

Section 7.0: Growth-Inducing Impacts

Section 15126.2(d) of the CEQA Guidelines requires that an EIR include a discussion of ways in which a proposed project could induce economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing or other development, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Projects that remove obstacles to population growth or tax existing community service facilities, requiring the construction of new facilities that could cause significant environmental effects, may have growth-inducing impacts. CEQA requires that “...it must not be assumed that growth in any area is necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment.” Induced growth is considered a significant impact only if it can be demonstrated to result in significantly adverse effect on the environment.

Generally, growth-inducing impacts refer to impacts from projects that possess such characteristics as being located in isolated, undeveloped or underdeveloped areas, necessitating the extension of major infrastructure (e.g., roadways, sewer and water lines and facilities) or other services or infrastructure that encourage “premature” or unplanned growth (i.e., “leap frog” development). In addition, projects that induce new development in nearby areas due to the provision of major infrastructure, employment centers, or residential communities may be considered to have growth-inducing impacts.

The growth-inducing impacts of the proposed Guasti Plaza Specific Plan Amendment may be related to future residential development that may occur on the site, as well as the existing condition of lands adjacent to and near the site. These include the potential for the Specific Plan Amendment itself to induce development on the site, as well as for future residential development on the site to induce development in adjacent areas. These impacts are discussed below.

Amended Specific Plan

Changes to the Specific Plan that update existing conditions or discuss relevant regulations or past approvals would not induce growth. However, amendment of the Guasti Plaza Specific Plan to include a Residential Overlay Zone would change land use and development regulations for the site. The proposed Amendment would allow the development of 500 dwelling units within the overlay zonesite, with a potential for 100 units to be located within a mixed use development to the west, as an alternative development to the planned office and commercial uses. The amended Specific Plan would allow high-density residential development within the Specific Plan area and could induce residential growth in this section of the City and early development of the site, in response to the demand for multi-family housing in the City.

In addition, the Specific Plan Amendment sets development standards that are different than those found in the current Specific Plan and the City’s Development Code. While the residential development standards are not necessarily less stringent than those of the City, they are more specific and detailed than what is contained in the City’s Code. Thus, development of residential uses on the site could be induced by the proposed development standards in the Specific Plan.

Since no change to the approved commercial uses, the development standards for commercial uses, or the allowable intensity of commercial development is proposed with the Amendment, no growth inducement is expected from planned commercial uses.

Development Capacity

The Guasti Plaza Specific Plan currently allows as much as 450,000 square feet of office uses on the project site. The proposed Specific Plan Amendment will allow the development of residential

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land uses as an alternative development on the site, in place of planned office uses. While development intensity would not change, high-density residential development may induce additional residential growth in the area. However, there are no areas designated for residential uses near the site.

Adjacent Developments

As discussed in Section 2.0, *Environmental Setting* and Section 6.0, *Cumulative Impacts*, the Guasti Plaza Specific Plan area has remained underdeveloped for years until the recent construction of office and retail buildings along the I-10 Freeway, with 4 other office buildings, 1 hotel and 2 parking structures approved under the Airport Towers Master Plan. The western section of the Specific Plan area has also been approved for the development of 970,000 square feet of office uses, 390,000 square feet of commercial/hotel uses, and 62,200 square feet of retail uses, along with the reuse of 4 historic structures.

Thus, at the time the proposed Amendment is approved and permits are obtained for future residential development, it is expected that development to the north and west of the site would have begun or would follow soon after. The Amendment or future residential development would not induce the development of these proposed projects in the area. Rather, these developments have influenced the proposed Specific Plan Amendment and likely to induce future residential development on the site.

Vacant Lands

Whether the proposed Amendment or future residential development would have a major influence on the development of adjacent vacant lands cannot be ascertained. There are many other factors that would play a part in development, including property owner decisions, economic conditions, demand, development costs, regulatory controls, and other market forces. These factors have exerted more development pressures on vacant lands in the City than nearby residential development.

While there are vacant lands to the north and west of the site, these have already been proposed for development. Only the vacant parcel to the northeast of the site remains undeveloped and unplanned. This site is designated as Office Commercial in TOP and was the site of a former school for the Guasti community. The school has been demolished and the site remains vacant. The City of Ontario now owns the parcel but no plans have been identified for this parcel. It cannot be discounted that residential development on the project site and in the area is likely to provide an additional inducement for this vacant lot to be developed. Future residential development under the proposed Specific Plan Amendment may induce the early development of this adjacent vacant land.

