6 CEQA-Required Assessment Conclusions

As required by CEQA, this chapter provides an overview of the impacts of the proposed Vacaville General Plan and Energy and Conservation Action Strategy (ECAS) based on the technical analysis presented in this EIR. The topics covered include growth inducement, unavoidable significant effects, and expected significant irreversible changes. A more detailed analysis of the effects the proposed General Plan and ECAS would have on the environment is provided in Chapter 4, Environmental Evaluation, of this EIR.

A. Growth Inducement

Section 15126.2(d) of the CEQA Guidelines requires that an EIR discuss the ways in which a proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Typical growth inducements might be the extension of urban services or transportation infrastructure to a previously unserved or under-served area, or removal of major barriers to development. Not all growth inducement is necessarily negative. Negative impacts associated with growth inducement occur only where the projected growth would cause adverse environmental impacts.

Growth-inducing impacts fall into two general categories: direct or indirect. Direct growth-inducing impacts are generally associated with providing urban services to an undeveloped area. Providing urban services to a site, and the subsequent development, can serve to induce other landowners in the vicinity to convert their property to urban uses. Indirect, or secondary growth-inducing impacts consist of growth induced in the region by additional demands for housing, goods, and services associated with the population increase caused by, or attracted to, a new project.

1. Direct Impacts

The proposed Vacaville General Plan would directly induce population, employment, and economic growth by allowing development in areas not currently designated for urban growth. Implementation of the proposed project would result in the following growth in 2035 based on the buildout methodology described in Chapter 3, Project Description:

- ♦ 9,680 new dwelling units
- ♦ 26,500 new residents
- ♦ 9,720 new jobs
- ♦ 1 million square feet of new commercial space (77 acres)

- 1.1 million square feet of new office space (84 acres)
- 2.1 million square feet of new industrial space (115 acres)

The primary mechanism for this growth is the proposed General Plan land use map, which allows for development in areas that are not currently developed. The anticipated locations of this growth are shown in Figures 3-4, 3-5, and 3-6 in Chapter 3, Project Description.

The proposed General Plan land use map allows some development in areas of the city presently used as agriculture and vacant land. However, policies enacted under the General Plan would control the geographical extent of growth and encourage sustainable patterns of urban land uses. In addition, the proposed General Plan and ECAS commit the City to controlled and orderly use of its natural resources with polices to conserve agricultural land, promote compact growth, and reduce the rate of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions growth.

Specifically, proposed General Plan Policy LU-P2.4 protects local agricultural land by requiring conservation easements in the Permanent Agriculture Overlay Area. Policy LU-P5.1 and Policies LU-P5.4 through LU-P5.7 commit the City to maintain the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) to limit the extent of its urbanized land footprint. These policies focus urban development within the boundary and prohibit land outside the boundary from being designated for uses other than for agriculture, park, open space, public facility, and utility uses until March 1, 2028, unless amended by the voters. Policy LU-P5.2 requires development of agricultural land or open space within the UGB but east of Leisure Town Road to be mitigated to a 1:1 ratio within 1 mile of the UGB, or an in-lieu fee paid in coordination with Solano Land Trust. In addition, policies and actions under Goal COS-9 and the measures included in the proposed ECAS help promote compact growth and facilitate reduced auto dependence, which lowers potential GHG emissions and air pollutants.

The proposed Vacaville General Plan also includes policies that would maintain the small town feel of Vacaville and minimize the environmental impacts of anticipated growth. For example:

- Policy LU-P3.4 directs the City to not approve new development unless there is infrastructure in place or planned to support the growth.
- Action LU-A3.2 directs the City to monitor the rate of growth to ensure that it does not overburden the City's infrastructure and services and does not exceed the amounts analyzed in the General Plan EIR.
- Action LU-A3.3 directs the City to continue to monitor new development where infrastructure limits are being reached or exceeded so that linkages with necessary improvements can be established and funded.

- Policy LU-P16.1 encourages continued improvement and redevelopment in Downtown Vacaville, but states that the City should retain the small-town scale and character of Main Street.

As a result, while the proposed General Plan would result in increased local growth, policies, actions, and measures included in the proposed General Plan and ECAS would reduce the potential for negative impacts associated with direct growth inducement to a less-than-significant level.

