, rather than jurisdictional boundaries. The geographic scope of cumulative effects will often extend beyond the scope of the direct effects, but not beyond the scope of the direct and indirect effects of the Project. The EIR addresses the Project's potentially significant impacts, recommends Project-specific mitigation measures, and then also identifies existing or recommended measures to address potential cumulative impacts.

CUMULATIVE ANALYSIS APPROACH

There are two commonly used approaches, or methodologies, for establishing the cumulative impact setting or scenario. One approach is to use a "list of past, present, and probable future projects producing related or cumulative impacts including, if necessary, those projects outside the control of the agency, …" (14 CCR § 15130(b)(1)(A) and PCR § 21083(b)(2)). The other is to use a "summary of projections contained in an adopted local, regional or statewide plan, or related planning document, that describes or evaluates conditions contributing to the cumulative effect" (14 CCR § 15130(b)(1)(B) and PCR § 21100(e)).

This EIR uses the list-based approach plus the "previously certified EIR" approach ("hybrid approach") to provide a broad understanding and context for analyzing the cumulative effects of a project.

From a broad perspective, the Project is situated adjacent to State Route 60 (SR-60) at Potrero Boulevard, in a rapidly developing portion of northwest City of Beaumont. The Project represents a "high-cube" logistics warehouse building of approximately 577,920-square feet on approximately 32 acres. The warehouse would include two office spaces that would total approximately 20,000-square feet and would be located on the southeast and northeast corners of the proposed warehouse. The Project would include other associated facilities and improvements such as a perimeter fencing, parking, onsite and perimeter landscaping, lighting, and exterior sidewalks.

Specific cumulative projects were developed in consultation with City staff and incorporated into the Project Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) (refer to ***Section 3.13, Transportation***, and ***Appendix K***). TIA page 20 specifically shows the cumulative projects used in the traffic study, which were then factored into the cumulative analysis for related quantitative environmental issues such as air quality and noise. The cumulative projects are listed below:

1. Beaumont General Plan Update (Beaumont 2040 Plan)
2. SR-60/ Potrero Boulevard Interchange Project
3. Southern California Association of Governments 2020 RTP/SCS EIR

Taken together, the projects identified above and included in the TIA cumulative analysis, together with previously certified local and regional planning program EIRs, provide context as to the nature of potential cumulative projects. The intent of the cumulative impact discussions is to provide sufficient information to inform decision-makers and the public, rather than "tiering" off of prior CEQA documents for cumulative impacts.

TYPES OF PROJECTS CONSIDERED

Impacts associated with implementation of the Project would be near- and long-term as the Project would include future construction and operational activities associated with the Project buildout. The following project summaries represent past, present and probable future projects that could result in cumulative impacts when combined with the Project. Related projects and other possible development in the Project area determined as having the potential to interact with the proposed Project to the extent that a significant cumulative effect may occur are outlined in ***Table 3-1: Cumulative Projects***.

Table 3-1: Cumulative Projects

Project Name	Project Summary
Cumulative Local Projects	
Beaumont General Plan Update (Beaumont 2040 Plan)	The City of Beaumont prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the City of Beaumont General Plan Update (Beaumont 2040 Plan, proposed Project) in accordance with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Notice of Preparation (NOP) was circulated in March 2018 and a Scoping Meeting was held on March 13, 2018. The Beaumont 2040 Plan (the proposed Project) is a comprehensive update of the City's General Plan, and provides a vision for the future of Beaumont over the next 20 to 30 years. The General Plan functions as a guide to the type of community that Beaumont citizens desire, and provides the means by which that desired future can be achieved. The General Plan addresses a range of immediate, mid-, and long-term issues with which the community is concerned. The General Plan is intended to allow land use and policy determinations to be made within a comprehensive framework that incorporates public health, safety, and "quality of life" considerations in a manner that recognizes resource limitations and the fragility of the community's natural environment. In preparing the Beaumont 2040 Plan and planning for the future of the City, it will be important for the City to closely coordinate with neighboring jurisdictions and regional agencies in order to plan for sustainable community growth. Land uses within the City's Planning Area may include a combination of undeveloped, developing and developed properties.
SR-60/ Potrero Boulevard Interchange Project	The SR-60/Potrero Boulevard Interchange Project is on SR-60 in the City of Beaumont (between Jack Rabbit Trail and the Interstate 10/SR-60 Junction) and includes a new 6-lane Potrero Boulevard overcrossing (3-lanes in each direction) with a temporary connection to Western Knolls Avenue. The City will also construct interim project Phase 1A which includes a deceleration lane and acceleration lane along westbound SR-60 at the Western Knolls Avenue access point (west). Phase 2 of the interchange includes the design and construction of a six ramp, partial cloverleaf interchange. The six ramp interchange would consist of four on-ramps and two off-ramps.
Cumulative Regional Projects	
Southern California Association of Governments 2020 RTP/SCS EIR	The 2020 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) contains regional transportation investments and integrated land use strategies. The 2020 RTP/SCS includes a vision, goals, guiding policies and performance measures developed through extensive outreach to the general public and stakeholders across the region. The 2020 RTP/SCS is intended to build upon the progress made since the 2016 RTP/SCS while recognizing the current conditions of land use and transportation throughout the region as well as developments and technologies since the adoption of the 2016 RTP/SCS.