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## 8.0 OTHER SECTIONS REQUIRED BY CEQA

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This section discusses the additional topics statutorily required by CEQA. The topics discussed include significant irreversible environmental changes/irretrievable commitment of resources, significant and unavoidable environmental impacts, and growth-inducing impacts.

### 8.1 SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

Public Resources Code Sections 21100(b)(2) and 21100.1(a) require that an EIR prepared for the adoption of a plan, policy, or ordinance of a public agency must include a discussion of significant irreversible environmental changes of project implementation. CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(c) describes irreversible environmental changes as follows:

*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 assure that such current consumption is justified.*

Implementation of the proposed City of Colusa General Plan would result in the conversion of undeveloped open space and agricultural lands, including 2,072 acres of farmland and grazing land, to residential, commercial, industrial, office, public and recreational uses. Development of the proposed Planning Area would constitute a long-term commitment to urban land uses. It is unlikely that circumstances would arise that would return any developed land to its original undeveloped condition. Development of undeveloped and agricultural lands would result in the permanent loss of wildlife habitat. Therefore, conversion of undeveloped and agricultural lands to urban development is considered a significant irreversible environmental effect.

Development of the City would irretrievably commit building materials and energy to the construction and maintenance of buildings and infrastructure proposed. Renewable, nonrenewable, and limited resources that would likely be consumed as part of development would include oil, gasoline, lumber, sand and gravel, asphalt, water, steel, and other similar materials. Many of these materials would be consumed during development activities, and therefore cannot be reused or recycled. It is possible that some building materials could be recycled or salvaged, such as glass and aluminum. Currently, neither the City nor Colusa County has requirements for the recycling or reuse of building materials.

Development under the proposed General Plan would require a permanent allocation of water supply to serve the proposed uses. Air pollutants associated with development under the proposed General Plan would have a long-term effect on air quality.

In addition, implementation of development under the updated General Plan would result in an increased demand on utilities for energy such as electricity and natural gas (see Section 4.12, Public Services and Utilities). Energy conservation measures would reduce the potential demand from each land use, but overall energy consumption would likely still increase with development. Most electricity in California comes from generating plants utilizing fossil fuels such as coal and natural gas. These fuels are consumed during electricity generation and cannot be retrieved. Other sources of electricity include hydroelectric, nuclear and renewable sources (e.g., wind, solar). Hydroelectric and renewable electricity relies on power sources that are not consumed during electricity generation. Electricity from nuclear plants requires radioactive materials for power generation. These materials, along with other materials that come in contact with them (e.g., fuel rods), generally cannot be used for other purposes. Natural gas

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and propane are used to heat buildings. These gases are burned to provide heat, and thus cannot be reused.

### 8.2 SIGNIFICANT AND UNAVOIDABLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(b) requires an EIR to discuss unavoidable significant environmental effects, including those that can be mitigated but not reduced to a level of insignificance. In addition, Section 15093(a) of the CEQA Guidelines allows the decision-making agency to determine the benefits of a proposed project outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental impacts of implementing the project. The City can approve a project with unavoidable adverse impacts if it prepares a "Statement of Overriding Considerations" setting forth the specific reasons for making such a judgment.

The following significant and unavoidable impacts are specifically identified in Section 4.0 of this EIR. The reader is referred to the various environmental issue areas of Section 4.0, 5.0 and 6.0 for further details and analysis of the significant and unavoidable impacts identified below.

#### SECTION 4.1 LAND USE AND PLANNING

##### Conflicts with Land Use Plans/Policies

**Impact 4.1.2** Implementation of the proposed General Plan Update could lead to inconsistency with other land use plans and ordinances, particularly the Comprehensive Land Use Plan for the Colusa County Airport. While development consistent with the Low Density Residential designation would be incompatible with the CLUP, the only mitigation measure would be to change the proposed land use that is incompatible with the Colusa County Airport CLUP. However, such a mitigation measure would be inconsistent with the project as proposed. This impact is considered **significant and unavoidable**.

##### Loss of Agricultural Land

**Impact 4.1.5** Implementation of the proposed General Plan Update would result in the loss of Prime Farmland and Farmland of Local Importance, as designated under the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program. Implementation of MM 4.1.5 would reduce the impact of the loss of important farmland by compensating for any loss due to development. However, because projects will remove Prime Farmland and Farmland of Local Importance from existing agricultural production without the assurance of replacement with like lands, projects would still result in the direct loss of Prime Farmland and Farmland of Local Importance. Therefore, this impact is considered **significant and unavoidable**.

