

## 5.0 GROWTH INDUCING IMPACTS

Section 15126(d) of the *State CEQA Guidelines* requires a discussion of a proposed project's potential to foster economic or population growth, including ways in which a project could remove an obstacle to growth. The Specific Plan's potential to induce growth is discussed in this section.

Growth does not necessarily create significant physical changes to the environment. However, depending upon the type, magnitude, and location of growth, it can result in significant adverse environmental effects. The proposed Specific Plan's growth inducing potential is therefore considered significant if it could result in unavoidable significant effects in one or more environmental issue areas.

### 5.1 POPULATION AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

As discussed in Section 2.0, *Project Description*, it is anticipated that the Specific Plan would accommodate 300 new residences at full buildout. Based on the City's average household size of 2.56 (Scotts Valley General Plan Housing Element, 2007), this would generate a population increase of approximately 768. Further population generation could occur outside the downtown area as a result of the increased commercial and industrial square footage that is proposed. The magnitude of such a population increase is speculative, however.

Based on Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) projects, the City could experience an increase from 11,615 persons in the year 2007 to a projected 15,000 residents in the year 2030. Thus, the population increase of 768 that could result from the Specific Plan is consistent within AMBAG projections. Additionally, AMBAG projected the population of Scotts Valley to be 13,182 in the year 2005. However, the actual population as of 2007 is far below AMBAG projections. Therefore, the increase in population and housing that would result from the Specific Plan is consistent with long-term growth projections for the City and would be less than significant.

Furthermore, development of high density housing units with the Specific Plan area may encourage affordable housing production, as well as result in indirect economic benefits, such as an increase in demand for retail and commercial services.

The Specific Plan includes a range of policies and actions intended to attract businesses to the City and proposed downtown area specifically. The economic growth that could be accommodated under the Specific Plan would have economic benefits in terms of jobs and City tax revenues. It could also potentially contribute to environmental effects including increase air pollution, noise, and traffic; however, as discussed in Section 4.0, *Environmental Impact Analysis*, such impacts would either be less than significant or would be reduced to a less than significant level with the incorporation of recommended mitigation measures.

The Specific Plan is designed to facilitate orderly development of the proposed downtown area, such that the plan would reduce the potential for uncontrolled growth within the plan area and associated environmental impacts. The Specific Plan would focus development in already urbanized portions of the City, which would intensify land use within the Downtown area, with the potential for compatibility conflicts relating to issues such as traffic, aesthetics, and noise. However, as noted in Section 4.0, the Specific Plan policies and actions, as well as the incorporation



of design techniques on future development under the Specific Plan, would minimize the potential for conflicts.

Mitigation Measures. None required.

Significance After Mitigation. No significant environmental impacts relating to economic growth are anticipated.

## **5.2 REMOVAL OF OBSTACLES TO GROWTH**

Currently, land use and zoning controls would limit growth potential in the area. The proposed project would increase development potential within the project area. However, by focusing on the intensification and reuse of an already urbanized area of the community, it is anticipated that implementation of the Specific Plan would reduce the potential for growth pressure in undeveloped areas at the periphery of the community. The proposed project is an in-fill project that includes building in a previously developed area or in areas adjacent to existing development. This is an important component of LEED-ND and its involvement in the green building movement, considering that even LEED-certified buildings contribute to sprawl if they are built on the fringe of urban areas disconnected from other land uses.

The proposed project would generally reduce the potential for impacts relating to issues such as biological resources, regional traffic, and air quality associated with potential urban sprawl. The Specific Plan will focus future development in the already urbanized portion of the City, which will make use of existing infrastructure. The Specific Plan will not require the extension of infrastructure (including roadways to areas not currently served), so the potential for inducing growth in such areas is minimal. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures. None required.

Significance After Mitigation. No significant environmental impacts are anticipated.

