

5.0 OTHER CEQA CONSIDERATIONS

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) for the Beaumont Summit Station Specific Plan (Project) discusses additional California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) considerations. The additional considerations discussed in this section include:

1. Significant and Irreversible Environmental Changes; and
2. Growth Inducing Impacts.

5.1 CEQA Requirements

Section 15126.2 (b) of the CEQA Guidelines requires that an EIR discuss any significant impacts associated with the Project. In **Section 4.0, Environmental Analysis**, of this Draft EIR, describes the potential environmental impacts of the Project and recommends mitigation measures to reduce impacts to a less than significant level, where feasible. **Section 1.0, Executive Summary** contains **Table 1-2, Summary of Significant Impacts and Proposed Mitigation Measures**, which summarizes the impacts, mitigation measures, and levels of significance before and after mitigation.

5.2 Significant and Irreversible Environmental Changes

The CEQA Guidelines § 15126.2(d), requires a discussion of any significant irreversible environmental changes that would be caused by a proposed project. Generally, the section states that a project would result in significant irreversible environmental changes if the following occurs:

- The project would involve a large commitment of nonrenewable resources in a way that would make their nonuse or removal unlikely;
- The primary and secondary impacts would generally commit future generations to similar uses;
- The project would involve uses in which irreversible damage could result from any potential environmental accidents associated with the project, and
- The proposed consumption of resources is not justified (e.g., the project involved the wasteful use of energy).

The project would involve a large commitment of nonrenewable resources in a way that would make their nonuse or removal unlikely.

The Project would not involve the utilization of nonrenewable resources in a manner that would make their nonuse or removal unlikely. Nonrenewable resources associated with the development of the Project site would include fossil fuels. Fossil fuels would serve as energy sources during both Project construction and operations. Fossil fuels would act as transportation energy sources for construction vehicles and heavy equipment during the construction period and by vehicles and equipment used during Project operations. Though the Project would endeavor to utilize fossil fuels efficiently, their use would be vital for construction and operations activities, making their nonuse unlikely. However, the Project would not require the continued use of fossil fuels at the end of its operational life. By nature of being a nonrenewable resource, fossil fuels, once consumed, cannot be replaced. Those fuels, once spent, may be transformed into another form of matter such as exhaust or smoke. Standard vehicles and equipment

used by the Project in both construction and operational phases would likely utilize fossil fuels. Some construction and operational equipment such as forklifts may be electrified and therefore not rely on fossil fuels. Energy-efficient equipment would be utilized according to their availability and in order to comply with energy regulations and policies for the Project as a whole as it pertains to e-commerce and commercial uses.

The Project does not propose any fueling stations and would not likely store significant amounts of fossil fuels on the site. Fossil fuels on-site would especially not be stored in a manner that would make their removal unlikely. No infrastructure is proposed to store fossil fuels in large amounts or without the ability of removal. The Project would also require the commitment of land on which the Project would be developed for mix-use of e-commerce and commercial uses. Similarly, land is a finite resource in that once developed and in active use it removes the ability for that land to be used for other purposes. However, development of the Project site would not eliminate the possibility of redevelopment in the future.

The primary and secondary impacts would generally commit future generations to similar uses.

The Project's development is anticipated to produce some significant and unavoidable impacts based on analyses conducted in **Sections 4.2, Air Quality; 4.7, Greenhouse Gas Emissions; 4.11, Noise, and 4.15, Transportation**. These impacts would also affect the surrounding environment. However, these significant impacts would not commit future generations to similar uses. Although grading would occur in the Project site, the site could be regraded for a different project should the need arise. Additionally, Planning Area 3 of the Project site would be maintained as Open Space which would act as buffer from the residential development to the south of the Project site. As such, Planning Area 3 would remain fully developable, if necessary. As previously stated, the proposed e-commerce and commercial structures would be able to be removed at the end of the Project's life and replaced.

The use of materials considered hazardous waste would be minimal; mostly used for cleaning, landscaping, and operational maintenance. Compliance with federal, state, and local regulations would ensure that the usage and storage of any hazardous materials and waste would be completed in the safest and most efficient manner. Similarly, the Project would comply with any federal, state, and local air quality and water quality regulations to further ensure the least amount of environmental impact. The mixed-use nature of the Project is unlikely to lead to impacts that would relegate future generations and developments to similar uses. Therefore, the Project would not influence future development in that land area as the existing land use designations would be unchanged.

The project would involve uses in which irreversible damage could result from any potential environmental accidents associated with the project.

The Project is intended to develop a mix of e-commerce and commercial development and is not anticipated to release hazardous materials into the environment. Construction and operation of the Project would utilize chemical substances common with typical construction, warehousing, landscaping, and cleaning activities and do not generally pose a significant hazard to the public or environment. However, in the event that hazardous materials are either used or stored on the Project site, mitigation measures are proposed, which would both reduce the significance of any impacts and ensure the Project's compliance with any Federal, State, and local policy regarding hazardous materials and accidents.

The proposed consumption of resources is not justified (e.g., the project involves the wasteful use of energy).

The Project would comply with any applicable federal, state, and local regulation and law regarding the use of resources during both construction and operations. As established in **Section 4.17, Utilities and Service Systems**, development of the Project would not significantly impact water, electricity, solid waste, and telecommunications resources. It was found that the Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District (BCVWD), the water supplier for the City and Project site, has adequate supplies to serve the Project's expanded demand. Further, development of the Project would include the use of energy-efficient vehicles and equipment in accordance with the most recent Federal, State, and local regulations. Therefore, resources used for the Project, including energy, would be done in an efficient, justifiable manner. Energy resources and consumption is discussed in greater detail in **Section 4.5, Energy**.

