7.0 Other CEQA Required Discussions

7.1 GROWTH INDUCEMENT

CEQA Guidelines section 15126.2(d) requires that the EIR 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." Also, the EIR must discuss the characteristics of the project that could encourage and facilitate other activities that could significantly affect the environment, either individually or cumulatively. Growth can be induced in a number of ways, such as through the elimination of obstacles to growth, through the stimulation of economic activity within the region, or through the establishment of policies or other precedents that directly or indirectly encourage additional growth. Although growth inducement itself is not considered an environmental effect, it could potentially lead to environmental effects.

The purpose of a general plan is to guide growth and development in a community. Accordingly, the Redwood City New General Plan is based on a certain amount of growth taking place. Redwood City, as well as the entire San Francisco Bay Area Region, has experienced sustained growth the past two decades and this trend is expected to continue into the next century. The focus of the New General Plan is to serve as a blueprint for the City from which physical development can be guided and the growth can be managed.

The New General Plan contains goals, policies, and programs that provide a framework for accommodating the orderly growth of the plan area. The New General Plan provides the necessary tools to accommodate future growth and defines the geographical limits of future growth in the plan area. The New General Plan provides direction for new development and redevelopment projects and establishes the desired mix and relationship between land use types.

The New General Plan introduces several new land use designations and one new overlay. The New General Plan strives to enhance the diverse character of Redwood City’s neighborhoods, corridors, and centers, and to decrease dependence on motor vehicles and increase pedestrian, bicycle, and transit usage through appropriate land use and transportation planning. These new land use designations are concentrated on the land use map in several geographic areas identified as having the greatest potential for change and are identified as “focus areas.” Additionally, many of the land use focus areas are adjacent to existing employment centers, commercial areas, transit, and services.

Table 7-1 shows the change in development capacity between existing conditions and the increment of development allowable in the plan area under the New General Plan.
Table 7-1  Plan Area Development Changes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Existing (2008)</th>
<th>2030 Project</th>
<th>Net Change</th>
<th>Percent Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dwelling Units</td>
<td>37,181</td>
<td>46,284</td>
<td>9,103</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Residential</td>
<td>29,951,628</td>
<td>37,247,825</td>
<td>7,296,197</td>
<td>24.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>99,913</td>
<td>116,732</td>
<td>16,819</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>57,980</td>
<td>85,982</td>
<td>28,002</td>
<td>48.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: City of Redwood City, 2010

By the year 2030, the City estimates that the plan area could have approximately 116,732 residents, 46,284 housing units, 37.2 million square feet of non-residential square footage, and 85,982 jobs. These changes represent an increase of approximately 9,103 dwelling units, 16,819 residents, approximately 7.3 million square feet of non-residential square footage, and 28,002 jobs over existing conditions. The New General Plan provides appropriate land use designations, and a land use pattern that provides sufficient land for orderly development and redevelopment. The New General Plan also contains polices that address the provision of sufficient infrastructure to accommodate projected growth. The increase in population and development allowed under the New General Plan has the potential to induce substantial growth within the plan area.

SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

CEQA Guidelines section 15126.2(c) requires that the EIR discuss "significant irreversible environmental changes which would be caused by the proposed project should it be implemented." 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).

Implementation of the New General Plan could allow continued urban development in the City of Redwood City, focusing on mixed use and transit-oriented development in already urbanized areas.

The CEQA Guidelines also require a discussion of the potential for irreversible environmental damage caused by an accident associated with the project. The New General Plan is a long-range planning document to guide growth and development in Redwood City and the plan area through the year 2030. The City’s adoption of the New General Plan would not specifically entitle any new development. The New General Plan
would not directly result in any new development with the potential to cause irreversible environmental damage through an accident. Future development proposals consistent with the New General Plan, could, however, include the routine use, transport, storage, and disposal of hazardous wastes, perhaps as part of construction activity or an incidental use associated with commercial/industrial operations. As described in Section 4.7, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, all such activities are required to comply with applicable State and federal laws related to hazardous materials transport, use and storage, which significantly reduces the likelihood and severity of accidents that could result in irreversible environmental damage.

