

## **5 CEQA Required Conclusions**

### **5.1 Growth Inducing Impacts**

---

The EIR must examine the potential growth-inducing impacts of the proposed General Plan. More specifically, CEQA Guidelines require that the EIR “discuss the ways in which the proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly” (CEQA Guidelines §15126.2(d)). This analysis must also consider the removal of obstacles to population growth, such as improvements in the regional transportation system.

Growth-inducing impacts such as those associated with job increases that might affect housing and retail demand in other jurisdictions over an extended time period are difficult to assess with precision, since future economic and population trends may be influenced by unforeseeable events, such as natural disasters and business development cycles. Moreover, long-term changes in economic and population growth are often regional in scope; they are not influenced solely by changes in policies or specific development projects. Business trends are influenced by economic conditions throughout the state and country as well as around the world.

Another consideration is that the creation of growth-inducing potential does not automatically lead to growth. Growth occurs through capital investment in new economic opportunities by the private or public sector. These investment patterns reflect, in turn, the desires of investors to mobilize and allocate their resources to development in particular localities and regions. These and other pressures serve to fashion policy. These factors, combined with the regulatory authority of local governments, serve to mediate the growth-inducing potential or pressure created by a proposed General Plan. Despite these limitations on the analysis, it is still possible to qualitatively assess the general potential growth-inducing impacts of the proposed General Plan.

#### **PROJECTED GROWTH**

##### **Population**

According to Census 2010, the population of the City of Daly City was 101,123, comprising 14.1 percent of San Mateo County’s total population of 718,451 (Census 2010). Under the proposed General Plan, Daly City will accommodate approximately 106,388 people at buildout, an increase of approximately 5.2 percent over the 2010 population. This represents an average annual growth rate of 0.3 percent.

The Department of Finance estimates that San Mateo County population will increase by 58,411<sup>1</sup> (using Census 2010 as the baseline population) in 2030, resulting in an increase of 8.1 percent. This represents an average annual growth rate of 0.4 percent. Under the proposed General Plan, the growth rate in Daly City will be fairly consistent with the projected growth trend for San Mateo County. Additionally, compared to the existing General Plan, the proposed General Plan would result in 1,129 more residents. This increase in population attributable to the proposed General Plan would represent approximately two percent of the total projected new population of San Mateo County. Thus, the growth is only a small fraction of anticipated regional growth.

## **Housing**

The existing number of housing units in Daly City is 31,778. The proposed General Plan will result in 33,935 housing units at buildout, resulting in an increase of 6.8 percent. Compared to the existing General Plan, the proposed General Plan would result in 360 more housing units.

## **Employment**

The existing number of jobs in Daly City is 17,656. The proposed General Plan will result in 21,646 jobs at buildout, resulting in an increase of 22.6 percent. Compared to the existing General Plan, the proposed Plan would result in 1,173 more jobs.

## **JOBS/EMPLOYMENT BALANCE**

A city's jobs/employed residents' ratio would be 1.0 if the number of jobs in the city equaled the number of employed residents. In theory, such a balance would eliminate the need for commuting. More realistically, a balance means that in-commuting and out-commuting are matched, leading to efficient use of the transportation system, particularly during peak hours. The jobs/employed residents' ratio for Daly City in 2010 was 0.41, which means that there were 0.41 jobs for every employed resident in the city. The proposed General Plan would add more jobs (17,656) than housing units (2,157) to the city which would be beneficial to the jobs/employment balance within the city. At buildout, the jobs/employed residents' ratio will be 0.46

## **Overall Growth**

Overall, the proposed General Plan would accommodate more population and job growth compared to the existing General Plan. However, given the limitation of available land in Daly City, the city's growth will be through densification and intensification rather than by expanding outward. This focus of growth within the urban core with sufficient transportation and public service infrastructure is in line with the smart growth goals of the City, as it will lessen pressure for growth on the urban fringe.

## **INCREASE IN REGIONAL HOUSING DEMAND**

Due to its location on the Peninsula, more people may be drawn to Daly City as the employment base in the city and surrounding areas increase. As a result, housing demand may increase in Daly

---

<sup>1</sup> State of California, Department of Finance, Interim Population Projections for California and Its Counties 2010-2050, Sacramento, California, May 2012.

