

CHAPTER 8

Growth Inducing Impacts of the Project

Pursuant to Sections 15126.2(c) and 15126.2(d) of the *CEQA Guidelines*, this chapter is provided to examine 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. Also, required by CEQA this section includes an assessment of other projects that would foster activities which could affect the environment, individually or cumulatively. To address these issues, answers to the following questions are examined in terms of the potential to directly or indirectly foster growth:

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

Growth-inducing effects are not to be construed as necessarily beneficial, detrimental or of little significance to the environment (*CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.2(d)). This issue is presented to provide additional information on ways in which the proposed project could contribute to significant changes in the environment beyond the direct consequences of developing the land use concepts examined in the preceding sections of this EIR.

Would this project remove obstacles to growth, e.g., through the construction or extension of major infrastructure facilities that do not presently exist in the project areas?

The proposed project would develop 72 single-family residential lots in an undeveloped area. The proposed “Agricultural Residential” (AR) zoning designation and “Rural Residential” (1A) General Plan Land Use designation would allow a minimum residential lot size of 7,200 square feet. However, the proposed project would cluster these residences north and south of Long Canyon Road, and retain 71 percent of the project area in open space.

Because the project site is largely undeveloped, it does not have the infrastructure required to serve the proposed residential uses. The project includes the extension of infrastructure, which would include access roads into the development area, improvements to existing roadways, and extension of water infrastructure.

Primary access to both project phases would be provided off Long Canyon Road via Ortega Highway; through the construction of a new access road heading north and south from Long Canyon Road (see Figure 2-3 and Figure 2-4 of Chapter 2, *Project Description*). In addition, the project would develop an on-site (internal) roadway system to serve the new residential uses. The new roadways and roadway improvements would only provide access into the project development area for the residential uses to be accessed. The roadways would not provide access to other areas beyond the project site. Because the proposed project includes preservation of large areas of open space, is largely surrounded by open space, and in an area only served by one route via two roadways (Long Canyon Road and Ortega Highway), connections to other existing roadways or the continuation of the proposed roadways would not occur. However, the project does include roadway improvements within the paved right-of-way on Ortega Highway at the Long Canyon Road intersection to provide enhanced access to both phases of the project. The improvements consist of installing a northbound 12-foot wide acceleration lane and a northbound 12-foot wide left turn lane on Ortega Highway; and installing a minimum 22-foot wide southbound deceleration lane on Ortega Highway from Long Canyon Road to 160 feet to the north. These roadway improvements are intended to provide additional safety features at the Ortega Highway and Long Canyon Road intersection, and would not provide an overall increase in capacity to the roadway system because the improvements are limited to areas within 160 feet of the intersection. The capacity of the rest of Ortega Highway would not be increased by the proposed project.

The project would receive water services from Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District (EVMWD). Because the project is currently not located within the EVMWD service area, receiving water services would require annexation of the project area into EVMWD, Western (Western) Municipal Water District, and Metropolitan Water District (MWD). As described in Section 3.16, *Utilities and Service Systems*, to meet the operational water demands, approximately 133.4 acres of the proposed project would require an annexation into the EVMWD service area. EVMWD is wholly within the boundaries of Western, which is wholly within the boundaries of MWD. Because of this arrangement, the area annexed into EVMWD would also be annexed into the boundaries of Western and MWD. The project would require both offsite and onsite improvements that include extension of an existing six-inch main to distribute water to the project area.

The new onsite water distribution facilities would include a 12-inch distribution line that would be constructed throughout the development portions of the project site during each construction phase. There is an existing six-inch water main that extends from Tomlin No. 1 Booster Station located on the northwestern boundary of Lake Elsinore, travels southwest, providing potable water to upgradient communities along Ortega Highway, which would feed the two new water storage reservoirs (one 525,000 gallon and one 615,000 gallon). Both reservoirs would be situated at elevations sufficient to provide water (via gravity feed) to the respective development phases, in order to minimize the use of booster pump stations. New distribution mains from each

reservoir would be installed to provide water to the respective development phases. While the proposed project includes annexation into the EVMWD service area, EVMWD has existing infrastructure and is servicing the area through a six-inch water main that is providing potable water to upgradient communities along Ortega Highway. The project would extend water infrastructure from the existing water main only into the project area to serve the proposed residences and associated landscaping. The extension would not provide service to areas beyond those needing domestic water supply in the proposed project, or provide capacity to serve additional areas. Because the water main is currently installed and available for connections and the project would only provide extensions to serve the proposed uses onsite, the project would not induce population growth outside of the project area through extension of water infrastructure.

To treat wastewater, the proposed project would install wastewater treatment systems located on each lot that would treat effluent and dispose through an underground emitter / soaker lines that would be used to irrigate Fuel Modification Zone 'B' areas. The onsite wastewater treatment systems would be designed to accommodate the demands from each lot and would not be designed, such that multiple lots or areas outside of the proposed project could be served. Thus, the wastewater systems would not provide services beyond those proposed, and would not provide infrastructure that could serve additional areas. Therefore, the project would not induce population growth outside of the project area through extension of wastewater infrastructure.

Would the project remove obstacles to growth through changes in existing regulations pertaining to land development?

