

# Chapter 5 Other CEQA Required Discussions

## 5.1 Growth Inducement

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126(d) 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. 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 project's growth inducing potential is therefore considered significant if project-induced growth could result in significant physical effects in one or more environmental issue areas.

### 5.1.1 Population and Employment Growth

As is discussed in [Section 4.15](#), at full buildout of the Fowler 2040 GP, Fowler would have a projected population of 48,131 people and a projected dwelling unit count of 14,764 units. This reflects a population increase of 41,526 people and 12,703 dwelling units between 2019 and 2040. The Fowler 2040 GP plans for a mix of development types that may not actually occur within the planned period due to development and growth trends. For instance, Fowler has grown at a rate between two and three percent since the 2025 GP was adopted in 2004. If this trend continues and Fowler were to grow at a constant rate of three percent through 2040, Fowler would have a population of 11,833 people. The Fowler 2040 GP includes goals and policies that would encourage orderly development and infill development that would minimize the impacts of population and housing growth as a result of the Fowler 2040 GP. The purpose of the Fowler 2040 GP is to provide the framework for growth to occur in both a logical and orderly manner within the City. This framework would be used as a guide for future development through the life of the GP.

### 5.1.2 Removal of Obstacles to Growth

The largest potential growth inhibitor that Fowler faces now and into the future is the lack of infrastructure to provide roads and utilities for a larger population to utilize, and very little room for economic growth and development. Growth and city expansion would occur as infrastructure is built out. Without access to public utilities or roadways, growth cannot and would not occur. In addition, the supply of water within Fowler would be a determining factor in its future growth potential. Fowler would be required to show that it has ample water supplies to serve a future population that is proposed by future individual development projects. The necessity of public utilities, roads, opportunities for economic growth, and water supply are the determining factors that control the growth rate of Fowler.

The existing GP could be viewed as an obstacle to growth, given that Fowler is almost built out under existing land use designations. The very act of updating the GP could be viewed as removing an obstacle to growth. There is an existing demand for both residential and employment growth, which Fowler is trying to accommodate by revising some land use designations. Redevelopment of several sites within Fowler and implementation of numerous policies intended to reduce overall impacts will allow additional growth in a more compact and efficient manner.

## 5.2 Irreversible Environmental Effects

PRC Sections 21100(b) (2) and 21100.1(a) require that DEIRs prepared for the adoption of a plan, policy, or ordinance of a public agency must include a discussion of significant irreversible environmental changes resulting from Project implementation. CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(c) describes significant irreversible environmental changes that would be caused by a proposed project.

Use of nonrenewable resources during the initial and continued phases of a project may be irreversible, since a large commitment of such resources makes removal or nonuse thereafter unlikely. Primary impacts and, particularly, secondary impacts (such as highway improvement which provides access to a previously inaccessible area) generally commit future generations to similar uses. Also, irreversible damage can result from environmental accidents associated with the project. Irretrievable commitments of resources should be evaluated to assure that such current consumption is justified. Generally, a project would result in significant irreversible environmental changes if:

1. The primary and secondary impacts would generally commit future generations to similar uses;
2. The project would involve a large commitment of nonrenewable resources;
3. The project involves uses in which irreversible damage would result from any potential environmental accidents associated with the project; or
4. The proposed consumption of resources is not justified (e.g., the project involves the wasteful use of energy).

Implementation of the Fowler 2040 GP would accommodate future development that would result in the conversion of presently undeveloped land to residential, commercial, industrial, office, public, and recreational uses. Development consistent with the GP would constitute a long-term commitment to these land uses. Additionally, irreversible changes would likely occur due to future excavation, grading, and construction activities associated with future land uses consistent with the GP. Although the environmental impacts of these changes can generally be minimized through application of mandatory polices and implementation of mitigation measures, the potential for disturbance would represent an irreversible change. Restoration of the region to pre-developed conditions would not be feasible given the degree of disturbance, the urbanization of the area, and the level of capital investment.

Renewable, nonrenewable, and limited resources that would likely be consumed as part of future development consistent with the Fowler 2040 GP would include, but are not limited to oil, gasoline, lumber, construction aggregates, asphalt, surface water and groundwater, energy, steel, and similar materials. Development of land uses consistent with the GP would require the consumption of lumber, aggregates, asphalt, steel, and other construction materials. Both construction and operation of land uses would require the consumption of oil, gasoline, water, and energy. For example, construction equipment would require oil and gasoline for operation, and residents of new housing units would consume energy and water during daily activities.

In addition, development of the proposed project would result in increased demand on public services and utilities (see [Section 4.16](#), Public Services, and [Section 4.20](#), Utilities and Service Systems). This increased demand would require expansion of infrastructure that would result in irreversible conversion of land similar to other development types and would also result in the permanent commitment of resources such as water and energy by making these resources available to more consumers. Long-term impacts would also result from an increase in vehicular traffic, and associated noise emissions (see [Section 4.18](#), Transportation, and [Section 4.14](#), Noise). Additional development that would occur under the Project could

result in the loss of significant historical resources (see [Section 4.6](#) Cultural Resources) or important farmland (see [Section 4.3](#), Agriculture Resources) as land containing these resources is converted to other land uses.

CEQA Guidelines also require a discussion of the potential for irreversible environmental damage caused by an accident associated with the Project. As described in [Section 4.10](#), Hazards and Hazardous Materials, implementation of the GP would allow for the development of land uses, such as industrial buildings, that commonly store, use, and dispose of hazardous materials. Additionally, industries and businesses using hazardous materials may expand or increase to accommodate the projected population growth under implementation of the Fowler 2040 GP. Compliance with applicable federal, State and local hazardous materials regulations would ensure that the Project would not result in irreversible environmental damage related to the accidental release of hazardous materials.