City. The proposed General Plan will result in 2,157 units at buildout, which will more than meet Daly City's regional current housing need allocation of 1,207. The proposed Housing Element contains an analysis of the community's housing needs, resources, constraints, and opportunities; it also contains goals, policies, and programs for housing and an action plan which details the actions to be taken by the City to respond to the community's evolving housing needs.

Physical changes needed to accommodate regional growth may have physical impacts on the environment. Potential effects of these physical changes are evaluated under their respective sections, such as 3.2: *Air Quality*, 3.6 *Greenhouse Gases and Energy*, 3.10 *Noise*, 3.11: *Public Services and Facilities*, and 3.13: *Utilities and Service Systems*.

## **5.2 Cumulative Impacts**

---

CEQA requires that the EIR examine cumulative impacts. As discussed in CEQA Guidelines § 15130(a)(1), a cumulative impact “consists of an impact which is created as a result of the combination of the project evaluated in the EIR together with other projects causing related impacts.” The analysis of cumulative impacts need not provide the level of detail required of the analysis of impacts from the project itself, but shall “reflect the severity of the impacts and their likelihood of occurrence” (CEQA Guidelines §15130(b)).

In order to assess cumulative impacts, the EIR must analyze either a list of past, present, and probable future projects or a summary of projections contained in an adopted general plan or related planning document. The proposed General Plan is essentially a set of projects, representing the cumulative development scenario for the reasonably foreseeable future in the city. This future scenario incorporates the likely effects of surrounding regional growth.

### **TRAFFIC AND CIRCULATION**

By its nature, the transportation analysis presented in Chapter 3 represents a cumulative analysis of transportation conditions through 2030. As a result of increasing the amount of development through the proposed General Plan, the travel demand and level of service operations produced by the proposed project is the cumulative condition for CEQA purposes.

The contribution of the proposed General Plan to intersection level of service was found to be considerable since traffic modeling indicates a worsening of already significant conditions under the proposed General Plan (as compared to the No Project) at two intersections. Therefore, the proposed General Plan is determined to have a considerable contribution to the significant impact regarding intersection LOS, despite the threshold being exceeded in the No Project scenario. These impacts are identified as significant and unavoidable and are discussed in greater detail in Section 3.12 of the EIR.

### **AIR QUALITY, ENERGY AND GREENHOUSE GASES**

By their nature, the air quality, energy and greenhouse gas (GHG) analysis presented in Chapter 3 represent a cumulative analysis of air quality conditions, energy usage, and GHG emissions through 2030. As a result of increasing the amount of development through the proposed General Plan, the

associated air quality, energy usage, and GHG emissions produced by the proposed project is the cumulative condition for CEQA purposes.

Concurrent implementation of the proposed General Plan and forecast development of residential and employment land uses in the region could result in increased air pollutants, thereby contributing to increased criteria air pollutants. It is reasonable to generalize that air quality are found to be cumulatively significant, though the proposed General Plan's contribution is less than significant and no cumulatively considerable. Air quality impacts are discussed in detail in Section 3.12 of the EIR.

Forecast population and employment growth would result in increased energy usage. However, energy use under the proposed General Plan would be moderated by the application of State regulations and measures, which will ensure that energy use will not be wasteful, inefficient and unnecessary. This effect is not considered significant, as discussed in greater detail in Section 3.2 of the EIR.

Concurrent implementation of the proposed General Plan and forecast development of residential and employment land uses in the region could result in increased GHG emissions, thereby contributing to climate change. It is reasonable to generalize that climate change is found to be cumulatively significant. However, the proposed General Plan's contribution was found to be less than considerable as the proposed General Plan's per service population emissions did not exceed 6.6 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e, as discussed in greater detail in Section 3.6 of the EIR.

## **NOISE**

By its nature, the noise analysis presented in Chapter 3 represents a cumulative analysis of noise conditions through 2030. As a result of increasing the amount of development through the proposed General Plan, the associated noise produced by the proposed project is the cumulative condition for CEQA purposes.

Concurrent implementation of the proposed General Plan and forecast development of residential and employment land uses in the region could result in increased noise, thereby contributing to increased noise levels in the City. The proposed General Plan's contribution was found to be considerable as the increase in noise levels with the proposed General Plan was more than three dB compared to existing conditions, as discussed in greater detail in Section 3.10 of the EIR.

