

5 OTHER CEQA SECTIONS

5.1 GROWTH INDUCEMENT

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Section 21100(b)(5) specifies that the growth-inducing impacts of a project must be addressed in an environmental impact report (EIR). Section 15126.2(d) of the State CEQA Guidelines provides the following guidance for assessing growth-inducing impacts of a project:

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. Included in this are projects which would remove obstacles to population growth (a major expansion of a wastewater treatment plant might, for example, allow for more construction in service areas). Increases in the population may tax existing community service facilities, requiring construction of new facilities that could cause significant environmental effects. Also, discuss the characteristics of some projects which may encourage and facilitate other activities that could significantly affect the environment, either individually or cumulatively. It must not be assumed that growth in any area is necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment.

A project can induce growth directly, indirectly, or both. Direct growth inducement would result if a project involved construction of new housing. Indirect growth inducement would result, for instance, if implementing a project resulted in any of the following:

- ▶ substantial new permanent employment opportunities (e.g., commercial, industrial, or governmental enterprises);
- ▶ substantial short-term employment opportunities (e.g., construction employment) that indirectly stimulates the need for additional housing and services to support the new temporary employment demand; and/or
- ▶ removal of an obstacle to additional growth and development, such as removing a constraint on a required public utility or service (e.g., construction of a major sewer line with excess capacity through an undeveloped area).

Growth inducement itself is not an environmental effect but may foreseeably lead to environmental effects. If substantial growth inducement occurs, it can result in secondary environmental effects, such as increased demand for housing, demand for other community and public services and infrastructure capacity, increased traffic and noise, degradation of air or water quality, degradation or loss of plant or animal habitats, conversion of agricultural and open-space land to urban uses, and other effects.

5.1.1 Growth Inducing Impacts of the Project

POPULATION GROWTH

Direct growth inducement from the Project would result if the Project involved construction of new housing that would facilitate new population growth in an area. The Project is a zoo facility and does not include new housing or result in direct population growth. The Project would require 200 net new employees after relocation from the Sacramento Zoo. Because current employees at the Sacramento Zoo are residents local to the Sacramento region it is assumed that new employees would be individuals that currently reside in the region and that would not require housing. Therefore, the Project would have no impact on direct population growth.

ELIMINATION OF OBSTACLES TO GROWTH

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

As described in Chapter 2, "Project Description," the Project would involve off-site improvements that consist of drainage and water quality infrastructure, wastewater infrastructure, extension of water pipelines, and various roadway improvements to Lotz Parkway and Kammerer Road. These improvements are designed to accommodate the operational needs of the Project and would not provide additional new capacity to accommodate new development in the Project area. Buildout of the Project area has been planned for urban development and associated infrastructure improvements as part of the Southeast Policy Area and in the City's General Plan and analyzed in the Subsequent EIR prepared for amendments to the General Plan (SCH No. 2022020463). Please refer to Section 3.13, "Transportation," and Section 3.14, "Utilities and Service Systems," for a further analysis of the utility and transportation demands of the Project.

OTHER EMPLOYMENT GROWTH AND OTHER ECONOMIC-RELATED GROWTH EFFECTS

Implementation of the Project would increase economic activity through the short-term creation of jobs during construction. As of December 2021, there were 43,300 construction jobs in Sacramento County (EDD 2023). Due to the short-term nature of such construction jobs and people moving from one job site to another, as done in the construction industry, these jobs would not result in housing demand. Therefore, it is assumed that the employment opportunities generated by construction of the Project would be filled by individuals in the construction industry who currently reside in the region and that construction workers would not permanently relocate to the City. Substantial population growth or increases in housing demand in the region as a result of Project-related construction jobs are not anticipated.

Operation of the Project would consist of up to 300 jobs, including animal care takers, administrative staff, chefs, veterinarians, and volunteers. Approximately 100 employees would be from relocation of the Sacramento Zoo. Therefore, the Project would require 200 new employees at buildout. The Project was included in the recently updated General Plan (122,155 jobs at buildout of the City and General Plan designated study areas) and thus would not result in growth in addition to current projections (City of Elk Grove 2023).

