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V. GROWTH INDUCING IMPACTS

INTRODUCTION

Section 15126 (d) of the CEQA *Guidelines*, as amended, requires a discussion of the ways in which a project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Such a discussion should also include projects that would remove obstacles to population growth, and the characteristics of a project, which may encourage and/or facilitate other activities that, either individually or cumulatively, could significantly affect the environment. CEQA emphasizes that growth in an area should not be considered beneficial, detrimental or of little significance to the environment. The purpose of this discussion is to evaluate the growth-inducing potential and impact of the proposed project.

GROWTH INDUCING POTENTIAL

In general terms, a project may foster spatial, economic, or population growth in a geographic area if it meets any one of the criteria that are 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 (leap-frog 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).

Should a project meet any one of these criteria, it may be considered growth-inducing under CEQA. An evaluation of the proposed project in relation to these growth-inducing criteria is provided in this section.

Removal of an Impediment to Growth

Growth in an area may result from the removal of physical impediments or restrictions to growth. 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). The following discussion evaluates the effects of the proposed project with respect to this criterion.

In general terms, the project site is located within the Brentwood-Pacific Palisades area of Los Angeles. Specifically, the proposed project would be located to the south of Promontory Road at 2050 Stoney Hill Road within the boundaries of Mountaingate, a development of clustered town homes and houses located in the Santa Monica Mountains. The proposed project site is located within the original Mountaingate Master Plan approved by the City of Los Angeles in 1974. Since that time, close to 300 residences have been built there. The existing 300 residences are served by a network of electricity, water, sewer, storm drain, communications, roadways and other amenities that are already in place. The existing infrastructure can be expanded to accommodate buildout of the Mountaingate Master Plan as defined by the Brentwood-Pacific Palisades Community Plan. Development of the proposed project would involve new connections that would be linked to the existing network of such facilities and amenities. No new service lines (e.g., water, storm drain, electricity, telephone, etc.) other than those required to serve the Mountaingate Master Plan are to be constructed. Therefore, the project would not induce growth beyond the approved area for the Mountaingate Master Plan, and so is not considered growth-inducing.

Urbanization of Land in Remote Locations (Leap-Frog Development)

Development can be considered growth inducing when it is not contiguous to existing urban development and “leaps” over open space areas. The proposed project is part of the Mountaingate Master Plan. Development of the proposed 29 single-family residential units would be linked to the existing Mountaingate Community by contiguous development of residential development and roadways (i.e., Stoney Hill Road and Canyonback Road). As a result, the proposed project will not “leap-frog” over any undeveloped areas or introduce development into an area that has not been officially planned for developed. It should be noted that, as an effort to eliminate future development, this project proposes to dedicate approximately 424 acres of land as permanent open space.

Economic Growth

The proposed project would result in the development of 29 single-family residential units as part of the Mountaingate Master Plan, which is identified within the Brentwood-Pacific Palisades District Plan. Although the project is not commercial, and so would not increase employment in the area, it would result in an increase in population of the area. It is expected that the project would result in the addition of approximately 82 persons to the existing population.

In 1990, there were 54,880 persons residing in the area comprising the Brentwood-Pacific Palisades Community Plan District. Buildout of the existing Community Plan would result in 161,358 persons

residing in the area. Under the Community Plan Update, theoretical capacity would be 97,467 persons with approximately 64,619 persons actually expected in the area by 2010. The project's addition of approximately 82 persons would be consistent with these forecasts and planned growth for the area. The proposed project's population generation would, therefore, not result in an increase in population over expected levels, or that which has been officially planned for the Brentwood-Pacific Palisades Community Plan area. It should be noted, however, that the proposed project would result in a temporary increase in construction-related job opportunities in the local area. Potential employees are anticipated to be pooled from the existing labor force in the Los Angeles metropolitan area. Based on the above, the project is not considered growth inducing under economic growth.

Precedent Setting Action

As mentioned under project description, the project applicant is seeking approval for the subdivision of approximately 449 acres of land into 32 lots. Twenty-nine lots are intended for the construction of single-family homes on estate lots varying in size between 17,341 square feet to 70,090 square feet. Project implementation would require: Major Plan Review application, pursuant to Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) Section 11.5.8, which includes approval of a General Plan Amendment, and a zone change incident in order to achieve consistency in land use and plan designation for the property. Due to the General Plan Amendment and zone change application as part of the proposed project, the proposed project may be considered growth-inducing. However, the decision to allow development of land on or near the proposed project site is at the discretion of the City Council and the City's Planning Commission. If the proposed project were to be approved, its approval would not necessarily mean that other development approvals in the area would follow since the proposed project is part the previously approved Mountaingate Master Plan as identified in the *General Plan*. It should also be noted that as part of an effort to eliminate future development in the immediate project area, this project is proposing to dedicate approximately 424 acres as permanent open space. Further, prior to the approval of any development proposal inside or outside of the City, substantial legal, political and economic barriers must be overcome. Further, development impediments and regulatory legislation, such as ordinances, codes and policies, may also restrict or deter localized growth and can be considered an impediment to growth.