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## V. GENERAL IMPACT CATEGORIES

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### A. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

Section 15126.2(b) of the CEQA Guidelines requires that an EIR describe any significant impacts which cannot be avoided. Specifically, Section 15126.2(b) states:

*“Describe any significant impacts, including those which can be mitigated but not reduced to a level of insignificance. Where there are impacts that cannot be alleviated without imposing an alternative design, their implications and the reason why the project is being proposed, notwithstanding their effect, should be described.”*

Based on the analysis contained in this Revised Draft EIR, implementation of the proposed Project would result in significant unavoidable environmental impacts relative to aesthetics, air quality, noise, and traffic.

### B. GROWTH INDUCING IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

Section 15126.2(d) of the CEQA Guidelines requires a discussion of the ways in which a proposed action could be growth-inducing. This includes ways in which the proposed Project would foster population or economic growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Section 15126.2(d) of the CEQA Guidelines reads as follows:

*“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 waste water 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 characteristic[s] 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.”*

Sonoma County experienced significant population growth during the past three decades, increased from 252,100 in 1970 to 458,614 in 2000, according to the Census. The population of Sonoma County is projected to grow to 548,900 by 2025. Along with the increase in population, the number of households

is projected to increase to 212,380 households during the same time period, an increase of approximately 31,000 households from 2005.<sup>1</sup>

Buildout under the proposed Project could result in the construction of 872 residential units, approximately 1.1 million square feet of commercial space, approximately one million square feet of industrial development, and at least 339 hotel rooms. The proposed Project would include single-family, multi-family, and mixed-use residential units. As discussed in Section IV.M (Population & Housing), implementation of the proposed Project could result in a population increase of 2,268 residents in the Sphere of Influence (SOI). Based on the estimated population within the City's SOI in 2005 (12,200), the potential number of new units and the average 2.6 persons per household rate projected for the SOI by ABAG between 2005 and 2025, the potential SOI population at buildout under the proposed General Plan would be 14,468 residents. This would represent an increase of 2,762 persons (approximately 24 percent) over 2008 conditions. This estimated population increase represents the most conservative scenario because it assumes that all 872 units would be built and all units in the SOI would be occupied. When compared to regional projections for population increase, buildout of the proposed Project in 2025 would exceed the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) projections for the SOI by approximately 68 persons, or .5 percent greater than ABAG's projections, an insignificant difference.

The City's wastewater, water and utility systems will not be greater than needed to serve a buildout population of 14,468. Furthermore, proposed General Plan policies that provide for retention of the City's Urban Growth Boundary and a prohibition of the extension of utilities outside of it will ensure that growth is not induced beyond this boundary.

Residential and non-residential development occurring within the SOI would accommodate some of the growth expected to occur in the Northern California region, as projected by ABAG. Neither the anticipated buildout of the proposed Project nor the implementation of any of the proposed General Plan policies would result in any significant growth-inducing impacts and/or significantly exceed growth that is projected by ABAG. Development under the proposed Project would occur on vacant and underutilized parcels within the SOI. Additionally, the type of growth envisioned by the proposed General Plan implements the tenets of "smart growth" and would act to intensify and cluster development in areas adjacent to transportation and transit corridors, thereby promoting city-centered growth, managing residential growth to ensure a measured pace of development, ensuring that infrastructure and services keep pace with development, and maintaining a jobs/housing balance.

### **C. SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE CHANGES TO THE ENVIRONMENT**

Section 15126.2(c) of the CEQA Guidelines states that significant irreversible environmental changes associated with a proposed project shall be discussed, including the following:

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<sup>1</sup> Association of Bay Area Governments, *Projections 2007*.

- Uses of nonrenewable resources during the initial and continued phases of the project that may be irreversible because a large commitment of such resources makes removal or nonuse thereafter unlikely;
- Primary impacts and, particularly, secondary impacts (such as highway improvement that provides access to a previously inaccessible area), which generally commit future generations to similar uses; and
- Irreversible damage that could result from environmental accidents associated with the project.

Implementation of the proposed Project would result in new residential, commercial, industrial, and hotel development within the Planning Area that would entail the commitment of energy and human resources. This commitment would include energy resources in the form of electricity, petroleum products (diesel fuel and gasoline), and natural gas that would be required for the construction of residential, commercial, and industrial development and the ongoing maintenance and operation of development occurring under the proposed Project.

Potential growth in the city under the proposed Project would not result in the urbanization of land in a remote location because the proposed Project would allow only development and redevelopment intensification within the Healdsburg SOI. The Saggio Hills project in Sub-Area C and any future development in Sub-Area B will require new or expanded utilities and roadways to serve residents in those areas. Utility and road extensions for the Saggio Hills project were analyzed in the Saggio Hills EIR certified on September 15, 2008. These sub-areas are located adjacent to city limits and existing urban development, and would therefore not constitute urbanization of a remote region.

The city consists of an urbanized area that is served by an extensive network of electricity, water, sewer, storm drain, communications, roadways, and other infrastructure sized to accommodate or allow existing and planned growth within the SOI. Any improvements to this infrastructure would be designed to serve only the SOI and would not encourage growth outside of its boundaries.

Irreversible changes to the physical environment could occur from accidental releases of hazardous materials associated with development. However, compliance with hazardous materials regulations and policies, as outlined in Section IV.H (Hazards & Hazardous Materials) is expected to maintain this potential impact as less than significant. No other irreversible changes would result from the adoption and implementation of the proposed Project.

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