2. Indirect Impacts

While the proposed General Plan does allow additional growth, it also includes specific policies that limit that growth to the city limits and UBG, as described above. For example, policies under Goal LU-5 set forth the parameters of the UGB. The proposed General Plan land use map provides a mixture of housing, shopping, public, and employment opportunities so that as the number of residents increase, they do not pressure adjacent communities to provide new commercial and employment opportunities. As previously stated, the General Plan commits to only allow development where infrastructure is in place or is planned. In addition, the proposed General Plan discourages piecemeal development. Policy LU-P2.2 requires that specific plans be prepared for new areas brought into the city for development, and that they provide a coordinated plan for land use, public facilities, and public services. This policy also prohibits individual, piecemeal developments within these outlying areas. As a result, the proposed General Plan policies would result in a less-than-significant indirect growth inducing impact.

B. Unavoidable Significant Impacts

Section 15126.2(b) of the CEQA Guidelines requires that an EIR describe any significant impacts that cannot be avoided, even with the implementation of feasible mitigation measures. This section lists the impacts for the proposed project that were found to be significant and unavoidable. More information on these impacts is found in Chapter 4, Environmental Evaluation, of this Draft EIR.

Impact AES-1: The visual character in undeveloped portions of Vacaville would be substantially altered.

Impact AG-1: Although the proposed General Plan includes policies and actions that would reduce and partially offset the conversion of farmland, it designates approximately 2,640 acres of farmlands of concern under CEQA for non-agricultural uses.

Impact AG-2: The proposed General Plan designates 206 acres of lands with active Williamson Act contracts for non-agricultural uses.

Impact AG-3: Although the policies and actions in the proposed General Plan would reduce and partially offset regional agricultural impacts, the proposed project would contribute to cumulatively significant agricultural impacts in the region.

Impact AIR-1: Mobile-source air pollutant emissions associated with the proposed General Plan would exceed the significance criterion of 80 pounds per day of PM_{10}. This would be a significant project-level and cumulative impact.

Impact BIO-1: The proposed General Plan, in combination with the Northeast Fairfield Specific Plan, could preclude retention of an important wildlife corridor.

Impact GHG-1: The proposed General Plan and ECAS would conflict with AB 32's (the California Global Warming Solutions Act's) goal to reduce GHG emissions by 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.

Impact HYDRO-1: Although the proposed General Plan's policies and actions reduce risks associated with dam or levee failure, they do not eliminate risks to people and property.

Impact HYDRO-2: The proposed General Plan would contribute to development in dam and levee inundation areas, resulting in a significant cumulative impact.

Impact POP-1: The proposed General Plan would induce substantial population growth within the EIR Study Area.

Impact POP-2: The proposed General Plan would induce substantial population growth within Vacaville and the region.

Impact TRAF-1: The Alamo Drive at Marshall Road (4)[1] intersection would degrade to LOS D during both peak hours.

TRAF-3: The Allison Road at Nut Tree Parkway intersection (10) would degrade to LOS F during the PM peak hour.

[1] The number in parentheses following the intersection name in listed traffic and transportation impacts corresponds to the intersection numbers used in Figure 4.14-1 and Table 4.14-10.

TRAF-4: The Leisure Town Road at Alamo Drive intersection (32) would degrade to LOS E during the PM peak hour.

TRAF-5: The Leisure Town Road at Elmira Road intersection (33) would degrade to LOS F in during both peak hours.

TRAF-6: The Leisure Town Road at Interstate 80 Eastbound Ramps (35) would degrade to LOS D during both peak hours. This location is a freeway ramp intersection and is under Caltrans jurisdiction.

TRAF-11: The Peabody Road at Cliffside Drive intersection (80) would degrade to LOS E during the PM peak hour.

TRAF-13: The Peabody Road at Elmira Road intersection (82) would degrade to LOS E during the PM peak hour.

TRAF-21: The unsignalized Cherry Glen Road at Interstate 80 Eastbound Ramp intersection (19) would degrade to LOS F in the PM peak hour. This location is a freeway ramp intersection and is under Caltrans jurisdiction.

TRAF-22: The unsignalized Cherry Glen Road at Interstate 80 Westbound Ramp intersection (20) would degrade to LOS E in the AM peak hour and LOS F in the PM peak hour. This location is a freeway ramp intersection and is under Caltrans jurisdiction.

TRAF-23: The unsignalized Leisure Town Road at Gilley Way intersection (34) would degrade to LOS F on the worst minor street approach during both peak hours, while the overall intersection would deteriorate to LOS F in the PM peak hour.

