

CHAPTER 6.0 OTHER CEQA CONSIDERATIONS

Section 15126 of the CEQA Guidelines requires that all aspects of a project must be considered when evaluating the project's impact on the environment. As part of this analysis, the EIR must identify the following:

- significant environmental effects of the proposed project;
- significant environmental effects that cannot be avoided if the proposed project is implemented;
- significant irreversible environmental changes that would result from implementation of the proposed project;
- the project's growth-inducing impacts;
- mitigation measures proposed to minimize significant effects; and
- alternatives to the proposed project (included in Chapter 5.0 of this EIR).

6.1 SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

Table ES-1, contained in the Executive Summary, and Sections 3.1 through 3.13 identify the environmental effects of the proposed project, including the level of significance of each impact before and after mitigation is implemented.

6.2 SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS THAT CANNOT BE AVOIDED

Section 15126.2(b) of the CEQA Guidelines requires that an EIR describe potential environmental impacts that cannot be avoided, even with the implementation of feasible mitigation measures. Implementation of the GP/CLUP would result in the following significant and unavoidable project-related impacts.

6.2.1 Aesthetics and Visual Resources

- **Impact 3.1-1. Impacts of GP/CLUP on Visual Resources within the City Including Views from Hollister Avenue and City Gateways.** Proposed development of vacant or underutilized land in accordance with the GP/CLUP in the vicinity of certain scenic corridors along Hollister Avenue would potentially create significant impacts to views. Another key public viewpoint that could be impacted in association with development of vacant land includes the gateways to the City located on US-101 at the western and eastern entrance of the City. These impacts cannot be reduced to a less-than-significant level.
- **Impact 3.1-2. Impacts of GP/CLUP on Citywide Visual Character.** Implementation of the GP/CLUP could result in a significant change to the visual character of the City because design policies are subjective. Therefore, there is potential for significant impacts to City visual character.

6.2.2 Agriculture and Farmland

- **Impact 3.2-1. Conversion of Agricultural Land and Loss or Impairment of Agricultural Productivity.** Buildout under the GP/CLUP would result in the conversion of 55.7 acres of agricultural land and the loss of a large amount of agricultural productivity. This conversion

of agricultural land would constitute a significant impact by permanently eliminating these lands from agricultural production.

6.2.3 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

- **Impact 3.7-1. Risk of Upset at Venoco Facilities.** The main risk to the population of the city (both existing and at GP/CLUP buildout) from the EOF involves the separation and storage of LPG and NGL. These gas liquids produce large flame jets or BLEVEs that—if released—can affect a large geographic area. This risk, combined with the relatively high populations close to the facility, produces levels of risk that would be classified as unacceptable.
- **Impact 3.7-2. Transport of Hazardous Materials.** The overall risk associated with transport of hazardous materials would be expected to increase following buildout as more population comes in closer proximity to US-101, SR-217, Hollister Avenue, and the Union Pacific Railroad tracks. These transportation facilities can be used to transport hazardous materials to and through the City and all pass near high-density residential and commercial areas.

6.2.4 Noise

- **Impact 3.11-1. Exposure of Noise Sensitive Land Uses to Noise from Single-Event and Nuisance Noise Sources.** Noise-sensitive land uses in the City may be exposed to single-event and noise sources from future construction activities associated with future buildout.
- **Impact 3.11-2. Exposure of Existing or Planned Noise-Sensitive Receptors to Increased Noise.** There are a number of roadways where traffic noise on adjacent parcels is predicted to increase under the GP/LCUP to levels that exceed 65 dBA CNEL. Assuming nominal exterior-to-interior noise reduction of 20 dB, interior noise levels could also increase to exceed 45 dBA CNEL.
- **Impact 3.11-3. Exposure of Proposed Noise Sensitive Land Uses to Traffic Noise.** A number of areas planned for development of noise-sensitive land uses could be exposed to traffic noise exceeding 65 dBA CNEL. Assuming nominal exterior-to-interior noise reduction of 20 dB, interior noise levels could also increase to exceed 45 dBA CNEL.
- **Impact 3.11-4. Exposure of Proposed Noise Sensitive Land Uses to Railway Noise.** A number of areas planned for residential development could be exposed to railroad noise exceeding 65 dBA CNEL. Assuming nominal exterior-to-interior noise reduction of 20 dB, interior noise levels could also increase to exceed 45 dBA CNEL.
- **Impact 3.11-5. Exposure of Noise Sensitive Land Uses to Industrial and Other Point Sources.** A number of areas planned for residential development could be exposed to commercial or industrial noise exceeding 65 dBA CNEL. This includes Areas 9 and 14 depicted in GP/CLUP Figure 10A-2, and Areas 7, 16, 18, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 31,32, 34, and 35 depicted in GP/CLUP Figure 10A-3.

6.3 SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

Pursuant to Section 15126.2(c) of the State CEQA Guidelines, an EIR must consider any significant irreversible environmental changes that would be caused by the proposed project should it be implemented. Section 15126.2(c) reads as follows:

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.

