

## SECTION 5

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# **GROWTH INDUCING, UNAVOIDABLE AND IRREVERSIBLE IMPACTS**

## 5 GROWTH INDUCING, UNAVOIDABLE, AND IRREVERSIBLE IMPACTS

According to CEQA Guidelines Section 15126, “All phases of a project must be considered when evaluating its impact on the environment: planning, acquisition, development, and operations.” Consideration of the Project’s significant environmental impacts are discussed in the following sections:

Section 5.1: Growth-Inducing Impacts. CEQA Guidelines Section 15126(d) requires that an EIR evaluate the potential growth-inducing impacts of the Project;

Section 5.2: Unavoidable Impacts. CEQA Guidelines Section 15126(b) requires that an EIR identify significant environmental effects that cannot be avoided if the Project is implemented; and,

Section 5.3: Irreversible Impacts. CEQA Guidelines Section 15126(c) requires that an EIR evaluate significant irreversible environmental changes that would be caused by the Project.

### 5.1 GROWTH INDUCING IMPACTS

Section 15126(d) of the CEQA Guidelines requires that an EIR discuss the ways in which a project could directly or indirectly foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing. Growth-inducing impacts fall into two general categories, direct and indirect.

Direct growth inducing impacts are generally associated with the provision of urban services and the extension of infrastructure to an undeveloped area. The extension of services and facilities to an individual site can reduce development constraints for other nearby areas and can serve to induce further development in the vicinity.

Indirect or secondary growth inducing impacts consist of growth induced in the region by the additional demands for housing, employment, and good and services associated with population increase caused by, or attracted to, new development.

According to CEQA Guidelines (Section 15126[g]), a project fosters spatial, economic or population growth in a geographic area if it meets any one of the four criteria identified below:

1. Removal of an impediment to growth (i.e., establishment of an essential public service or provision of a new access to an area);
2. Economic expansion or growth (i.e., change in revenue base, employment expansion, etc.);
3. Establishment of a precedent setting action (i.e., innovation, radical change in zoning or GPA approval); or,
4. Development or encroachment in an isolated or adjacent area of open space (being distinct from an “infill” type of project).

The impacts of the proposed Project are evaluated below with regard to these four growth-inducing criteria. Should the Project meet any one of the four criteria listed above, the Project can be considered growth-inducing.

#### 5.1.1 Removal of an Impediment to Growth

The proposed Project would modify the current land use designation and substantially increase the area’s growth rate. In addition, the Project will include infrastructure and utility improvements. These actions

could be considered as constituting an action, or generating impacts, that may be considered “removing an impediment to growth.” The proposed Project will accommodate the the NMC GPA by constructing the West Haven Specific Plan community in Subareas 6 and 12. As discussed in the NMC GPA, the NMC is considered to be growth-inducing since it designates future growth; however, the Project is consistent with the growth identified in the NMC GPA.

### **5.1.2 Economic Expansion or Growth**

The Project and future buildout within the NMC will cause an expansion and diversification of the local economic base and create both direct and indirect economic growth. The Project will result in increased construction jobs during the construction period, increased business and job opportunities, and increased property tax revenue. For these reasons, the Project can be considered growth-inducing by fostering economic growth. However, the Project is consistent with the City’s General Plan and urbanization defined by the NMC GPA.

### **5.1.3 Establishment of a Precedent Setting Action**

The Project is consistent with the City’s General Plan in addition to the zoning land use designations given for the NMC. Therefore, the Project will not result in a precedent setting action.

### **5.1.4 Development or Encroachment on Open Space**

The Project will result in the removal of the dairy farm operations and the existing tree and plant nursery that are located on the Project site. Therefore, the Project will not result in the loss of open space.

### **5.1.5 Conclusion**

The West Haven Specific Plan has met two of the four growth-inducing criteria specified under CEQA (Guidelines Section 15126[g]). The direct and indirect impacts of the NMC GPA’s goals and objectives, along with the proposed Project’s buildout, will require improvement and construction of infrastructure, and development and construction of the West Haven Specific Plan community, residences, facilities and services. Section 3.0, *Setting, Impacts, Mitigation, and Significant Effects of the Project After Mitigation*, addresses the land use resources and constraints within the Project boundaries, and the goals, policies and programs that will guide the development, and reflect the changes to, these land use designations. Economic development within the context of an urban infill setting will have a beneficial impact. Since the infrastructure is largely in place, secondary growth-inducing effects, do not represent a significant environmental impact. Mitigation measures included in Section 3.12, *Utilities/Service Systems*, address the impacts on these resources as associated with the proposed Project, and mitigation measures necessary to reduce these impacts to an acceptable level. However, the extension of these utilities and other service (police and fire, etc.) improvements to be made to the Project site are considered growth inducing.

