

6.0 GROWTH INDUCEMENT

INTRODUCTION

Section 15126.2(d) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, as amended, requires the discussion of the ways in which a project could directly or indirectly foster economic growth, population growth, or the construction of additional housing in the surrounding environment. This discussion should also include projects that would remove obstacles to population growth. It should include the characteristics of a project, which may encourage and/or facilitate other activities that could significantly affect the environment, either individually or cumulatively. CEQA emphasizes that growth in an area should not be considered beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance. The purpose of this section is to evaluate the growth-inducing potential and impact of this project.

GROWTH-INDUCING CRITERIA

In general terms, a project may foster spatial, economic, or population growth in a geographic area if it meets any one of the criteria that are identified below:

- Removal of an impediment to growth (e.g., the establishment of an essential public service or the provision of new access to an area).
- Economic expansion or growth (e.g., construction of additional housing, changes in revenue base, employment expansion, etc.).
- Establishment of a precedent-setting action (e.g., an innovation, a change in zoning or general plan designation).
- Development or encroachment in an isolated or adjacent area of open space (being distinct from an “infill” type of project).

Should a project meet any one of these criteria, it can be considered growth inducing. An evaluation of this project compared against these growth-inducing criteria is provided below.

Removal of an Impediment to Growth

Growth in an area may result from the removal of physical impediments or restrictions to growth, as well as the removal of planning impediments resulting from land use plans and policies. In this context, physical growth impediments may include nonexistent or inadequate access to an area or the lack of essential public services (e.g., water service), while planning impediments may include restrictive zoning and/or general plan designations.

The project area contains established land uses and supporting infrastructure. The construction of proposed uses would require the modification and/or improvement of existing infrastructure in order to support the increased land use intensity associated with the Verdugo Gardens project. Such modifications and improvements to infrastructure are discussed in further detail below. Given the urban nature of the site and surroundings, and the existence of established infrastructure, no growth-inducing impacts would result from project development.

An established transportation network exists in the surrounding area that offers local and regional access to the project site. Access to the project site would be provided via three separate driveways along Doran Street, Sanchez Drive, and Central Avenue. The Doran Street driveway would be located approximately 100 feet east of the Central Avenue/Doran Street intersection. This driveway would provide full access (i.e., both left- and right-turn ingress and egress turning movements). The Sanchez Drive driveway would be located approximately 100 feet east of the Sanchez Drive/Central Avenue intersection. As Sanchez Drive is a one-way eastbound roadway, this driveway would accommodate right-turn only ingress and egress. The Central Avenue driveway would be located at the intersection with Pioneer Street and would be limited to northbound right-turn ingress, and left and right-turn egress turning movements.

The project would also require a 10-foot-wide lane dedication along Sanchez Drive, Central Avenue, and Doran Street to reduce traffic concerns. As a result, Doran Street would be restriped to provide a center two-way left-turn lane between the project driveway and Orange Street. In addition, the westbound Doran Street approach to the Central Avenue intersection would be restriped to allocate three lanes (one left-turn lane, one through lane and one right-turn lane). The lane dedication on Sanchez Drive would also allow for an additional eastbound travel lane on Sanchez Drive immediately east of Central Avenue, which would transition into a separate right-turn only lane at the project driveway. Finally, the dedication on Central Avenue would allow for an additional northbound travel lane on Central Avenue. In conjunction with this additional northbound travel lane on Central Avenue, a northbound right-turn lane would be installed at the Sanchez Drive intersection. The resulting northbound Central Avenue approach to the Sanchez Drive intersection would also be modified to provide four through travel lanes and one right-turn only lane. All improvements would be designed to serve the proposed project and would not induce growth within the area.

The water and energy (electricity and natural gas) infrastructure required to support the proposed project would be available to the project site from surrounding streets. A 24-inch line on Central Avenue, a 6-inch line on Sanchez Drive, and a 20-inch line on Doran Street would provide water service to the project site. No new water mains other than those required to serve the project site would be constructed. As

such, the development of on-site water infrastructure to serve the project would not induce growth within the area.

Electricity and natural gas transmission infrastructure presently exists on, and in the vicinity of, the project site. Development of the project would necessitate the construction of an on-site distribution system to convey this energy to uses on the site. This system would be designed to accommodate the uses proposed within the project, and would not extend beyond the requirements or boundary of the project. The on-site service lines would be sized to meet the demands of the proposed project. No growth-inducing impacts, due to the extension of electrical or natural gas service lines, would occur with the development of the project.