Implementation of the New General Plan could result in the long-term commitment of various resources to urban development. While the New General Plan itself would not directly entitle or result in any new development, it is reasonably foreseeable that the New General Plan, as the City’s blueprint for growth and development over the next twenty years, could allow development that results in such significant irreversible impacts as: a change in visual character of the City, the increased generation of pollutants, and the short-term commitment of non-renewable and/or slowly renewable natural and energy resources, such as water resources during construction. Ongoing operations associated with allowable future uses on land designated for development could also consume fossil fuels, water, natural gas, and electrical energy. These unavoidable consequences of allowing for new urban growth are described in the appropriate sections of Chapter 4.0 of this Draft EIR.

Resources that could be permanently and continually consumed by implementation of the New General Plan include water, electricity, natural gas, and fossil fuels; however, development allowed under the New General Plan would not necessarily result in the inefficient or wasteful use of resources. Compliance with all applicable building codes, as well as proposed General Plan policies, standard conservation features, and current City programs would ensure that natural resources are conserved to the maximum extent possible. It is possible that new technologies or systems will emerge, or become more cost-effective or user-friendly, to further reduce the reliance upon non-renewable natural resources. Nonetheless, future construction activities related to implementation of the New General Plan could 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.

7.2 UNAVOIDABLE SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS

CEQA Guidelines section 15126.2(b) requires that the EIR discuss "significant environmental effects which cannot be avoided if the proposed project is implemented." Significant unavoidable impacts are those that would not be reduced to less-than-significant levels by the mitigation measures recommended in this EIR.

The following impacts are considered to be significant and unavoidable:

**Air Quality:**

**Impact 4.3-1:** The projected population growth allowed by the New General Plan would be inconsistent with growth projections in the current regional Clean Air Plan, in that the projected population allowed by the New General Plan would
increase at a greater rate than regional projections utilized within the Clean Air Plan.

- **Transportation:**
  
  Impact 4.14-1: New development allowed under the New General Plan could cause an increase in traffic that is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the roadway system and result in unacceptable service levels on several roadway segments based on current LOS policy.

- **Utilities:**
  
  Impact 4.15-4: Development allowed by the New General Plan could generate an increase in future demand for water supply that is not anticipated to be fully met by the City’s existing and future water supplies.

- **Greenhouse Gas Emissions/Global Climate Change**
  
  Impact 4.16-2: The New General Plan would allow for new development to occur in areas that may be subjected to tidal inundation if sea level rises; this could place additional people and structures at elevated risk of exposure to flood hazards associated with long-term sea level rise.

As identified in Chapter 5.0, Alternatives, the potential continuation of the existing General Plan could itself have environmental effects. In Chapter 5.0, Alternative 1 examines relative impacts of taking no action or in other words retaining the existing General Plan. Please see Chapter 5.0, Alternatives, for a discussion of these comparative impacts.

### 7.3 ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS FOUND NOT TO BE SIGNIFICANT

The Draft EIR identifies three classes of environmental issues that were found not to be significant impacts.

1. **No Impact:** Where applicable, the technical subsections identify “Issues not discussed further.” These are environmental issues that are not applicable to the New General Plan project.

2. **Less than Significant:** The technical subsections identify a number of environmental issues that result in less than significant impacts without any added mitigation. In most cases, the technical subsections conclude that a less than significant impact would occur due to the inclusion of New General Plan programs and policies. In such instances, programs and policies, collectively and individually, are shown to reduce potential project effects.

3. **Issue Not Present:** For the New General Plan project, the only environmental topic found to be wholly inapplicable is Mineral Resources. In lieu of a full technical subsection, this section provides the City’s reasoning in providing a summary conclusion regarding potential impacts to mineral resources.
Effects found not to be significant in the Draft EIR are listed below, followed by a summary discussion regarding mineral resources.

