VI. CEQA REQUIRED ASSESSMENT CONCLUSIONS

As required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), this chapter discusses the following types of impacts that could result from implementation of the proposed Creekside Mixed-Use development project: growth-inducing impacts; significant irreversible changes; significant unavoidable environmental impacts; cumulative impacts; and effects found not to be significant.

A. GROWTH-INDUCING IMPACTS

A project is considered growth inducing if it would directly or indirectly foster economic or population growth or the construction of additional housing. Examples of projects likely to have significant growth-inducing impacts include extensions or expansions of infrastructure systems beyond what is needed to serve project-specific demand, and development of new residential subdivisions or industrial parks in areas that are currently only sparsely developed or are undeveloped. Typically, redevelopment projects on infill sites that are surrounded by existing urban uses are not considered growth-inducing because redevelopment by itself usually does not facilitate development intensification on adjacent sites.

The proposed project would not have any growth inducement effects. The project site is in a developed area fully served by public utilities. There are no significant areas that are undeveloped adjacent to the project site. Additionally, the project would not remove any obstacles that would help facilitate growth that could significantly affect the physical environment

Indirect population growth associated with the proposed project could also occur in association with job creation. The economic stimulus generated by construction of the proposed project could result in the creation of new construction-related jobs. In addition, commercial square footage that would be built as part of the project could generate approximately 22 employees. However, the jobs created during both the construction and operation phases of the project would not be substantial in the context of job growth in Oakland and the region in the next 10 years. Although some of the employees generated by the proposed project may decide to live in Oakland, the migration of these employees into the City would not result in a substantial population increase.

Implementation of the proposed project would result in an estimated residential population of 208 people[39]. According to ABAG, the population of Oakland is expected to increase by 35,100 residents between the years 2005 and 2015. The proposed project's associated increase in population would account for approximately 0.6 percent of this increase. This residential growth is well within the anticipated population growth for the City of Oakland and would not be considered substantial.

[39] Population and employment estimates based on assumptions in the Gateway Community Development Project Draft Environmental Impact Report. Assumptions concerning residents: Long-term average vacancy of four percent; 1 person per studio unit; 1.6 persons per one-bedroom unit and 2.2 persons per two-bedroom (assumed unit mix is based on typical floor plan included in project plans). Assumptions concerning employment: 1 employee per 350 square feet of commercial space.

In addition, the proposed project would occur on an infill site in an existing urbanized neighborhood in Oakland. It would not result in the extension of utilities or roads into exurban areas, and would not directly or indirectly lead to the development of greenfield sites in the East Bay. In addition, the provision of additional housing in Oakland would allow more people to live in an existing urbanized area and could reduce development pressures on farmland and open space in the greater Bay Area. Therefore, the population growth that would occur as a result of project implementation would be largely beneficial and not considered substantial and adverse.

B. SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE CHANGES

An EIR must identify any significant irreversible environmental changes that could result from implementation of a proposed project. These may include current or future uses of non-renewable resources, and secondary or growth-inducing impacts that commit future generations to similar uses. CEQA dictates that irretrievable commitments of resources should be evaluated to assure that such current consumption is justified. The CEQA Guidelines describe three distinct categories of significant irreversible changes: (1) changes in land use that would commit future generations; (2) irreversible changes from environmental actions; and (3) consumption of non-renewable resources.

1. Changes in Land Use Which Would Commit Future Generations

The proposed project would allow for the redevelopment of approximately 32,139 square feet of land just north of 51st Street on Telegraph Avenue in the Temescal neighborhood of Oakland. The project site, which is surrounded by urban development on all sides, is designated for additional growth in the plans and policies of the City of Oakland, including the General Plan. The project site is located within a "Grow and Change" area as outlined in the General Plan Strategy Diagram. This designation is used where growth will be focused to help Oakland succeed in its economic, social, and environmental transition that will allow the City to successfully address housing, economic vitality and other challenges. According to the General Plan, Grow and Change areas should emphasize significant changes in density, activity, or use, which are consistent with the General Plan. The project is consistent with residential densities as specified in the NCMU and MHTR General Plan designations and would direct additional commercial and residential density and activities to the Temescal commercial corridor consistent with the Grow and Change designation.

Construction of the project over the underground Temescal Creek culvert would likely lessen the opportunity of future generations to daylight the creek on-site. Since the culvert is currently underground and the existing building on-site is constructed over the culvert, construction of the project would not substantially alter the existing underground condition of the culvert. As previously discussed in Chapter IV-B of this EIR, daylighting the creek may be undesirable due to liability, structural, cost, processing, aesthetic, maintenance, security, hydrological, and flooding concerns.

Because the proposed project would occur on an infill site on land designated for housing and commercial uses in both the City of Oakland's General Plan and Planning Code, it would not commit future generations to a significant change in land use.

2. Irreversible Changes from Environmental Accidents

No significant irreversible environmental damage, such as what could occur as a result of an accidental spill or explosion of hazardous materials, is anticipated due to implementation of the proposed project. Furthermore, compliance with federal, State and local regulations, and the City of Oakland's Standard Conditions of Approval would reduce to a less-than significant level the possibility that hazardous substances within the project site would cause significant environmental damage.

3. Consumption of Non-Renewable Resources

Consumption of nonrenewable resources includes conversion of agricultural lands, loss of access to mining reserves, and use of non-renewable energy sources. The project site is located within an urban area of Oakland; no agricultural land would be converted to nonagricultural uses. The project site does not contain known mineral resources and does not serve as a mining reserve.

Construction of the proposed project would require the use of energy, including energy produced from non-renewable resources. Energy consumption would also occur during the operational period of the proposed project due to the use of automobiles and appliances. However, the proposed project would incorporate energy-conserving features, as required by the Uniform Building Code and CA Energy Code Title 24.

C. SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE PROJECT IMPACTS

As discussed at the end of each topical section in Chapter IV, Setting, Impacts, Standard Conditions of Approval, and Mitigation Measures, the project would not significantly contribute to any significant unavoidable impacts for any section other than transportation. The project transportation impacts would be significant without the implementation of Standard Conditions of Approval and mitigation measures, but, with the exception of two intersections (Claremont Avenue & SR 24 EB off-ramp/Clifton Street and Telegraph/51st Street) would be reduced to a less-than-significant level if the Standard Conditions of Approval and mitigation measures noted in this report are implemented. Impacts are anticipated to be less than significant for all other environmental topics.

D. CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

As discussed at the end of each topical section in Chapter IV, Setting, Impacts, Standard Conditions of Approval, and Mitigation Measures, the project would not significantly contribute to any significant cumulative impacts for any topics other than transportation. "Cumulative" is defined to include all past, present, existing, approved, pending and reasonably foreseeable future projects. The project would significantly contribute to cumulative impacts at the following intersections:

- Shattuck Avenue / 52nd Street (Years 2015 and 2030)
- Telegraph Avenue / 51st Street (Years 2015 and 2030)

- Telegraph Avenue / 52nd Street and Claremont Avenue (Year 2030)
- Claremont Avenue & S.R. 24 E.B. off-ramp / Clifton Street (Year 2030)

The project's contribution to the cumulative impact at each of the above intersections can be mitigated to a less-than-significant level except at the Claremont Avenue & SR 24 EB off-ramp/Clifton Street intersection and at the Telegraph Avenue / 51st Street intersection in the year 2030. The impact to the Claremont Avenue & SR 24 EB off-ramp/Clifton Street intersection can be mitigated to a less-than-significant level with the approval of Caltrans.