

## CHAPTER 5 Other CEQA Considerations

Section 15126 of the *California Environmental Quality Act* (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 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 Code Requirements/Mitigation Measures), which is contained in Chapter 2 (Summary) of this EIR, and Sections 4.1 through 4.15 of this EIR provide a comprehensive identification of the proposed project's environmental effects, including the level of significance both before and after mitigation.

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

Section 15126.2(b) of the CEQA Guidelines requires that an EIR describe any significant impacts that cannot be avoided, even with the implementation of feasible mitigation measures. Development of the proposed project would result in the following significant and unavoidable project-related and/or cumulative impacts:

#### ■ Air Quality

- > **Project Specific**—Construction and operation of future projects under the Specific Plan could generate air emissions that exceed SCAQMD thresholds.
- > **Project Specific/Cumulative**—Implementation of the project could result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of criteria pollutants for which the project region is in nonattainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard.

#### ■ Cultural Resources

- > **Project Specific**—Construction activities associated with future projects under the Specific Plan could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource due to physical demolition of property.
- > **Cumulative**—The cumulative effects of development in the Orange County region would be significant since it is currently infeasible to determine whether future development under the

proposed Specific Plan would result in demolition or removal of historic resources within the Specific Plan area.

■ **Noise**

- > **Project Specific**—Since construction activities could occur as close as 25 feet from sensitive receptors, implementation of the proposed project could generate or expose persons or structures to excessive groundborne vibration (above the threshold of 85 VdB).
- > **Cumulative**—Vibration from concurrent future development within 50 feet of existing sensitive receptors could combine to result in a significant cumulative impact.

■ **Population and Housing**

- > **Cumulative**—All cumulative residential development would ultimately contribute to the substantial exceedance of SCAG population projections for the City for the 2030 timeframe. Because the proposed project would have a considerable contribution to the cumulative impact, this is considered significant.

■ **Public Services**

- > **Project Specific**—Full build-out of the proposed Specific Plan would increase the demand for fire protection services, and could require the construction of new or physically altered facilities to accommodate the increased demand.
- > **Cumulative**—Implementation of mitigation measures could result in secondary effects in the future if additional staffing or equipment is required for the HBFD. Therefore, the contribution of the proposed project to cumulative impacts on fire services would be cumulatively considerable.

■ **Recreation**

- > **Project Specific**—Implementation of the proposed project would require the construction or improvement of a substantial amount of recreational facilities at the time of future development and/or redevelopment. Because the specifics of future recreational facilities are unknown at this time, it is infeasible to provide adequate mitigation measures to cover the breadth of potential future actions.
- > **Cumulative**—Because the proposed project represents a majority of the future recreational needs that would be required through 2030, the cumulative impact of such future development is considered significant.

■ **Transportation/Traffic**

- > **Project Specific**—Under Year 2016 conditions, the proposed project would result in a significant impact at five Caltrans intersections because the City cannot guarantee implementation of the mitigation measures. In addition, the project would increase traffic to the I-405 northbound loop ramp, which is currently deficient.
- > **Project Specific**—Under Year 2030 conditions, buildout of the proposed project would result in a significant impact at six Caltrans intersections because implementation of the mitigation measures cannot be guaranteed by the City. In addition, future projects under the Specific Plan would contribute traffic to the I-405 northbound loop ramp from Beach Boulevard, as well as the regional freeway system, which are both projected to have deficiencies in 2030.

> **Cumulative**—Because implementation of the proposed project would contribute to projected regional freeway deficiencies in both 2016 and 2030, this increase is considered substantial in relation to the forecasted traffic load and capacity of the street system.

■ **Utilities and Service Systems**

> **Project Specific**— Due to the statewide water supply situation, water supplies are known to be deficient after 2010 or 2020, depending on the various WSA models used, as a result of imported water supply curtailments. Therefore, future development under the proposed project would result in a significant impact.

> **Cumulative**— Due to the statewide water supply situation, water supplies are known to be deficient after 2010 or 2020, depending on the various WSA models used, as a result of imported water supply curtailments. Therefore, cumulative development would contribute to a significant cumulative impact.