#### SECTION 4.2 POPULATION AND HOUSING

##### Population and Housing Growth

**Impact 4.2.1** Implementation of the proposed General Plan Update could result in a substantial increase in population and the number of housing units, with its attendant environmental impacts. However, even with implementation of General Plan policies and mitigation measures identified in the MEIR, implementation of the General Plan and its associated growth is expected to

result in several significant and avoidable effects to the environment. Therefore, this impact is considered **significant and unavoidable**.

### SECTION 4.3 TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION

#### Increased Traffic Volumes on Local Roadways

**Impact 4.3.1** Implementation of the proposed General Plan would result in increased traffic volumes and a decrease in LOS on area roadways. Implementation of mitigation measure MM 4.3.1a would reduce potential impacts associated with development considered prior to adoption of the Street and Roadways Master Plan and prior to the updates to the CIP and development impact fee programs. However, due to right-of-way constraints for some improvements, such as portions of Wescott Road, some improvements may be determined to not be feasible by the City. While implementation of the improvements identified in mitigation measures MM 4.3.1b through MM 4.3.1i would result in acceptable LOS as identified above, the timing of the adoption of the Capital Improvement Program is unknown, no funding has been identified for these improvements and the schedule for these improvements is unknown. Individual development projects would mitigate specific impacts associated with the project as required under proposed Implementing Action CIR-1.1.b: Development review. However, the lack of a Capital Improvement Program and development impact fee program to address traffic impacts associated with buildout of the General Plan, which may be less than significant for individual development projects but result in significant impacts when buildout of the General Plan is considered, would result in residual significant impacts. Therefore, impacts to roadways would be considered **significant and unavoidable**.

#### State Highways

**Impact 4.3.2** Implementation of the proposed General Plan would result in increased traffic volumes and a decrease in LOS on state highways (SR 20 and SR 45). Given the status of the improvement projects identified by Caltrans and the information available at this time, the City has concluded that there is currently insufficient information and certainty on which to base a feasible and viable mitigation measure to fully address the General Plan Update's impact on SR 20 and SR 45. The necessary improvements are not approved nor are they funded. There is no fee or other funding mechanism currently in place for future funding. Subsequent development projects would be reviewed consistent with CEQA requirements and appropriate mitigation determined for each project. At this time, the City cannot determine the specific improvements that would be implemented nor the cost of the necessary improvements and thus cannot determine fair-share contributions for future development projects that would satisfy the legal requirements for fee-based mitigation under both CEQA (see CEQA Guidelines 15126.4) and constitutional principles that call for a nexus and rough proportionality between a project's impacts and the fee-based mitigation measure.

Implementation of mitigation measures MM 4.3.2a and 4.3.2c would assist in reducing impacts to segments of SR 20 and SR 45 within the City. Mitigation measure MM 4.3.2b commits the City to coordinate with Caltrans to develop

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an SR 20 access management plan and to consult with Caltrans regarding appropriate fair-share contributions for subsequent development projects. However, as the CIP has not yet been developed, specific improvements to be included in the CIP and funding sources for necessary improvements are unknown. Improvements to be undertaken by Caltrans for SR 20 and SR 45 are unknown. Therefore, while these mitigation measures would assist in reducing the impacts to SR 20 and SR 45, the impacts would not be reduced to less than significant.

Finally, the prospects of the proposed state route improvements ever being constructed remains uncertain due to funding priorities and on-going policy developments that may favor other approaches to addressing state route congestion. Consequently, the City has been unable to identify any feasible mitigation measures imposable on this project that could reduce or avoid the impact of the Project on the SR 20 and SR 45 to a less than significant level. The California Environmental Quality Act (Pub. Resources Code, §21000 et seq.) defines "feasible" for these purposes as capable of being accomplished in a successful manner within a reasonable period of time, taking into account economic, environmental, social, and technological factors (Pub. Resources Code, § 21061.1). Therefore, the impacts of the proposed General Plan Update on SR 20 and SR 45 facilities would remain a **significant and unavoidable** impact.

