6 OTHER CEQA SECTIONS

6.1 GROWTH INDUCEMENT

CEQA Section 21100(b)(5) specifies that the growth-inducing impacts of a project must be addressed in an EIR. Section 15126.2(d) of the State CEQA Guidelines provides the following guidance for assessing growth-inducing impacts of a project:

> Discuss the 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. Included in this are projects which would remove obstacles to population growth (a major expansion of a wastewater treatment plant might, for example, allow for more construction in service areas). Increases in the population may tax existing community service facilities, requiring construction of new facilities that could cause significant environmental effects. Also, discuss the characteristics of some projects which may encourage and facilitate other activities that could significantly affect the environment, either individually or cumulatively. It must not be assumed that growth in any area is necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment.

A project can induce growth directly, indirectly, or both. Direct growth inducement would result if a project involved construction of new housing. Indirect growth inducement would result, for instance, if implementing a project resulted in any of the following:

- substantial new permanent employment opportunities (e.g., commercial, industrial, or governmental enterprises);
- substantial short-term employment opportunities (e.g., construction employment) that indirectly stimulates the need for additional housing and services to support the new temporary employment demand; and/or
- removal of an obstacle to additional growth and development, such as removing a constraint on a required public utility or service (e.g., construction of a major sewer line with excess capacity through an undeveloped area).

Growth inducement itself is not an environmental effect but may foreseeably lead to environmental effects. If substantial growth inducement occurs, it can result in secondary environmental effects, such as increased demand for housing, demand for other community and public services and infrastructure capacity, increased traffic and noise, degradation of air or water quality, degradation or loss of plant or animal habitats, conversion of agricultural and open-space land to urban uses, and other effects.

6.1.1 Summary of Growth-Inducing Impacts

The State CEQA Guidelines require discussion in an EIR of the ways in which a proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. It is not assumed that growth in any area is beneficial or detrimental, consistent with the State CEQA Guidelines (CCR Section 15126.2[d]).

Environmental effects resulting from induced growth fit the CEQA definition of "indirect" effects in the State CEQA Guidelines (CCR Section 15358[a][2]). These indirect or secondary effects of growth may result in significant environmental impacts. CEQA does not require that the EIR speculate unduly about the precise location and site-specific characteristics of significant, indirect effects caused by induced growth, but a good-faith effort is required to disclose what is feasible to assess. Potential secondary effects of growth could include consequences – such as conversion of open space to developed uses, increased demand on community and public services and infrastructure, increased traffic and noise, degradation of air and water quality, or degradation or loss of plant and wildlife habitat – that are the result of growth fostered by the project.

6.1.2 Growth-Inducing Impacts of the 2035 Master Plan

This analysis examines the following potential growth-inducing impacts related to implementation of the 2035 Master Plan:

1) foster population growth;
2) foster the construction of new housing in the surrounding environment;
3) foster economic growth; and
4) remove obstacles to growth by expanding facility capacity, or infrastructure.

Per estimates provided by the California Department of Finance (DOF), San Luis Obispo County is anticipated to experience growth of 21,009 residents between 2019 and 2035, an approximately seven percent increase. The existing populations for the cities in the vicinity of campus and projected populations were gathered from resources developed by the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG). More specifically, SLOCOG's 2019 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) (SLOCOG 2019) provides existing populations per county for the year 2018, while SLOCOG's Update to Long Range Socio-Economic Projections (SLOCOG 2009) incorporates projections for the year 2035 for nearby cities. Per SLOCOG's resources, and using the high-growth scenario, the City of Atascadero is anticipated to grow from 31,147 residents in 2018 to 32,950 residents in 2035, an increase of approximately six percent. The City of Paso Robles is expected to grow from 31,559 residents in 2018 to 42,350 residents in 2035, an approximately 34 percent increase. The City of San Luis Obispo is anticipated to grow from 46,548 residents in 2018 to 48,860 residents in 2035, an approximately five percent increase. Arroyo Grande's population is anticipated to increase by approximately 13 percent, from 17,912 residents in 2018 to 20,230 residents in 2035. Similarly, Grover Beach would experience a population increase of approximately six percent from 13,560 residents in 2018 to 14,390 residents in 2035. Lastly, Pismo Beach is expected to increase in population by 22 percent, from 8,233 residents in 2018 to 10,080 residents in 2035 (SLOCOG 2019; SLOCOG 2009).

