

5.0 GROWTH INDUCING IMPACTS

Section 15126(g) of the *State CEQA Guidelines* requires a discussion of a proposed project's potential to foster economic or population growth, including ways in which a project could remove an obstacle to growth. The Specific Plan's potential to induce growth is discussed in this section.

Growth does not necessarily create significant physical changes to the environment. However, depending upon the type, magnitude, and location of growth, it can result in significant adverse environmental effects. The proposed Specific Plan's growth inducing potential is therefore considered significant if it could result in unavoidable significant effects in one or more environmental issue areas.

5.1 ECONOMIC GROWTH

The commercial components of the Specific Plan would directly generate jobs and economic activity. Using a factor of 500 building square feet per worker for commercial uses, the 280,500 square feet of commercial/retail/office development proposed would generate an estimated 560 jobs. Another 80 employees could be generated by recreational uses within subarea 4, for a total of 640 employees within the plan area. A portion of the jobs would be expected to be filled by occupants of the residential components of the proposed Specific Plan. Although some jobs would likely be filled by current residents of Paso Robles, many of the new job opportunities would likely be filled by people relocating to the area. In this way, the proposed Specific Plan may indirectly generate population growth in the area. The number of relocatees and the location in which they would reside cannot be predicted with any certainty, but it is likely that the proposed Specific Plan would contribute to housing demand in the City of Paso Robles. This could increase pressure for additional housing development and/or tend to drive up housing prices.

Under the Specific Plan, circulation, water, sewer, and drainage infrastructure would be constructed to accommodate urban development on the site. This additional demand for services and multiplier-effect related economic growth is not expected to significantly impact the region, and the costs of such will be at least partially offset by the additional tax base, both in property and sales.

Based on current City household sizes (2.7 persons per unit; U.S. Census 2000), the residential components of the Specific Plan, which include 1,439 dwellings, would be expected to generate 3,885 residents. The estimated 3,885 residents that would be added on the site would incrementally increase activity in nearby retail establishments and may generate demand for such services as landscaping, gardening, and home cleaning and maintenance. Specific Plan site residents are expected to draw on existing retail and commercial services already available in the area, as well as such services available on the Specific Plan site, rather than inducing new service providers to relocate to the area. As a result, no significant physical effects are expected to result from economic growth generated by the proposed Specific Plan. In a general sense, the proposed Specific Plan is expected to have beneficial economic effects on local retailers and service providers.

Mitigation Measures. None required.



Residual Impacts. No unavoidable significant environmental impacts relating to economic growth are anticipated.

5.2 POPULATION GROWTH

As of January 1, 2005, the City's population was 28,000 (State Department of Finance, 2005) The proposed Specific Plan involves 1,300 single-family residential units and 139 multi-family residential units. Based on current City household sizes (2.7 persons per unit; U.S. Census 2000), the residential components of the Specific Plan, would be expected to generate 3,885 residents. This population increase represents about 14% of the current City population of 28,000.

To the extent that commercial and residential development in the City of Paso Robles has generally progressed to the east along State Route 46 over time, the proposed Specific Plan can be viewed as an extension of this growth trend. Although buildout of the Specific Plan would not substantially affect the overall City population, it involves the development of a currently undeveloped semi-rural area. However, the site is surrounded by existing urban land uses to the west, south and north, and would represent infill urban development. In addition, the site is currently designated as a Specific Plan Overlay Designation in the 2003 City General Plan update. The Chandler Ranch Area Specific Plan proposes the infill of vacant land within the City limits. Infill within the current corporate boundary will result in additional housing and employment opportunities. The Specific Plan would be consistent with the existing General Plan, and is consistent with projected housing targets included in the Housing Element. Therefore, it would only induce the anticipated population growth. Thus, no significant population growth impacts would result.

