

***5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING, IMPACTS,  
AND MITIGATION MEASURES***

## 5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING, IMPACTS, AND MITIGATION MEASURES

This chapter contains an analysis of the environmental topics identified by Sonoma County's scoping process for the EIR (Initial Study and Notice of Preparation) described in *Chapter 1.0 Introduction*. Environmental topics addressed in this chapter include:

- 5.1 Land Use
- 5.2 Traffic and Circulation
- 5.3 Noise
- 5.4 Air Quality
- 5.5 Hydrology and Water Quality
- 5.6 Biological Resources
- 5.7 Geology and Soils
- 5.8 Visual and Aesthetic Quality
- 5.9 Cultural Resources
- 5.10 Public Services
- 5.11 Hazardous Materials

Sections 5.1 through 5.11 of this chapter describe existing environmental conditions as they relate to each specific topic, identify potential impacts from implementing the *Wolf House Inn*, and present mitigation measures required to reduce significant adverse impacts to a less-than-significant level. Where relevant, cumulative impacts of project buildout combined with other growth elsewhere in the study area are described in Sections 5.1 through 5.11, as discussed in *Section 3.3 Cumulative Development Assumptions*. Cumulative impacts are further discussed in *Section 7.2 Cumulative Impacts*.

### FORMAT OF TOPICAL ANALYSES

Each of the topical impact assessments in this EIR (Sections 5.1 through 5.11) are organized as follows:

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#### **Environmental Setting**

Existing conditions are described in the respective "setting" sections. These descriptions summarize information compiled during the study process to prepare the EIR. Background materials used in the EIR are referenced in footnotes and listed in *Section 8.3 Bibliography*.

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#### **Significance Criteria**

Standards used to evaluate the magnitude of impacts are listed in the "significance criteria" subsections for each topic analyzed. Under CEQA, a *significant effect* is defined as a substantial or potentially substantial adverse change in the environment - namely, in any of the "physical conditions within the area affected by the project including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise, and objects of historic or aesthetic significance". The *State CEQA Guidelines* direct that the

significance of impact be determined on the basis of scientific and factual data. The significance criteria were derived from the following main sources: the *State CEQA Guidelines*, *Sonoma County General Plan*, environmental documents prepared recently on other projects in Sonoma County, and the professional standards and practices of the technical analysts who conducted the EIR evaluations.

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## ***Impacts and Mitigation Measures***

The “impacts and mitigation” subsections identify the level and type of impacts that are likely to result from implementation of the *Wolf House Inn*.

All impacts are numbered consecutively by topic. Based on the significance criteria, each impact is identified as being either a ***Significant Impact*** or a ***Less-than-Significant Impact***. Significant impacts are followed by feasible mitigation measures that are available to reduce the magnitude of impact. No mitigation measures are required for less-than-significant impacts. Mitigation measures also are numbered to correspond to the respective impacts.

For each significant impact where a feasible mitigation is identified, a conclusion is provided as to whether with the incorporation of the recommended mitigation measure the impact would be reduced to a less-than-significant level or whether it would be a ***Significant Unavoidable Impact***. A significant unavoidable impact is a significant impact which cannot feasibly be avoided with mitigation. These include impacts which could be partly mitigated but could not be reduced to a less-than-significant level.

For each significant unavoidable impact identified in the Final EIR, Sonoma County would be required to adopt Findings and a Statement of Overriding Considerations explaining the reasons for approving the project (if approved) despite the impacts identified.