

SECTION 4

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

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CEQA Guidelines Section 15130 requires each public agency to consider the cumulative impacts of its actions, specifically, the incremental environmental consequences of a proposed Project when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions. Cumulative impacts may result from individually minor, but collectively significant decisions made over time and affecting lands within the “Project Impact Zone.” The proposed Project will accommodate the growth projected in the City’s 1998 NMC GPA. Impacts resulting from that growth are discussed in the EIR prepared for the NMC GPA (1997), and incorporated herein by reference. Impacts associated with the Project and its growth inducing potential, and the future expansion of the NMC itself, is discussed in Section 5.0, *Growth Inducing, Unavoidable, and Irreversible Impacts*.

4.1 AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

Although, the Project would not contribute to the cumulative loss of the region’s lands under Williamson Act Contracts, the development of the West Haven Specific Plan, in conjunction with the proposed development identified in the NMC GPA, would result in both direct and secondary impacts upon agricultural resources. The direct impact of converting agricultural land uses to non-agricultural land uses are anticipated to result in secondary impacts upon agricultural productivity. The transition from Ag-Preserve to the West Haven Specific Plan is consistent with the General Plan and zoning land use designations identified by the NMC GPA, but the affect of the proposed Project, in addition to the conversion of agricultural lands and dairies farms within the region, is a cumulative loss of agricultural land and productivity.

Although mitigation strategies have been considered, none were determined feasible to avoid or reduce the loss of Prime Farmland to non-agricultural uses for the proposed Project. City mitigation strategies were reviewed and considered such as agricultural preservation fees and easements but none were determined feasible for economic and environmental reasons. The avoidance or reduction of the cumulative effects of the loss of Farmland to non-agricultural uses within the Chino Basin cannot be achieved within a reasonable amount of time for the Project to be implemented within the early phases of NMC development as identified in the Project objectives.

This cumulative loss of Farmland soils is considered significant. The NMC GPA EIR was certified with Overriding Consideration findings related to the cumulative loss of agriculture. Cumulative losses of Farmland resulting from this Project were a part of that original EIR and Statement of Overriding Consideration. No new issues have been raised by this Project which were not considered in the NMC GPA EIR.

4.2 AIR QUALITY

Construction-related activities associated with cumulative projects may be undertaken within the same construction horizon as the Project (2005 through 2015). Depending on construction schedules and actual implementation of each project, cumulative air emissions of NO_x and PM₁₀ would occur causing potential short-term increases in air pollutants.

Currently, the South Coast Air Basin is in non-attainment for O₃, CO, and PM₁₀. Although construction of the Project and the related projects would contribute to the existing conditions described in the 1997

AQMP and this EIR (refer to Section 3.2, *Setting, Impacts, and Significant Impacts of the Project After Mitigation: Air Quality*), control strategies outlined in the 1997 AQMP would offset the emissions generated by new development. Ongoing programs mitigating regional air quality impacts administered by the U.S. EPA and state regulatory agencies, including the Air Resources Board and SCAQMD, lessen air quality emissions by encouraging, and in some cases mandating, the use of alternative fuels, reformulated diesel fuels, cleaner engines, and ridesharing programs. Notwithstanding, the Project and the cumulative projects would contribute mobile-source emissions to the non-attainment South Coast Air Basin that are potentially significant and unavoidable.

The Project would contribute air emissions in the short-term (construction) and long-term (occupation and use of the Project site), within an air basin identified as a “non-attainment” area. The project is not in conformance with the SCAQMD standards, and in light of the surrounding residential development, the Project could be considered to have a cumulative impact on overall air quality in the SCAB. Any project that contributes emissions to this basin has a cumulative impact on the air quality of the region. Therefore, unavoidable significant cumulative impacts on air quality would occur. The NMC GPA EIR was certified with Overriding Consideration findings related to cumulative air quality impacts. No new issues have been raised by this Project which were not considered in the NMC GPA EIR.

4.3 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The Project site has historically been altered from its natural environmental setting and remnants of its native vegetation are virtually absent under the historical influence of intense agricultural land use and dairy farming. The concurrent absence of dense urbanization, means that these open spaces may still support some native animal species that may have persisted though the site changed to an agricultural habitat. Despite the continuing agricultural land use practices, the Project site supports a diversity of wildlife, in particular, birds. This is due, in part, to the relatively level topography that contributes to the accumulation of standing water, an attraction for numerous migratory and wintering birds. The Project’s on-site basins, reservoirs, drainages, and low areas, subject to flooding, are the focus of bird activity, and, the species observed, and those likely to occur, are attracted to the open water and the basins shoreline for resting habitat, food, and cover from predators.