Roadway Improvements

The construction of the internal and perimeter roadways as part of future residential development would improve access to areas north and west of the site. The roadway and infrastructure improvements that would accompany development would add travel lanes and traffic signals to improve traffic flow and access in the area, as well as increase pass-by traffic. The improvement of Turner Avenue and Old Guasti Road would provide a more developed street system (with street lights, sidewalks, medians, and parkways), over those that are now mainly two-lane roads with soft shoulders or dirt roads. Thus, the provision of roadway improvements by future development may result in a more attractive area for new development.

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While adjacent vacant areas to the north and west were planned for development prior to the proposed Amendment, roadway improvements may make the areas east of the site more attractive to investors and property owners, inducing the redevelopment of these areas. At the same time, it is unlikely that the relatively new office uses to the northeast would be redeveloped, nor will the Verizon equipment facility and the San Secondo D'Asti Church. Only the industrial use to the southeast may be redeveloped to a newer or more intensive industrial use. Thus, redevelopment of parcel to the southeast of the site may be induced by roadway improvements made as part of future residential development on the site.

Infrastructure Improvements

Future residential development under the proposed Specific Plan Amendment would be accompanied by a number of infrastructure improvements. On-site infrastructure would be designed and built to specifically serve the proposed residential land uses on the site and would not benefit adjacent areas. Off-site infrastructure that would be built as part of the project include water line, sewer line, and storm drain line extensions to tie within existing utility lines in the area.

Since development has been proposed north and west of the project site, utility lines to serve these adjacent uses are expected to be in place by the time of future residential development. Thus, infrastructure improvements needed for future residential development would be confined to those that would specifically serve the residential uses on the site. Also, existing lines are present on Turner Avenue to provide utility connection to future development on the City-owned parcel to the northeast or to serve the redevelopment of the industrial use to the southeast. Thus, no growth inducement is expected from infrastructure improvements that would be constructed with future residential development.

Public Services

While future residential development would need the same public services as other developments in the City, new police or fire stations need not be constructed as part of the Amendment or to serve the developed project site. Rather, police protection services will be provided by officers from the City's main station. Similarly, fire protection services will be provided by firefighters from existing fire stations in the City.

No schools are proposed on-site and the Cucamonga School District has indicated that there are capacities at existing schools to serve residents of future residential development on the site. No libraries or other public facilities would be developed on the site or to serve the site, which could induce growth or otherwise draw people to the site. No growth-inducing impacts associated with public services or new public facilities would occur with the Amendment.

Resident Population

The proposed Amendment could bring in 500 dwelling units with approximately 1,001 residents, which will not occur with planned office uses. Demand for commercial goods and services generated by on-site residents could induce additional commercial development at nearby vacant areas. Commercial developments are now found north of the I-10 Freeway and commercial uses proposed west of the site would supplement adjacent businesses. Together with other proposed

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developments in the surrounding area, future residential development would contribute to the ongoing growth and development in the City of Ontario.

The proposed Specific Plan Amendment is expected to result in population growth that was not planned under the adopted Guasti Plaza Specific Plan. The increased population may result in more indirect growth in order to serve their needs than previously was forecast, such as in the area of retail and services. Existing and future commercial uses near the site are expected to meet the demand for goods and services generated by future residents of the site.

While the proposed Amendment and future residential development on the site would induce growth in the surrounding area, future development or redevelopment would be subject to review and approval by the City of Ontario and include the necessary environmental clearance in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act. Environmental review for individual projects would ensure that potentially significant adverse impacts are identified and mitigated, in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act. Public utility and service providers would also need to determine if the additional growth associated with individual projects can be accommodated by existing or planned infrastructure improvements and public services and the utility agencies' capabilities to provide services. This review and approval of individual developments by public agencies and service providers would ensure that adequate services and infrastructure are available to serve future developments and that no land use conflicts are created. Mitigation measures, standard conditions, and conditions of approval imposed on development projects in the area are expected to avoid or reduce environmental impacts, which may be induced or indirectly attributed to the proposed Amendment or future residential development under the Amendment. Thus, the growth-inducing impacts of the Amendment are not expected to result in significant adverse effects to the environment.