

## **CHAPTER 3.0**

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### **EXISTING SETTING**

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CEQA Guidelines §15360 (Public Resources Code Section 21060.5) defines “environment” as “the physical conditions that exist within the area which will be affected by a proposed project including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise, and objects of historical or aesthetic significance.” According to CEQA Guidelines §15125 (a), a CEQA document must include a description of the physical environment in the vicinity of the project, as it exists at the time the Notice of Preparation (NOP) is published from both a local and regional perspective. This environmental setting will normally constitute the baseline physical conditions by which a lead agency determines whether an impact is significant. The description of the environmental setting shall be no longer than is necessary to provide an understanding of the significant effects of the proposed project and its alternatives. Since this [CEQA document](#) is a programmatic EIR that covers the SCAQMD’s entire jurisdiction, the existing setting for each category of impact is described on a regional level.

The following subchapters describe the existing environmental setting for those environmental areas identified in the Initial Study (see Appendix A) that could be adversely affected by the proposed project. These areas include the following [topics](#): aesthetics; air quality; energy; hazards [and hazardous materials](#); hydrology and water quality; land use [and planning](#); noise; solid and hazardous waste [management](#); and, transportation and traffic.