## **5.2 UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS**

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126(b) requires an EIR identify “... where there are impacts that cannot be alleviated without imposing an alternative design, their implications and the reasons why the project is being proposed, notwithstanding their effect.”

The Project would cause three unavoidable adverse impacts. The first unavoidable adverse impact is on agricultural resources. The proposed Project is anticipated to impact agricultural productivity in the NMC

GPA area due to the individual and cumulative impact it will have on the continued viability of dairy production in the area. There are currently 150 dairies within the City's NMC area, which represents approximately 50 percent of the dairies in the Chino Basin. Buildout of the NMC, in addition to the West Haven Specific Plan development, will convert most of the existing dairies, some of which are on Prime Farmland and some of which are under Williamson Act Contracts, from agricultural land uses to non-agricultural land uses. Therefore, the proposed Project and expected buildout would result in the loss or conversion of Prime Farmland to non-agricultural use resulting in unavoidable significant individual and cumulative impacts.

The second unavoidable adverse impact is on air quality and would be created by the construction and operation of the Project. The SCAQMD has established significance thresholds for air emissions associated with short-term construction-related activities and long-term operational characteristics of development projects. The SCAQMD-recommended pollutant thresholds are presented in Table 3.2-3, *SCAQMD Thresholds of Significance*, which was used to assess the impacts of the Project. As discussed in Subsection 3.2.3, *Impacts*, Project construction emissions of PM<sub>10</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub> emissions are above threshold levels and Project operational air emissions of ROG from area and mobile sources are above threshold levels. Therefore, these are impacts that cannot be reduced to an acceptable level by mitigation measures included in the EIR, and are unavoidable adverse impacts.

Thirdly, implementation of the Project would result in significant impacts on 9 intersections in the vicinity of the Project in the year 2007, and 16 intersections in the year 2015. Although with the implementation of on-site and off-site transportation/traffic mitigation measures, it is anticipated that the majority of the study intersections and roadways segments would experience improved operating conditions and acceptable levels of service; some intersection and roadways would still continue to carry a significant amount of traffic volume due in part by deficiencies of the roadway circulation system which include missing roadway links and interchange access to the regional freeway system. Therefore, Project-related traffic impacts are expected to be unavoidable and significant. However, the Project would have no significant effect on the transportation network in the Project vicinity if sufficient funding were to become available from other private and public sources, and construction of the identified intersection improvements were to occur.

Table ES-2, Summary of Significant Environmental Impacts, Mitigation Measures, and Level of *Significance After Mitigation*, outlines a detailed summary of the proposed Project's environmental impacts, proposed mitigation measures, and the level of impact significance after mitigation. No other avoidable impacts are expected as described in Section 3.0, *Setting, Impacts, Mitigation, and Significant Effects of the Project After Mitigation*, and defined in Section 4.0, *Cumulative Impacts*.

### 5.3 SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE

Section 15126.2(c) of the CEQA Guidelines requires an EIR characterize "... use[s] 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, particular, secondary impacts 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."

Implementation of the proposed Project and associated land uses will entail construction activities that commit non-renewable and/or slowly renewable energy resources, natural resources, such as lumber and other forest products, sand and gravel, asphalt, steel, copper, lead, other metals, water, and human resources. An increased commitment of social services and maintenance services, such as police, fire, and water services, will also be required. The energy and social service commitments will be irreversible obligations since it is nearly impossible to return land to original conditions once developed.

Additionally, both residential and non-residential development on-site will further require commitment of energy resources in the form of natural gas and electricity generated by coal, hydroelectrical power, or nuclear energy. Increased motor vehicle travel in the NMC and the City will indeed be accompanied by increased consumption of petroleum products. An increased commitment to public maintenance services, such as waste disposal and treatment, will also be required. These energy and public service commitments will be irreversible obligations since the Project's development will require these commitments.

Manure stored on the site could create methane gas which could potentially impact new residents, school children, and staff and those using the park that would be developed as part of this Project. However, manure stored or buried on the site will be removed from the site, therefore, methane gas production from the decomposition of this material will also be removed from the site.

### **5.3.1 Non-Renewable Resources**

The SCAG Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide states that California "... has an abundance of natural resources....coupled with significant fossil fuel reserves, California boasts among the most diverse energy systems in the world – one which utilizes wind, geothermal, hydroelectric, solar, and nuclear energy, as well as conventional fossil fuels, to homes, businesses, and industry."

Uncontrolled use of natural resources has potential environmental implications. Overall, it is in the best interest of the Project applicant and construction contractor to use typical prudent construction techniques included in standard construction specifications to reduce the potential for overuse of non-renewable resources and reduce the potential of accidental spills. Such prudent measures reduce development costs and alleviate the need of implementing additional mitigation measures.

