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## 5.0 INTRODUCTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS AND ASSUMPTIONS USED

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The following is an introduction to the project-specific and cumulative impacts environmental analysis. The reader is referred to the individual technical sections of the Draft EIR regarding specific methodology and significance criteria used in the analysis.

### 5.1 ANALYSIS ASSUMPTIONS GENERALLY USED TO EVALUATE THE IMPACTS OF THE PROJECT

#### BASELINE ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS ASSUMED IN THE DRAFT EIR

Section 15125(a) of the CEQA Guidelines requires that an EIR include a description of the physical environmental conditions in the vicinity of the project, as they exist at the time the Notice of Preparation (NOP) is published. The CEQA Guidelines also specify that this description of the physical environmental conditions is to serve as the baseline physical conditions by which a lead agency determines whether impacts of a project are considered significant.

The environmental setting conditions of the project site and the surrounding area are described in detail in the technical sections of Draft EIR (see Sections 5.1 through 5.12). In general, these setting discussions describe the setting conditions of the project site and the surrounding area as they existed when the NOP for the project was released in July 2005.

#### GENERAL PLAN CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS

As required by CEQA Guidelines 15125(d), each technical section of the EIR (Sections 5.1 through 5.13) has been evaluated for consistency with policies contained in the existing Elk Grove General Plan (amended 2005).

#### PROJECT CONSTRUCTION EFFECTS

Section 3.0 (Project Description) provides a description of anticipated construction activities associated with the proposed project. The environmental analysis addresses potential significant impacts from the direct effects of construction at the project site, and indirect impacts associated with the proposed construction staging areas, fill areas, and construction traffic.

#### PROJECT BUILDOUT ASSUMPTIONS

For the purposes of the environmental analysis, it is assumed that the buildout of the project site would occur against current conditions, and would be built by 2006. No phasing is proposed. Project operational impacts, such as traffic, air quality, and noise are evaluated in the technical sections of the EIR (Sections 5.1 through 5.12).

#### APPROACH TO THE CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS

##### **Definition of Cumulative Setting**

CEQA Guidelines Section 15130 requires that EIRs include an analysis of the cumulative impacts of a project when the project's effect is considered cumulatively considerable. In general, the cumulative setting conditions considered in this Draft EIR are based on the existing land use plans provided by the City of Elk Grove (General Plan and Zoning Ordinance) and proposed and approved development and roadway projects in the area. Section 6.0 (Cumulative Impacts Summary) provides a summary of the cumulative impacts associated with the development of the proposed project.