
7.0 LONG-TERM IMPLICATIONS

This section discusses the additional topics statutorily required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The topics discussed include significant irreversible environmental changes/irretrievable commitment of resources, significant and unavoidable environmental impacts, and growth-inducing impacts.

7.1 GROWTH-INDUCING IMPACTS

INTRODUCTION

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(d) requires that an environmental impact report (EIR) evaluate the growth-inducing impacts of a proposed action. A growth-inducing impact is defined by the CEQA Guidelines as:

The way 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. Included in this are projects which would remove obstacles to population growth...It is not assumed that growth in an area is necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment.

A project can have direct and/or indirect growth inducement potential. Direct growth inducement would result if a project, for example, involved construction of new housing. A project would have indirect growth inducement potential if it established substantial new permanent employment opportunities (e.g., commercial, industrial, or governmental enterprises) or if it would involve a construction effort with substantial short-term employment opportunities that would indirectly stimulate the need for additional housing and services to support the new employment demand (*Napa Citizens for Honest Government v. Napa County Board of Supervisors*). Similarly, a project would indirectly induce growth if it would remove an obstacle to additional growth and development, such as removing a constraint on a required public service. A project providing an increased water supply in an area where water service historically limited growth could be considered growth inducing.

The CEQA Guidelines further explain that the environmental effects of induced growth are considered indirect impacts of the proposed action. These indirect impacts or secondary effects of growth may result in significant, adverse environmental impacts. Potential secondary effects of growth include increased demand on other community and public services and infrastructure, increased traffic and noise, and adverse environmental impacts such as degradation of air and water quality, degradation or loss of plant and animal habitat, and conversion of agricultural and open space land to developed uses.

Growth inducement may constitute an adverse impact if the growth is not consistent with or accommodated by the land use plans and growth management plans and policies for the area affected. Local land use plans provide for land use development patterns and growth policies that allow for the orderly expansion of urban development supported by adequate urban public services, such as water supply, roadway infrastructure, sewer service, and solid waste service.

COMPONENTS OF GROWTH

The timing, magnitude, and location of land development and population growth in a community are based on various interrelated land use and economic variables. Key variables include regional economic trends, market demand for residential and non-residential uses, land availability and cost, the availability and quality of transportation facilities and public services,

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proximity to employment centers, the supply and cost of housing, and regulatory policies or conditions. Since the general plan of a community defines the location, type, and intensity of growth, it is the primary means of regulating development and growth in California.

GROWTH EFFECTS OF THE PROJECT

Based on Government Code Section 65300, the proposed General Plan Update is intended to serve as the overall plan for the physical development of the City of Rocklin. While the General Plan does not specifically propose any development projects, it does regulate future population and economic growth of the city that would result in direct and indirect growth-inducing effects.

Implementation of the proposed General Plan Update would refine existing land use designations in the city and establish new policy provisions and actions that guide and manage future development and land uses in the city. This would also include policy direction on roadway facility improvements, public service improvements, and the extension and expansion of utilities. The specific environmental effects resulting from the direct growth effects of proposed land use patterns and associated extension of public services are discussed in Sections 4.1 through 4.15 of this DEIR. The following is a discussion of the potential growth-inducing effects of the project.

Population Growth

As described in Section 4.11, Population and Housing, implementation of the City of Rocklin General Plan Update is realistically expected to result in the construction of 8,247 new residential dwellings by the 2030 planning horizon to arrive at a total of 29,283 housing units and a population of 76,136. By comparison, the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) projects a City of Rocklin population of 75,719 by the year 2035. The City's General Plan population projection assumes total buildout of all available residential lands in the city will be reached by the year 2030, in which case substantial population and housing growth would be dramatically reduced from that point on as any residential development would be limited to redevelopment activity. Based on discussions with SACOG staff, the slight difference between the numbers can be attributed to the fact that their population projections do not represent total buildout of all residential lands in the city. These minor differences in assumptions are considered negligible, and SACOG staff concurs that the City's population projection resulting from the proposed General Plan (76,136 people) is consistent with the population projections of SACOG (75,719 people). Therefore, implementation of the General Plan Update would not result in significant population growth or population growth that would substantially exceed any established growth projections.

Growth Effects Associated with Infrastructure Improvements

The proposed General Plan Update could indirectly induce growth if it would remove an obstacle to additional growth and development, such as removing a constraint on a required public service. The city's infrastructure and public services are largely provided by other public and private service providers (e.g., Placer County Water Agency for water supply, South Placer Municipal Utility District and South Placer Wastewater Authority for wastewater service, Pacific Gas & Electric for natural gas service and electrical service), which utilize master plans for guiding planned facility and service expansions that are subject to environmental review under CEQA. The proposed General Plan Update does not include any provisions requiring the oversizing of infrastructure facilities to serve growth not anticipated in the General Plan. Therefore, significant growth effects resulting from infrastructure improvements are not anticipated.

