

**FACULTY AND FAMILY STUDENT HOUSING,
OPEN SPACE PLAN, AND LRDP AMENDMENT EIR**

**SECTION 5.0
OTHER CEQA CONSIDERATIONS**

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Considerations*

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Section 15126 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines requires that all aspects of a project must be considered when evaluating its impact on the environment, including planning, acquisition, development, and operation. As part of this analysis, the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) must also identify: (1) significant environmental effects of the proposed project; (2) Significant environmental effects that cannot be avoided if the proposed project is implemented; (3) significant irreversible environmental changes that would result from implementation of the proposed project; (4) growth-inducing impacts of the proposed project; (5) mitigation measures proposed to minimize significant effects; and (6) alternatives to the proposed project.

5.2 SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

Table 1-1 (Summary of Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures), which is contained in Section 1.0 of this EIR, and Sections 4.2 through 4.16 of this EIR provide a comprehensive identification of the environmental effects of the proposed project, including the level of significance both before and after mitigation.

5.3 SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS THAT CANNOT BE AVOIDED

Section 15126.2(b) of the CEQA Guidelines requires that an EIR describe any significant impacts that cannot be avoided, even with the implementation of feasible mitigation measures. Implementation of the proposed project would result in the following significant and unavoidable project-related impacts:

Noise

- Short-term construction noise

Air Quality

- Emission of criteria pollutants during project operation
- Emission of precursors to ozone for which Santa Barbara County is designated as a moderate nonattainment area

Traffic

- Increase in vehicular traffic on Storke Road north of Hollister Avenue would result in conditions that exceed the applicable threshold for roadway operations

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Section 5.0 In addition, the proposed project, in conjunction with other planned and proposed development
Other CEQA in the project vicinity (listed on Table 4-1, Introduction to the Analysis), would result in the
Considerations following significant and unavoidable cumulative impact:

Hydrology and Water Quality

- Water quality impairments associated with incremental increases in urban runoff in the Devereux Creek watershed.

Traffic

- Cumulative increases in vehicular traffic on the segment of Storke Road north of Hollister Avenue and at the intersection of Los Carneros and Mesa Road would exceed applicable thresholds.

5.4 SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

Section 15126.2(c) of the CEQA Guidelines requires a discussion of any significant irreversible environmental changes that would be caused by the proposed project. Specifically, 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 generations to similar uses. Also, irreversible damage can result from environmental accidents associated with the project. Irretrievable commitments of resources should be evaluated to ensure 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 a large commitment of nonrenewable resources
- The project involves uses in which irreversible damage could result from any potential environmental accidents associated with the project
- The proposed consumption of resources is not justified (e.g., the project involves the wasteful use of energy)

Development of the proposed project would result in the commitment of undeveloped lands on the University North and West Campuses to housing-related use for the useful life of such projects. These lands have been disturbed by previous development and are no longer in their natural condition.

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Resources that will be permanently and continually consumed by project implementation include water, electricity, natural gas, and fossil fuels; however, the amount and rate of consumption of these resources would not result in significant environmental impacts or the unnecessary, inefficient, or wasteful use of resources. The increased housing responds to a demand for affordable housing close to the campus from existing faculty and students who are already employed or enrolled at the University, but who reside elsewhere. Therefore, natural resources are currently being consumed by the occupants of the residential facilities and would continue to be consumed by those individuals. Nonetheless, construction activities related to the proposed 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.

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With respect to operational activities, compliance with all applicable building codes, as well as LRDP Policies and the Mitigation Measures identified in this EIR would ensure that all natural resources are conserved to the maximum extent possible. It is also possible that new technologies or systems will emerge, or will become more cost-effective or user-friendly, to further reduce reliance upon nonrenewable natural resources. Overall, the consumption of natural resources would increase at a lesser rate than the projected population increase due to the variety of energy conservation measures that the campus has and will continue to provide.

5.5 GROWTH-INDUCING IMPACTS

As required by the CEQA Guidelines, an EIR must include a discussion of the ways in which the proposed project could directly or indirectly foster economic development or population growth, or the construction of additional housing and how that growth would, in turn, affect the surrounding environment (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(d)). Growth can be induced in a number of ways, including the elimination of obstacles to growth, or through the stimulation of economic activity within the region. The discussion of removal of obstacles to growth relates directly to the removal of infrastructure limitations or regulatory constraints that could result in growth unforeseen at the time of project approval. Under CEQA, induced growth is not considered necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment.

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

- The project removes an impediment to growth (e.g., the establishment of an essential public service, or the provision of new access to an area)
- The project results in the urbanization of land in a remote location (leapfrog development)
- Economic expansion or growth occurs in an area in response to the project (e.g., changes in revenue base, employment expansion, etc.)
- The project establishes a precedent-setting action (e.g., a change in zoning or general plan amendment approval)

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Section 5.0 If a project meets any one of these criteria, it may be considered growth inducing.

Other CEQA Considerations

As discussed in Section 4.16 of this EIR and summarized below, the proposed project is intended to respond to existing demand for faculty and family student housing and would not be growth inducing.

The proposed project would not be considered growth inducing for the following reasons:

- Development of faculty and family student housing would only include infrastructure necessary to support the development of the North and West campuses, and thus would not remove an impediment to growth. As part of the Project, the South Parcel would be preserved and restored as a natural open space area.
- The project results in the residential development of land at locations that are immediately contiguous to existing residential development, and thus does not represent urbanization of a remote location.
- The project would cause result in an increase in residential population of approximately 1,003 persons, many of whom already reside within the City of Goleta, the City of Santa Barbara, and the County of Santa Barbara. Expenditures by residential occupants and recreational users of open space would have a minor impact on demand for retail goods and services in the project vicinity, which would only marginally increase employment in the area.
- The area proposed for residential development has previously been designated for such development, and thus the proposed LRDP amendment does not represent a precedent-setting action.

For the reasons identified above, amendment of the LRDP to permit residential development on the North Campus, improve coastal access, and manage coastal resources in open space areas, including restoration of degraded habitat, would not result in growth-inducing impacts.

5.6 MITIGATION MEASURES PROPOSED TO MINIMIZE SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS

Table 1-1 (Summary of Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures), which is contained in Section 1.0 of this EIR, and Sections 4.2 through 4.16 of this EIR provide a comprehensive identification of the environmental effects of the proposed project, and identifies feasible mitigation measures to reduce the magnitude of impacts.

5.7 ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

Alternatives to the 2003 LRDP are presented in Section 6.0 (Alternatives) of this EIR.