### Intersections

#### Impact 4.3.3

Implementation of the proposed General Plan would result in increased traffic volumes and a decrease in LOS at street and roadway intersections. While implementation of the improvements identified in mitigation measures MM 4.3.3a through MM 4.3.1i would result in acceptable LOS as identified above, the timing of the adoption of the Capital Improvement Program is unknown, no funding has been identified for these improvements and the schedule for these improvements is unknown. Individual development projects would mitigate specific impacts associated with the project as required under proposed Implementing Action CIR-1.1.b: Development review and mitigation measure MM 4.3.1a. However, due to right-of-way constraints for some improvements, such as portions of Wescott Road and SR 20, some improvements may be determined to not be feasible by the City. Furthermore, the lack of a Capital Improvement Program and development impact fee program to address traffic impacts associated with buildout of the General Plan, which may be less than significant for individual development projects but result in significant impacts when buildout of the General Plan is considered, would result in residual significant impacts. Therefore, impacts to intersections would be considered **significant and unavoidable**.

### SECTION 4.4 NOISE

#### Construction Noise Levels

#### Impact 4.4.3

Demolition of existing structures and construction activities associated with development under the proposed General Plan Update would temporarily increase noise levels at existing noise-sensitive receivers. While implementation of the proposed General Plan policies and action items

along with mitigation measure MM 4.4.3 would reduce construction noise impacts, the potential for short-term exposure of noise-sensitive uses to excessive noise levels associated with construction activities would remain. Therefore, while construction noise would be a temporary occurrence, impacts are considered **significant and unavoidable**.

### Airport Noise

#### Impact 4.4.4

Implementation of the proposed General Plan Update could place new noise-sensitive land uses near the Colusa County Airport. As described in Section 4.4, Policies N-1.1, N-1.2 and N-1.3, along with Implementing Actions N-1.1.a, N-1.1.b and N-1.2.a, would apply noise standards to development projects and require mitigation for any adverse noise impacts. Implementing Actions N-1.1.c, N-1.1.d and N-1.1.e explicitly apply to noise associated with airport operations. These actions seek to incorporate the provisions of the Colusa County Airport CLUP into City plans and ordinances as they apply to noise exposure. These provisions are designed to reduce the exposure of noise-sensitive land uses to elevated levels of airport noise. Implementation of the proposed General Plan policies and implementing actions would minimize airport-related noise impacts on nearby residential land use. However, the City may approve uses inconsistent with the CLUP, as allowed under State law, which could result in excessive noise exposure. While mitigation measures may reduce noise levels, it is not anticipated that aircraft noise levels would be mitigated to a less than significant level through implementation of mitigation measures through the Design Review process for all development that may be accommodated under the proposed General Plan. As a result, this impact is **significant and unavoidable**.

### Increased Traffic Noise

#### Impact 4.4.5

Implementation of the General Plan, in combination with existing, approved, proposed, and reasonably foreseeable development, would contribute to a cumulative increase in traffic noise. As described in Section 4.4, Policies N-1.1, N-1.2, N-1.3, N-1.4, N-1.5, N-1.6, and associated implementing actions Implementing Actions would require application of noise standards and mitigation measures to reduce noise-levels and reduce exposure of noise-sensitive land uses to excessive noise. However, despite the implementation of these measures, it would be infeasible to ensure that all existing residential uses will not be exposed to future traffic noise levels in excess of the City's noise standards. As a result, this impact is considered **significant and unavoidable**.

## SECTION 4.5 AIR QUALITY

### Operations-Related Emissions

#### Impact 4.5.2

Implementation of the proposed General Plan Update would increase air pollutant emissions from land use activities within the City. The proposed General Plan policies and implementing actions would reduce the emissions generated by land use activities at buildout. Proposed new development would be required to incorporate air quality mitigation measures such as Best Management Practices from the Colusa County APCD. However, it cannot

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be determined at this time that these emissions would be reduced to a level that could be considered less than significant because of the uncertainty of the potential future projects that may be developed in the City and to what extent these projects may impact air quality. Therefore, impacts after mitigation are considered **significant and unavoidable**.

