

Chapter 6

Growth-Inducing Impact of the Proposed Project

6.1 Introduction & Scope

Section 15126(d) of the CEQA Guidelines sets forth the EIR standards for a discussion of Growth Inducing Impacts. Like other potential environmental impacts, growth inducing impacts of a project can be either in direct or indirect form.

Section 15126 (d) states that and EIR must 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.”

The discussion must address:

- A discussion ways that the project may remove obstacles to population growth.
- How increases in the population may tax existing community service facilities, requiring construction of new facilities that could cause significant environmental effects.
- A discussion on the characteristics of the project which may encourage and facilitate other activities that could significantly affect the environment, either individually or cumulatively.

6.2 Project Growth Inducing Potential

The CSU Stanislaus Physical Master Plan Update does not increase the planned student population of 12,000 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) students. The growth discussion for this project will focus on the secondary impact of the project with respect to the impacts of regional and state-wide population growth and the need to provide higher educational resources to this growing population.

Central to any environmental analysis of growth impacts is the primary assumptions regarding why growth is expected to occur. Is the project the cause or the result of growth? This Program EIR relies on the following assumptions regarding growth:

1. Local population and employment growth rates are strongly affected by national, state and regional economic and population growth trends.
2. Population and employment growth rates in Stanislaus County and the City of Turlock operate more or less independently of the planning policy of the CSU Stanislaus Campus but, conversely, is driven by these local population and employment trends.
3. Long-term employment trends in the central San Joaquin Valley, combined with housing costs and other social and economic factors compared to the San Francisco

Bay area, will continue of have a major impact on growth in the Central Valley region.

4. Local urban growth patterns within the region will be largely influenced by City and County economic and public policy decisions.

In general, these four assumptions are based on the theory that local City and County public land use policy decisions can affect the distribution of population and employment opportunities in a local area. Conversely, these same local public land use policy decisions cannot significantly alter growth rates at a regional level at any particular time. It is the responsibility of a public service provider, such as the California State University System, to assure that adequate facilities are available to meet the future needs of a growing population

Growth in California is expected be fueled by its strategic position relative to the growing trade areas around the Pacific Rim and its leadership in technological innovations (computers, telecommunications and bio-science). In the Central Valley, the growing agricultural industry has expanded in response to increased demand at a national and international level. This economic growth, coupled with other State-wide growth inducing influences, indicate a continuation of historic population and economic growth trends in California and its Central Valley for the foreseeable future.

The Central Valley Region is seen by many as the focus for much of the growth expected to occur in California during the next fifty years according to forecasts prepared by the California State Department of Finance's Demographic Forecast Unit. This growth pressure is expected to result, in part, from the lack of available urban expansion areas in the coastal urban centers of the State and the lack of resources (water) to support population growth in other urban centers of the state.

6.3 Project Indirect Growth Impacts

Specific indirect growth impacts expected to result from the adoption and implementation of the CSU Stanislaus Physical Master Plan Update are indirect. The Project will help eliminate an impediment to growth by making provisions for the planned expansion of the Campus to reflect anticipated growth demands for higher education in the Central San Joaquin Valley. As a result of this increase in student population, other impacts can be expected. These impacts include:

- Growth in student spending in the local economy;
- Growth in the number of faculty members and service personal employed by the University;
- Growth in the demand for services, including all utility services, retail and other personal services for both increased student and Campus employees;
- Growth in automotive and service truck traffic related to the larger student population and Campus employees;
- Growth in the resource consumption water, power, etc.) of the student population and Campus employees in proportion to the increases in the students and employees.

All of these indirect growth factors, to a greater or lesser extent, are subjects of the analysis contained in Chapter 3 of this PEIR. Indirect or secondary impacts of this growth, however, is not the subject of this analysis. At present (2008) the Campus directly injects over \$90 million into the local economy in the form of salaries, benefits, student scholarships, supplies and materials. This does not include student spending that can approach \$6,000 to 8,000 per year for food, other expenses and lodging per student. On the whole, the Campus is a large economic engine that drives a large segment of the City of Turlock's economy. In this light, expanded Campus student population and employment will create new economic impacts on several sectors of the Turlock economy; particularly in the areas of retail goods and services, entertainment and off-campus housing. Some of the secondary "growth" effects of the Master Plan's implementation can be viewed as "good" and others as "bad". The CEQA Guidelines state:

"It must not be assumed that growth in any area is necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment"

Chapter 8 *Project Alternatives*, addresses the sensitivity of some of these "physical" environmental effects to alternative approaches to planning for campus growth.

6.4 Conclusions

The adoption and implementation of the CSU Stanislaus Physical Master Plan Update will have some indirect growth inducing impacts on the local and regional environment. These impacts, however, have not changed since the adoption of the 1968 Master Plan in that the overall Full Time Equivalent (FTE) student population remains at 12,000 and no student growth beyond that figure is anticipated at this time. The updated Master Plan simply defines the facilities needed to support this previously planned student population in light of modern educational needs and facility standards.

Future Campus growth will have both beneficial and harmful impacts on the physical environment of the Campus, the City of Turlock and the region as a whole. The overall benefits derived from having a plan for the orderly development of the campus outweighs potential harmful effects that may be indirectly induced from Plan adoption and implementation.