

## SECTION 6 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

This section of the EIR analyzes potential impacts of reasonably foreseeable growth, including the proposed CEQA Project. The State CEQA Guidelines § 15355 defines cumulative impacts as “two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts ...” The State CEQA Guidelines § 15130, as revised October 26, 1998, states that the discussion of cumulative impacts shall reflect the severity of the impacts and their likelihood of occurrence, but the discussion need not provide as great a detail as is provided for the effects attributable to the Project alone. The discussion should be guided by the standards of practicality and reasonableness and should focus on the cumulative impact to which the identified other projects contribute rather than the attributes of other projects which do not contribute to the cumulative impact. The following elements are necessary in an adequate discussion of cumulative impacts:

- (1) Either:
  - a. A list of relevant past, present and probable future projects, producing related or cumulative impacts, including, if necessary, those projects outside the control of the Agency, or
  - b. A summary of projections contained in an adopted general plan or related planning document, or in a prior environmental document which has been adopted or certified, which described or evaluated regional or areawide conditions contributing to the cumulative impact. Any such planning document shall be referenced and made available to the public at a location specified by the lead agency. When utilizing a list, as suggested in paragraph (1) of subdivision (b), factors to consider when determining whether to include a related project should include the nature of each environmental resource being examined, the location of the project and its type.
    - i. “Probable future projects” may be limited to those projects requiring an agency approval for an application which has been received at the time the notice of preparation is released, unless abandoned by the applicant; projects included in an adopted capital improvements program, general plan, regional transportation plan, or other similar plan; projects included in a summary of projections or projects (or development areas designated) in a previously approved project (e.g., a subdivision); or those public agency projects for which money has been budgeted.
    - ii. Lead agencies should define the geographic scope of the area affected by the cumulative effect and provide a reasonable explanation for the geographic limitation used.

- (2) A summary of the expected environmental effects to be produced by those projects with specific reference to additional information stating where that information is available.
- (3) A reasonable analysis of the cumulative impacts of the relevant projects. An EIR shall examine reasonable, feasible options for mitigation or avoiding the project's contribution to any significant cumulative effects.
- (4) With some projects, the only feasible mitigation for cumulative impacts may involve the adoption of ordinance or regulations rather than the imposition of conditions on a project-by-project basis.

Cumulative impacts may be discussed in terms of Project impacts, in combination with impacts anticipated for future development (including approved and planned development within the Project area and surrounding affected area). The geographic area for each impact varies, depending on the nature of the impact, whether it is regional, such as air quality, or local, such as noise.

Quantification can be difficult for cumulative impacts, as it requires speculative estimates of impacts including, but not limited to, the following: the geographic diversity of impacts (impacts of future development may affect different areas); variations in time of impacts (many of the Project's and future development impacts, particularly those that are short-term, would occur at different times, and would be reduced or removed before other short-term impacts occurred); and data for future development may change following subsequent approvals. However, every attempt has been made herein to make sound qualitative judgements of the combined effects of, and relationship between, land uses and potential impacts.

The purpose of this section is to revisit and then validate, modify and/or update, based on new information made available following completion of the DODHF Novato Disposal and Reuse EIS, the four resource categories that have been evaluated in detail in this EIR including noise, air quality and hazardous materials. Because the cumulative traffic and circulation impacts of the proposed CEQA Project have been analyzed in detail in Section 5-1 of this document, this analysis has not been repeated in this Section. All other cumulative environmental issues have been adequately analyzed in the EIS.

Pursuant to the State CEQA Guidelines § 15130(1), the cumulative impacts analysis contained herein is based on a summary of buildout projections contained in the City of Novato General Plan. The General Plan states that total estimated buildout will include, beyond existing built and vested Projects, 5,465 residential dwelling units, 3,372,103 square feet of commercial uses, 2,080,229 square feet of industrial uses and 1,253,848 square feet of office uses. As noted in Sections 1 and 2 of this EIR, the Reuse Plan has been incorporated into the Novato General Plan. As such, the proposed CEQA Project and the NHP Master Plan Area are included in the General Plan Buildout projections.

