

Attachment A: Statement of Overriding Considerations

Statement of Overriding Considerations

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires the lead agency to balance the benefits of a proposed project against its unavoidable environmental risks in determining whether to approve the project.

The City of Hesperia (City) proposes to approve the Hesperia General Plan Update (project) although significant and unavoidable adverse impacts are expected to occur related to Air Quality, which include exceeding the Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District (MDAQMD) thresholds for VOC, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5}; violation of an ambient air quality standard; and contribute to cumulatively considerable air quality impacts. In addition, the proposed project will result in significant effects after the implementation of feasible mitigation measures for noise impacts, which includes permanent increase in ambient noise levels and cumulative increase in ambient noise levels. Additionally, the proposed Project will result in significant effects after the implementation of feasible mitigation measures for traffic, which includes exceeding LOS thresholds and cumulatively exceeding Level of Service (LOS) thresholds.

These significant adverse unavoidable impacts have been identified and evaluated in the Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Even though these adverse impacts are not reduced to a level considered less than significant, the City finds, after balancing these impacts with the benefits of the project, that those impacts are outweighed by the benefits of the project. Further, the alternatives which were identified in the Final EIR to the same extent as the proposed project would not meet either in part or in whole the project objectives.

Pursuant to Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 21081(b) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15093, the City has balanced the benefits of the proposed project against these unavoidable adverse impacts associated with the proposed project and has adopted all feasible mitigation measures with respect to the air quality, noise, traffic and climate change.

The City also has examined alternatives to the proposed project, none of which both meet the project objectives and is environmentally preferable to the proposed project. The City, after balancing the specific economic, legal, social, technological, and other benefits of the proposed project, has determined that the unavoidable adverse environmental impacts identified above may be considered “acceptable” due to the following specific considerations which outweigh the unavoidable, adverse environmental impacts of the proposed project. Each of the separate benefits of the proposed project, as stated herein, is determined to be, unto itself and independent of the other project benefits, a basis for overriding all unavoidable adverse environmental impacts identified in these Findings. The City Council and City Planning Commission have independently verified the existence of all facts stated below to justify the Statement of Overriding Considerations.

- Implementation of the General Plan Update will comply with State requirements and, more importantly, will provide the City, its residents, land owners and businesses, staff and policy makers and all stakeholders with a comprehensive, long-range policy guideline for future development.
- Implementation of the General Plan Update will serve as a foundation in making land use decisions based on goals and policies related to land use, transportation routes, population growth and distribution, development, open space, resource preservation and utilization, air and water quality, noise impacts, safety issues and other related physical, social, and economic development factors.
- Implementation of the General Plan Update will address the continuing change, growth, and development of the City of Hesperia over the next two decades and will provide a public policy framework for the future of the city.
- Implementation of the General Plan Update will comply with the State of California requirement that all counties and cities “adopt a comprehensive, long-term general plan for the physical development of the county or city, and of any land outside its boundaries which in the planning agency’s judgment bears relation to its planning” (Government Code Section 65300).
- Implementation of the General Plan Update will create a safe, efficient and balanced transportation network, improve environmental quality, encourage healthier lifestyles, and support economic development. The General Plan Update will develop a safe, efficient, convenient, and attractive transportation system throughout the community, providing links within the City and with neighboring regions, and accommodating automobile, truck, pedestrian, recreational, equestrian, rail, air, and public transit needs which will meet current and future development requirements within the planning area.
- Implementation of the General Plan Update will preserve the character of existing single-family residential neighborhoods and continue to improve the higher density neighborhoods. Diversity in the types of housing in the city is necessary to accommodate a population with varying socioeconomic needs.
- Implementation of the General Plan Update will identify resources that should be preserved, and set the foundation for preservation of these resources by utilizing a variety of tools that will promote the sustainability and environmental integrity of the City of Hesperia. The General Plan Update will establish the City's priorities as they relate to natural, historical and paleontological resources and outline the means for their preservation.
- Implementation of the General Plan Update will preserve existing open space and other undeveloped natural resources and to identify specific criteria in the future selection of open

space and recreational facilities. The General Plan Update will help mitigate the conflict between development and construction with the preservation and use of natural resources, a conflict which has challenged the City to better preserve and manage its natural resources as the city continues to grow.

- Implementation of the General Plan Update will promote and support economic development to provide jobs in concert with future population growth.
- Implementation of the General Plan Update will regulate development so that the density of residential development and the intensity of non-residential development are appropriate to the property and to surrounding properties and neighborhood.
- Implementation of the General Plan Update will protect and enhance the quality of life by ensuring residential development is visually pleasing and compatible with existing uses and neighborhoods as well as the natural desert environment.
- Implementation of the General Plan Update will provide a guide for City recommendations to San Bernardino County regarding development proposals within the sphere of influence.
- Implementation of the General Plan Update will provide the land use and policy framework for pre-zoning, infrastructure master planning to facilitate the orderly annexation of sphere areas into the corporate boundaries of the City.