

10. Growth–Inducing Impacts of the Proposed Project

Pursuant to Sections 15126(d) and 15126.2(d) of the CEQA Guidelines, this section is provided to examine 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. Also required is an assessment of other projects that would foster other activities that could affect the environment, individually or cumulatively. To address this issue, potential growth-inducing effects will be examined through analysis of the following questions:

- Would this project remove obstacles to growth, e.g., through the construction or extension of major infrastructure facilities that do not presently exist in the project area, or through changes in existing regulations pertaining to land development?
- Would this project result in the need to expand one or more public services to maintain desired levels of service?
- Would this project encourage or facilitate economic effects that could result in other activities that could significantly affect the environment?
- Would approval of this project involve some precedent-setting action that could encourage and facilitate other activities that could significantly affect the environment?

Please note that growth-inducing effects are not to be construed as necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment. This issue is presented to provide additional information on ways in which the Proposed Project could contribute to significant changes in the environment, beyond the direct consequences of developing the land use concept examined in the preceding sections of this EIR.

Would this project remove obstacles to growth, e.g., through the construction or extension of major infrastructure facilities that do not presently exist in the project area, or through changes in existing regulations pertaining to land development?

As discussed in Section 5.17, *Utilities and Service Systems*, major new infrastructure facilities would be required to implement the Proposed Project in some areas of Antelope Valley. Some extensions of existing utility facilities from surrounding roadways, including water and sewer lines, would need to be upgraded to serve the amount of development anticipated by the Proposed Project. In particular, infrastructure in the unincorporated areas of the Antelope Valley (Project Area) would need to be upgraded—in a context-sensitive way—to serve the level of growth projected for this area.

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The purpose of the Proposed Project is to guide growth and development in the Project Area. Los Angeles County, as well as the entire Southern California region, has experienced dramatic growth in the past two decades. Similar growth is expected to continue for the next two decades. As a response to this trend, the focus of the Proposed Project is to provide a framework in which growth can be managed and tailored to suit the needs of the community and the surrounding area, while preserving the rural character of the region and conserving environmental resources. Adoption of the Proposed Project would direct future development in the Project Area to three designated Economic Opportunity Areas consistent with the Land Use Element of the Proposed Area Plan. The Proposed Project does not approve the construction of specific development projects and would largely accommodate growth based on market conditions. However, it would allow increased development intensity and/or a more inclusive mix of land uses compared to existing conditions, although significantly less development than what is allowed under the Adopted Area Plan. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not remove regulatory obstacles to growth, and is not considered to be growth-inducing.

Would this project result in the need to expand one or more public services to maintain desired levels of service?

As discussed in Section 5.14, *Public Services*, as the Project Area continues to develop, it would require further commitment of public services that could include fire protection, law enforcement, public schools, public recreation, and other services as appropriate. Future development in the Project Area would require an increased commitment to public services that would be considered a long-term commitment in order to maintain a desired level of service. Although significantly less development than what is allowed under the Adopted Area Plan would occur, additional public services would be required to serve the Proposed Project as compared to existing conditions. This is considered a growth-inducing impact.

Would this project encourage or facilitate economic effects that could result in other activities that could significantly affect the environment?

Future development consistent with the Proposed Project would create a number of temporary construction jobs during development of the project. Although significantly less development than what is allowed under the Adopted Area Plan would occur, additional jobs would be generated by the Proposed Project as compared to existing conditions. This would be a direct, growth-inducing effect of the Proposed Project.

As the population grows and occupies new dwelling units, these residents would seek shopping, entertainment, employment, home improvement, vehicle maintenance, and other economic opportunities in the surrounding area. This would facilitate the purchase of economic goods and services and could, therefore, encourage the creation of new businesses and/or the expansion of existing businesses. A key objective of the Proposed Project is to balance housing and employment within the Project Area to reduce vehicle miles traveled. As a result, the Proposed Project would provide new employment opportunities in housing-rich areas within future office and commercial developments. Additionally, proposed increases in commercial uses are intended to serve the shopping needs of future residents and would generate additional employment opportunities. Therefore, the Proposed Project would have both direct and indirect growth-inducing effects.

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Would approval of this project involve some precedent-setting action that could encourage and facilitate other activities that could significantly affect the environment?

Approval of the Proposed Project would not set a precedent that could encourage and facilitate other activities that could significantly affect the environment. Cities and counties in California periodically update their general plans pursuant to California Government Code Sections 65300 et seq.

As discussed in Chapter 3, *Project Description*, the Proposed Project consists of the preparation of the Antelope Valley Area Plan. The Proposed Area Plan consists of the following: Land Use Element, Mobility Element, Conservation and Open Space Element, Public Safety, Services, and Facilities Element, Economic Development Element, and Community-Specific Land Use Concepts. The purpose of the Proposed Project is to provide a framework in which the growth can be managed and tailored to suit the needs and safety of the community, while preserving the rural character of the region and conserving environmental resources. Pressures to develop in the surrounding cities may derive from regional economic conditions and market demands for housing, commercial, office and industrial land uses that may be directly or indirectly influenced by the Proposed Project.

Buildout projections for the Proposed Project are based on the theoretical buildout (dwelling units, population, nonresidential square footage, and employment) of each land use designation, which are calculated using the range of allowable densities. Buildout projections for the Proposed Project, are shown in Table 3-2, *Buildout Projections for the Proposed Project*. Buildout of the Proposed Project would allow for 106,180 residential dwelling units, a population of 405,410, and 134,351 jobs. The majority of new development is directed to occur in the designated Economic Opportunity Areas. By comparison, the Adopted Area Plan would allow for the development of 278,249 dwelling units, a population of 1,070,924, and 51,319 jobs.

Although the Proposed Project does not include approval of physical development, it allows for additional development in the Project Area compared to existing conditions. However, as discussed above, the Adopted Area Plan allows for significantly more residential development and does not balance jobs with housing. Although approval of the Proposed Project would allow for significant growth as compared to existing conditions, it is substantially less than what is allowed under the Adopted Area Plan. As a result, the Proposed Project, while precedent-setting, reduces potential growth-inducing impacts as compared to the Adopted Area Plan.

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