

## 6.0 LONG-TERM IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROJECT

### 6.1 SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

Section 15126.2 (c) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines (*State CEQA Guidelines*) requires that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) consider and discuss significant irreversible changes that would be caused by implementation of the proposed City of Long Beach (City) General Plan Land Use and Urban Design Elements (LUE/UDE) project (proposed project). The *State CEQA Guidelines* specify that the use of nonrenewable resources during the initial and continued phases of the project should be discussed because a large commitment of such resources makes removal or nonuse thereafter unlikely. Primary and secondary impacts (such as a highway improvement that provides access to a previously inaccessible area) should also be discussed because such changes generally commit future generations to similar uses. Irreversible damage can also result from environmental accidents associated with the project and should be discussed.

Project development is a planning action that results in an irreversible commitment of land. The planning area is largely built out in nature, and future development under the proposed project would likely occur as infill development. In the event that a project future project under the LUE/UDE is proposed on undeveloped land, after the structural lifespan of the building is reached, it is improbable that the project site would revert to its undeveloped nature. Once implemented, the proposed project would allow for the characteristics of land in the planning area to result in an irreversible commitment of land.

Construction of future development facilitated by the proposed project would result in a commitment of limited, slowly renewable, and nonrenewable resources. Such resources may include certain types of lumber and other forest products; raw materials such as steel; aggregate materials used in concrete and asphalt such as sand and stone; water; petrochemical construction materials such as plastic; and petroleum-based construction materials. In addition, fossil fuels used by construction equipment would also be consumed. Future project construction will also result in an increased commitment of public maintenance services such as waste disposal and treatment.

Similarly, operation of the future development facilitated by the proposed project would result in the commitment of limited, nonrenewable resources and slowly renewable resources such as natural gas, electricity, petroleum-based fuels, fossil fuels, and water. Natural gas and electricity would be used for lighting, heating, and cooling of the buildings and operation of the future facilities. As discussed in Section 4.7, Public Services, the projected electricity and natural gas demands are within the existing delivery capacity of service providers and the proposed project would not result in a significant adverse impact related to the provision of electricity or natural gas. In addition, Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR) requires conservation practices that would limit the amount of energy consumed by the proposed project. Furthermore, all future development under the proposed project would be required to undergo project-specific analysis and comply with all Title 24 energy efficiency standards. Nevertheless, the use of such resources would continue to represent a long-term commitment of essentially nonrenewable resources.

Implementation of the proposed project would also result in future development that would result in an increased demand for potable water, changes to on-site drainage patterns, connections to storm drains, and generation of wastewater.

Each future project within the planning area would be evaluated individually, and project-specific mitigation would be required as needed. The commitment of limited, slowly renewable, and nonrenewable resources required for construction and operation of future development facilitated by the proposed project would limit the availability of these resources for future generations or for other uses during the life of the project. However, the use of such resources for future development would be consistent with regional and local plans and projected growth in the area.

## 6.2 GROWTH-INDUCING IMPACTS

Sections 15126(d) and 15126.2(d) of the *State CEQA Guidelines* require that an EIR analyze growth-inducing impacts and state that an EIR should discuss the ways in which the proposed project could foster economic or population growth or construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. This section examines 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. An assessment of other projects that could affect the environment, individually or cumulatively, is also required. To address this issue, potential growth-inducing effects were examined through analysis of the following questions:

- Would the project remove obstacles to growth (e.g., through the construction or extension of major infrastructure facilities that do not presently exist in the project area, or through changes in existing regulations pertaining to land development)?
- Would the project result in the need to expand one or more public services to maintain desired levels of service?
- Would the project encourage or facilitate economic effects that could result in other activities that could significantly affect the environment?
- Would approval of the project involve some precedent-setting action that could encourage and facilitate other activities that could significantly affect the environment?

It should be noted that growth-inducing effects are not to be construed as necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment (*State CEQA Guidelines*, Section 15126.2(d)). This issue is presented to provide additional information on ways in which this project could contribute to significant changes in the environment beyond the direct consequences of developing the proposed project as described in earlier sections of this Draft EIR.

### 6.2.1 Removal of Obstacles to Growth

The planning area encompasses the entirety of the City and is representative of a fully built out urban area containing a mix of land uses. As discussed in this Draft EIR, the proposed project does not include any physical improvements, but would allow for new PlaceTypes that would facilitate an increase in population and employment in the City. Due to the urban context of the proposed project, implementation of the proposed project would generally be accommodated by the existing

infrastructure. All future projects would be analyzed on a project-specific basis to determine the demand and capacity for existing infrastructure to serve the planning area.

The proposed project is a planning tool that would change the existing regulations pertaining to land development through the approval of new both the General Plan LUE and UDE, which would replace the existing LUE and Scenic Routes Element (SRE). These changes would affect the classification of land in the City and the design of development and infrastructure throughout the City. The proposed LUE would introduce the concept of “PlaceTypes,” which would replace the current approach in the existing LUE of segregating property within the City through traditional land use designations and zoning classifications. The UDE would be an entirely new element of the City’s General Plan and would replace the existing SRE. These changes to land development regulations would not allow for unrestricted growth, rather, the proposed LUE and UDE would provide greater flexibility and a mix of compatible land uses, focus new development within the Major Areas of Change, and outline a urban framework that addresses the varying aesthetic characteristics of the City. Because Long Beach is a built-out city that is surrounded by other built-out communities, continued growth in the City would not remove obstacles to growth beyond its borders. Therefore, the proposed project would not be considered to be growth inducing, even with the increased demand and changes to land use regulations associated with build-out of the proposed project.