### Carbon Monoxide Emissions from Traffic

**Impact 4.5.4** Implementation of the proposed General Plan Update would increase traffic volumes that would potentially increase concentrations of carbon monoxide (CO) along streets and near intersections. Colusa can be expected to have very low concentrations of this pollutant, and signalized intersections affected by project traffic currently operate at good levels of service. However, there are several intersections projected to operate at LOS E or F under future conditions (see Section 4.3). While mitigation measures are incorporated in the MEIR that would improve the LOS at these intersections, the timing of the improvements (as well as feasibility for the SR 20 intersections) is unknown. As such, it must be assumed that improvements to these intersections may not be available and therefore a reduction in CO cannot be assured. The only realistic mitigation for the reduction of CO emission is a state mandated reduction in vehicle emissions. No other feasible mitigation measures are available on a City level. Therefore, this impact would be **significant and unavoidable**.

## SECTION 4.10 VISUAL RESOURCES

### Scenic Vistas

**Impact 4.10.3** Implementation of the proposed General Plan Update may result in the obstruction of scenic vistas at the existing edges of urban development. Development under the General Plan Update would result in the obstruction of scenic views, including those of the Coastal Range, Sutter Buttes, and Sacramento River, from both public and private vantage points. Implementation of the General Plan policies and implementing actions would reduce potential impacts on scenic vistas in the area. However, it is likely that obstruction of scenic views would still occur. Therefore, impacts after implementation would remain **significant and unavoidable**.

## SECTION 5.1 COLUSA RIVERBEND

### Agricultural Land Conversion

**Impact 5.1.1** The Colusa Riverbend project would convert land from agricultural use to urban uses. Implementation of **MM 5.1.1** would reduce the impact of the loss of important farmland by compensating for any loss due to development. However, because the project will remove Prime Farmland and Farmland of Local Importance from existing agricultural production without the assurance of replacement with like lands, the project would still result in the direct loss of Prime Farmland and Farmland of Local Importance. Therefore, this impact is considered **significant and unavoidable**.

### Loss of Scenic Views and Visual Character

**Impact 5.1.10** Implementation of the Colusa Riverbend project would result in the loss of views of scenic area and change the visual character within the project vicinity. While the City General Plan incorporates a number of policies and implementing actions to remove potential impacts to scenic resources of the City, development of a parcel of land that is currently agricultural uses or vacant into uses that would place buildings in the viewshed of existing uses would invariably change the existing character of the landscape and impact views of scenic resources. There is no feasible mitigation for the loss of these views from existing development therefore; project implementation will result in **significant and unavoidable** impacts.

### SECTION 5.2 COLUSA CROSSINGS

#### Agricultural Land Conversion

**Impact 5.2.1** The Colusa Crossings project would convert land from agricultural use to urban uses. Implementation of **MM 5.2.1** would reduce the impact of the loss of important farmland by conserving comparable existing agricultural lands. However, development of the project would result in an irrevocable decrease in the amount of Prime Farmland and Farmland of Local Importance and a net reduction in important agricultural lands. Therefore, this impact is considered **significant and unavoidable**.

### Loss of Scenic Views and Visual Character

**Impact 5.2.6** Implementation of the Colusa Crossings project would result in the loss of views of scenic area and change the visual character within the project vicinity. While the City General Plan incorporates a number of policies and implementing actions to remove potential impacts to scenic resources of the City, development of a parcel of land that is currently agricultural uses or vacant into uses that would place buildings in the viewshed of existing uses would invariably change the existing character of the landscape and impact views of scenic resources. There is no feasible mitigation for the loss of these views from existing development or the alteration in visual character of the site. Therefore; project implementation will result in **significant and unavoidable** impacts.

### SECTION 5.3 BROOKINS RANCH

#### Agricultural Land Conversion

**Impact 5.3.1** The Brookins Ranch project would convert land from agricultural use to urban uses. Implementation of **MM 5.2.1** would reduce the impact of the loss of important farmland by conserving comparable existing agricultural lands. However, development of the project would result in an irrevocable decrease in the amount of Prime Farmland and Farmland of Local Importance and a net reduction in important agricultural lands. Therefore, this impact is considered **significant and unavoidable**.

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### Loss of Scenic Views and Visual Character

**Impact 5.3.14** Implementation of the project would result in the loss of views of scenic area and change the visual character within the project vicinity. While the City General Plan incorporates a number of policies and implementing actions to remove potential impacts to scenic resources of the City, development of a parcel of land that is currently agricultural uses or vacant into uses that would place buildings in the viewshed of existing uses would invariably change the existing character of the landscape and impact views of scenic resources. There is no feasible mitigation for the loss of these views from existing development or the alteration in visual character of the site. Therefore; project implementation will result in **significant and unavoidable** impacts.