As noted in Section 3.11, "Population and Housing," development under the 2035 Master Plan would allow for increased campus population, thereby increasing local student population, as well as the number of faculty/staff on campus on a daily basis. While there would be an overall population increase, the 2035 Master Plan allows for development of more housing units than student enrollment increases, which would, overall, reduce the need for students to seek off-campus housing compared to existing conditions. Therefore, the 2035 Master Plan would not foster population growth at off-campus locations or within local jurisdictions to house students. With respect to employment growth, the 2035 Master Plan anticipates an increase of up to 669 faculty and staff and includes on-campus workforce housing for approximately 800 faculty/staff and families. A retirement community is also proposed to house approximately 250 retired Cal Poly faculty, staff, and alumni. These housing developments would reduce off-campus housing demand for employee and non-student housing. Thus, this increase in on-campus housing would meet projected demand associated with long-term planning efforts (e.g., demand generated by enrollment increases) and would decrease off-campus housing demand. The projected increase in student enrollment and availability of on-campus housing for new and existing students, under the 2035 Master Plan, would increase on-campus population. It would also necessitate development of additional on-campus facilities (e.g., academic/administrative, recreation, dining, parking, and utility-related facilities), the effects of which are evaluated throughout this EIR (refer to Sections 3.1 through 3.10, Sections 3.12 through 3.14, and Chapters 4 and 5). However, because the 2035 Master Plan would house substantially more residents than generated through the 2035 Master Plan, it would not induce additional population growth or housing on campus beyond what is projected by the 2035 Master Plan, and thus, would not be expected to foster or create a need for construction of new housing in the surrounding (off-campus) environment.

The on-campus population growth may induce economic growth through an increased demand for goods and services, which could create new jobs in the area, including within the downtown area of the City of San Luis Obispo. Based on a 2014 study conducted for Cal Poly regarding economic impacts associated with the campus, for every 2,741 direct jobs supplied to the local area by Cal Poly, an additional 2,381 jobs are created in the local area by these additional employees (Cal Poly 2014). This means that one new job would be created in the region for approximately every 1.2 new jobs on-campus. Based on the anticipated increase in campus employment of 669, and assuming that

one job would be created for every 1.2 new Cal Poly jobs, the 2035 Master Plan could result in 558 additional jobs (additional to Cal Poly jobs) within the region. This indirect and induced economic growth may result in additional commercial development in the region, which would be subject to local planning and discretionary actions by local jurisdictions, including the City of San Luis Obispo. The potential environmental impacts associated with such development would be identified consistent with local planning requirements and evaluated through local jurisdictions' General Plans and project-level evaluations of commercial development proposals. According to the City of San Luis Obispo General Plan, the City of San Luis Obispo is anticipated to reach a population of 47,622 by 2030 at an annual growth rate of 0.40 percent. Similarly, the County of San Luis Obispo is anticipated to reach a population of 321,741 by 2035 (County of San Luis Obispo 2014). As discussed in Section 3.11.3, implementation of the 2035 Master Plan would allow for an enrollment increase of 3,188 students on campus. This would make up seven percent of the City of San Luis Obispo's population (though it should be noted that on-campus residents are not residents of the City of San Luis Obispo) and 0.11 percent of the County of San Luis Obispo's population. As outlined in the City of San Luis Obispo's General Plan, in 2012 the City of San Luis Obispo has 22,984 employed persons (County of San Luis Obispo 2014). Similarly, the County of San Luis Obispo anticipates that approximately 9,400 new jobs will be created county-wide (including cities) between 2015 and 2025 (County of San Luis Obispo 2014). Therefore, the 558 additional jobs in nearby areas anticipated under the 2035 Master Plan would represent approximately 6 percent of the total jobs anticipated to be created in the County and neighboring cities between 2015 and 2025 and would represent approximately 2 percent of the employed persons in the City of San Luis Obispo. As such, job growth is within the levels contemplated for the area.