## **6.2.2 Expansion of Public Services**

As discussed in Section 4.7, Public Services, the planning area is currently served by all public service providers, including police protection services, fire prevention services, public schools, public libraries, electricity, and natural gas. The proposed project does not include any physical improvements, but allows future development that is anticipated to create an increase in the demand for public services within the City. All future projects consistent with the proposed LUE and UDE would be required to undergo project-specific environmental review and comply with the provision of police, fire, and school impact fees. In addition, new electricity and natural gas facilities to support the project-related demand would be constructed in accordance with the demand for the new service.

## **6.2.3 Encouragement/Facilitation of Economic Effects**

### **Short Term**

During construction of future development facilitated by the proposed project, a number of temporary design, engineering, and construction-related jobs would be created, increasing economic activity. This would be a direct economic effect of this project that could significantly affect the environment. Because the proposed project is a programmatic policy document, the impacts from this effect would be analyzed and any appropriate mitigation imposed on a project-by-project basis.

### **Long Term**

The proposed project would allow for a significant increase in population, employment, and housing in the City of Long Beach through the year 2040. The growth associated with build-out of the proposed project would be consistent with the Southern California Association of Governments’ (SCAG) regional growth forecasts for each of these topic areas for the same horizon year (2040). This population and employment growth would facilitate economic goods and services that could result in the creation of new businesses and/or the expansion of existing businesses to address these economic

needs. Many of the project objectives of the proposed LUE and UDE are to enhance economic vitality and create job growth allowing for new businesses in in the City. Actual economic growth will depend on future market demand, site constraints, and property owner willingness. However, new commercial uses developed to serve the shopping needs of future residents would likely generate additional employment opportunities. Therefore, the proposed project would have both direct and indirect economic effects that could significantly affect the environment. Because the proposed project is a programmatic policy document, the impacts from this effect would be analyzed and any appropriate mitigation imposed on a project-by-project basis.

#### **6.2.4 Precedent-Setting Action**

Approval of the proposed project would not set a precedent that could encourage and facilitate other activities that could significantly affect the environment. Pursuant to California Government Code Sections 65300 et seq., cities and counties in the State of California are required to periodically update their general plans.

Unlike project-by-project approval, the proposed project would be a comprehensive planning tool that would define future land use and design throughout the City. The proposed project represents the implementation of both the LUE and UDE, which would establish PlaceTypes, urban design guidelines, goals, and policies for the planning area. The proposed change from segregated land use designations to PlaceType classifications would apply to all parcels throughout the City. Major land use changes proposed as part of the LUE are identified as Major Areas of Change, which include introduction of a new PlaceType category, increased density, or transit-oriented uses (see Chapter 3.0, Project Description, of this Draft EIR).

Proposed goals and policies in both elements encourage greater flexibility in land uses as well as the orderly accommodation of growth and urban design. In addition, the proposed project introduces transit-oriented PlaceTypes to focus development in certain areas in the City and along existing transit corridors. These changes to the land use categorization of the City represent a precedent-setting action because implementation of the proposed project would create a community that encourages increased density, transit-oriented development, and flexible land uses. However, these policies have indirect impacts, such as creating an LUE that aspires to reduce air quality and greenhouse gas emissions and encourages the reduction of vehicle miles traveled and, therefore, the project would be beneficial to the City and region and does not represent an adverse impact.

In Chapter 3.0, Project Description, Table 3.B, Project Buildout Summary, estimates the future housing unit and non-residential square footage based on the build-out projections of the proposed LUE. Projections are based on the build-out capacity of PlaceTypes based on allowable densities. As shown in Table 3.B, 2040 build out of the LUE is projected to accommodate approximately 484,485 residents, 175,538 housing units, and 181,665 employees. Project-related increases in population and employment have been accounted for in SCAG's growth projections for the City. As discussed throughout this Draft EIR, implementation of the LUE and UDE would result in significant and unavoidable adverse impacts related to air quality, global climate change, and transportation/traffic. However, existing land uses in Long Beach generate citywide impacts related to these three topic areas under existing conditions. Although significant and unavoidable impacts generated by implementation of the proposed project could be greater than under existing conditions, they do not introduce a precedent-setting new type of environmental impact previously unseen in Long Beach.

The City is almost entirely built out, and future development would be mostly infill. The proposed project does not include any physical improvements, and subsequent similar actions consistent with the proposed LUE and UDE would require environmental analysis and associated mitigation to ensure that such subsequent impacts would not significantly affect the environment.

### **6.3 SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS THAT CANNOT BE AVOIDED**

As determined in the contents of this Draft EIR, implementation of the proposed project would result in significant and unavoidable adverse impacts related to air quality, global climate change, and transportation/traffic. With implementation of mitigation measures for air quality and greenhouse gas impacts, the potential impacts identified in this Draft EIR would remain significant and unavoidable. Due to the absence of feasible mitigation for the adverse traffic impacts at 44 study area intersections under the General Plan build-out scenario, transportation/traffic impacts identified in this Draft EIR remain significant and unavoidable. These impacts are further discussed in Chapter 8.0, Significant Unavoidable Adverse Impacts, in this Draft EIR.

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