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GROWTH-INDUCING IMPACTS

8.1 Introduction

The State of California CEQA Guidelines require an EIR to discuss the ways 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. This includes ways in which the proposed Project would remove obstacles to population growth or trigger the construction of new community services facilities that could cause significant effects (State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15126.2).

NEPA requires an EIS to examine the potential of the proposed Project to significantly or adversely affect the environment; potential impacts could be either direct or indirect. Indirect effects (NEPA, 40 CFR 1508.8[b]) may include growth-inducing effects and other effects related to induced changes in the pattern of land use, population density or growth rate, and related effects on air, water, and other natural systems including ecosystems. The analysis presented below focuses on whether the proposed Project would directly or indirectly stimulate growth in the surrounding area. The proposed Project would accommodate economic growth by allowing additional goods to move into the region to serve increased demand.

8.2 Summary of Growth-Inducing Impacts

As discussed below, the proposed Project would not directly foster economic or population growth or the construction of new housing in the Port's region of influence (Los Angeles County, Orange County, Riverside County, San Bernardino County, and Ventura County). Although the proposed Project would lead to development of a currently underutilized area and increase the volume of containers moving over Berths 136-147, this would not stimulate significant population growth, remove obstacles to population growth, or necessitate the construction of new community facilities that would lead to additional growth in the surrounding area.

8.2.1 Direct Growth-Inducing Impacts

A project would directly induce growth if it would directly foster economic or population growth or the construction of new housing in the surrounding environment (e.g., if it would remove an obstacle to growth by expanding existing infrastructure). The proposed Project does not include the development of new housing or population-generating uses or infrastructure which would directly encourage such uses. The residential area in the immediate vicinity of the proposed Project (Wilmington and San Pedro communities) is built out. Therefore, the proposed Project would not directly trigger new residential development in the proposed Project area. However, the proposed Project would increase the volume of containers moving over Berths 136-147 to accommodate anticipated demand through the year 2038. In this way, the proposed Project would directly accommodate future economic growth.

As part of the proposed Project, transportation system improvements would be constructed in the vicinity of the proposed Project site to ensure acceptable traffic flow for the proposed container terminal, including both roadway and rail facility projects (see Section 2.5.1.1 for a description of each improvement). The proposed Project is located in an area that is currently developed and has been planned by the LAHD to undergo improvements and increases in cargo movement. Furthermore, the area in the immediate vicinity of the Port is built-out with housing and commercial structures. Construction of the additional transportation infrastructure would not trigger or cause substantial new residential or other development in the proposed Project area. Additionally, proposed rail facility improvements would reduce the percentage of containers that would otherwise be transported by truck, thereby decreasing the demand on the roadway system. Therefore, these transportation improvements would not be growth-inducing.

As stated above, the proposed Project is located in an area that is currently developed and has been planned to undergo improvements by the LAHD. As discussed in section 3.12, implementation of the proposed Project would generate increased demands for water consumption. However, as the proposed Project would have limited building development and would not include major water-consuming industrial or commercial processes, terminal construction and operation would not require substantial quantities of water. Although the site currently has water supply infrastructure, additional distribution mains would need to be extended to direct water to new terminal facilities. These new utilities would tie into the existing utility lines that currently serve the proposed Project site. These improvements are not considered to be growth-inducing because they would neither accommodate nor require any increase in the water supply.

The proposed Project would also result in minimal increases in wastewater output. However, as discussed in section 3.12, adequate capacity exists in the existing sewer trunk lines in the proposed Project area to accommodate anticipated increases in wastewater output associated with the Berths 136-147 Terminal operations. Wastewater flows generated from implementation of the proposed Project would be conveyed to, and treated by, the Terminal Island Treatment Plant. The Treatment Plant currently operates at 50 percent capacity. Therefore, no increased capacity of wastewater infrastructure would be required to serve the proposed Project.

8.2.2 Indirect Growth-Inducing Impacts

A project would indirectly induce growth if it would foster economic or population-expanding activities which would lead to further development by taxing existing facilities, and eventually requiring the construction of new facilities (e.g., an increase in population as a result of development authorized by approval of a general plan).

As discussed in Chapter 7, net changes in employment attributable to terminal operations under proposed Project conditions could reach 5,433 jobs annually over No Project conditions by the year 2038. The maximum annual employment effect during construction activities of the proposed Project would reach 2,812 jobs. As further discussed in Chapter 7, when these proposed Project-induced effects are compared to regional employment levels expected to occur at the corresponding times, their contribution accounts for less than 0.1 of 1 percent of regional employment. Given the highly integrated nature of the Southern California economy and the prevalence of cross-county and inter-community commuting by workers between their place of work and place of residence, it is unlikely that a substantial number of workers would change their place of residence in response to the new Port-related employment opportunities. Such potential residential relocation is especially unlikely given that about half the new jobs created are secondary and, by their nature, distributed throughout the five-county region. Thus, in the absence of changes in place of residence by persons likely to fill the job opportunities, distributional effects to population and, thus, housing assets, are not likely to occur. Accordingly, negligible impacts to population, housing, and community services and infrastructure are anticipated. Because the proposed Project would not involve development of housing and would not result in substantial direct increases in employment in the regional workforce, the proposed Project would not have any significant effects on population growth which would tax existing facilities and require the construction of new facilities, the construction of which could have environmental effects.

The proposed Project would indirectly increase earnings to firms and households throughout the region as proposed Project expenditures are spent throughout the region. The short-term indirect effects from construction would incrementally increase activity in nearby retail establishments as a result of construction workers patronizing local establishments. However, the long-term effects in the immediate area from the proposed Project would be small relative to the size of the regional economy. Overall, the proposed Project would not generate significant indirect growth-inducing impacts.

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