## **PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES, UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS**

By its nature, the public services and facilities and utilities and service systems analyses presented in Chapter 3 represent a cumulative analysis of conditions through 2030. As a result of increasing the amount of development through the proposed General Plan, the associated impacts on services, infrastructure, utilities and service systems is the cumulative condition for CEQA purposes.

Concurrent implementation of the proposed General Plan and forecast development of residential and employment land uses in the region would result in increased pressure on public services and infrastructure, as well as utilities and service systems. However, as discussed in greater detail in Sections 3.11 and 3.13, there is enough park, school, water, wastewater, and solid waste capacity to accommodate growth under the proposed General Plan and regional growth and therefore impacts

are not considered significant. Forecast population and employment growth would result in increased pressure on fire and police services, however this effect is not considered significant.

### **ALL OTHER IMPACT AREAS**

As discussed in Chapter 3, impacts on aesthetics, biological resources, cultural and historic resources, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology, flooding, and water quality, land use, and housing will be mitigated by existing regulations and/or proposed General Plan policies. Therefore these effects are not considered significant.

## **5.3 Significant Environmental Effects**

---

According to CEQA Guidelines 15126(b), an EIR must discuss any significant environmental impacts that cannot be avoided under full implementation of the proposed program. Also, this EIR must discuss why the program is being proposed, notwithstanding such impacts. The policies of the proposed General Plan and existing regulatory requirements described in Chapter 3 of this EIR would avoid or eliminate all potentially significant impacts except intersection LOS and noise.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

Intersection LOS will have significant and unavoidable impacts, as a result of the proposed General Plan and regional growth. Intersection LOS will exceed the threshold of significance in the No Project scenario, indicating that the impact results in part from regional growth and is cumulative in nature. Delays do increase under the proposed General Plan, and because this indicates a worsening of already significant conditions, the proposed General Plan is determined to have a significant impact regarding intersection LOS. This impact is discussed in greater detail in Section 3.12, Impact 3.12-1.

### **NOISE**

Increase in noise levels will be a significant and unavoidable impact, also as a result of the proposed General Plan and regional growth. Noise levels will increase by more than 3 dB along certain segments of Juniper Serra, and will do so in the No Project scenario, indicating that the impact results in part from regional growth and is cumulative in nature. However, as noise levels do increase by more than 3 dB, the proposed General Plan is determined to have a significant impact regarding noise levels. This impact is discussed in greater detail in Section 3.10, Impact 3.10-1.

## **5.4 Significant Irreversible Environmental Change**

---

The EIR must also examine irreversible changes to the environment. More specifically, CEQA Guidelines require the EIR to consider whether “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” (CEQA Guidelines §15126.2(c)). “Nonrenewable resource” refers to the physical features of the natural environment, such as land, waterways, etc.

## **ENERGY SOURCES**

New development under the proposed General Plan would result in the commitment of existing and planned sources of energy, which would be necessary for the construction and daily use of new buildings and for transportation. Both residential and non-residential development use electricity, natural gas, and petroleum products for power, lighting, heating, and other indoor and outdoor services, while cars use both oil and gas. Use of these types of energy for new development would result in the overall increased use of non-renewable energy resources. This represents an irreversible environmental change. However, energy-reduction efforts may lower the rate of increase.

## **CONSTRUCTION-RELATED IMPACTS**

Irreversible environmental changes could also occur during the course of constructing development projects made possible by the proposed General Plan. New construction would result in the consumption of building materials, natural gas, electricity, water, and petroleum products. Construction equipment running on fossil fuels would be needed for excavation and the shipping of building materials. Due to the non-renewable or slowly renewable nature of these resources, this represents an irretrievable commitment of resources.

## **5.5 Impacts Found Not To Be Significant**

---

CEQA requires that an EIR provide a brief statement indicating why various possible significant impacts were determined to be not significant. Chapter 3 of this EIR discusses all potential impacts, regardless of their magnitude. A similar level of analysis is provided for impacts found to be less than significant and impacts found to be significant. Significance of an impact is assessed in relation to the significance criteria provided in each section in Chapter 3. A summary of all impacts is provided in the Executive Summary of this EIR.