As with this 2035 Master Plan EIR, the CEQA review for future regional growth may identify significant impacts and mitigation measures and significant and unavoidable impacts. These impacts are generally part of overall regional growth and the 2035 Master Plan would be a minor, incremental contributor to this growth and its related impacts. In considering proposals for future developments, these regional entities would evaluate the details, alternatives, and mitigation measures to decide whether potential impacts can be mitigated and avoided, or significant and unavoidable.

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 land use designations. The 2035 Master Plan would be implemented within the existing campus boundaries which contain established land uses and supporting infrastructure (roads, water distribution, wastewater and drainage collection, and energy distribution). The 2035 Master Plan includes redevelopment of areas within the campus and would intensify the uses over what currently exists in some areas. To account for this intensification, the 2035 Master Plan proposes circulation infrastructure improvements, to provide for the safe and efficient movement of pedestrians, bicycles, and vehicles around campus, while also encouraging a more complete shift to an active transportation approach. Further, utilities infrastructure improvements, such as new water, wastewater, and storm drainage infrastructure, are also proposed to accommodate growth under the 2035 Master Plan. For instance, under the 2035 Master Plan, a Water Reclamation Facility (WRF) is proposed to be constructed in the West Campus, south of the Student Experimental Farm and west of the compost operation to treat wastewater and provide recycled water to future development associated with the 2035 Master Plan. This necessary utility infrastructure would be located on campus and would serve only the campus (in terms of sizing and need). Further, these components would be maintained separate from other local jurisdictions. As such, there is no potential for additional growth (off the campus) to occur beyond that anticipated under the 2035 Master Plan.

6.2 SIGNIFICANT AND UNAVOIDABLE ADVERSE IMPACTS

The State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(b) requires EIRs to include a discussion of the significant environmental effects that cannot be avoided if the proposed project is implemented. As documented throughout Chapter 3 (project impacts) and Chapter 4, "Cumulative Impacts," of this Draft EIR, after implementation of the recommended mitigation measures, most of the impacts associated with the 2035 Master Plan would be reduced to a less-than-

significant level. The following impacts are considered significant and unavoidable; that is, no feasible mitigation is available to reduce the project's impacts to a less-than-significant level;

- Impact 3.1-1: Result in a Substantial Adverse Effect on a Scenic Vista or Substantially Degrade the Existing Visual Character or Quality of Public Views of the Site and Its Surroundings
- Impact 3.1-2: Damage Scenic Resources within a State Scenic Highway
- Impact 3.2-1: Convert Agricultural Uses, Including Lands Designated as Important Farmland, to Nonagricultural Use
- Impact 3.3-2: Cause Construction-Generated Criteria Air Pollutant or Precursor Emissions to Exceed APCD-Recommended Thresholds
- Impact 3.3-3: Result in a Net Increase in Long-Term Operational Criteria Air Pollutant and Precursor Emissions That Exceed APCD-Recommended Thresholds
- Impact 3.3-6: Result in Other Emissions (Such as Those Leading to Odors) Adversely Affecting a Substantial Number of People
- Impact 3.4-1: Cause Substantial Adverse Change in the Significance of a Historical Resource
- Impact 3.10-1: Generate Substantial Temporary (Construction) Noise
- Impact 3.10-3: Generate Substantial Long-Term Increase in Stationary Noise

Cumulative impacts to aesthetics (effects on a scenic vistas, existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings, and scenic resources within a state scenic highway), agriculture (conversion of farmland in the region), air quality (criteria air pollutant emissions during construction and operation and odors), and historic resources (alteration of historic structures) would also be significant and unavoidable as a result of implementation of the 2035 Master Plan.