### 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 15126.2(c)

Future development that would be permitted under implementation of the proposed project would entail the commitment of energy, human resources, and building materials. This commitment of energy, personnel, and building materials would 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 future development in the project area would entail a further commitment of energy resources in the form of natural gas, 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 would 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. As discussed in Section 4.14 (Utilities and Service Systems), impacts to water supplies are considered significant due to the cutbacks in imported water supply availability. Depending on the various water supply assessment (WSA) models used, supplies could become deficient after 2010 or 2020. It is also recognized that the statewide supply situation is subject to change and could return to normal or above-normal year precipitation in the near-term and then extend over many years. While the supply impact is not a direct result of the proposed project, because future development under the Specific Plan would contribute to the increase in water demand throughout the City, the impact is

considered significant. However, as also established in Section 4.14 (Utilities and 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 natural resources:

- Commitment of energy and water resources as a result of the operation and maintenance of future development that would be permitted

## 5.4 GROWTH-INDUCING IMPACTS

Section 15126.2(d) of the CEQA Guidelines requires that this section discuss 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. According to Section 6.0 of the General Plan EIR (Huntington Beach 1995), incorporated herein by reference, implementation of the General Plan would induce growth, particularly in the associated removal of impediments to growth (e.g., provision of new access to an area) and increased potential for economic expansion. As discussed in Chapter 3 (Project Description), the residential growth that would be permitted under the proposed project would not exceed that identified in the General Plan. However, the following activities have the potential to result in growth inducement as a result of the project:

- Allow additional housing supply in an area that does not currently permit such uses
- 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

Future development under the proposed project would require expansion and/or upgrades to sewer, water, and gas lines in the Specific Plan area. These systems would connect to the existing infrastructure located in the area. Expansion of facilities would not result in the extension of services to undeveloped areas other than a few vacant parcels within the Specific Plan area.

Roadway and interchange improvements can induce growth because the provision of better vehicular access can facilitate development. The project includes improvements along Edinger Avenue, as well as improvements to areas of Beach Boulevard and interchanges. Although the project would provide better

access to the Specific Plan area, it would not induce or facilitate development on previously undeveloped parcels outside the Specific Plan area.

## **5.4.2 Additional Housing Supply**

Overall, buildout of the Specific Plan could result in a net growth of up to 6,400 new dwelling units (du). Therefore, future projects under the proposed Specific Plan could introduce new residential uses which would likely induce growth. The proposed Specific Plan requires a General Plan Amendment (GPA), Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA), and Zoning Map Amendment (ZMA) as implementation of the proposed project would result in changes to land use and development intensity and standards related to site layout, building design, and landscaping. The GPA would be subject to approval by the Planning Commission and City Council and would likely result in growth. Due to the number of housing units that would be created, the project would be considered growth inducing with respect to housing.

## **5.4.3 Employment Generation**

Overall, buildout of the Specific Plan could result in the addition of up to 738,400 square feet (sf) of retail uses, 350 hotel rooms, and 112,000 sf of office uses. However, not all of this development would be considered net growth. In many cases, existing structures would be replaced or redeveloped with the new uses. In order to accommodate the proposed development, it is estimated that approximately 1.4 million sf of existing commercial development within the Specific Plan (or approximately 22 percent of existing development) would be demolished. This takes into account that many of the existing buildings would remain on redeveloped parcels (i.e., only part of a parcel would be redeveloped). It is estimated that at buildout, commercial and office space would decrease compared to existing conditions.

Future development under the proposed project would generate short-term, construction-related employment opportunities. These opportunities would occur over the entire 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 Orange County area, and no in-migration of workers would be anticipated. Due to the nature of construction activities, the employment opportunities resulting from future construction would not be considered permanent.

In addition, future development would generate long-term employment opportunities associated with commercial uses in the Specific Plan area. Long-term employment opportunities could induce growth in the region and could potentially be considered a growth-inducing impact to the region.