### SECTION 6.0 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

#### Cumulative Loss of Agricultural Land

**Impact 6.2** Implementation of the proposed General Plan Update, in addition to existing, proposed, approved, and reasonably foreseeable development in Colusa County, would contribute to the cumulative loss of Prime Farmland and other valuable farmland in Colusa County, the Sacramento Valley and the State. Implementation of mitigation measure MM 4.1.6, along with the proposed General Plan policies and implementing actions, would help reduce the project's contribution to the cumulative loss of important farmland in the region by taking steps to protect regional farmlands from conversion to non-agricultural uses. However, implementation of the proposed General Plan Update would still contribute to the cumulative loss of Prime Farmland and Farmland of Local Importance that cannot be fully mitigated. Therefore, this impact is considered **cumulatively considerable** and **significant and unavoidable**.

#### Cumulative Population and Housing Growth

**Impact 6.3** Implementation of the proposed General Plan Update, in addition to existing, proposed, approved, and reasonably foreseeable development in the area, could result in a cumulative increase in population and housing growth in the County and associated environmental impacts. The MEIR contains mitigation measures where appropriate to reduce or eliminate potentially significant impacts associated with employment and population growth in the Planning Area. While the General Plan contains policies that would help offset the effects of population growth, there are no measures that would completely mitigate the environmental effects of population growth under cumulative conditions. Even with implementation of General Plan policies and mitigation measures, environmental impacts would remain significant, as population growth will inevitably occur and housing and other services would need to be provided to accommodate this growth. Therefore, impacts related to population growth would be **cumulatively considerable** and **significant and unavoidable**.

#### Cumulative Impacts to State Highways

**Impact 6.4** Implementation of the proposed General Plan Update, in addition to existing, proposed, approved, and reasonably foreseeable development in the area, could result in a cumulative increase in interregional traffic on state highways.

Implementation of mitigation measures MM 4.3.1a, 4.3.2a and 4.3.2b along with the General Plan policies and implementing actions, would reduce the proposed project's contribution to impacts on the LOS of state highways in the Planning Area. However, the City does not have a feasible mitigation measure to reduce interregional transportation impacts on SR 20 to a level that is less than significant. Also, it would be difficult to provide a four-lane section of SR 20 in the developed areas along the 10<sup>th</sup> Street corridor from Market Street south to the fairgrounds and on the Bridge Street corridor from Market Street south to Wescott Avenue. LOS on these SR 20 segments would be below the Caltrans LOS threshold of D. Therefore, while some impacts can be mitigated, the cumulative impact on state highways would be **cumulatively considerable** and **significant and unavoidable**.

### Increased Traffic Noise

**Impact 6.5** Implementation of the General Plan Update, in combination with existing, approved, proposed, and reasonably foreseeable development, would contribute to a cumulative increase in traffic noise. While implementation of mitigation measure MM 4.4.5 in addition to the proposed General Plan policies and implementing actions would result in a reduction of traffic noise levels at affected sensitive receptor locations within the proposed Planning Area, it would be infeasible to ensure that all sensitive receptors and residential uses would not be exposed to future traffic noise levels in excess of applicable standards. As a result, this impact is considered **cumulatively considerable** and **significant and unavoidable**.

### Cumulative Regional Air Basin Impacts

**Impact 6.6** Implementation of the proposed General Plan Update, in combination with existing, approved, proposed and reasonably foreseeable development, would exacerbate existing NSVAB problems with ozone and particulate matter. Implement mitigation measures MM 4.5.1 and MM 4.5.2. Implementation of these mitigation measures, along with the General Plan policies and implementing actions identified in this section, would assist in reducing emissions associated with the proposed General Plan that would contribute cumulatively to adverse air quality in the NSVAB. However, it cannot be stated with certainty that impacts would be reduced to a level that is less than significant. Therefore, the cumulative impact is considered **cumulatively considerable** and **significant and unavoidable**.

### Cumulative Biological Resource Impacts

**Impact 6.9** Implementation of the proposed General Plan Update, in addition to existing, approved, proposed and reasonably foreseeable development in the Planning Area and larger regional context would result in a cumulative loss of biological resources in the region. Implementation of General Plan policies and implementing actions would reduce the General Plan's contribution to cumulative biological impacts in the region. However, the General Plan's contribution would remain cumulatively considerable, as implementation of the proposed General Plan Update along with cumulative development throughout the region would contribute to special-status plant and wildlife species and habitat loss. The only mitigation for such impacts – restricting the majority of development proposed in the General Plan Update – is not considered feasible,

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given that it would fundamentally conflict with the goals of the General Plan. Therefore, cumulative biological resource impacts are considered **cumulatively considerable** and **significant and unavoidable**.