The impacts of other similar development would depend upon the location and magnitude of such development, although the types of impacts would likely be similar to those of the Specific Plan. Environmental areas that could experience significant effects if similar development were to occur elsewhere in the vicinity include agriculture, biological resources, and aesthetics. Such impacts would be addressed on a case-by-case basis as individual development projects are proposed.

Mitigation Measures. None required.

Residual Impacts. No unavoidable significant environmental impacts relating to population growth are anticipated.

5.3 REMOVAL OF OBSTACLES TO GROWTH

Currently, land use and zoning controls would limit growth potential in the area. However, these are political barriers to growth that can be changed, as land use and zoning controls can be amended to be less restrictive. If these actions occurred, the growth potential of the area would increase.

Because the Specific Plan area is now generally undeveloped, it would require the extension of urban infrastructure to serve proposed development. New infrastructure that would be required includes development of new roads to serve the site, extension of the water and sewer lines, and the improvement of the sewer capacity. The potential for each of these types of infrastructure to induce growth is discussed below.



Road Extensions. Access from the north to the Specific Plan would be from Airport Road, Union Road, and Gilead Lane. Access from the central portion would be from Golden Hill Road and from the southern portion would be from Sherwood Road. The internal road system will consist of a series of local roads designed specifically to serve site development. None of the internal roads will be designed to serve additional development on the Specific Plan and none approach the outer boundaries of the Specific Plan. Therefore, although extensions of planned roads to other portions of the Specific Plan or offsite areas could occur, the current circulation system would not easily accommodate such extensions. The potential for the proposed internal road system to induce additional growth either on-site or off-site is limited.

The extension of Airport Road along the eastern boundary of the Specific Plan area would provide a major north-south link along the eastside of the City. However, it would not serve areas that do not already have roadway access, other than the Specific Plan area itself. Thus, the extension of this roadway would not be growth-inducing.

Sewer Infrastructure. As described in Section 4.10, *Public Services and Infrastructure*, the Specific Plan includes a fee to upgrade some of the City's Sewer infrastructure to handle the increase in wastewater flow that would be created by the development. The development itself will be responsible for the installation of onsite sewer infrastructure. However, if such infrastructure is overbuilt, it could accommodate additional or more intensive development on-site or at off-site at some point in the future, thereby removing an obstacle to future growth.

Water Infrastructure. As described in Section 4.10, *Public Services and Infrastructure*, the Specific Plan includes payment to the City to improve the water system to handle the increase in water flow that would be created by the development. Also, three new wells (or the equivalent) are included in the Specific Plan to meet the water demand of the proposed development. However, if these are overbuilt, they could accommodate additional or more intensive development at off-site locations at some point in the future, thereby removing an obstacle to future growth.

Mitigation Measures. Policy I-1 of the proposed Specific Plan requires the following:

- **Policy I-1. Utility Sizing.** *All water, sewer, and drainage systems shall be designed and installed to accommodate the full buildout of the Specific Plan Area as well as other potential development areas that would be accommodated by the General Plan, including the Beechwood Area Specific Plan and the Olsen Ranch Specific Plan.*

This policy would be needed to ensure that development under the existing General Plan could proceed in a logical and cost-effective manner. However, the following additional mitigation measure is needed to ensure that development could not indirectly induce potential growth beyond the boundaries of the existing General Plan:

- GI-1(a) Infrastructure Capacity Limitations.** Water, sewer and circulation infrastructure that serves the Specific Plan land uses shall be sized to meet only the demands of the Specific Plan itself, as well as other offsite areas that are included in the 2003 General Plan. Such areas include the Beechwood-Olsen Specific Plan as well as other citywide development anticipated under the General Plan.



Plan Requirements and Timing: Public Works shall review proposed water line extensions prior to approval of initial building permits.

Monitoring: Public Works shall review plans for water line and drainage infrastructure extensions prior to construction and field inspect lines for compliance prior to occupancy dwelling units.

Residual Impacts. With the above measure, the potential to induce further growth would be reduced to a less than significant level.

