

7.0 GROWTH INDUCEMENT

INTRODUCTION

Section 15126.2(d) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, as amended, requires the discussion of the ways in which a project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Such a discussion should also include projects that would remove obstacles to population growth, and the characteristics of a project, which may encourage and/or facilitate other activities that, either individually or cumulatively, could significantly affect the environment. CEQA emphasizes that growth in an area should not be considered beneficial, detrimental or of little significance. The purpose of this section is to evaluate the growth-inducing potential and impact of this project.

GROWTH-INDUCING CRITERIA

In general terms, a project may foster spatial, economic or population growth in a geographic area if it meets any one of the criteria that are identified below.

- Removal of an impediment to growth (e.g., the establishment of an essential public service or the provision of new access to an area).
- Economic expansion or growth (e.g., construction of additional housing, changes in revenue base, employment expansion, etc.).
- Establishment of a precedent-setting action (e.g., an innovation, a change in zoning or general plan designation).
- Development or encroachment in an isolated or adjacent area of open space (being distinct from an “infill” type of project).

Should a project meet any one of these criteria, it can be considered growth inducing. An evaluation of this project compared against these growth-inducing criteria is provided below.

Removal of an Impediment to Growth

Growth in an area may result from the removal of physical impediments or restrictions to growth, as well as the removal of planning impediments resulting from land use plans and policies. In this context, physical growth impediments may include nonexistent or inadequate access to an area or the lack of essential public services (e.g., water service), while planning impediments may include restrictive zoning and/or general plan designations.

The project area contains established land uses and supporting infrastructure. Construction of the uses proposed on the project site would require the modification and/or replacement of existing infrastructure in order to support the increased land use intensity associated with the Glendale Town Center. Given the urban nature of the site and surroundings, and the existence of established infrastructure, no growth inducing impacts would result from project development. A more detailed discussion of infrastructure extension/upgrades associated with the project is addressed below.

An established transportation network exists in the surrounding area that offers local and regional access to the project site. The existing roadways adjoining the site including Central Avenue, Harvard, Orange Street and Colorado Street would provide access to the project site. On-site circulation would be facilitated by a system of internal access roads and parking aisles. Some minor widening of the street would occur to facilitate traffic traveling into the project site. The internal circulation system would allow motorists to reach any part of the site without re-entering the adjacent street system. Sidewalk areas would be provided in front of each building area to allow for movement of pedestrians between building locations. In addition, the project would include some off-site improvements such as the installation of turn-lanes and signals at off-site intersection locations to mitigate for project impacts. On-site and off-site improvements would be designed to serve the proposed project. As such, the improvement of on-site and off-site circulation to serve the project would not induce growth within the area.

The water, sewer, and energy (electricity and natural gas) infrastructure required to support the proposed project would be available to the project site from surrounding streets. Water service to the project site would be provided by a 16-inch line on Central Avenue, an 8-inch line on Colorado Street, a 16-inch line on Brand Boulevard, and 4-inch and 16-inch lines on Orange Street. Sewer service to the project site will be served by a 12-inch line on Central Avenue, a 21-inch line on Colorado Street, a 10-inch line in the alley between Orange and Brand Boulevard, an 8-inch line on Orange Street and an 8-inch line on Harvard Street. No new water or sewer mains other than those required to serve the project site would be constructed. As such, the development of on-site water and sewer infrastructure to serve the project would not induce growth within the area.

Electricity and natural gas transmission infrastructure presently exists on and in the vicinity of the project site. Development of the project would necessitate the construction of an on-site distribution system to convey this energy to uses on the site. This system would be designed to accommodate the uses proposed within the project, and would not extend beyond the requirements or boundary of the project. The on-site service lines will be sized to meet the demands of the proposed project. No growth inducing impacts due to the extension of electrical or natural gas service lines would occur with the development of the project.

In summary, the design and construction of roadways, water, sewer, electrical and natural gas infrastructure needed to accommodate the project would not induce growth within undeveloped areas surrounding the project area.

Economic Growth

The second criterion by which growth inducement can be measured involves economic considerations. In the short-term, the proposed project would provide for short-term construction employment opportunities. It is anticipated that construction employees would commute from elsewhere in the region, rather than relocate to the City of Glendale for a temporary assignment.

Long-term growth, should it occur, would primarily be in the form of an economic response to the increased employment opportunities and new residents that would occur on the site. Long-term full-time and part-time jobs would be generated for up to 1,756 persons. As a result of daytime and evening shifts, there would be up to approximately 721 employees on the premises at one time.¹ Of the 1,756 employment positions that would be generated by the project up to 420 of these employees could reside in the City of Glendale. If it is conservatively assumed that each of these employees forms a single new household in the City, these households could add approximately 1,176 additional residents to the City (420 households x 2.8 persons per household). However, it should be noted that this estimate is conservative since it is based on the assumption that City residents will fill none of the employment opportunities associated with the project. Given that unemployment in Glendale stands at 6.4 percent, it is reasonable that some of the employment opportunities associated with the project will be filled by current residents of the City. In addition, it is likely that existing residents of the City and surrounding communities will fill many of the part-time employment opportunities associated with the project. Nonetheless, any small increase in persons commuting from outside the area or potentially relocating to the area may result in a corresponding slight increase in demand for City goods and services. Given this project's relatively small size in relation to the City population and work force, the economic contribution of this project alone would not be considered significant. Furthermore, the City has a total of 73,713 housing units, with approximately 71,792 units occupied (i.e., vacancy rate of approximately 2.6 percent). Given the existing vacancy rate making 1,916 units available and because additional residential developments are expected to be constructed in the near future (estimated 338 units for the project and 801 units on the Citywide project list), any growth in housing demand would be adequately accommodated. Nonetheless, the small increase in population and economic activity potentially generated by the proposed project could be considered growth inducing. Such an increase is not

