

CHAPTER 5 Other CEQA Considerations

Section 15126 of the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 (CEQA) Guidelines requires that all aspects of a project must be considered when evaluating its impact on the environment, including planning, acquisition, development, and operation. As part of this analysis, the project environmental impact report (EIR) must also identify (1) significant environmental effects of the proposed project, (2) significant environmental effects that cannot be avoided if the proposed project is implemented, (3) significant irreversible environmental changes that would result from implementation of the proposed project, (4) growth-inducing impacts of the proposed project, (5) mitigation measures proposed to minimize significant effects, and (6) alternatives to the proposed project.

5.1 SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

Table 2-1 (Summary of Environmental Effects and Project Requirements/Mitigation Measures), which is contained in Chapter 2 (Executive Summary) of this EIR, and Sections 4.1 through 4.13 of this EIR, provide a comprehensive identification of the proposed project's environmental effects, including the level of significance both before and after proposed mitigation measures.

5.2 SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS THAT CANNOT BE AVOIDED IF THE PROPOSED PROJECT IS IMPLEMENTED

Section 15126.2(b) of the CEQA Guidelines requires a discussion of any significant impacts that cannot be avoided, even with the implementation of feasible mitigation measures. In such cases where an impact cannot be mitigated to a level considered less than significant, a Statement of Overriding Considerations must be prepared prior to approval of a project, and in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Sections 15091 and 15093. Development of the proposed project would result in the following significant and unavoidable project-related and/or cumulative impacts:

- Air Quality
 - > Operation of the proposed project would violate an air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation (NO_x).
 - > Operation of the proposed project would result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is classified non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (ozone, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5}).
 - > Construction activities associated with development of the proposed project would generate emissions that would result in an exceedance of localized significance thresholds for PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} established by the SCAQMD, and, therefore, would expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.

5.3 SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

Section 15126.2(c) of the CEQA Guidelines requires a discussion of any significant irreversible environmental changes that the proposed project would cause. Specifically, Section 15126.2(c) states:

Uses of nonrenewable resources during the initial and continued phases of the project may be irreversible since a large commitment of such resources makes removal or nonuse thereafter unlikely. Primary impacts, and particularly, secondary impacts (such as highway improvement which provides access to a previously inaccessible area) generally commit future generations to similar uses. Also, irreversible damage can result from environmental accidents associated with the project. Irretrievable commitments of resources should be evaluated to assure that such current consumption is justified. Section 15126.3(c).

The construction and implementation of the proposed project will entail the commitment of energy, human resources, and building materials. This commitment of energy, human resources, and building materials will be commensurate with that of other projects of similar magnitude, and none of these commodities are in short supply. Manpower would also be committed for the construction of buildings and public facilities necessary to support the new development.

Ongoing maintenance and operation of the proposed project will entail a further commitment of energy resources in the form of natural gas and electricity, and water resources. Long-term impacts would also result from an increase in vehicular traffic, and associated air pollutant and noise emissions. This commitment of energy resources will be a long-term obligation in view of the fact that, practically speaking, it is impossible to return the land to its original condition once it has been developed; however, as established in Section 4.12 (Utilities/Service Systems), the impacts of increased energy usage are not considered significant adverse environmental impacts.

In summary, implementation of the proposed project would involve the following irreversible environmental changes to existing on-site natural resources:

- Alteration of the existing topographic and biological character of the project site
- Commitment of energy and water resources as a result of the operation and maintenance of the proposed project
- Increase in vehicular traffic, and associated air pollutant and noise emissions

5.4 GROWTH-INDUCING IMPACTS

Section 15126.2(d) of the CEQA Guidelines requires a discussion of the ways in which the proposed project could foster economic, population, or housing growth, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Growth-inducing impacts are caused by those characteristics of a project that tend to foster or encourage population and/or economic growth. Inducements to growth include the generation of construction and permanent employment opportunities in the service sector of the economy. A project could also induce growth by lowering or removing barriers to growth or by creating an amenity that attracts new population or economic activity.

The following activities of the proposed project have the potential to result in growth inducement:

- Extension of public facilities, such as electrical lines, gas lines, sewers, and water
- Generation of employment opportunities, including short-term, construction employment opportunities

A project's growth-inducing potential does not automatically result in growth, whether it is a portion of growth or actually exceeds projected levels of growth. Growth at the local level is fundamentally controlled by the land use policies of local municipalities or counties, which are determined by the local politics in each jurisdiction.

5.4.1 Extension of Public Facilities

The proposed project would require expansion of electrical lines, gas lines, sewers, and water to the project site. From the project site, these systems would connect to the existing infrastructure located adjacent to the project site. No new trunk lines or utility corridors would be established that could serve as connections for future projects; however, the construction of new electrical facilities on site or adjacent to the project site would be required to serve the proposed project. Expansion of facilities would not result in the extension of services to undeveloped areas other than the proposed project.

5.4.2 Urbanization of Land in a Remote Location

The project site is presently surrounded by commercial, residential, and industrial uses, as follows:

- **North:** I-215 is northeast of the project site. Beyond I-215 are various commercial industries and a large residential community. The on-ramp to the southbound I-215 runs directly north of the project site. A Denny's Restaurant and gas station are northwest of the project site, adjacent to Palm Avenue. The land north of Palm Avenue is vacant. The lot at the southeast corner of Palm Avenue and Industrial Parkway (northwest of the project site) is vacant and currently for sale.
- **East:** I-215 runs along the northeast boundary of the project site. Directly east of I-215, approximately 500 feet from the project site, is a residential community. The hills that currently occupy the project site are visible from the residential community.
- **South:** Directly south of Industrial Parkway is both vacant property and active development. The development appears similar to the proposed project. Historic Route 66 and railroad tracks lie beyond this development.
- **West:** Directly west of the project site, across Industrial parkway is an industrial development.

Implementation of the proposed project would not encourage growth through the urbanization of land in remote locations, resulting in "leapfrog" development. While the project site is currently vacant, the proposed project is located in an urbanized area that is served by an existing and currently expanding network of gas, electric, water, sewer, communication, roadway, and other infrastructure sized to accommodate or allow existing and planned growth. No growth-inducing impacts from urbanization of land in a remote location would occur as a result of development of the project site.

5.4.3 Employment Generation

Development of the proposed project would generate long-term employment opportunities. The proposed project is anticipated to create approximately 500 new jobs; however, there is currently a high unemployment rate in the Inland Empire, and a large jobs-housing imbalance. The Inland Empire, of which the City is a part, needs significantly more jobs to help address the high unemployment rate, as well as the high imbalance between jobs and existing housing. As a result of the high unemployment rate, and the jobs/housing imbalance, the proposed project will add needed jobs to the area, but is not large enough to induce substantial population growth in the area, either directly or indirectly, and would not be considered a substantial growth-inducing impact to the region.

In addition, development of the proposed project would generate short-term, construction-related employment opportunities. These opportunities would occur over the approximate twenty-two month duration of the construction period. Given the supply of construction workers in the local work force, it is likely that these workers would come from within the Inland Empire, and no in-migration of workers would be anticipated. Due to the nature of construction activities, the employment opportunities resulting from construction of the proposed project would not be considered permanent.

5.5 MITIGATION MEASURES PROPOSED TO MINIMIZE SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

Table 2-1 (Summary of Environmental Impacts and Project Requirements/Mitigation Measures) of this EIR provides a comprehensive identification of the proposed project's environmental effects and proposed mitigation measures.

5.6 ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

Alternatives to the proposed project are presented in Chapter 6 (Alternatives to the Proposed Project) of this EIR.