## **6.2 PROPOSED AND APPROVED PROJECTS IN AREA**

A discussion of proposed and approved projects in the area is included herein to provide consistency with the DODHF Novato Disposal and Reuse EIS cumulative impacts analysis. The individual projects discussed hereafter are those projects located within proximity to the Project Area. The list of cumulative projects addressed in the EIS has been updated to reflect the current status of relevant past, present and probable future projects. Eight major projects are located in the Project vicinity that could contribute, when combined with the proposed CEQA Project, to cumulative impacts. These projects include the New Hamilton Partnership (NHP) Master Plan development, the Bel Marin Keys Unit 5 development, the Buck Center for Research in Aging, the disposal and reuse of the Hamilton Army Airfield property, the Black Point Project, transfer of the Spanish Housing area to the USCG, the St. Vincent's/Silveira Project and the Novato Redevelopment Project No.1. Exhibit 6-1, *Location of Proposed and Approved Projects in Area* illustrates the approximate location of the projects described below. The following is a summary of these projects.

### **New Hamilton Partnership (NHP) Master Plan**

Located immediately adjacent to the DODHF Novato, this 415-acre master plan project includes the development of approximately 1,043 dwelling units (including 142 senior assisted-living units) and between 600,000 and 800,000 square feet of commercial and office space. A Master Plan for the NHP properties was approved by the Novato City Council in May 1994 (refer to Exhibit 4-5 included in Section 4 of this report). The NHP Master Plan Area properties were transferred from the Army to the New Hamilton Partnership in a series of conveyances commencing in June 1995 and expected to be completed in April 1999.

The NHP Master Plan included the following uses on the site: residential, retail/commercial center, flex/office space, rehabilitated offices, campus offices, open space, wetlands, and open space/park lands. Phase I of the Master Plan Project, which generally includes the area south of Main Gate Road, commenced in July 1995 and is currently under construction. Buildout of Phase I is anticipated to be completed in the year 2000. Phase II of the Master Plan Project, which generally includes the area north of Main Gate Road, commenced in August 1997. Full buildout of the NHP Master Plan Area is anticipated to occur in the year 2001.

### **Bel Marin Keys Unit 5**

The Bel Marin Keys Unit 5 project is located immediately northeast of the Hamilton Army Airfield. This project includes 796 residential dwelling units, a neighborhood commercial center, an 18-hole golf course,

Exhibit 6-1

*Location of Proposed and Approved Projects in Area*

a social center, a marina, a habitat enhancement program, and related roadway and other infrastructure facilities. The development is proposed to be situated around a 463-acre expansion of the existing lagoon that currently serves Bel Marin Keys Units 3 and 4. A development application was submitted for this project in early 1996 but was deemed incomplete by the County of Marin. Area planners have indicated that the development, if approved, would likely include fewer residential units.

### **Buck Center for Research in Aging**

The Buck Center for Research in Aging is located adjacent to the City of Novato northern limits west of U.S. 101. The project includes a 350,000 square foot research facility and 135 housing units for research assistants and personnel. The Marin County Board of Supervisors approved the facility in 1995. The City of Novato voters approved the project and the initiative to annex the area to the City of Novato with passage of Proposition B in February 1996. The facility is approximately 95 percent complete and is partially occupied.

### **Hamilton Army Airfield - Disposal and Reuse**

Located immediately northeast of Spanish Housing, the Officers' Club, the Town Center, and the Ballfields, this action by the U.S. Army includes disposal and reuse of the Hamilton Army Airfield. This parcel contains the historic airfield and a number of other associated structures. The proposed project would restore approximately 900 acres of the site to salt marsh wetlands by breaching the existing levee system adjacent to San Pablo Bay and allowing bay tidal flows to inundate the airfield parcel. The area to be restored to wetlands will not include the hangars located on the Hamilton Army Airfield parcel. The hangars are proposed for adaptive reuse as office/commercial uses as part of the NHP Master Plan. All buildings and structures on the site will be removed by the Coastal Conservancy before the levees are breached. Over a period of 10 to 20 years, salt marsh wetlands would be created by natural tidal action.

### **Hospital Hill**

Hospital Hill is administered by the U.S. Army. This Planning Area is not included in the portion of DODHF Novato to be conveyed to the City of Novato and is not to be conveyed to the Master Developer.

### **Transfer of Spanish Housing to USCG**

The ownership of land and facilities in the 142-acre Spanish Housing Planning Area of DODHF Novato is proposed to be transferred from the Navy to the USCG. The USCG proposes to use the 282 residential units on this site to house personnel working in the San Francisco Bay area.

### **Black Point Project**

The Black Point project is located south of State Route 37 near Atherton Avenue and Harbor Drive. This project has been approved for 53 single-family residences, an 18-hole championship golf course, a clubhouse, and a 64 acre wildlife preserve. The golf course and clubhouse are currently under construction.

