

## 6 OTHER CEQA-MANDATED SECTIONS

### 6.1 GROWTH INDUCEMENT

PRC Section 21100(b)(5) specifies that the growth-inducing impacts of a project must be addressed in an EIR. Section 15126.2(e) 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:

- ▶ 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; 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.

#### 6.1.1 Growth-Inducing Impacts of the Project

##### POPULATION GROWTH

As discussed in the General Plan EIR, growth under the General Plan would allow for the future construction of up to 47,836 new homes within the Planning Area at a wide range of types and densities. Construction of these homes would increase the City's population by approximately 157,319 residents to a total of 328,378 at build out. The General Plan recognized that future urban development outside of the City limits may be appropriate to accommodate future growth and identified Study Areas as possible annexation areas for the City to accommodate such growth.

The rezones associated with the Housing Element Update would increase the number of dwelling units that could occur under buildout conditions and accommodate a greater population than was envisioned for the General Plan and analyzed in the General Plan EIR. The Project is intended to accommodate the City's fair-share of regional housing needs and facilitate the construction of affordable housing, but does not propose or entitle development. It

is anticipated that population growth in the City will continue to be driven by market conditions and the General Plan land use designations for residential uses will be revisited with each subsequent RHNA allocation that is received from SACOG.

The proposed Safety Element Update is required to identify evacuation routes and their capacity, safety, and viability under a range of emergency scenarios, as well as to include information identifying residential developments in hazard areas that do not have at least two emergency evacuation routes. Implementation of this element may result in the development of emergency access improvements. These proposed text changes would not result in any changes in land use that could affect population growth.

## **GROWTH EFFECTS ASSOCIATED WITH INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS**

The General Plan could potentially indirectly induce growth through removal of an obstacle to additional growth and development, such as removing a constraint on a required public service. The City's infrastructure and public services are largely provided by other public and private service providers (e.g., Sacramento County Water Agency for water supply, Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District and County Sanitation District 1 for wastewater service, Sacramento Municipal Utility District for electrical service) that utilize master plans for guiding planned facility and service expansions that are subject to environmental review under CEQA. The General Plan includes proposed roadway improvements that have been designed to support the General Plan Land Use Policy. The General Plan does not include any provisions requiring the oversizing of infrastructure facilities to serve growth not anticipated in the General Plan Land Use Policy Map. The Housing Element and Safety Element Update does not include any specific infrastructure improvements and also does not include any oversized infrastructure or infrastructure extensions that would result in growth.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF GROWTH**

The General Plan would induce further population and job growth in the City as well as potentially induce growth outside of the City (e.g., within the Study Areas). Proposed roadway improvements would support such growth within the City. As a result, the General Plan is considered to be growth-inducing. The environmental effects of this growth within the City and Study Areas is addressed in the General Plan EIR. The Housing Element Update does not propose to locate residential units in areas not anticipated for residential or urban development in the General Plan and General Plan EIR. The environmental effects of the implementation of the Housing Element Update and associated housing sites are discussed in Sections 3.1 through 3.14 and Chapter 4 of this Draft SEIR.

## **6.2 SIGNIFICANT AND UNAVOIDABLE ADVERSE IMPACTS**

The State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(c) 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 SEIR, 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 3.12-3: Increased Demand for New Public School Facilities
- ▶ Impact 3.13-1: Result in an Exceedance of City of Elk Grove General Plan VMT Thresholds
- ▶ Impact 4-20: Cumulative Public School Impacts
- ▶ Impact 4-22: Cumulative Impacts on Vehicle Miles Traveled

## 6.3 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.

As noted in Chapter 2, "Project Description," of this Draft SEIR, the Project would result in up to 2,722 new dwelling units beyond what was evaluated in the General Plan EIR (City of Elk Grove 2018). While the Project would increase housing units, all Project parcels were already anticipated for various levels of development under the General Plan (City of Elk Grove 2019). While housing units would increase, the Project could result in a reduced level of commercial development as compared with that anticipated by the General Plan, the Project would not increase the City's development footprint. Implementation of the Housing Element and Safety Element Update could result in the irreversible and irretrievable commitment of material resources and energy during construction and operation of future development, including:

- ▶ construction materials, such as soil, rocks, wood, concrete, glass, and steel;
- ▶ water supply for new residential units; 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.

Because the General Plan EIR already evaluated the commitment of material resources and energy, the Project's 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," implementation of the Housing Element and Safety Element Update would not result in the long-term inefficient use of energy or natural resources. Therefore, long-term Project operation would not result in substantial long-term consumption of energy and natural resources beyond what was evaluated in the General Plan EIR.

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