CHAPTER 5.0
IMPACTS FOUND NOT TO BE SIGNIFICANT

The environmental process requires that the Lead Agency for a proposed project, in this case the City of Dana Point, prepare a Notice of Preparation (NOP), which describes the proposed project and summarizes the potential environmental impacts that could result from the implementation of the proposed project. In accordance with Section 15060(d) of the State CEQA Guidelines, an initial study (IS) was not completed as part of this process because the City determined that an EIR would "... be clearly required for a project..." and CEQA provides that in cases where a Lead Agency determines an EIR will be required, they need not prepare an Initial Study. Therefore, this Environmental Impact Report has been prepared to assess potentially significant adverse impacts associated with this proposed project. The Notice of Preparation (NOP), and the supporting documentation for the proposed Pacific Coast Highway/Del Prado Avenue Phase I Street Improvement Project are provided in Appendix A of this EIR.

This section summarizes those potential impacts of the proposed Pacific Coast Highway/Del Prado Avenue Phase I Street Improvement Project that were determined not to be significant based on environmental analysis conducted for the proposed project in the initial study and/or Draft EIR.

5.1 Agricultural Resources

Project implementation will not result in the conversion of any prime or otherwise significant farmland. The entire project area is improved currently with right-of-way improvements on PCH and Del Prado. The roadways are not designated for agricultural use by the City of Dana Point. According to the Orange County Important Farmland Map, the entire area, including the project area, is designated as "Urban and Built Up Land," which encompasses land occupied by structures with a building density of at least one dwelling unit to one and one-half acres. Improvements proposed for the site will not result in any significant impacts to significant farmland.

5.2 Aesthetics

Although PCH/Del Prado (a state scenic highway) is recognized as a scenic roadway and as "type three" urbanscape corridor by the City of Dana Point, project implementation will not result in any significant landform alterations that would adversely affect the aesthetic character of the existing roadway. No heritage trees or significant rock outcroppings exist between Copper Lantern and Blue Lantern and no historic buildings or structures that exist along either arterial roadway would be adversely affected by the proposed circulation improvements.

5.3 Biological Resources

The subject property (i.e., PCH and Del Prado between Copper Lantern on the east and Blue Lantern on the west) is located within an urbanized area in the City of Dana Point. The City's Conservation/Open Space Element of the Dana Point General Plan indicates that no portion of the project area is designated as a "biologically sensitive area." Further, because the project area is covered with impervious surfaces that characterize street rights-of-way, it has no potential to support plant species considered to be of special interest by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Game, and California Native Plant Society due to both the exotic (i.e., non-native) nature of the plant species observed, and the overall highly disturbed nature of the habitats within the survey area. The entire
project areas are improved. Due to the highly disturbed nature of the project area and the existence of only non-native species occurring along the affected rights-of-way, no special status wildlife species are expected. Project implementation will result in roadway improvements to PCH and Del Prado in accordance with the Circulation Element of the Dana Point General Plan. Therefore, given the absence of sensitive plant and/or animal species and sensitive habitat, including wetlands, wildlife corridors, etc., no significant impacts to biological resources would occur. No mitigation measures are required.

5.4 Cultural Resources

The PCH and Del Prado rights-of-way that would be affected by the project have been extensively altered as a result of the construction of the existing roadway improvements and development located along those roadways. Any cultural, scientific, and/or historic resources that may have existed at one time have likely been unearthed or disturbed as a result of prior landform alteration necessary to construct PCH, Del Prado, and adjacent land uses. Although improvements to both PCH and Del Prado will be implemented as a result of the proposed project, no significant excavation and/or grading activities are anticipated that would affect areas that have not previously been altered by grading and/or development. As a result, no significant impacts to archaeological/cultural, paleontological, and/or historic resources would occur and no mitigation measures are required.

5.5 Geology and Soils

Although the two affected roadways would be subject to the effects of ground shaking associated with seismic events on one of the active faults in the region, it will be no different than baseline conditions already in existence. Project implementation would not result in potentially significant structural damage or loss of life. The roadways and related facilities will be designed in accordance with City standards. No significant impacts are anticipated. Furthermore, the project area is not characterized by adverse soils and/or a geologic unit that is or will become unstable due to project implementation. The circulation improvements would not be subject to the effects of liquefaction, landslides, or unstable conditions. Therefore, no significant impacts are anticipated. The project area is relatively flat with some undulation; but no significant slopes exist. Implementation of the proposed project will not necessitate extensive grading and excavation that would expose soils for extended periods of time while construction of the proposed project takes place. No grading will occur where significant areas of bare soils would be exposed to the elements for extended periods of time.

5.6 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Project implementation will not require any demolition of structures or other activities that could result in the release of toxic or hazardous materials (e.g., asbestos, lead-based paint, etc.) into the environs. The project will utilize diesel and gasoline fuels and related petroleum-based products to operate the construction equipment. The proposed roadway improvements will utilize materials typically used for such improvements and would not utilize toxic or hazardous materials that pose a health risk to the public, either during construction or subsequent to the completion of the improvements. Therefore, implementation of the project will not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the potential release of hazardous materials as a result of an accident. No significant impacts are anticipated as a result of project implementation. Neither the roadway nor any of the land uses located along the affected roadways are listed on any of the hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. Therefore, no significant impacts are anticipated as a result of project implementation.
5.7 Hydrology and Water Quality

After the circulation improvements are implemented, it is anticipated that the amount of impervious surfaces in this area, which has been extensively developed, will be reduced with landscaped zones approximately 28,700 square feet. As a result, the quantity and quality of the surface water runoff that will be generated will be improved from that occurring at the present time. Therefore, it is not anticipated that there would be any increase in the amount, or reduction in the quality of, surface runoff. Appropriate best management practices shall be implemented during construction (refer to Mitigation Measures) that may include, but are not limited to silt fences, street sweeping and vacuuming, storm drain inlet protection, wind erosion control, materials and water management measures, and other means of minimizing or eliminating the potential harmful pollutants, including siltation, that could result from project implementation. Post-construction best management practices will be implemented and may include, but are not limited to biofiltration, enhanced inlet filter/screening devices, drought tolerant landscaping, and water efficient irrigation systems.

As proposed, implementation of the proposed project would not substantively alter the existing drainage pattern that characterizes the project area. Although some of the construction activities could result in the potential for some erosion or siltation on- or off-site, the City of Dana Point will address these factors. The project will include all appropriate construction and post-construction Best Management Practices (BMPs) including site design, treatment control, and source control. Appropriate construction best management practices that shall be implemented (refer to Mitigation Measures) may include, but are not limited to silt fences, street sweeping and vacuuming, storm drain inlet protection, wind erosion control, materials and water management measures, and other means of minimizing or eliminating the potential harmful pollutants, including siltation, that could result from project implementation. Post-construction best management practices will be implemented and may include, but are not limited to biofiltration, enhanced inlet filter/screening devices, drought tolerant landscaping, and water efficient irrigation systems. The implementation of the BMPs will reduce the potential for erosion and siltation to a less than significant level.

The project area (i.e., PCH and Del Prado between Copper Lantern and Blue Lantern) is not located within the 100-year flood plain as delineated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) on the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) for the City of Dana Point or other areas subject to inundation identified by the City. The proposed project includes only roadway improvements to PCH and Del Prado; no residential development is proposed by the City for the project area by this project. Therefore, the improvements proposed for the two roadways will not result in the placement of housing within the 100-year flood plain area identified by FEMA or the City of Dana Point. No significant impacts are anticipated as a result of project implementation.

5.8 Mineral Resources

Neither the City’s General Plan nor the State of California has identified the site or environs as a potential location for mineral resources of State-wide, regional, or local significance. No mineral resources are known to exist. Therefore, development of the subject property as proposed will not result in the loss of any locally important mineral resource recovery sites. No significant impacts will occur as a result of project implementation.
5.9 Population and Housing

Project implementation does not include the private development of the project area for residential or other land uses that would be considered growth-inducing. The proposed circulation improvements to PCH and Del Prado have been contemplated by the City and are consistent with the Town Center plans adopted for the affected arterial roadway areas. Although utilities located in PCH and Del Prado between Copper Lantern and Blue Lantern may be relocated as necessary to accommodate the roadway improvements and irrigation water support systems installed, adequate capacity exists in the infrastructure systems that serve the existing project area (e.g., sewer, potable water, storm drainage). No additional growth would be anticipated to occur as a direct result of the street improvements proposed to PCH and/or Del Prado. The area along PCH and Del Prado between Copper Lantern and Blue Lantern is developed primarily with a variety of retail commercial and professional office uses. Any future growth that would occur in the City or project environs would be the result of zoning changes, social, and economic conditions that are conducive to development, unrelated to the proposed project, which would be anticipated to be consistent with the adopted long-range plans.

No residential structures exist within the limits of the project area and no housing will be displaced if the proposed circulation improvements are implemented. The proposed project will permit the implementation of roadway improvements that will result in improved vehicular movement and circulation along PCH and Del Prado. These improvements will not require the elimination of any residential dwelling units. Therefore, neither homes nor people will be displaced as a result of project implementation. Therefore, no significant impacts to population and housing are anticipated as a result of project implementation.

5.10 Public Services

Project implementation would not result in new development or the intensification of existing development on the site. Implementation of the proposed improvements/enhancements would not change the manner in which fire protection and police protection services are provided in the City, but could improve the response time with the installation of two-way streets, providing a more direct route to properties. During construction, it is anticipated that lanes along the affected arterial roadways (i.e., PCH and Del Prado) would be affected temporarily to accommodate construction of the proposed improvements; however, the City will require the construction contractor to provide traffic control and limit the work activities to ensure that emergency access is not adversely affected on PCH or Del Prado during the project construction. In addition, to ensure that potential impacts to emergency response by police and/or fire personnel are avoided, the proposed signals will include a preemptive device and future development occurring within the Town Center will be required to incorporate fire sprinklers in the new construction. Project plans will be reviewed by the Orange County Fire Authority and Orange County Sheriff Department.

The proposed circulation improvements do not include any development that would increase the number of school-age children (i.e., residential, commercial, industrial, etc.) and, therefore, will not directly result in potentially significant impacts because no school-age students will be added as a result of the roadway and pedestrian circulation improvements proposed by the City of Dana Point. No significant impacts are anticipated to school facilities within the Capistrano Unified School District and no mitigation measures are required. Access to the existing Montessori preschool parking lot on Del Prado will be maintained throughout the construction period and after project completion.

Implementation of the proposed project does not include any residential development that would create a demand for additional park space. Therefore, no significant impacts are anticipated and no mitigation measures are required. City evacuation plans currently anticipate using three vehicular travel lanes in each direction through Town Center. Three lanes are maintained in each direction with the proposed
plan, maintaining the current lane capacity, albeit split between PCH and Del Prado. Therefore, no adverse impact is anticipated.

5.11 Utilities

The City of Dana Point, including the project area, is located within the service area of the South Coast Water District (SCWD). The SCWD owns and maintains several sewer mains in the vicinity of the subject property, including those in PCH and Del Prado. The SCWD has a separate project for upgrading those facilities to accommodate future development anticipated in the Dana Point Town Center based on the long-term plan and zoning adopted for that area. Implementation of the proposed project does not include development that would generate additional raw sewage or create demands for additional water once the improvements have been completed. Furthermore, the proposed project would not induce additional growth within the area that would affect the adequacy either of the existing sewer and water facilities or those currently proposed by the SCWD. The sewer facilities that will be constructed by the SCWD as well as the sewage treatment plant capacity owned by SOCWA are adequate to accommodate the existing raw sewage that is generated by existing development in the project area (and that permitted within the Dana Point Town Center "buildout" parameters permitted by the approved Town Center Plan). Improvements proposed by the City for PCH and Del Prado between Copper Lantern and Blue Lantern will not result in any interruption of service and none of the existing or future facilities proposed by the SCWD would require relocation by the proposed project. Therefore, no significant impacts to the District’s ability to provide adequate sewage collection and treatment and/or domestic water supplies and service are anticipated and no mitigation measures are required.

Implementation of the proposed project would result in the generation of a modest amount of construction and/or demolition debris associated with the improvements to both PCH and Del Prado. Although some construction/demolition debris (e.g., asphalt, concrete, etc.) would be generated as a result of the circulation improvement project, the increase would not be significant and 75 percent of the construction/demolition waste must be recycled. The County landfill system (i.e., three landfill sites) has available capacity to accommodate any increase in non-recyclable solid waste resulting from project implementation. In addition, operations within the City and, therefore, in the project area, would be subject to requirements set forth by the State of California Department of Resources, Recycling & Recover to reduce solid waste, including construction debris, as required by AB939. The construction/demolition debris can be recycled, which would result in a reduction in the amount of refuse that would be landfilled. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not result in a significant impact to the provision of solid waste disposal services.