### **St. Vincent's/Silveira Project**

The St. Vincent's Silveira project is located on a 1,200 acre site immediately east of the Capehart/Hillside Housing Planning Area and south of the USCG Spanish Housing Planning Area. This proposed project involves the annexation of 2,100 dwelling units and 350,000 square feet of commercial uses from the County of Marin to the City of San Rafael. The existing St. Vincent's school would remain during and after implementation of this project.

### **Novato Redevelopment Project #1**

Located east of U.S. 101 between SR 37 and Novato Creek, the Novato Redevelopment Project #1 has designated 400-acres as a redevelopment area. The project area was established to re-plan and reuse a previously underutilized area in order to increase employment opportunities and to provide public improvements. The redevelopment Project includes five parcels of land. One parcel, Vintage Oaks, is built out as the Vintage Oaks Shopping Center, and another parcel, Rowland Plaza, is fully built out. The EIR for the Redevelopment Plan and the shopping center evaluated cumulative impacts of the redevelopment project buildout.

## **6.3 CUMULATIVE ANALYSIS**

The proposed CEQA Project, in conjunction with other major military and nonmilitary projects in the region, would result in cumulative impacts to several resources. The cumulative impacts of the proposed Project were evaluated in the *Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Disposal and Reuse of the Department of Defense Housing Facility Novato, California* (November 1997). The Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) concluded that some of the cumulative impacts, such as land use and socioeconomics, would be beneficial for the local area. Other impacts were expected to be fully or partially offset through the conditions placed on Projects during the planning process or specific mitigation measures. The only significant and unavoidable cumulative impacts identified in the FEIS were related to traffic and circulation. Potential cumulative impacts anticipated with development of the proposed CEQA Project, in combination with the City of Novato General Plan Buildout projections, are discussed below.

### **6.3.1 AIR QUALITY**

For air quality, the cumulative region of influence is the San Francisco Bay Area. The proposed CEQA Project would contribute traffic to the local and regional transportation system, thereby contributing to the cumulative air quality degradation in the Project area. Vehicle travel associated with the proposed CEQA Project would produce a net increase in Nitrogen Oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) and reactive organic compound emissions that would exceed the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) impact significance threshold of 80 pounds of ozone precursor pollutants per day. No feasible mitigation exists to reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level. Although this would be an unavoidable Project-specific significant impact, the added emissions would not cause any measurable change in the location, magnitude, or frequency of high ozone concentrations. Consequently, although adding to cumulative air emissions in the region of influence, the proposed CEQA Project would not affect the Bay Area's attainment status for ozone. Because the cumulative conditions anticipated in the region would not substantially differ from those anticipated in the General Plan Buildout projections and the DODHF Novato Disposal and Reuse EIS, the air quality impact conclusions of the EIS would remain unchanged.

### **6.3.2 NOISE**

As identified in the DODHF Novato Disposal and Reuse Final EIS, the proposed Project would contribute traffic to the local and regional transportation system, thereby contributing to the cumulative noise level in the Project area. The proposed Project was included in the Preferred General Plan EIR Buildout scenario traffic analysis. Traffic-related noise impacts associated with General Plan Buildout were adequately addressed in the Preferred General Plan EIR, which concluded that traffic-related noise impacts would be considered less than significant. Cumulative traffic levels associated with the proposed CEQA Project would be less than were analyzed under the Preferred General Plan EIR scenario and approved with the 1996 General Plan. Thus, Project noise related to traffic would not contribute significantly to cumulative noise levels. The significant noise impacts associated with the Project would result from residents of reuse housing being exposed to existing sources of noise on U.S. 101 which are significantly greater than the land use compatibility noise level guidelines provided in the General Plan. This is a Project-specific impact that would not add to cumulative noise levels. Because the cumulative conditions anticipated in the region would not substantially differ from those anticipated in the General Plan Buildout projections and the DODHF Novato Disposal and Reuse EIS, the noise impact conclusions of the EIS would remain unchanged.

### **6.3.3 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS/RISK OF UPSET**

The cleanup of hazardous materials and waste between closure of the DODHF Novato and buildout of the proposed CEQA Project, in conjunction with cumulative base conversion projects throughout the Bay Area

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regions, would have a beneficial impact on the regional environment. All contaminated areas would be remediated by the Navy to levels protective of human health and the environment. Because the cumulative conditions anticipated in the region would not substantially differ from those assumed in the General Plan Buildout projections and the DODHF Novato Disposal and Reuse EIS, the hazardous materials and waste impact conclusions of the EIS would remain unchanged.