¹ Caruso Affiliated Holdings, *Interoffice Memorandum - Glendale Center Estimated Employee Count*, September 5, 2003.

considered substantial, since this increase does not exceed the amount of growth projected for the City. and impacts are considered to be less than significant.

Precedent-Setting Action

Changes from a project that could be precedent-setting include (among others) a change in zoning, general plan designation, general plan text or approval of exceptions to regulations that could have implications for other properties or that could make it easier for other properties to develop.

The current General Plan land use and zoning designation for the Glendale Town Center site is Central Business District (CBD). Implementation of the project would involve a General Plan Amendment and zone change to redesignate the project site to Specific Plan. Although the change in land designation and zoning could encourage other requests for land use designations or rezoning of other properties, each application would be considered by the City of Glendale on a project-by-project basis. The proposed change in land use designation and rezoning for the Glendale Town Center would only apply to the project site, would not encompass other properties, and would not facilitate the development of other projects. For these reasons, the project would not be considered growth inducing.

The proposed project includes a minor amendment to the text of the General Plan Land Use Element description of the Central Business District to clarify the relationship of residential land uses to the Central Business District Regional Commercial Area as described in the Land Use Element. The project includes a proposed amendment to the Street Classifications and Characteristics table in the Circulation Element (Exhibit 2-2) to reflect the planned vacation of portions of Orange and Harvard Streets within the site. The Circulation Element designates Orange Street as an Urban Collector from Doran Street to Colorado Street and Harvard Street as an Urban Collector from Central Avenue to Chevy Chase Drive. The proposed amendment would designate Orange Street as an Urban Collector from Doran Street to Broadway and Harvard Avenue as an Urban Collector from Brand Boulevard to Chevy Chase Drive. Although the change in General Plan text could encourage other requests from other properties, each application would be considered by the City of Glendale on a project-by-project basis. The proposed change in General Plan text for the Glendale Town Center would only apply to the project site and would not encompass other properties. For these reasons, the project would not be considered growth inducing.

Development of or Encroachment Isolated on Open Space

Development can be considered growth inducing when it requires the extension of urban infrastructure into isolated localities, which are presently devoid of such facilities. The project site is situated in an area that is surrounded to the north, east, south, and west by urban areas that contain established

infrastructure. The Glendale Galleria shopping mall is located directly to the north and to the west across Central Avenue from the Glendale Town Center site. Retail-commercial development, including the Glendale Marketplace, is located to the east across Brand Boulevard. In addition, the City's Central Library and Central Park are located to the east across Brand Boulevard. A hotel and recording studio are located directly south, west, and east of the project site along Colorado Boulevard. Smaller retail-commercial buildings are located to the south across Colorado Street. Furthermore, the project site is bound by Brand Boulevard on the east, by Colorado Street on the south and by Central Avenue on the west. Orange Street, which runs in a north-south direction connecting Colorado Street and Broadway, and Harvard Street, which runs in an east-west direction connecting Central Avenue and Brand Boulevard, currently bisect the Glendale Town Center site. Consequently, the project would not induce growth under this criterion since it would not result in the urbanization of land in an isolated location.

It must be emphasized that the CEQA *Guidelines* require an EIR to "discuss the ways" a project could be growth inducing and to "discuss the characteristics of some projects that may encourage...activities that could significantly affect the environment." However, the CEQA *Guidelines* do not require that an EIR should predict (or speculate), specifically where such growth would occur, in what form it would occur, or when it would occur. Clearly, the answers to such questions require great speculation, which CEQA discourages (see CEQA *Guidelines* §15145). Attempting to determine the environmental impacts created by growth that could be induced by the proposed project is speculative in that the size, type, and location of specific, future projects, which may be induced, by this project are unknown at the present time. To the extent that specific projects are known (as discussed in **Section 4.0** of this EIR), those projects either have already been or will be subject to their own environmental analysis. Furthermore, it is speculative to state conclusively that implementation of the project alone would induce growth in the surrounding area, as there are many variables that must be considered when examining the mechanics of urban growth (e.g., market forces, demographic trends, etc.). Impacts associated with growth in the Glendale area can be found in the cumulative analyses for each topic that was analyzed in **Section 4.0, Environmental Impact Analysis**. Individual cumulative impact assessment methodology is contained within each issue addressed within this EIR.