

X. SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

An EIR must identify any significant irreversible environmental changes that would be caused by the proposed project being analyzed. Irreversible environmental changes may include current or future commitments to the use of non-renewable resources, or secondary or growth-inducing impacts that commit future generations to similar uses. Irreversible commitments of resources should be evaluated to assure that such current consumption is justified.¹ The *CEQA Guidelines* describe three categories of significant irreversible changes that should be considered, as further detailed below.

A. CHANGES IN LAND USE WHICH WOULD COMMIT FUTURE GENERATIONS

As described throughout this EIR, the Baseball Stadium in the Diridon/Arena Area Project would allow for the redevelopment and intensification of land uses in an area that is underutilized. This land use change would occur in the form of infill development of urbanized parcels that have been developed since the late 1800s. In the same manner that the current uses and structures are being proposed for redevelopment after years of usefulness, so too could a baseball stadium undergo renovation or change after another 50 to 100 years. In this way, the proposed project would commit 2 to 3 generations to this land use change. Such a commitment would not constitute a significant adverse effect.

B. IRREVERSIBLE CHANGES FROM ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIONS

The loss of a historic structure from the project site and the alteration of the character of an adjacent historic structure would result in a significant irreversible change in the environment. As discussed in Section V.J, Cultural and Paleontological Resources, these are significant unavoidable impact of the proposed project.

The only other irreversible changes to the physical environment that could occur as a result of a project like this one would stem from the accidental release of hazardous materials associated with development. However, compliance with hazardous materials regulations and policies, and the remediation of existing conditions within the project site, as outlined in Chapter V.I, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, are expected to maintain this potential impact at a less-than-significant level. No other irreversible changes – such as those which might result from construction of a large-scale mining project, a hydroelectric dam project, or other industrial project – would result from development of a baseball stadium.

¹ *CEQA Guidelines*, 2005, Section 15126.2(c).

C. CONSUMPTION OF NONRENEWABLE RESOURCES

Consumption of nonrenewable resources includes increased energy consumption, conversion of agricultural lands to urban uses, and lost access to mineral reserves. No agricultural lands would be converted and no access to mining reserves would be lost with construction of the proposed project. The project would redevelop underutilized parcels and construct public infrastructure and amenities and expand an entertainment serving district on the western side of the Greater Downtown Area. While this would require additional energy of several types for construction and for on-going use, it would not require the construction of major new lines to deliver energy, and service providers anticipate being able to provide the capacity to serve these levels of development. Furthermore, to the extent that growth throughout San Jose is partly an expression of regional demand, the redevelopment of existing neighborhoods would represent a more efficient allocation of non-renewable resources than would some other types or patterns of growth.