### Cumulative Increase in GHG Emissions

**Impact 6.14** Buildout of the proposed General Plan Update would result in the cumulative increase of greenhouse gases (GHG) including CO<sub>2</sub> emitted into the atmosphere. GHG emissions are associated with vehicle trips, industrial uses, and emissions associated residential and non-residential development. Section 6.0 provides a complete discussion of this impact under Impact 6.14. Table 6.13-4 illustrates the total buildout amount of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions as a result of implementation General Plan Update. According to the methodologies listed previously for the identification of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, buildout of the General Plan will result in an increase in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of .298 million metric tons (MMT) annually. In comparison, the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> emitted in California in 2004 was 334.9 MMT (369.2 million tons).

Policies CCD-1, PRC-5.1, PRC-5.2, PRC-5.3, PRC-5.4, PRC-5.5, PRC-11.1, and PRC-11.2 and associated implementing actions will assist in the reduction of GHGs as described in Section 6.0 under Impact 6.14. However, at this time, due to the lack of a threshold of significance, it is not possible to determine at what level of impact the increase in GHGs would occur as a result of implementation of the General Plan Update. It is generally believed that climate changes are now and will continue to occur because of the increase of greenhouse gasses throughout the world. AB 32 requires that statewide GHG emissions be reduced to 1990 levels by the year 2020. This will require an overall reduction GHGs emitted in the state. Buildout of the General Plan Planning Area would most likely, with present technology, increase the City's contribution to GHG emissions beyond the 1990 levels. The City can and does require energy efficient design in building construction within the City. This requirement and the General Plan policies and implementing actions listed previously can effectively reduce GHG emissions from building operations (energy use). Whether or not these requirements will reduce emissions effectively enough to mitigate the City's contribution to GHGs is unknown. The only entity which has jurisdiction over vehicle emissions in California is the state or federal government. Therefore, until such time that there are thresholds of significance for which to compare the City's GHGs contribution, it must be assumed that any increase in GHGs will lead to a change in climate. Therefore, this impact is considered **significant and unavoidable** and the proposed General Plan Update would have a **cumulatively considerable** contribution.

### Cumulative Effects of Global Climate Change on the City of Colusa

**Impact 6.15** The impacts of global climate change would cumulatively result in the potential decrease in water supply, increase in air pollutants, and increase in health hazards. As described in Section 6.0, the City would be exposed to effects associated with global warming. Cumulative effects of climate change include substantial loss of snowpack, increased risk of large wildfires, reductions in the quality and quantity of certain agricultural products and health effects, such as dehydration, heat stroke/exhaustion, heart attack, stroke, and respiratory distress caused by extreme heat. All policies and implementing actions listed under

Impact 6.14 would assist in the reduction of GHGs. Please refer to Impact 6.14 for these policies and implementing actions. Policies and action items discussed in 4.7 would reduce impacts associated with water supply and flooding. While the General Plan policies and implementing actions would reduce the potential GHG emissions in the City, climate change is a result of global GHG emissions. A complete elimination of GHG emissions in the City would not significantly change GHG emissions on a global scale nor decrease the effects of global climate change on the City's residents. Therefore, this impact is considered **significant and unavoidable** and the proposed General Plan Update would have a **cumulatively considerable** contribution.

### 8.3 GROWTH-INDUCING IMPACTS

#### INTRODUCTION

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15126.2(d) requires that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) evaluate the growth-inducing impacts of a proposed action. A growth-inducing impact is defined by the CEQA Guidelines as follows:

*The way in which a 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...It is not assumed that growth in an area is necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment.*

A project can have direct and/or indirect growth inducement potential. Direct growth inducement would result if a project, for example, involved construction of new housing. A project would have indirect growth inducement potential if it established substantial new permanent employment opportunities (e.g., commercial, industrial or governmental enterprises) or if it would involve a construction effort with substantial short-term employment opportunities that would indirectly stimulate the need for additional housing and services to support the new employment demand. Similarly, a project would indirectly induce growth if it would remove an obstacle to additional growth and development, such as removing a constraint on a required public service. A project providing an increased water supply in an area where water service historically limited growth could be considered a growth-inducing project.