Concerning sewer infrastructure, an 8-inch line in Central Avenue and a 15-inch line in Doran Street would provide sewer service to the project site. Due to sewer capacity issues downtown, the sewer system may need upgrading as a result of existing development, the project, and cumulative development. Consequently, the project could be construed as growth-inducing due to the need to construct new sewer infrastructure.

In summary, the design and construction of roadway, water, electrical, and natural gas infrastructure needed to accommodate the project would not induce growth within undeveloped areas surrounding the project area. The development of new sewer lines to increase capacity for the project and cumulative development could be considered to be growth-inducing.

Economic Growth

The second criterion by which growth inducement can be measured involves economic considerations. In the short term, the proposed project would provide for short-term construction employment opportunities. It is anticipated that construction employees would commute from elsewhere in the region, rather than relocate to the City of Glendale for a temporary assignment.

Long-term growth, should it occur, would be primarily in the form of an economic response to the new residents that would occupy the site. The increase of people associated with the proposed project may result in a slight corresponding increase in demand for City goods and services. However, given the relatively small size of the project in relation to City population, the economic contribution of this project alone would not be considered growth inducing.

Furthermore, the City has a total of 74,565 housing units, with approximately 72,635 units occupied (i.e., vacancy rate of approximately 2.6 percent).¹ Given the existing vacancy rate making 1,930 units available and because of the construction of additional residential developments in the near future (estimated 287 units for the project and 2,477 units on the related project list), any growth in housing demand would be adequately accommodated. Nonetheless, the small increase in population and economic activity potentially generated by the proposed project could be considered growth inducing. Furthermore, such an increase could be considered substantial, as the project's population increase exceeds the amount of growth projected for the City, as stated in **Section 4.2, Population and Housing**.

Precedent-Setting Action

Changes from a project that could be precedent setting include (among others) a change in zoning, general plan designation, general plan text, or approval of exceptions to regulations that could have implications for other properties or that could make it easier for other properties to develop.

The Verdugo Gardens project site is currently designated as "Downtown Specific Plan" on the General Plan land use map. This designation provides for an array of commercial uses (i.e. retail, service, office, entertainment), in addition to very-high-density urban housing and mixed-use developments. The project is consistent with the intent of the Downtown Specific Plan and does not include a change in zoning, general plan designation, or general plan text. Consequently, the project is not considered to be growth inducing.

Development of or Encroachment Isolated on Open Space

Development can be considered growth inducing when it requires the extension of urban infrastructure into isolated localities, which are presently devoid of such facilities. The project site is situated in an area that is surrounded to the north, east, south, and west by urban areas that contain established infrastructure. The 134 Freeway is located directly to the north from the Verdugo Gardens project site. A 24-story office building and a 3-story office building are located to the west across Central Avenue, while a 3-story office building is located to the south across Doran Street. A 5-story parking structure and surface parking lot are located directly to the east. Consequently, the project would not induce growth under this criterion because it would not result in the urbanization of land in an isolated location.

It must be emphasized that the *CEQA Guidelines* require an EIR to "discuss the ways" a project could be growth inducing and "discuss the characteristics of some projects that may encourage...activities that

¹ California State Department of Finance, E-5 City/County Population and Housing Estimates, January 1, 2007, May 2007.

could significantly affect the environment.” However, the *CEQA Guidelines* do not require an EIR to predict or speculate where such growth would occur, in what form it would occur, or when it would occur. Attempting to determine the environmental impacts created by growth that might be induced by the proposed project is speculative because the size, type, and location of specific future projects that may be induced by this project are unknown at the present time. Therefore, such impacts are too speculative to evaluate (see *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15145). To the extent that specific projects are known (as discussed in **Section 4.0, Environmental Impact Analysis**, of this EIR), those projects have already been or would be subjected to their own environmental analysis. Additionally, due to the variables that must be considered when examining the mechanics of urban growth (e.g., market forces, demographic trends, etc.), it would be speculative to state conclusively that implementation of the project alone would induce growth in the surrounding area. Further analysis of impacts associated with growth in the Glendale area, and corresponding cumulative impact assessment methodology, can be found in the cumulative analyses for each individual topic addressed in **Section 4.0**.