The project site is currently designated as Open Space in the Orange County General Plan land use map. This designation allows for limited land uses that do not require a commitment of significant urban infrastructure that are consistent with the open space character of the area. The existing zoning for the project site is General Agriculture (A1), which allows a minimum density of 0.25 to 0.5 dwelling units per acre, or a minimum of four acres per dwelling unit.

A project would directly induce growth if it would remove barriers to population growth such as change to a jurisdiction's general plan and zoning code, which allows new residential development to occur. The construction of the proposed project would result in amendments to the General Plan and to the zoning code to allow for the proposed residential development as opposed to the existing undeveloped open space. The project proposes a General Plan land use designation amendment from OS to 1A, which would allow minimum density of 0.25 to 0.5 dwelling units per acre, or two to four residences per acre. The project proposes a far lower density of one residence per acre in Phase 1 (south parcel) and one residence per 1.13 acres in Phase 2 (north parcel), which is well within the density allowed by the proposed 1A land use designation. The project also includes a proposed zone change from A1 to AR. As described above, the project proposes a far lower density than allowed by the proposed zone change.

SCAG policies concerning regional growth-inducement are included as part of Section 3.10, *Land Use*, and Section 3.12, *Population and Housing*. As described in those sections, the growth anticipated by SCAG's projections for regional growth in the project area can accommodate the

increases in population (230 residents) and housing structures (72 single-family units) anticipated at build-out of the project. Therefore, impacts related to growth from changes in existing regulations pertaining to land development would be less than significant.

Would this project result in the need to expand one or more public services to maintain desired levels of service?

The proposed project is expected to incrementally increase demand for fire protection and emergency response, police protection, schools, and library services with development of the proposed 72 single-family units. However, as described in Section 3.13, *Public Services*, of this EIR, the proposed project would not require construction of new or expanded facilities to serve the project site. Based on service ratios, build out projections in the General Plan, and regional growth projections, the proposed project would not create a demand for services beyond what is already contemplated in the General Plan. Therefore, an indirect growth inducing impact as a result of expanded or new public facilities that could support other development in addition to the proposed project would not occur. The proposed project would not have significant growth-inducing consequences as to require the need to expand public services to maintain desired levels of service.

Would this project encourage or facilitate economic or other effects that could result in activities other than the proposed project that could significantly affect the environment?

During each phase of project construction, a number of temporary design, engineering, and construction related jobs would be created. Due to the limited number of homes being developed during each phase (43 in Phase 1 and 29 in Phase 2) and the small size of the additional population (approximately 230 residents), in comparison to the large population and available labor pool in Orange County as a whole, it is highly unlikely that the economic effects of the proposed project would result in other activities that could impact the environment (i.e., new housing or facilities).

Operation of the project would generate a limited number of employment opportunities for security personnel, landscapers, and other service workers to support the 72 single-family units. Such workers are typically drawn from surrounding areas, and the number of employment opportunities generated by the project would be too small to attract a large enough labor force that new housing for those workers would be necessary.

As the new 72 single-family units are occupied, residents of the proposed project would seek shopping, entertainment, and other economic opportunities in the surrounding areas. This would represent an increased demand for such economic goods and services. The new residents of the project could, therefore, encourage the creation of new businesses, and/or the expansion of existing businesses to address these economic needs resulting in an indirect growth inducing impact. It is more likely, however, that given the small number of proposed dwelling units (72), increased long-term economic activity resulting from the proposed project would be

accommodated by existing businesses and business expansion based on overall Orange County growth trends, rather than any discernible expansion related specifically to the proposed project. As shown in Section 3.12, *Population and Housing*, within Table 3.12-5, SCAG estimates the population for Orange County in 2035 to be 3,421,000 persons, an increase of 410,768 persons, based on the 2010 U.S. Census population of 3,010,232. The project would constitute approximately 0.06 percent of the anticipated growth in Orange County. Therefore, the proposed project would result in a limited demand for goods and services that would be satisfied by the existing land uses and anticipated growth within the City of Lake Elsinore and other nearby communities.

Additionally, the proposed project includes development of 24.5 acres of vineyards. Production and/or wine making facilities are not included in the proposed project. However, it is anticipated that the grapes grown on the site would be harvested and sold. The vineyards would be owned, operated/maintained by the HOA for the project, which would also pay for the operation of the vineyards. It is estimated that five employees would be needed on a year-round basis (daily) to oversee the vineyard production, with peaks of up to 25 employees needed during harvest season.

Given the relatively small size of the proposed project in relation to the Orange County population and work force, the economic contribution of this project alone would not be considered significant; still, the small increase in population and economic activity potentially generated by the proposed project could be considered growth inducing.

Would approval of this project involve some precedent-setting action that could encourage and facilitate other activities that could significantly affect the environment?

The proposed project involves amendments to the County of Orange General Plan and Zoning Ordinance, but those amendments are specific to the allowable land uses on the project site itself. The proposed project does not propose changes to any of Orange County's building safety standards (i.e., building, grading, plumbing, mechanical, electrical, or fire codes). An Area Plan has been prepared to provide for the orderly development of the project site, and large areas of open space would be preserved to buffer the proposed residential uses from adjacent lands. The project would comply with all applicable County plans, policies, and ordinances. In addition, Project Design Features and mitigation measures have been included within this EIR to ensure that the project minimizes environmental impacts. The project would not involve any precedent-setting action that could encourage and facilitate other activities that significantly affect the environment.