The proposed Project will be subject to pay habitat land acquisition fees (MM B-2) and avoid disturbance of nesting raptors (MM B-1). Continued development within the Project Impact Zone would incrementally impact local flora and fauna, specifically the birds. However, implementing this EIR’s Biological Resource mitigation measures (MM B1-B4) will reduce the potential cumulative impacts to a less than significance level.

4.4 CULTURAL RESOURCES

While no prehistoric, cultural, or paleontological resources were found at the Project site, the Juan Batista D’Anza Trail is known to have crossed the northern portion of the site, an area that has been extensively disturbed by development and current dairy farming. In addition, two potentially historic structures built in the 1940s at 10401 E. Riverside Drive, are associated with the West Star Diary. The structures include a milking barn and single family residence. It is also possible significant cultural resources are still present in the Project site’s subsurface presently occupied and covered by the Project site’s large manure piles, dairy farms, and tree and plant nursery. Cultural Resource impacts from the Project will be reduced

to insignificance as the recommended Cultural Resource mitigation measures are followed, thus allowing monitoring for, and protection of, historical, cultural, archaeological, or paleontological resources that may still be intact at the Project area. The mitigation measures would reduce the potential Cultural Resource cumulative impacts to a less than significant level. However, the proposed Project along with future development in the Project area will contribute to the cumulative loss of Cultural Resources as the area is converted from dairy farming use to urban uses.

As stated in the Cultural Resources section of this EIR, if the proposed Project implements the required mitigation measures, all potential significant adverse environmental effects to cultural resources will be reduced to below the level of significance for the Project and cumulatively.

4.5 GEOLOGY/SOILS

Continued development within the Project would cause a nominal increase in the number of people and the amount of developed land potentially exposed to earthquake-related hazards. Any development-related projects would involve grading on infill lots (property surrounded by existing developed parcels) on land identified for future development. Landform alterations associated with such related projects would increase runoff rates leading to increased erosion of open areas. Due to the fact that all construction in the City will be subject to the UBC, City inspections, and other standards that will reduce possible impacts from each development to less than significant levels; cumulative impacts resulting from seismic activity, constructing on unstable soils, and blown sand are expected to be less than significant.

4.6 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Upon Project completion and the future buildout associated with the NMC GPA, an incremental increase in the use of household and commercial chemicals by introducing residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational (parks and paseos) is anticipated to occur. Use and storage of small quantities of household hazardous materials (cleaners, paints, automotive fluids, oils, ammonia, fertilizers, and chlorine for pools) would increase with development of related projects. An unknown range and quantity of hazardous materials may be stored and handled for commercial and recreational uses. The potential cumulative impacts of hazardous materials associated with such related projects will be reduced through implementation of federal, state, and local agency regulations governing transport, handling, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials and waste. These measures would reduce potential cumulative impacts from hazardous materials to a less than significant level.

4.7 HYDROLOGY/WATER QUALITY

Although the property is not in a natural state, the change in the hydrologic condition on this site will be significant. There are two primary factors involved: (1) more runoff from the property affecting downstream watersheds; and, (2) less water for infiltration into the local aquifer. The Santa Ana RWQCB is mandating, through the City of Ontario Municipal NPDES Permit, the requirement of all projects to prepare for approval a WQMP. One of the goals in a WQMP is to mitigate the cumulative impacts caused by changes in hydrologic conditions.

For example, development of the Project would increase the amount of impervious surfaces and associated storm water runoff within the Project Impact Zone. The Project and ensuing development projects in the NMC will be located within a rural setting, and many of the streets are only partially

improved, and some do not have curbs or gutters. Each of these projects will be required to identify drainage improvements, i.e., detention basins and conveyance systems, necessary to accommodate the anticipated storm water flows from the Project site to drainage facilities with sufficient capacity to handle Project runoff.

Currently, there is no regional storm water facility for this Project to discharge into. Until such a facility is constructed, this Project and other local projects will need to mitigate Project related runoff on-site. It is also unknown at this time what mitigation requirements will be considered for the WQMP. The cumulative impact to water quality is also a function of the availability of a regional storm water facility, and the types of mitigation BMPs selected for the Project. Specific BMPs may mitigate possible pollutants to a less than significant impact. However unless maintained, long-term impacts could be significant. It should also be noted that a regional storm water facility would not typically be developed to mitigate all the possible pollutants that may leave the site. The Project would still need to mitigate for those pollutants not addressed by a regional facility.