TRAF-26: The unsignalized Midway Road at I-505 Northbound Ramp intersection (52) would degrade to LOS F on the worst minor street approach during both peak hours, while the overall intersection would operate at LOS A in the AM peak hour and LOS F in the PM peak hour. This location is a freeway ramp intersection and is under Caltrans jurisdiction.

TRAF-27: The unsignalized Midway Road at I-505 Southbound Ramp intersection (53) would degrade to LOS F during both peak hours. This location is a freeway ramp intersection and is under Caltrans jurisdiction.

TRAF-31: The Interstate 80 Eastbound Ramps at North Texas Street intersection (29) in Fairfield would degrade to LOS F during both peak hours. This location is a freeway ramp intersection and is under Caltrans jurisdiction.

TRAF-32: The Interstate 80 Westbound Ramps at North Texas Street intersection (30) in Fairfield would degrade to LOS F in the AM peak hour. This location is a freeway ramp intersection and is under Caltrans jurisdiction.

TRAF-33: The Peabody Road at Air Base Parkway intersection (78) in Fairfield would degrade to LOS E in the AM peak hour and LOS F in the PM peak hour.

TRAF-34: The Peabody Road at Jepson Parkway intersection (85) in Fairfield would degrade to LOS F during both peak hours.

TRAF-35: The eastbound segment of Interstate 80 west of Lagoon Valley Road would degrade to LOS F during the PM peak hour.

TRAF-36: The eastbound segment of Interstate 80 east of Leisure Town Road would degrade to LOS F during the PM peak hour.

TRAF-37: The project would result in deterioration of level of service at a number of intersections below acceptable standards that may not be able to be mitigated when the improvements are needed.

C. Significant Irreversible Changes

Section 15126.2(c) of the CEQA Guidelines requires a discussion of the extent to which a proposed project will commit nonrenewable resources to uses that future generations will probably be unable to reverse. An example of such an irreversible commitment is the construction of highway improvements that would provide public access to previously inaccessible areas.

A project would generally result in a significant irreversible impact if:

- ♦ Primary and secondary impacts would commit future generations to similar uses.
- ♦ The project would involve a large commitment of nonrenewable resources.
- ♦ The project would involve uses in which irreversible damage could result from any potential environmental accidents associated with the project.

1. Changes in Land Use that Commit Future Generations

Development allowed by the proposed General Plan would result in the conversion of some agricultural and vacant lands to residential, commercial, and industrial uses, and the intensification of underutilized areas. In addition, intensification of land uses and development of current-

ly undeveloped lands would result in traffic congestion throughout the city, as described in Chapter 4.14, Traffic and Transportation. Development under the proposed General Plan would constitute a long-term commitment to residential, commercial, industrial, parking, public, and other urban uses, as well as the traffic impacts resulting from new development.

2. Irreversible Damage from Environmental Accidents

Irreversible changes to the physical environment could occur from accidental release of hazardous materials associated with development activities. However, compliance with State and federal hazardous materials regulations and local emergency plans, as discussed in Chapter 4.8, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, would reduce this potential impact to a less-than-significant level. No other irreversible changes are expected to result from the adoption and implementation of the proposed General Plan and ECAS.

3. Large Commitment of Nonrenewable Resources

Implementation of the proposed General Plan and ECAS would result in the commitment of limited, renewable resources such as lumber and water. In addition, development allowed by the proposed General Plan would irretrievably commit nonrenewable resources for the construction and maintenance of buildings, infrastructure, and roadways. These non-renewable resources include mined materials such as sand, gravel, steel, lead, copper, and other metals. Buildout of the proposed General Plan also represents a long-term commitment to the consumption of fossil fuels, natural gas, and gasoline. Increased energy demands would be used for construction, lighting, heating, and cooling of residences, and transportation of people within, to, and from the EIR Study Area. Proposed General Plan Goals COS-10 and COS-11 and their associated policies and actions would promote energy conservation, which could minimize or incrementally reduce the consumption of these resources. In addition, the proposed ECAS includes measures to promote energy conservation and the development of renewable energy in Vacaville. In particular, Measure GB-1 provides incentives for green building certification, Measure GB-2 requires measures that reduce energy use through solar orientation, Measures RE-1 and RE-5 include solar-related requirements for new development, and Measure RE-3 directs the City to develop an alternative energy development plan.

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