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF GROWTH

As described above, the proposed General Plan Update is not expected to induce significant growth within or outside of the Planning Area. As a result, the proposed General Plan is not considered to be growth inducing. The environmental effects of buildout of the General Plan Update are addressed in Sections 4.1 through 4.15 of this DEIR, and the project's cumulative impacts are addressed in Section 5.0.

7.2 SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

CEQA Guidelines Sections 21100(b)(2) and 21100.1(a) require that EIRs prepared for the adoption of a plan, policy, or ordinance of a public agency include a discussion of significant irreversible environmental changes of project implementation. In addition, CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(c) describes irreversible environmental changes as:

Uses of nonrenewable resources during the initial and continued phases of the project may be irreversible since a large commitment of such resources makes removal or nonuse thereafter unlikely. Primary impacts and, particularly, secondary impacts (such as highway improvement which provides access to a previously inaccessible area) generally commit future generations to similar uses. Also irreversible damage can result from environmental accidents associated with the project. Irrecoverable commitments of resources should be evaluated to assure that such current consumption is justified.

Implementation of the proposed General Plan Update would result in the conversion of undeveloped and/or underutilized properties to residential, commercial, office, industrial, public, and recreational uses. Subsequent development under the General Plan Update would constitute a long-term commitment to these uses. It is unlikely that circumstances would arise that would justify the return of the land to its original condition.

Development of the city would irretrievably commit building materials and energy to the construction and maintenance of buildings and infrastructure. Renewable, nonrenewable, and limited resources that would likely be consumed as part of the development of the proposed project would include, but are not limited to, oil, gasoline, lumber, sand and gravel, asphalt, water, steel, and similar materials. In addition, development of the project would result in increased demand on public services and utilities (see Section 4.12, Public Services, and Section 4.13, Utilities and Service Systems). The project would also result in significant unavoidable effects related to air emissions (see Section 4.2, Air Quality).

7.3 SIGNIFICANT AND UNAVOIDABLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(b) requires an EIR to discuss unavoidable significant environmental effects, including those that can be mitigated but not reduced to a level of insignificance. In addition, Section 15093(a) of the CEQA Guidelines allows the decision-making agency to determine whether the benefits of a proposed project outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental impacts of implementing the project. The City can approve a project with unavoidable adverse impacts if it prepares a "Statement of Overriding Considerations" setting forth the specific reasons for making such a judgment.

The following significant and unavoidable impacts (project and cumulative) of the proposed General Plan Update are specifically identified in Sections 4.1 through 4.15 and Section 5.0 of this DEIR. The reader is referred to the various environmental issue areas of these sections for further details and analysis of the significant and unavoidable impacts identified below.

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SECTION 4.2 AIR QUALITY

Increase in Criteria Pollutants: Operational Air Pollutants

Impact 4.2.3 Negative air quality impacts associated with long-term emissions from projected growth over the planning horizon of the proposed project could result in a violation of an air quality standard or in a substantial contribution to an existing or projected air quality violation. Although the proposed General Plan Update has mitigating policies and associated action steps to minimize the effects of this impact, these policies and action steps will not reduce the impact to a less than significant level. Therefore, this is considered a **potentially significant** impact.

Increase in Criteria Pollutants: Exposure to Toxic Air Contaminants

Impact 4.2.5 Development of the land uses in the proposed General Plan Update could include sources of toxic air contaminants which may impact surrounding land uses, or conversely, place sensitive land uses near existing sources of toxic air contaminants. Therefore, implementation of the General Plan Update could expose sensitive receptors to toxic air contaminants. This is considered a **potentially significant** impact.

Odors

Impact 4.2.6 Subsequent land use activities associated with implementation of the proposed project could include sources that could create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people. This impact is considered **potentially significant**.

Cumulative Contribution to Regional Air Quality Impacts

Impact 4.2.7 Implementation of the proposed project, along with potential development of the surrounding region, would exacerbate existing regional problems with ozone and particulate matter. The proposed project's contribution to these conditions is considered **cumulatively considerable** and a **significant and unavoidable** impact.

4.3 AESTHETICS/LIGHT AND GLARE

Substantially Degrade the Existing Visual Character

Impact 4.3.3 Implementation of the proposed project would result in increased development which would substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the area and its surroundings. Although the proposed General Plan Update has mitigating policies and associated action steps, these policies and associated action steps will not reduce the impact to a less than significant level. Therefore, this would be a **potentially significant** impact.

Create a New Source of Substantial Light or Glare

Impact 4.3.4 Implementation of the proposed project could result in an increase in daytime glare and/or nighttime lighting. This increase in daytime glare sources and nighttime lighting levels could have an adverse effect on day or nighttime views in the area. This is considered a **potentially significant** impact.

Cumulative Impacts to Scenic Vista, Scenic Resources, Existing Visual Character, and Creation of Light and Glare

Impact 4.3.5 While the Planning Area does not contain any scenic vistas or scenic resources within a state scenic highway, implementation of the proposed project would result in alterations to the city's existing visual character through the increased expansion of urban development and creation of additional new sources of light and glare. This is considered a **cumulatively considerable** impact.

