

7.0 OTHER CEQA CONCERNS

7.1 GROWTH INDUCING IMPACTS

In accordance with Section 15126.2(d) of the CEQA Guidelines, an EIR must “discuss the ways in which the proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment.” In addition, when discussing growth-inducing impacts of a proposed project, “it must not be assumed that growth in any area is necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment” (Section 15126.2(d) of the CEQA Guidelines). Two issues must be considered when assessing the growth-inducing impacts of a project:

- **Elimination of Obstacles to Population Growth:** The extent to which additional infrastructure capacity or a change in regulatory structure will allow additional development in the County and region,
- **Promotion of Economic Growth:** The extent to which the proposed project can cause increased activity in the local or regional economy. Economic impacts can include direct effects, such as the direction and strategies implemented within the project area and indirect or secondary impacts, such as increased commercial activity needed to serve the Santa Barbara County Association of Government’s population growth forecasts for the project area.

7.1.2 Elimination of Obstacles to Population Growth

The elimination of either physical or regulatory obstacles to population growth is considered to be a growth-inducing impact. A physical obstacle to population growth typically involves the lack of public service infrastructure. The extension of public service infrastructure, including roadways, water mains, and sewer lines, into areas not currently provided with these services is expected to support new development. Similarly, the elimination of or change to a regulatory obstacle, including existing growth and development policies, can result in new population growth.

In the case of the Isla Vista Master Plan, all public service infrastructure is currently available to the project area; some specific public facilities will be upgraded. In addition, the project would result in the residential development of land at locations either already developed or surrounded by existing residential development, and thus does not represent urbanization of a remote location.

The proposed project would provide for the development of up to 1,447 new residential units (a net increase of 801 units over what would be allowed under the current General Plan) that would provide housing for up to 4,355 people (a net increase of 2,411 people over the previously anticipated population of Isla Vista under the current General Plan). Full build out of Isla Vista would add to the South Coast’s housing stock and would be expected to provide a significant contribution to filling Isla Vista’s need for affordable housing. The proposed amendments would also allow up to 51,487 square feet of commercial development.

Isla Vista residents, many of whom would be expected to be new residents, may be an inducement to the development of commercial services to meet their daily needs. The design of the proposed project is intended, however, to foster such commercial services within Isla Vista. Other services deemed necessary for daily living are readily available within the Isla Vista and in nearby communities.

Further, because the Isla Vista area's build out is expected to span 15 or more years, the encouragement of additional commercial services would be expected to match the pace of residential development in the community. The planned commercial development opportunities within Isla Vista would be expected to generate employment, which in turn would generate a demand for housing. The demand for housing would include a demand for affordable housing for those individuals employed in service and retail businesses.

7.1.3 Promotion of Economic Growth

Increased industrial, commercial, and residential development typically generates a secondary or indirect demand for other services. The County's growing population will require additional goods and services, such as groceries, entertainment, and medical services which will stimulate economic activity.

Because the proposed project would not substantially alter the population projections adopted by the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments, the secondary effects of increased residential demand for goods and services is independent of the project. This increased demand could result in greater employment-generating uses in the County that could generate a secondary demand for goods and services to support new and expanding business throughout the Goleta-Santa Barbara Metropolitan Area.

7.1.4 Summary/Conclusions

In summary, the proposed project would indirectly induce additional population growth in the County. However, that growth is not considered to be detrimental to the environment.

7.2 IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENT OF RESOURCES

Purpose: The purpose of this section is to identify those project impacts, discussed in this document, which would result in significant and irreversible changes in the environment should the proposed project be implemented. This section also identifies environmental accidents that could occur as a result of the proposed project.

Section 15125(f) of the CEQA Guidelines states significant irreversible environmental changes involved with a proposed project may include the following:

- Uses of non-renewable resources during the initial and continued phases of the project which would be irreversible because of a large commitment of such resources makes removal or non-use thereafter unlikely;

- Primary impacts and, particularly, secondary impacts which commit future generations to similar uses; and
- Irreversible damage which may result from environmental accidents associated with the project.

The proposed IVMP would facilitate future residential and commercial growth in Isla Vista and thus, would constitute an irreversible commitment of non-renewable resources during both the construction and operation phases.

Irreversible changes to the environment during the construction and operation phases include air quality degradation, and consumption of non-renewable natural resources such as petroleum products for fuel, lumber, water, and aggregate materials. Additional changes include the loss of viewsheds, loss and/or degradations of biological resources, air quality degradation, traffic increases, increased water consumption, and an increased demand on public services. Although these resource commitments and environmental changes will occur gradually, their combined loss can be considered significant and irreversible.

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