
17. CEQA-REQUIRED ASSESSMENT CONCLUSIONS

This chapter summarizes the EIR in terms of the various assessment categories suggested by California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines for EIR content. The chapter includes report findings with respect to "growth inducement," "unavoidable significant adverse impacts," "irreversible environmental changes," "cumulative impacts," and "effects found not to be significant."

17.1 GROWTH-INDUCING IMPACTS

Section 21100(g) of CEQA requires that an EIR include information regarding the growth-inducing impact of the proposed project. Section 15126(g) of the CEQA Guidelines states that the discussion should include 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."

Central area growth inducement and increased economic activity and investment are intended impacts (i.e., goals) of the proposed Downtown Improvement Program Update project. If project objectives are successfully achieved, new development activities are expected to occur, including an increased intensity of commercial and residential development in the project area. This EIR conservatively assumes that proposed project actions may result in realization of central area development levels consistent with full realization of the proposed *Downtown Design Plan* residential and commercial development "envelopes" (see Table 3.3 herein).

17.1.1 Internal Growth-Inducement

If the proposed Downtown Improvement Program Update (*Downtown Design Plan* and associated Specific Plan, General Plan, Municipal Code, and Redevelopment Plan amendments) does facilitate the maximum central area buildout scenario quantified in Table 3.3 and evaluated in this EIR, the proposed project would result in the following estimated total downtown development increments over existing (2002) conditions by the year 2020:

- up to approximately 1,670 total additional residential units;
- approximately 116,640 total additional square feet of retail/restaurant/entertainment floor area;
- approximately 942,640 square feet of total additional office floor area; and

- approximately 12,240 square feet of total additional public facility floor area.

17.1.2 External Growth-Inducement

The primary growth-inducing impacts of the project would be confined within the boundaries of the project area (see Figure 3.1). To a lesser degree, secondary growth-inducing impacts (the "multiplier" effect) could also be expected in portions of the city and subregion outside the project area boundary. In particular, project-induced increases in local primary ("basic") jobs could be expected to have a "multiplier" effect, increasing overall employment totals and housing demands in the city and the surrounding subregion. In addition, project-facilitated infrastructure improvements, and some of the development projects that would be facilitated within the project area, might induce additional pressure to intensify use of surrounding underused lands.

Secondary growth-inducing land use impacts of the project would occur in the form of future individual development proposals and associated applications. Most of this primary and secondary growth inducement would be expected to occur in a manner consistent with the City of Sunnyvale General Plan. Each such future project, with the exception of those which are exempt from CEQA, would also require applicant submittal and City of Sunnyvale review of associated individual development applications, and under CEQA, would routinely involve project-specific environmental impact documentation and public review to ensure that any associated significant adverse impacts are adequately addressed. These requirements and procedures would be expected to reduce such secondary growth-inducement impacts of the project to *less-than-significant levels*, unless specific statements of overriding consideration were adopted.

17.2 UNAVOIDABLE SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE IMPACTS

Section 21100(b) of CEQA requires that the EIR discuss "*any significant environmental effects which cannot be avoided if the project is implemented.*" Unavoidable adverse impacts are those that could not be reduced to less-than-significant levels by the mitigation measures recommended in this report. Significant unavoidable impacts identified were identified in this EIR related to Transportation and Air Quality. They include:

- Impact 7-4: Project Impacts on Intersections (Project Condition or No Project Condition)-- De Anza Boulevard and Homestead Road Intersection in the AM Peak Hour; and
- Impact 10-2: Long-Term Regional Emissions Increases.

17.3 IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

Section 21100(f) of CEQA requires that an EIR identify any significant irreversible changes that would result from implementation of the project. The project would consist of a series of actions, improvements, and development that would further land use intensification in the project area. Due to the scale of the proposed project and the commitment of resources involved in its implementation, the various physical effects of the project would be considered "irreversible environmental changes." The future removal of project-facilitated land use and infrastructure changes, and associated impact reversals, would be highly unlikely, and therefore the various project-facilitated physical changes can be considered "irreversible."

17.4 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

The CEQA Guidelines (section 15355) define "cumulative impacts" as *"..two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts."* In the case of the proposed project, cumulative impacts could result from the project-facilitated central area buildout scenario, in combination with other recently approved and pending development in Sunnyvale or elsewhere in Santa Clara County. The cumulative effects of the project and surrounding development on land use, population, housing, employment, transportation, public services and utilities, storm drainage, water quality, noise, air quality, and biological resources have been fully considered and are discussed where applicable in chapters 4 through 15 of this EIR.

17.5 EFFECTS FOUND NOT TO BE SIGNIFICANT

The City of Sunnyvale, in its Initial Study for the proposed Downtown Improvement Program Update, determined that a number of specific possible environmental effects would not occur, would be insignificant, or would be adequately addressed in subsequent City development review procedures without further environmental assessment in this program EIR. These environmental impact categories (i.e., mineral resources and agricultural resources) are identified in appendix 21.2 of this EIR, which contains the Initial Study Checklist and narrative.