5.3 Growth Inducing Impacts

State CEQA Guidelines § 15126.2(e) requires that EIRs include a discussion of ways in which a project could induce growth. The State CEQA Guidelines identify a project as "growth-inducing" if it fosters economic or population growth or if it encourages the construction of additional housing either directly or indirectly in the surrounding environment. New employees from commercial or e-commerce development and new population from residential development represent direct forms of growth. These direct forms of growth have a secondary effect of expanding the size of local markets and inducing additional economic activity in the area. The proposed Project would therefore have a growth inducing impact if it would:

- Directly or indirectly foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing;
- Remove obstacles to population growth;
- Require the construction of new or expanded facilities that could cause significant environmental effects; or
- Encourage and facilitate other activities that could significantly affect the environment, either individually or cumulatively.

A project's potential to induce growth does not automatically result in growth. Growth can only happen through capital investment in new economic opportunities by the private or public sectors. Under CEQA, the potential for growth inducement is not considered necessarily detrimental nor necessarily beneficial, and neither is it automatically considered to be of little significance to the environment. This issue is presented to provide additional information on ways in which the Project could contribute to significant changes in the environment, beyond the direct consequences of implementing the Project examined in the preceding sections of this Draft EIR.

Direct Growth-Inducing Impacts in the Surrounding Environment

Potential growth-inducing effects are examined through analysis of the following questions:

Would the project directly or indirectly foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing? No

Population and Employment

As shown in **Table 4.12-7, Project Generated Employment**, the projected number of employees that would result from the implementation of the Project was calculated based on the employment forecast factors used in the Beaumont 2040 GP Draft EIR.¹ The Project has the potential to generate approximately 4,010 employment opportunities.

The construction phase of the Project would generate employment opportunities, including construction management, engineering, and labor. Construction related jobs are not considered significantly growth inducing because they are temporary in nature and are anticipated to be filled by persons within the City and the surrounding communities. As noted in **Table 4.12-3, Housing Units – City of Beaumont and County of Riverside**, the City is housing-rich with an has a 4.8 percent vacancy rate. Additionally, the City is considered “jobs poor” as it has a high 10.5 percent unemployment rate. This suggests that the Project’s employment opportunities would be adequately filled, by local residents or the surrounding community. Therefore, the Project’s employment opportunities for the construction phase would not induce substantial unplanned population growth.

Population Growth

Buildout of the Specific Plan would increase jobs in the City, which would have the potential to increase the demand for housing in the area. However, the City is housing-rich and therefore, the Project would produce more jobs that would help lower the unemployment rate of the area. Because the City is housing-rich, it is expected that jobs at the Project site would be drawn from the local and regional labor force. The Project is not anticipated to result in a substantial population growth, and impacts would be less than significant.

Would the project remove obstacles to population growth? No

The Project site currently consists of vacant parcels, which were previously improved with commercial/animal farming uses that have since been demolished (see **Section 3.0, Project Description** for more information). The demolition of these structures did not induce population growth since they will be replaced with the proposed e-commerce and commercial facilities. Additionally, the zoning and General Plan designation for the Project site would be Beaumont Summit Station Specific Plan and would not allow for residential development without a Zone Change or General Plan Amendment to a residential designation. The Project would be an allowed and anticipated use within the Specific Plan and would therefore not create or remove an obstacle for growth.

¹ City of Beaumont. (2019). *Beaumont General Plan 2040 Program DEIR – Section 5.13 Population and Housing: page 5.13-13*. Retrieved at: <https://www.beaumontca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/36627/DEIR-090720> (Accessed August 24, 2021).

Would the project require the construction of new or expanded facilities that could cause significant environmental effects? No

The Project site was previously disturbed and developed with commercial/animal farming buildings which have since been demolished. These uses required utility and infrastructure improvements in order to function. The Project would include infrastructure improvements and connections to existing facilities to allow for the efficient use of resources such as natural gas, electricity, and water. Improvements to the Project adjacent streets would also include underground dry utility facilities (e.g., cable, electric, telephone, natural gas, television and fiber optics) along the Project's frontage street: Cherry Valley Boulevard. The environmental impacts associated with the facility improvements associated with the Project have been analyzed in **Section 4.1, Aesthetics** through **Section 4.18, Wildfire** of this EIR. In the presence of potentially significant impacts which were not minimized by the Project design features, mitigation measures have been proposed which, when implemented, would reduce potential impacts stemming from the Project's development to less than significant levels, with the exception of impacts associated with air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, noise, and traffic, which would remain significant and unavoidable. Further, the proposed Project would not require the expansion of utility facilities such as water treatment plants or landfills. Adequate capacity was concluded for each of those facilities.

Encourage and facilitate other activities that could significantly affect the environment, either individually or cumulatively.

Refer to **Section 4.1, Aesthetics** through **Section 4.18, Wildfire** of this EIR. No cumulative impacts were discovered during the analysis of the Project. The design features and objectives of the Project were concluded as having the potential to create significant unavoidable impacts to air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, noise, and transportation analyses. Mitigation is proposed in each case to minimize the potential of these impacts. However, through the nature of development some impacts cannot be avoided.

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