

CHAPTER 8.0

EFFECTS FOUND NOT TO BE SIGNIFICANT

Based on the NOP dated April 1, 2003 (see Appendix 2.1), it was determined that the proposed Downtown Community Plan would not have a significant impact to the following: biological resources, mineral resources, and agricultural resources.

8.1 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The downtown planning area is the urban core of San Diego and covers an area which serves high-rise commercial office, hotel and multi-family residential uses; major facilities such as Petco Park, the Convention Center, and the Civic Center; retail and entertainment centers including Horton Plaza, the Gaslamp District and Seaport Village; government and institutional uses; and, light industrial uses. This highly urbanized setting is almost entirely lacking in native vegetation and its associated wildlife. Ornamental trees, parkways, occasional lawns, and gardens comprise the only perennial vegetation within the downtown planning area. The value of these ornamentals to native wildlife are insignificant in their present location. Where vacant lots and exposed strips of soil are left undisturbed, weedy annual herbs and grasses have become established. Furthermore, no sensitive plant or animal resources have been identified within the downtown planning area due to its urbanized character. Thus, there would be no change to the diversity of species of plants and animals; reduction in the numbers of rare or unique plants or animals; introduction of new species; reduction in the acreage of an agricultural crop; or deterioration of existing habitats as a result of the proposed Downtown Community Plan.

As discussed Chapter 5.9, the proposed Plan would include a number of measures to control urban runoff effects on San Diego Bay. Thus, the proposed Plan would not result in significant impacts to marine plants and animals.

8.2 MINERAL RESOURCES

The downtown planning area has been urbanized since the early part of the 20th Century. The potential for viable extraction of mineral resources is limited due to the urbanized character of the area. Furthermore, the area has not been designated as having a high potential for mineral resources. Therefore, no impacts to mineral resources would occur as a result of the proposed Downtown Community Plan.

8.3 AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

The downtown planning area does not contain land that is designated as prime agricultural soils by the Soils Conservation Service, nor does it contain prime farmlands designated by the California Department of Conservation. Furthermore, the area is not subject to nor is near a Williamson Act Contract pursuant to Section 51201 of the California Government Code. Therefore, no impacts to agricultural resources would occur with implementation of the proposed Downtown Community Plan.