

## 6 CEQA-REQUIRED ASSESSMENT CONCLUSIONS

As required by CEQA, this chapter provides an overview of the impacts of the Draft 2030 General Plan and the Climate Action Plan (CAP) 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 Draft 2030 General Plan and CAP would have on the environment is provided in Chapter 4.

### A. *Growth Inducement*

A project is typically considered to be growth-inducing if it fosters economic or population growth. 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 Draft 2030 General Plan would directly induce population, employment and economic growth by allowing for intensified development within some areas of the city. The Draft 2030 General Plan would result in the following growth patterns based on the expected growth assumptions for the city limit and Sphere of Influence (SOI):

- ◆ Under buildout conditions in 2030, the Draft 2030 General Plan would add approximately 3,446 new residents to the existing 2008 population within the city limit. This would result in a city population of 32,303 in 2030, which would be approximately 1,397 fewer people than projected for 2030 by ABAG.
- ◆ Under buildout conditions in 2030, the Draft 2030 General Plan would result in approximately 1,436 additional residential units to the 11,960 residential units estimated to exist in 2008.
- ◆ Under buildout conditions in 2030, the Draft 2030 General Plan would add approximately 9,165 new jobs to the 19,288 jobs estimated to exist in 2008.
- ◆ Under buildout conditions in 2030, the Draft 2030 General Plan would add 724,030 square feet of commercial development to the approximately 2.1 million square feet existing in 2008.

State law requires the City to promote the production of housing to meet its fair share of the regional housing needs distribution made by ABAG. The housing and employment growth in San Carlos would generally have beneficial effects by allowing the City to address its regional fair-share housing obligations.

In addition, the type of growth envisioned by the Draft 2030 General Plan would be concentrated in specific, designated areas and new development would be pedestrian-friendly, use land efficiently and promote transportation alternatives. Housing along and near the El Camino Real transit corridor and Caltrain station would be encouraged, as would mixed-use development. The growth envisioned under the Draft 2030 General Plan would result in regional benefits by promoting growth that encourages less automobile dependence and supports regional transit systems, which could reduce air quality and noise impacts associated with population growth and non-residential development. Encouraging infill growth in the Downtown area and other designated areas and maintaining the City's open space designations would help to

preserve open space at the urban fringe and reduce development pressures on lands outside the city limit.

For these reasons, the growth-inducing effects of implementation of the Draft 2030 General Plan would be beneficial to the city and surrounding areas.

## **2. Indirect Impacts**

The Draft 2030 General Plan encourages new growth in the urbanized areas of San Carlos. Development in these areas would consist of infill development on the remaining vacant sites or redevelopment of underutilized sites. Since the infrastructure is largely in place, and since commercial growth would be required to comply with the City's standards for public services and utilities, secondary growth-inducing effects do not represent a significant environmental impact.

### ***B. Unavoidable Significant Impacts***

While the majority of impacts associated with the Draft 2030 General Plan would be reduced to a *less-than-significant* level, adoption and implementation of the Draft 2030 General Plan would result in the following *significant and unavoidable* impacts:

#### **a. Air Quality**

The Draft 2030 General Plan is inconsistent with the BAAQMD Thresholds of Significance which require that the 2030 General Plan be consistent with the Clean Air Plan population and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) assumptions. VMT may increase faster than population due to traffic movements through San Carlos which would be *significant and unavoidable*.

#### **b. Traffic and Circulation**

The Draft 2030 General Plan would have *significant and unavoidable* freeway operations and intersection level of service impacts.

### *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 under the Draft 2030 General Plan would result in the intensification of underutilized areas. This development would constitute a long-term commitment to residential, commercial, industrial, parking and other urban uses.

#### **2. Commitment of Resources**

Development allowed under the Draft 2030 General Plan would irretrievably commit nonrenewable resources to the construction and maintenance of buildings, infrastructure and roadways. These non-renewable resources include mining resources such as sand, gravel, steel, lead, copper and other metals. Buildout of the Draft 2030 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 planning area. Goal 9 of the Environmental Management Element and Goals 1, 2 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 and the associated implementation measures of the

CAP would promote energy conservation, which could minimize or incrementally reduce the consumption of these resources.

Implementation of the Draft 2030 General Plan would also result in an irreversible commitment of limited, renewable resources such as lumber and water. The Policy 5.3 of the Environmental Management Element and goals and implementation measures in the CAP would also result in some savings of renewable resources.

### **3. 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 the countywide response plan, as discussed in Section 4.6, 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 Draft 2030 General Plan.

**CITY OF SAN CARLOS**  
**DRAFT 2030 GENERAL PLAN EIR**  
CEQA-REQUIRED ASSESSMENT CONCLUSIONS