7.3.1 NO IMPACT

Aesthetics
- Scenic resources
- Substantially degrade the existing visual character of existing residential neighborhoods

Agriculture and Forest Resources
- Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance
- Conflict with Agricultural zoning or a Williamson Act Contract
- Conflict with forest land or timberland zoning
- Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use

Air Quality
- Total emissions

Biological Resources
- Conflict with an applicable conservation plan

Geology and Soils
- Fault rupture
- Septic systems

Hydrology and Water Quality
- Substantially deplete groundwater supplies
- Inundation by tsunami

Land Use and Planning
- Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy or regulation
- Conflict with any applicable Habitat or Natural Community Conservation Plan
- Unify existing community (beneficial impact)

Noise and Vibration
- Exposure to excessive noise levels within the vicinity of a private airstrip

Transportation
- Change in air traffic patterns
- Promote walking and bicycling (beneficial impact)
- Transit usage and accessibility (beneficial impact)
**Greenhouse Gas Emissions**
- Conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing greenhouse gas emissions

**7.3.2 LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS**

**Aesthetics**
- Scenic vistas
- Visual quality/visual character
- Light and glare
- Shade and shadow

**Agriculture and Forest Resources**
- Conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use

**Air Quality**
- Participation in Transportation Control Measures (TCMs)
- Address latest BAAQMD guidance regarding Toxic Air Contaminants (TACs)
- Carbon Monoxide emissions
- Potential odor sources
- Dust generation

**Biological Resources**
- Special Status species
- Special Status plant species
- Special Status animal species
- Special Status avian species
- Special Status bat species
- Non-native invasive plant species

**Cultural Resources**
- Historical resources
- Undiscovered archaeological resources
- Paleontological resources
- Disturb human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries

**Geology and Soils**
- Ground shaking, landslides, liquefaction, and lateral spreading
• Soil erosion, expansive soils, slope stability, differential settlement, and subsidence

**Hazards and Hazardous Materials**

• Use, Storage, Generation, and Disposal of Hazardous Materials
• Development of sites with known and unknown contamination
• Development within an adopted airport land use plan
• Emergency Response and Evacuation Planning
• Wildfire Risks

**Hydrology and Water Quality**

• Water Quality
• Impervious surfaces and groundwater recharge
• Alter drainage patterns
• Stormwater runoff and stormwater drainage system
• Flood hazards
• Inundation by seismic-related seiche
• Inundation by seismic-related mudflow

**Noise and Vibration**

• Existing and future noise levels at noise sensitive developments
• Groundborne vibration sensitive development
• Increase in ambient noise levels due to traffic
• Temporary increase in ambient noise levels due to construction
• Aircraft noise over new development

**Population and Housing**

• Increase in plan area population and employment
• Displacement of housing and people

**Public Services**

• Fire protection
• Police protection
• Schools
• Libraries
Recreation, Parks, and Open Space

- Demands on parkland and facilities
- Construction or expansion of recreational facilities

Transportation

- Elimination of LOS in evaluating Downtown traffic impacts
- Pedestrian enhanced design
- Roadway design hazards
- Emergency access
- Decrease vehicle miles traveled (VMT)

Utilities

- Wastewater treatment requirements
- Construction or expansion of water facilities
- Construction or expansion of wastewater facilities
- Demand for wastewater treatment
- Solid waste

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

- Reduction in greenhouse gas emissions per capita

Energy

- Energy and natural gas use
- Increased energy and natural gas demand
- Transportation energy use

7.3.3 Issues Not Present

Mineral Resources

There are no known mineral resources within the plan area. The urbanization of the plan area over the past 40 years has resulted in extensive excavation of topsoil, and it is unlikely that any valuable resources exist. Adoption and implementation of the New General Plan would allow for new development to occur in the plan area, but such new development would not result in the loss or availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the State. Further, adoption and implementation of the New General Plan would not result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated in a local land use plan.