Significant impacts concerning non-renewable resources are not expected to occur. After Project construction, future residents would be encouraged by their solid waste disposal service provider to recycle both renewable and non-renewable materials. These efforts would minimize, to the maximum extent practicable, the consumption of non-renewable resources and would result in a less than significant impact.

Sections 5.3.1.1 through 5.3.1.4 provides supporting information on the anticipated fossil fuels, building materials, and petroleum products consumption, and the potential risk of upset associated with the use of these resources on the Project site.

#### **5.3.1.1 Fossil Fuels**

During Project construction, fossil fuels will be used both on- and off-site by construction workers and by equipment used on the Project site. Once consumed, those fossil fuels will be permanently expended and, through their consumption, become unavailable for subsequent or alternative uses. The amount of fossil

fuel that would be consumed during construction cannot easily be determined; however, the amount is expected to be substantially less than the amount that would be consumed throughout the operational life of the Project. Accordingly, efforts will be taken during both the construction phase and throughout the Project's operational life to reduce the consumption of fossil fuels.

#### **5.3.1.2 Building Materials**

During building construction, a variety of natural resources would be consumed, including water, sand, gravel, and asphalt. Once used, these materials would be either irretrievably "lost" for subsequent or alternative use, and/or committed to the Project site on a long-term basis. In addition to the materials that are consumed in the construction of on-site structures, some portion of those materials become construction and demolition (C&D) wastes. C&D wastes would be generated both during site clearance, grading, street and utilities construction, home building, and installation of landscaping and irrigation systems. C&D wastes would include vegetation, earth materials, concrete, wood, and other miscellaneous debris (cardboard, paper, plastic, household trash, food wastes). Compliance with Assembly Bill 939 source reduction and recycling requirements would ensure that both renewable and non-renewable C&D wastes generated during construction and transported to landfills are minimized to the maximum extent practicable.

Once operational, additional non-renewable materials will be consumed by Project occupants, including those using the concept elementary school and concept park, developed as part of this Project. Long-term demands would be imposed on regional energy resources for space heating and cooling, transportation, and the production of consumable goods. Recycling programs now in place encourage future homeowners to recycle both renewable and non-renewable materials. Pursuant to the provisions of AB 939, the City is required to take such actions as may be necessary to attain the recycling goal of diverting 50% of all wastes generated within the City from local landfills. Municipal and private efforts toward the attainment of that goal would minimize, to the maximum extent practicable, the consumption of non-renewable resources.

#### **5.3.1.3 Petroleum Products**

During construction, limited quantities of gasoline and/or diesel fuels may be used and stored on the Project site. Supplies of these fuels are readily available, but at ever increasing costs. The limited use of such fuels will not create a significant potential for an environmental accident.

#### **5.3.1.4 Risk of Upset**

Significant amounts of hazardous materials will not be generated during the construction and operation of the Project. During the construction phase of the Project, the contractor will be required to comply with the State General Storm Water Permit for Construction Activities to reduce the potential contamination of storm water discharges by hazardous materials. The permit requires the development of a SWPPP that indicates the appropriate storage, handling, and disposal of hazardous materials reducing the potential for pollutant discharges from the Project site.

The Project will incur an incremental increase in the use of household and commercial chemicals by the new residents and those maintaining the Project's school and park. Residents and Project maintenance personnel would use nominal amounts of household chemicals, such as cleaners, automotive fluids, and possibly chlorine for pools. It is also possible that residents may use some quantities of pesticides and

herbicides, the disposal and over application of which may contribute to pollutant storm water discharges if storm water and irrigation runoff is not controlled. It is anticipated that the Project will include extensive landscaping that will be used to filter some of the pollutants carried by storm water and irrigation runoff.

In an effort to manage household hazardous waste (HHW), the City contracts with the County of San Bernardino Fire Department Household Hazardous Waste Program. The County's HHW program is based on the California Health and Safety Code Section 25179.4. This section of the code contains provisions on hazardous waste management practices designed to ensure:

- (a) Reduction of hazardous waste generated;
- (b) Recycling of hazardous waste;
- (c) Treatment of hazardous waste; and,
- (d) Land disposal of residuals from hazardous waste recycling and treatment.

In an effort to comply with the Health and Safety Code, the County has designated a number of HHW collection centers. The HHW collection center within the City of Ontario is located at 1408 E. Francis Street. This center accepts household generated motor oil, oil filters, antifreeze, auto and household batteries, pesticides, fertilizers, paint products, chemical cleaners, and hobby/pool supplies. The County's HHW Program would reduce potential impacts associated with household hazardous waste to a less than significant level.