Project-specific, on-site Best Management Practices (BMPs) are typically developed by the Project civil engineer and would be presented in detail in the WQMP document. BMPs for a project like this would include a combination of public education, source control and treatment controls. An option for this Project may be to develop a “local regional” BMP that only this Project would discharge to. This would be a private treatment facility, typically to be maintained by a Special District or other approved, legal long-term funded mechanism.

Cumulative adverse environmental effects to water quality and downstream hydrology are still considered significant following implementation of the proposed mitigation measures outlined above because the receiving waters are currently impaired and the Project will contribute incrementally to the degradation of water quality. A Statement of Overriding Consideration will be required prior to Project approval.

4.8 RECREATIONAL RESOURCES

The Project, in combination with the future buildout associated with the NMC GPA, would result in the conversion of existing dairy and agricultural uses into approximately 31,200 residential units on 5,200 acres, 5.5 million square feet of commercial on 504 acres, 5.2 million square feet of industrial and business parks uses on 338 acres, 500 acres of educational, 888 acres of parks and trails, and 776 acres of other public and infrastructure uses. Together these actions will significantly, and cumulatively, change the existing function, type, and character of land use within the NMC. According to the NMC GPA, the irretrievable loss of open space and conversion of land from a “rural” to “urban” character represents a significant, unavoidable impact (City of Ontario, 1997).

The City’s land use policies and regulations support and enable the current rural character of the Project Impact Zone to thrive. The Project and the NMC’s future projects will be individually evaluated to ensure conformance with the purpose and intent of the General Plan and zoning requirements. In addition, each project would be subject to design review by the City. The design review process would further ensure compatibility of the Project and other future projects within the NMC. These planning and design review processes administered by the City would promote design compatibility among existing and new development, thus lessening cumulative impacts from the proposed Project to a less than significant level.

4.9 NOISE

The primary noise sources expected to affect existing and planned noise sensitive land uses in the Project Impact Zone would be construction-related activities during development and traffic from area roadways during Project operations. Additional potential noise impacts could result from operational noise from the proposed elementary school, park and commercial neighborhood center. The noise mitigation measures to be included in the proposed Project and other future projects to be developed in the NMC, would reduce impacts from noise. However, these projects will continue the conversion of the Project area from an agricultural area to an urban area, which will result in significant cumulative Noise impacts.

In some areas within the NMC no sensitive receptors exist, but in some locations residents, school children and outdoor agricultural workers are currently, and will continue to be, exposed to noise levels that exceed thresholds. Mitigation measures have been incorporated which will reduce Project-related noise impacts to less than significant levels.

4.10 PUBLIC SERVICES

Demand for public services would increase with implementation of additional NMC projects, including the potential need for additional library facilities. The mitigation measures identified in Section 3.10.4, *Public Services Mitigation Measures*, would reduce the Project related impacts to a less than significant level. Also, sufficient capacity is currently available at the existing libraries in the City to serve the proposed Project. In addition, buildout associated with the NMC includes the development of new schools, fire and police stations. Each project in the NMC would be individually evaluated and required to mitigate its impacts on Public Services through payment of fees, reservation and/or dedication of land for new facilities, creation of community facilities districts, or other measures. Based on the preceding information, no significant cumulative impacts on public services are anticipated and the Project would not create significant cumulative impacts on schools, fire and police protection services, library services, or parks.

4.11 TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC

Nine study intersections are forecast to be significantly impacted during the Project opening year (2007) cumulative base (No Project) conditions, while 16 study intersections are forecast to be significantly impacted during the CMP Horizon Year (2015). Although fair share contributions toward the improvement of each future deficient intersection would be collected by the City, a funding short fall is projected which may not be offset by other funding sources (federal, state, county, city, and private). Accordingly, the cumulative traffic impacts of the related projects are expected to be significant and unavoidable.

4.12 UTILITIES/SERVICE SYSTEMS

Future NMC projects can be expected to increase the demand for utilities and services provided by the City, other cities in the County, the County of San Bernardino, and public utility companies. This growth is consistent with the trend of increased population and commerce that those entities have incorporated into their planning processes. Taken as a whole, the additional demand on public utilities imposed by the Project in combination with the related projects is expected to be a small fraction of the anticipated regional growth and would not result in a significant cumulative Utilities and Service System impact on service or capacity.