The CEQA Guidelines further explain that the environmental effects of induced growth are considered indirect impacts of the proposed action. These indirect impacts or secondary effects of growth may result in significant, adverse environmental impacts. Potential secondary effects of growth include increased demand on other community and public services and infrastructure, increased traffic and noise, and adverse environmental impacts such as degradation of air and water quality, degradation or loss of plant and animal habitat, and conversion of agricultural and open space land to developed uses. Growth inducement also may constitute an adverse impact if the growth is not consistent with or accommodated by the land use plans and policies for the area affected. Local land use plans set forth land use development patterns and growth policies that allow for the orderly expansion of urban development supported by adequate urban public services.

#### COMPONENTS OF GROWTH

The timing, magnitude, and location of land development and population growth in a community or region are based on various interrelated land use and economic variables. Key

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variables include regional economic trends, market demand for residential and non-residential uses, land availability and cost, the availability and quality of transportation facilities and public services, proximity to employment centers, the supply and cost of housing, and regulatory policies or conditions. Since the general plan of a community defines the location, type and intensity of growth, it is the primary means of regulating development and growth in California.

### **GROWTH EFFECTS OF THE PROJECT**

Based on Government Code Section 65300, the proposed General Plan Update is intended to serve as the overall plan for the physical development of the City of Colusa. While the General Plan does not specifically propose any development projects, it does regulate future population and economic growth of the City that would result in indirect growth-inducing effects.

Implementation of the proposed General Plan Update would refine existing land use designations in the City, establish new policies, actions and design guidelines to guide and manage future development and land uses in the City. This would also include policy direction on roadway facility improvements, public service improvements and the extension and expansion of utilities. The subsections in Section 4.0 discuss the specific environmental effects resulting from the proposed land use patterns and associated extension of public services, by environmental issue. In 2006, the City has a population of 5,698 and 2,099 housing units. The proposed General Plan Update at buildout would result in 9,386 residential units and a population of approximately 25,750. Refer to Section 4.0, Introduction to the Environmental Analysis and Assumptions Used, for a more detailed description of buildout conditions that would occur with incorporation of the General Plan and to Section 4.2, Population and Housing, for a discussion of impacts associated with increases in population and housing under the General Plan Update.

As described above, the proposed General Plan Update would induce further population and job growth in the City as well as potentially induce growth outside of the City. The proposed General Plan could indirectly induce growth if it would remove an obstacle to additional growth and development, such as removing a constraint on a required public service. Proposed roadway improvements would support such growth within the City and the proposed Planning Area. The General Plan Update also would encourage the development of infrastructure, including extension of infrastructure into unserved areas, to support the projected development. As a result, the proposed General Plan Update is considered to be growth-inducing. Sections 4.1 through 4.12 and 5.1 through 5.3 of this MEIR address the environmental effects of this growth within the City and in the proposed Planning Area.

It is anticipated that agricultural areas to the west and south of the proposed Planning Area may be pressured to develop, if adjacent lands are developed and infrastructure extended under the proposed project.

While the City of Colusa General Plan designates lands within the City limits for urbanization, the intensity of development and identification of urbanization of the SOI would exceed the existing and proposed development potential set forth by the City and Colusa County. This MEIR provides an evaluation of environmental effects of project growth.

Annexation of land beyond the City's current borders would add pressure to areas within and surrounding the City's proposed Planning Area. In addition, the extension of infrastructure and would place growth pressure on adjoining land areas. Ultimately, the City would continue to control land use and growth within the City through its General Plan and zoning provisions and

Colusa County would also continue to control land use and growth through its General Plan and zoning provisions.

### SECONDARY EFFECTS OF GROWTH

This EIR discusses the environmental effects associated with the implementation of the project. Environmental effects of growth on adjacent properties resulting in conversion of existing land uses especially on lands beyond the City's proposed Planning Area would be similar to those associated with the proposed project evaluated in Sections 4.1 through 4.13, which includes impacts associated with traffic, noise, air quality, hydrology and water quality, hazards, public services and utilities, cultural resources, geological resources, biological resources, land use, agricultural resources and visual resources. However, this growth would further contribute to these local and regional environmental impacts beyond the effects of the project.