Implementation of the GP/CLUP would allow for additional residential, commercial, and office development consistent with the adopted Land Use Element. Future development would require the commitment of vacant parcels of land or redevelopment of existing developed land within the City. Future development would also involve construction activities that would entail the commitment of nonrenewable and/or slowly renewable energy resources, human resources, and natural resources such as lumber and other forest products, sand and gravel, asphalt, steel, copper, lead, other metals, and water. An increased commitment of social services and public maintenance services (e.g., police, fire, schools, libraries, and sewer and water services) would also be required. The GP/CLUP would result in the irreversible commitment of energy and water to support new urban development. Where the development would involve substantial grading, excavation, or other alteration to existing topography, these effects would also be irreversible.

6.4 GROWTH-INDUCING IMPACTS

Pursuant to Section 15126.2(d) of the CEQA Guidelines, an EIR must address whether a project will directly or indirectly foster growth. Section 15126.2(d) reads as follows:

An EIR shall 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 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 characteristic 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.

The following growth-inducing impact discussion is a qualitative analysis and evaluates whether the proposed project would directly or indirectly induce economic, population, or housing growth in the surrounding environment.

6.4.1 Evaluation

By its very nature, adoption of a general plan is often growth inducing. California planning law requires each city and county to adopt a

comprehensive, long-term general plan for the physical development of the county or city, and of any land outside its boundaries which in the planning agency's judgment bears relation to its planning. (Government Code, Section 65300.)

In adopting the GP/CLUP, the City is setting the ground rules for future growth and development within its City boundary. Therefore, the proposed project is growth-inducing; it will directly involve new development and an increase in population, public services, and public infrastructure to accommodate future growth. Secondary growth-inducing impacts could also be expected in the surrounding cities and communities. Adoption of the GP/CLUP would have significant growth-inducing impacts on the areas discussed below.

6.4.1.1 Land Use, Housing, Population, and Employment

The GP/CLUP would allow for the development of 3,880 new residential units. This is a direct form of growth inducement. The number of units would accommodate about 7,421 new residents in the City, which would bring the City's population to 38,100. Such growth represents an approximate 24% increase over the next 24-year timeframe of the GP/CLUP. As discussed in Section 3.8, population growth would not itself create physical effects to the environment, it could result in secondary impacts. The result of the increased population would be the need for additional housing and jobs which would lead to the physical impact of residential and commercial development in the City and surrounding communities and cities. Population growth would also place an increased demand on public services, utilities, and infrastructure in the City and surrounding areas. The environmental effects related to the project are discussed in each section of Chapter 3 and 4. Significant and unavoidable impacts of the project are identified above in Section 6.2.

The GP/CLUP also allows for the development of 2,081,000 square feet of commercial and industrial land uses, which could result in the addition of 3,400 to 3,900 jobs in the City. This economic growth would have economic benefits in terms of jobs and City tax revenue, but would contribute to various environmental effects, including increased traffic, noise, and air pollution within the City and surrounding areas. In addition, the increase in potential jobs within the City could also result in additional people moving to the area resulting in an increased demand for housing in the City and surrounding areas.

The very purpose of the GP/CLUP is to accommodate the orderly development of Goleta. Therefore, by its nature, the GP/CLUP is intended to reduce the potential for uncontrolled growth and associated environmental impacts. The GP/CLUP is intended to focus development in certain areas of the City, primarily within vacant and underutilized land within the central subarea. GP/CLUP implementation would therefore induce growth in these areas. This is expected to result in an overall intensification of land uses with the potential for increased traffic, aesthetics, air quality, and noise impacts. In addition, development of any new areas would require the extension of infrastructure to serve new development. However, extension of infrastructure to these areas is not anticipated to expand the geography of the area that is already receiving City services.

6.4.1.2 Transportation and Circulation

A general plan is required by law to include a circulation element that is correlated with its land use element (Government Code, Section 65302[b]). The GP/CLUP includes changes to the City's LOS standards and improvements to existing roads to implement those changes. These roads and future roads built to serve new development would provide access to the residential, commercial, and industrial areas identified in the GP/CLUP, in addition to the surrounding areas. Project-facilitated transportation improvements might also induce additional pressure to intensify use of underused lands in the surrounding cities and communities.

6.4.1.3 Public Facilities and Services

The GP/CLUP would adopt a variety of objectives, policies, and programs intended to ensure that future planned development would be served adequately by water, wastewater disposal, and storm drainage systems; public services such as solid waste disposal and police and fire protection; and school and park facilities. New public facilities and infrastructure improvements could be provided in order to accommodate proposed growth, and the growth that is expected to

occur in the region. CEQA associates the development of new utilities, infrastructure and public services with growth inducement. Where, development has been constrained by infrastructure limitations, development of major new facilities has the potential to induce additional growth by facilitating development in areas that were once underused or vacant.

6.5 MITIGATION MEASURES PROPOSED TO MINIMIZE SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS

Table ES-1, contained in the Executive Summary, and Sections 3.1 through 3.13 identify the environmental effects of the proposed project and provide feasible mitigation measures that would minimize the effects of project-related impacts.

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