6.3 SIGNIFICANT AND IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

The State CEQA Guidelines requires a discussion of any significant irreversible environmental changes that would be caused by the project. Specifically, the State CEQA Guidelines section 15126.2(c) states:

> Uses of nonrenewable resources during the initial and continued phases of the 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 generation 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:

- 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;
- the project would involve a large commitment of nonrenewable resources; or
- the proposed consumption of resources is not justified (e.g., the project involves the wasteful use of energy).

Cal Poly's ownership of the campus represents a long-term commitment of the campus to educational uses and implementation of the 2035 Master Plan would continue these uses, irreversibly removing the Master Plan Area from other potential uses. Restoration of the campus to pre-developed conditions would not be feasible given the degree of disturbance, the urbanization of the area, and the level of capital investment.

Additional irreversible commitments to future use include those related to new housing or academic/administrative space development. Development of lands currently used for agricultural uses would constitute an irreversible change of use on these lands because once buildings or pavement are constructed, underlying soils would no longer be available for agricultural production. Implementation of the 2035 Master Plan would result in the loss of approximately ten acres of Important Farmland, all of which is also considered Prime Farmland. While Cal Poly would implement mitigation measures, including permanently preserving other Important Farmland at a minimum of a 1:1 ratio, the loss of this Important Farmland would be deemed permanent and therefore a significant impact. For biological resources, development under the 2035 Master Plan could result in conversion or loss of Special-Status plants, wildlife, and fish species and habitats; degradation or loss of riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities or state or federally protected wetlands; and degradation or loss of important wildlife movement corridors or nursery sites. As discussed in Section 3.5, "Biological Resources," Cal Poly would implement mitigation measures to reduce impacts to these sensitive biological communities to a less than significant level.

Resources that would be permanently and continually consumed by project implementation include water, electricity, natural gas, and fossil fuels; however, all new buildings would be constructed in accordance with the most recent building code (i.e., California Energy Code) at the time of construction, which includes energy efficiency requirements (see Section 3.6, "Energy"). GHG-related mitigation measures would put Cal Poly on track to meeting renewable energy and building efficiency goals that are more stringent than California building code and onsite project design features would enhance pedestrian and bicycle use while limiting parking and automobile use. Nonetheless, construction and operational activities related to the project would result in the irretrievable commitment of nonrenewable energy resources, primarily in the form of fossil fuels (including fuel oil), natural gas, and gasoline for automobiles and construction equipment.

With respect to operational activities, compliance with and exceedance of applicable building codes, along with project-specific mitigation measures or project requirements, would ensure that natural resources are conserved or recycled to the maximum extent feasible. It is also possible that new technologies or systems would emerge, or would become more cost-effective or user-friendly, which would further reduce Cal Poly's reliance on nonrenewable natural resources.

In summary, implementation of the 2035 Master Plan would foster on-campus student and employee population growth. Environmental impacts of on-campus population growth are accounted for in the 2035 Master Plan and considered in this EIR (e.g., impacts to agricultural resources, air quality, and traffic; see discussions within the relevant chapters of this EIR). However, because the 2035 Master Plan allows for development of more housing units than student enrollment growth, it is expected that this would reduce population growth at off-campus locations and within local jurisdictions that house students. Similarly, because the 2035 Master Plan includes more on-campus workforce housing compared to anticipated faculty and staff members expected to be added to the campus in response of the 2035 Master Plan, the 2035 Master Plan would decrease off-campus housing demand. Therefore, the 2035 Master Plan would not result in adverse growth-inducing impacts off-campus beyond those inherent to the plan itself which are analyzed in this EIR.

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