4.4 TRAFFIC AND CIRCULATION

Impacts to State/Interstate Highway Segments

Impact 4.4.2 Implementation of buildout of the proposed project would contribute to increased traffic volumes on state/interstate highway facilities, which could cause operations on state/interstate highway segments to deteriorate to levels below those identified in the Caltrans Transportation Concept Report (TCR). This impact is considered **significant**.

Impacts to State/Interstate Highway Intersections

Impact 4.4.3 Implementation of the proposed project would contribute to increased traffic volumes at state/interstate highway intersections at buildout. This impact is considered **significant**.

4.5 NOISE

Noise Impacts Associated with Development and Operation of Land Uses of Proposed Project

Impact 4.5.1 The proposed project could result in exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance or of applicable standards of other agencies. Although the proposed General Plan Update has mitigating policies and associated action steps designed to minimize the effects of this impact, these policies and associated action steps will not reduce the impact to a less than significant level. Therefore, this would be considered a **significant** impact.

Exposure to Surface Transportation Noise

Impact 4.5.3 The proposed project could result in a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project and could result in exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance

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or of applicable standards of other agencies, as a result of increased traffic on the roadway network. Projected increases in traffic noise levels could adversely affect noise-sensitive land uses. In addition, future development of noise-sensitive land uses could be exposed to roadway and/or railroad noise levels in excess of the City's noise standards. This impact would be considered **potentially significant**.

Exposure to Stationary Noise

Impact 4.5.4 Subsequent development associated with the proposed project could result in new noise-sensitive land uses encroaching upon existing or proposed stationary noise sources or new stationary noise sources encroaching upon existing or proposed noise-sensitive land uses. This could result in a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above existing levels or could result in exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance or of applicable standards of other agencies. As a result, this impact is considered **potentially significant**.

Cumulative Transportation Noise Impacts within the Planning Area

Impact 4.5.6 Buildout of the proposed project would increase transportation noise along roadways within the Planning Area. This would be a **cumulatively considerable** impact.

4.8 CULTURAL AND PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Cumulative Impacts to Historic Character

Impact 4.8.5 Implementation of the proposed project, in addition to existing, approved, proposed, and reasonably foreseeable development in the region, could result in cumulative impacts to historic character in the region. The proposed General Plan Update's mitigating policies and their associated action steps would reduce the severity of impacts to historic character. However, the policies would not completely mitigate this impact. Therefore, this impact is considered **cumulatively considerable**.

4.10 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Impacts to Sensitive Biological Communities

Impact 4.10.3 Implementation of the proposed project could have a substantial adverse impact on riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the CDFG or USFWS due to disturbance, degradation, and removal of sensitive biological communities. Implementation of the proposed project could also have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means. This would be a **significant** impact.

Loss of Native Oak and Heritage Trees

Impact 4.10.5 Implementation of the proposed project could conflict with local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance as a result of the removal of native oak trees, including heritage trees and other mature, healthy oak trees. Implementation of the proposed General Plan Update and the associated tree removal could also have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the CDFG and USFWS. This impact can be partially mitigated through the preservation of trees proposed for removal, the relocation or replanting of removed trees, and contributions to the City's Oak Tree Preservation Fund, but would be **significant and unavoidable** because the removed trees would not be immediately replaced with mature oak trees.

Loss of Oak Woodland Habitat

Impact 4.10.6 Implementation of the proposed project could conflict with local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance as a result of the removal of areas of oak woodland habitat. Implementation of the proposed project and the associated oak woodland habitat removal could also have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the CDFG or USFWS. This impact can be partially mitigated through the preservation, creation, and restoration of the city's urban forest and oak woodlands that would take place over time as part of the City's mitigation strategy, but would be **significant and unavoidable** because the mitigation strategy allows for the replanting of trees (either directly or through payments to the City) that will take many years to become as mature as many of the oak trees that will be removed, and the mitigation strategy may not necessarily result in the re-creation of areas of oak woodland habitat.

Cumulative Impacts to Biological Resources

Impact 4.10.7 The proposed project, in combination with other reasonably foreseeable projects, could have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on species identified as candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies or regulations, or by the CDFG or USFWS. The proposed project, in combination with other reasonably foreseeable projects, could also have a substantial adverse effect on riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the CDFG or USFWS. The proposed project, in combination with other reasonably foreseeable projects could also have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means. The proposed project, in combination with other reasonably foreseeable projects, could also interfere substantially with the movement of native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife

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nursery sites. Further, the proposed project, in combination with other reasonably foreseeable projects, could reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare, or threatened plant or animal species or biotic community, thereby causing the species or community to drop below self-sustaining levels. Therefore, this impact is considered **cumulatively considerable**.

4.15 CLIMATE CHANGE AND GREENHOUSE GASES

Generation of Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Impact 4.15.3 Implementation of the proposed General Plan Update and the associated future development would generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment. This impact is considered to be a **cumulatively considerable** impact.