

## 5.0 OTHER CEQA-REQUIRED DISCUSSIONS

This section discusses other issues for which CEQA requires analysis in addition to the specific issue areas discussed in Section 4.0, *Environmental Impact Analysis*. These additional issues include: (1) the potential to induce growth; and (2) significant and irreversible impacts on the environment.

### 5.1 GROWTH INDUCING EFFECTS

Section 15126.2(d) of the *CEQA Guidelines* requires that EIRs discuss the potential for projects to induce population or economic growth, either directly or indirectly. CEQA also requires a discussion of ways in which a project may remove obstacles to growth. This section also mandates a discussion of the potential characteristic of the proposed project to facilitate other activities that could affect the environment, either individually or cumulatively.

#### 5.1.1 Economic and Population Growth

As discussed in Section 2.0, *Project Description*, the Parklands Specific Plan proposes to develop 499 residential units in the Wells Community Area of the City of Ventura. The plan area is considered under “Sphere of Influence/Other Infill/Neighborhood Centers” in the predicted development intensity & pattern table in the 2005 General Plan (Table 3-2 in the “Our Well Planned Community” chapter). The Wells/Saticoy area is projected to accommodate a total of 1,050 residences by 2025. Current pending applications for the Saticoy Wells Area include 908 residential units (Saticoy Wells Housing Buildout, 9/2005). Therefore, with the addition of this project, planned and pending development within the Saticoy Wells Area exceeds the number of predicted residences by 357 residential units. However, the 2005 Ventura General Plan and SCAG predicts approximately 8,300 new citywide units by 2025. The proposed specific plan for development of 499 units would put Ventura still under its General Plan housing prediction. Figures estimating future growth in residential units are not development caps. Rather, these figures are merely estimates for future development used for analytical purposes. The project is consistent with the 2005 General Plan in respect to land use and zoning.

The 2005 General Plan includes various policies and actions intended to attract businesses to the City. Citywide job growth through 2025 is projected to range from about 14,000 to 20,000 jobs, which represents growth of about 26-37% over the current level of employment in the City. Such job growth is similar to SCAG forecasts for the City. The economic growth that could be accommodated under the 2005 General Plan would have economic benefits in terms of jobs and City tax revenues.

#### 5.1.2 Removal of Obstacles to Growth

It is the specific purpose of the Parklands Specific Plan to create a traditional neighborhood that embodies the principles of New Urbanism that will emphasize the public realm, include pedestrian friendly streets and blocks, and provide a diversity of uses and building types to generate a distinct sense of neighborhood identity. Parklands will be the first Traditional Neighborhood Development in the City of Ventura challenging the usual pattern of suburban sprawl by bringing together New Urbanist ideals, city planning, and livable spaces.



Furthermore, the Parklands project is an infill project, meaning the proposed development will occur in an area already surrounded by built environment. This type of development is expected to generally reduce the potential for impacts relating to such issues as biological resources, regional traffic, and air quality as compared to continued low density development on undeveloped areas at the periphery of the City. The characteristics of the Parklands Specific Plan make the development a viable smart growth option to help accommodate for Ventura's projected future growth.

## 5.2 IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

The CEQA *Guidelines* require that EIRs evaluating projects involving amendments to public plans, ordinances, or policies contain a discussion of significant irreversible environmental changes. CEQA also requires decisionmakers to balance the benefits of a proposed project against its unavoidable environmental risks in determining whether to approve a project. This section addresses non-renewable resources, the commitment of future generations to the proposed uses, and irreversible impacts associated with the proposed development.

Construction facilitated by the Parklands Specific Plan would involve the use of building materials and energy, some of which are non-renewable resources. Consumption of these resources would occur with any development in the region and are not unique to the City of Ventura or the General Plan. The addition of new residential and non-residential development in the City through 2025 would irreversibly increase local demand for non-renewable energy resources such as petroleum and natural gas. Increasingly efficient building fixtures and automobile engines, as well as implementation of policies such as Live/Work options in the Parklands Specific Plan, are expected to offset the demand to some degree. It is not anticipated that growth accommodated under the Parklands Specific Plan would significantly affect local or regional energy supplies.

Implementation of the Parklands Specific Plan would convert Prime agricultural lands to non-agricultural uses. However, under Scenario 1 - Intensification/Reuse Only in Section 4.2 of the 2005 General Plan EIR, the plan area was included as one of a number of properties already designated for non-agricultural use under the previous Comprehensive Plan. During adoption of the 2005 Ventura General Plan and Housing Approval Program (HAP), the City Council considered the conversion of agricultural lands within the City's sphere of influence and determined that public benefits of the General Plan outweigh certain unavoidable adverse environmental effects, including the conversion of agricultural land. A Statement of Overriding Consideration was adopted. Therefore, the project would not have any significant impact to agricultural lands beyond that identified in a prior impact assessment and documented in the certified 2005 General Plan FEIR.

Additional vehicle trips associated with growth through 2025 would incrementally increase local traffic and noise levels and regional air pollutant emissions. Project development has the potential to expose sensitive receptors to noise levels exceeding the normally acceptable range for single family and multiple family residential uses. Implementation of proposed policies and actions, in combination with the additional recommended action, could reduce the noise impacts associated with future growth to a less than significant level. As discussed in Section 4.9, *Traffic and Circulation*, the proposed intersection level of service performance standards



would be met at all locations. Specific plan build out would generate a cumulative impact at the Darling Road/Wells Road intersection during the P.M. peak hour. The intersection will operate at LOS D assuming the prescribed mitigation measures are implemented. As discussed in Section 4.02, *Air Quality*, the Parklands Specific Plan will implement mitigation measures to reduce air emissions associated with the project. Such mitigation measures would include requiring energy efficiency standards 20 percent beyond Title 24 requirements for commercial and residential buildings within the project to partially offset the operational emissions. The Parklands project would also be required to contribute towards an air Quality Mitigation fund to be used to develop regional programs to offset air pollutant emissions associated with implementation of the specific plan.



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