The Sacramento Area Council of Governments' (SACOG) 2020 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS) includes the Project area in the Developing Community Type. The 2020 MTP/SCS forecasts about 110,106 dwelling units and 53,093 employees in the Developing Community Type in the City. In comparison to the 2020 MTP/SCS, the Project would account for less than 1 percent of total new employees in the Developing Community /Type in Elk Grove by 2040. Therefore, the Project would be within the assumptions for the Developing Community /Type in the 2020 MTP/SCS.

Implementation of the Project would increase demand for public services and utilities, including water supply, wastewater (collection, treatment, and disposal), storm drainage, and electrical power. In fact, some infrastructure and facilities providing these services would be modified as part of the accommodating the Project but would not be sized to accommodate beyond what is identified in the City's recent General Plan update (2023). Potential impacts on these public services and utilities are discussed in Section 3.12, "Public Services," and Section 3.14, "Utilities and Service Systems," which also note that increased demand for public services and utilities would be based on population.

SUMMARY OF GROWTH-INDUCING IMPACTS

Although economic and employment growth in the area is an intended consequence of the Project, growth inducement directly and indirectly by the Project also could affect the region. Potential effects caused by induced growth in the region could include loss of agricultural land and open space, alteration of views, increases in light and glare, increased surface runoff, environmental impacts attributable to increases in regional water use, impacts on surface water quality, aquatic resource impacts, removal of habitat for species federally or State listed and other special-status species, loss of cultural resources, transportation and roadway impacts, air quality impacts, increases in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, increases in noise, increases in population, and increases in demand for public services and utilities.

The project does not include any dwelling units and an increase in housing demand in the region or reduce the planned housing in the LEA Community Plan and associated impacts of growth inducement or growth displacement would not occur.

5.2 SIGNIFICANT AND UNAVOIDABLE ADVERSE IMPACTS

The State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(b) requires EIRs to include a discussion of the significant environmental effects that cannot be avoided if the proposed project is implemented. As documented throughout Chapter 3 (Project-level impacts) and Chapter 4, "Cumulative Impacts," of this Draft EIR, after implementation of the recommended mitigation measures, many of the impacts associated with the Project would be reduced to a less-than-significant level. The following impacts are considered significant and unavoidable; that is, no feasible mitigation is available to reduce these impacts to a less-than-significant level:

- ▶ Impact 3.7-1: Project Generated Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions
- ▶ Impact 3.13-2: Project Generated Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)
- ▶ Impact 4-12: Cumulative GHG Emissions
- ▶ Impact 4-4-22: Cumulative VMT Impacts

5.3 SIGNIFICANT AND IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

The State CEQA Guidelines (Section 15126) require a discussion of the significant irreversible environmental changes that would be involved in a project if it were implemented. The irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources is the permanent loss of resources for future or alternative purposes. Irreversible and irretrievable resources are those that cannot be recovered or recycled or those that are consumed or reduced to unrecoverable forms.

The Project would result in the irreversible and irretrievable commitment of material resources and energy during construction and operation, including:

- ▶ construction materials, such as soil, rocks, wood, concrete, glass, and steel;
- ▶ water supply for Project operation; and
- ▶ energy expended in the form of electricity, gasoline, diesel fuel, and oil for equipment and transportation vehicles that would be needed for Project construction and operation.

The use of these nonrenewable resources is expected to account for a minimal portion of the region's resources and would not affect the availability of these resources for other needs in the region. As discussed in Section 3.5, "Energy," construction activities would not result in the long-term inefficient use of energy or natural resources. Mitigation Measure 3.7-1 identified in this EIR to reduce operation-related GHG emissions requires the efficient use of energy during Project operation by promoting carpooling to reduce Project trips. Therefore, long-term Project operation would not result in substantial long-term consumption of energy and natural resources.

This page intentionally left blank.