

7.0 OTHER CEQA CONSIDERATIONS

Section 15126 of the CEQA Guidelines states that an EIR must include a discussion of the following two topics:

- Significant environmental effects which cannot be avoided if the proposed project is implemented
- Growth-inducing impacts of the proposed project

In addition, Section 15128 of the CEQA Guidelines requires a brief statement of the reasons that various possible effects of a project have been determined not to be significant and therefore are not evaluated in the EIR.

The following sections address each of these types of impacts based on the analyses included in Section 4.0, Environmental Setting, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures.

7.1 SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE EFFECTS

This section identifies significant impacts associated with implementation of the Computational Research and Theory (CRT) project that could not be mitigated to a less than significant level. As part of the certification process, The Regents of the University of California will make a final decision as to the significance of impacts and the feasibility of mitigation measures in this EIR. As detailed in Sections 4.0 and 5.0, implementation of the CRT project would result in the following significant impacts that could not be mitigated to a less than significant level:

- CRT Impact NOISE-1: Construction activities would temporarily elevate construction-related noise levels at the project site and surrounding areas.
- CRT Cumulative Impact TRANS-1: The proposed project, in conjunction with reasonably foreseeable near-term and long-term development, would degrade intersection levels of service.

7.2 GROWTH-INDUCING IMPACTS

This section evaluates the potential for growth inducement as a result of the proposed project implementation. Section 15127.2(d) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines requires that an EIR include a discussion of the potential for a proposed project to foster economic or population growth or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment.

The CEQA Guidelines do not provide specific criteria for evaluating growth inducement and state that it must not be assumed that growth in an area is necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance

to the environment. Growth inducement is generally not quantified, but is instead evaluated as either occurring, or not occurring, with implementation of a project. The identification of growth-inducing impacts is generally informational, and mitigation of growth inducement is not required by CEQA. It must be emphasized that the CEQA Guidelines require an EIR to “discuss the ways” a project could be growth-inducing and to “discuss the characteristics of some projects that may encourage...activities that could significantly affect the environment.” However, the CEQA Guidelines do not require that an EIR predict or speculate specifically where such growth would occur, in what form it would occur, or when it would occur.

For the purposes of this analysis, the proposed project would be considered growth-inducing if it meets either of the following criteria:

- The project removes an obstacle to population growth (for example, through the expansion of public services or utilities into an area that does not presently receive these services), or through the provision of new access to an area, or a change in a restrictive zoning or General Plan land use designation.
- The project causes economic expansion and population growth through employment expansion, and/or the construction of new housing.

Generally, growth-inducing projects either are located in isolated, undeveloped, or underdeveloped areas, necessitating the extension of major infrastructure such as sewer and water facilities or roadways, or are projects that encourage premature or unplanned growth. An evaluation of the CRT Facility project and how it is related to these growth-inducing criteria is provided below.

Removal of an Obstacle to Population Growth

Population growth in an area may result from the removal of physical impediments (non-existent or inadequate access to an area or the lack of essential public services and utilities) or restrictions to growth, as well as the removal of planning impediments resulting from land use plans and policies, such as restrictive zoning and/or general plan designations.

The CRT Facility project is not expected to remove any obstacle to growth within LBNL. The proposed project site is located on the LBNL hill site, which is already fully served by infrastructure, including utilities, public services, and pedestrian and vehicular access. As described in Section 4.13, Utilities, Service Systems, and Energy, and in the Initial Study prepared for the CRT project, implementation of the project would not require an expansion of EBMUD’s wastewater treatment or conveyance facilities, water supply, solid waste, or other infrastructure facilities that would provide capacity for future projects surrounding the project site. The proposed utilities and infrastructure upgrades would serve only the

project. Therefore, the proposed utilities would enable growth in the Berkeley Lab population, but would not induce growth beyond that planned under the proposed project. Implementation of the project thus would not directly remove an obstacle to population growth.

Direct and Indirect Population and Employment Growth

As discussed in Section 4.10, Population and Housing, the project would increase the number of people working within the LBNL hill site but would not induce substantial population growth in the City of Berkeley or elsewhere in the region, either directly or indirectly.

The proposed project would generate incidental, short-term construction employment that would be filled by the labor force available in the greater Bay Area. Once operational, the project would accommodate up to 300 people (employees and visitors). Of the total projected CRT adjusted daily population, it is estimated that 135 employees would come from existing laboratories and offices within LBNL. The remaining 165 employees that would be “new” to the Lab site, including 70 employees from the NERSC facility in Oakland, 20 potential new employees that would be generated by the proposed project, and 75 UC Berkeley staff and students, are within the anticipated 2006 LRDP direct employment growth.

The population growth and housing demand associated with the proposed project would be dispersed over a number of communities in the region, similar to the pattern of residence of existing Berkeley Lab employees. The additional 165 employees new to the Berkeley Lab site would not be concentrated in any one community, and therefore would not result in a substantial increase in the population of any one community. Furthermore, the housing demand of the new households could be accommodated by the available resources in the greater Bay Area. In summary, the proposed project would not result in growth-inducing impacts in any one community.

7.3 EFFECTS FOUND NOT TO BE SIGNIFICANT

Section 15128 of the CEQA Guidelines requires an EIR to briefly describe any potential environmental effects that were determined not to be significant during the Initial Study and EIR scoping process and were, therefore, not discussed in detail in the EIR. A discussion of the effects of the proposed project on agricultural and mineral resources that were found not to be significant is presented below. Other impacts found to be less than significant in the EIR are discussed in detail in Section 4.0, Environmental Setting, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures, and summarized in Section 2.0, Executive Summary.

Agricultural Resources

Would the project:

- Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?
- Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?
- Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use?

The project site is located in a developed area. There are no Williamson Act Contracts within its boundaries. The project would not result in the conversion of farmland to a non-agricultural use.

Mineral Resources

Would the project:

- Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of future value to the region and the residents of the State?
- Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?

According to the State of California Department of Mines and Geology, Mineral Resource Zones and Resource Sectors map, the project site is located in an area designated as MRZ-1. This designation refers to an area “where adequate information indicates that no significant mineral deposits are present, or where it is judged that little likelihood exists for their presence.” Therefore, implementation of the project would not impact mineral resources.