

### 3.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Chapter 3.0 sets forth the affected environment and addresses the environmental consequences of the Proposed Action and alternatives with respect to 15 environmental topic areas. The discussions of the affected environment describe the present physical conditions, or the baseline conditions, within the area of the Proposed Action and alternatives. Generally, the baseline used for the analysis of environmental impacts under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) reflects the conditions present at or about the time this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was initiated.

The area, or region of influence, is defined for each environmental topic based on the extent of physical resources that may be affected directly or indirectly by the Proposed Action and alternatives, applying appropriate guidelines of regulatory agencies or common professional practice. Table 3-1 summarizes the environmental topic areas and associated regions of influence described in this San Francisco Veterans Affairs Medical Center (SFVAMC) Long Range Development Plan (LRDP) EIS.

**Table 3-1: Environmental Issues and Region of Influence for the SFVAMC Long Range Development Plan**

<b>Environmental Issue</b>	<b>Region of Influence</b>
Aesthetics	Project site and viewsheds to/from the project site
Air Quality	San Francisco Bay Area Air Basin
Community Services	Project site and contiguous communities
Cultural Resources	Project site
Floodplains, Wetlands, and Coastal Management	Project site and associated floodplains, wetlands, and coastal zone designations
Geology and Soils	Project site and San Francisco region
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Global
Hydrology and Water Quality	Project site and associated subbasins
Land Use	Project site and adjacent land uses
Noise	Project site and traffic study areas
Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice	Communities contiguous with the project site and San Francisco Bay Area
Solid and Hazardous Materials	Project site and surrounding areas
Transportation and Parking	City of San Francisco in the vicinity of the project site
Utilities	Project site and contiguous communities
Wildlife and Habitat	Project site and contiguous wildlife corridors

The potential impacts of the Proposed Action and alternatives are compared against the future No Action conditions for each environmental resource.

Each of the three alternatives (including the No Action Alternative) is analyzed from the viewpoint of these 15 environmental topic areas. Indirect impacts are discussed only for those topics where they have the potential to occur (e.g., air quality, biological resources, cultural resources).

Impacts are analyzed and the findings are included in this EIS, applying the following levels of significance:

- Adverse impact
- Minor impact
- No impact
- Beneficial impact

Adverse impacts are defined in terms of context and intensity. Context is related to the uniqueness of a resource. Intensity refers to the severity of the impact. Best management practices are incorporated into the project to limit the potential for an adverse impact. Where necessary, mitigation measures are identified for adverse impacts to limit the degree or magnitude of the action; rectify the impact by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the affected environment; or compensate for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments.