

6.0

GROWTH INDUCEMENT

6.1 Introduction

State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(d) requires that an EIR include a discussion of the ways in which a proposed project could directly or indirectly foster economic development, population growth, or additional housing, and how that growth would affect the surrounding environment. A project is considered growth inducing if it would remove obstacles to growth, or if it would stimulate economic activity within the region. For a general plan, the project is a long-term comprehensive plan to balance projected growth of population, housing, and employment with necessary public services and infrastructure. According to CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(d), “it must not be assumed that growth in any area is necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment.”

A project can have direct and/or indirect growth-inducement potential. Direct growth inducement would result if a project, for example, involved construction of new housing. A project would have indirect growth inducement potential if it would establish substantial new permanent employment opportunities (e.g., commercial, industrial, or governmental enterprises) or if it would involve a substantial construction effort with substantial short-term employment opportunities and indirectly stimulate the need for additional housing and services to support the new employment demand. Similarly, a project would indirectly induce growth if it would remove an obstacle to additional growth and development, such as removing a constraint on a required public service or utility. A project providing increased water supply in an area where water service historically limited growth would be considered growth-inducing.

6.2 Growth Effects of the General Plan Update

According to Government Code section 65300, the General Plan is required to serve as a comprehensive, long-term plan for the physical development of the city. By definition, the General Plan Update intends to address and provide for anticipated growth in the city and region.

The General Plan Update would not result in any direct growth-inducing impacts since it is a planning response to meet the anticipated population, housing, and economic growth needs in the city and region, and, in and of itself, does not propose any specific development projects. However, the Project could result in indirect growth due to the introduction of the Mixed Use land use designation and an effort to intensify specific locations in the DVSP and along Foothill and Verdugo Boulevards. This would remove an obstacle to additional growth. Chapter 3, "Project Description," describes projected growth of the Project, and the environmental consequences related to the potential growth are fully assessed in Sections 4.1 through 4.14 of this PEIR.

6.2.1 Population Growth

As described previously, the purpose of the General Plan Update is to guide the future development of the city. Accordingly, the General Plan Update is premised on a certain amount of growth taking place. Growth projections developed by the SCAG indicate an anticipated population of 21,862 for the city by 2030 (SCAG 2008b). However, with adoption of the General Plan Update, the City estimates a higher population by the year 2030. As such, development consistent with the land uses proposed in the General Plan Update would support up to 814 additional residential units, much of which would be infill development located in the DVSP and along Foothill and Verdugo Boulevards. In total, the city could support up to 7,883 housing units in the city by the 2030 buildout of the Project. These 814 additional dwelling units would accommodate up to 2,523 persons, resulting in a total population of 23,799 persons. Implementation of the Project would allow for the development of residential units that would accommodate a population in excess of SCAG's growth projections for the city; consequently, the General Plan Update would be considered growth inducing because the plan would seek to accommodate the future growth needs of the city by adding development potential within existing development areas (i.e., the DVSP and along Foothill and Verdugo Boulevards).

Thus, the proposed Project would result in indirect growth-inducing effects as it would accommodate the anticipated growth in population for 2030. The increases in population and housing would be a result of higher density Mixed

Use infill and redevelopment within the city's existing urbanized areas. Implementation of the proposed goals, policies, and programs of the General Plan Update would manage this growth in ways that protect the environment and quality of life. Environmental effects associated with buildout of the General Plan Update are discussed in Sections 4.1 through 4.14 of this PEIR.

6.2.2 Economic Growth

SCAG growth projections indicate that the city would include approximately 10,245 jobs by 2030 (SCAG 2008b). Future development consistent with the land uses proposed in the General Plan Update would support modest job growth in the city. Commercial space is expected to expand to 3,396,112 square feet at 2030 buildout of the General Plan Update, and the proposed Project would support the total development of 194,246 square feet of nonresidential uses. Therefore, the provision of Mixed Use square footage, which would support commercial uses, would be consistent with SCAG projections for 10,245 jobs by 2030 and would not induce growth outside of that anticipated by SCAG.

6.2.3 Removal of Obstacles

The proposed Project would establish new goals, objectives, and policies to guide and manage future development in the city, including policy direction on roadway facility improvements, public service improvements, and the extension and expansion of utilities. For example, LUE Objective 1.7 would aim to coordinate public infrastructure, utilities, and services with new development. In addition, CE Policy 1.1.1 would establish and maintain a circulation network that supports the Land Use Element of the General Plan Update.

The General Plan Update acknowledges that public facilities and services are more readily available in the city's urbanized areas. As such, the policies and programs in the Land Use Element would locate and/or intensify development in areas that are already served by public infrastructure. For example, LUE Policy 3.1.1 would encourage development of transit-oriented mixed-use projects in designated areas to create or enhance diverse centers of activity, link residential development to local-serving uses, create environments that are walkable and offer convenient pedestrian connectivity to alternative transportation options, and increase the efficiency of resource use by concentrating new development in areas that are already served by infrastructure. The majority of development subsequent to the General Plan Update would occur in key locations already served by existing infrastructure and public services, including roadways. The proposed Project does not include any provisions requiring the oversizing of infrastructure facilities to serve growth not anticipated in the General Plan Update. All physical environmental

effects of the future public services, roadway, and utility improvements within the General Plan Update area have been disclosed in their respective environmental issue areas in Sections 4.1 through 4.14 of this PEIR.

Overall, adoption and implementation of the General Plan Update would have indirect growth-inducing effects on the local environment. Implementation of the goals, objectives, and policies of the General Plan Update would incrementally increase the demand and/or require expansion of facilities for public services and utilities including water supply, wastewater treatment, fire protection and other emergency services, public education, and parks and recreation facilities; however, the majority of development subsequent to the General Plan Update would occur in key locations already served by existing infrastructure and public services, including roadways.