# CHAPTER 7

## OTHER CEQA TOPICS

Relationship Between Short-Term and Long-Term Productivity
Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes
Growth-Inducing Impacts

# 7.0 OTHER CEQA TOPICS

## 7.1 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SHORT-TERM USES AND LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

An important consideration when analyzing the effects of a proposed project is whether it will result in short-term environmental benefits to the detriment of achieving long-term goals or maximizing productivity of these resources. Implementing the 2007 AQMP is not expected to achieve short-term goals at the expense of long-term environmental productivity or goal achievement. The purpose of the 2007 revision of the AQMP is to set forth a comprehensive control program that will lead the Basin into compliance with the federal eight-hour ozone and PM2.5 air quality standards. By attaining federal and state air quality standards, the 2007 AQMP is expected to enhance short and long-term environmental productivity in the region.

Implementing the 2007 AQMP does not narrow the range of beneficial uses of the environment. Of the potential environmental impacts discussed in Chapter 4, only those related to air quality, energy, hazards, water quality/hydrology, and solid/hazardous waste are considered potentially significant. Implementation of the recommended mitigation measures will ensure such impacts are mitigated to the greatest degree feasible.

Because no short-term environmental benefits are expected at the expense of long-term environmental goals being achieved, there is no justification for delaying the proposed action. This project must be implement now as the SCAQMD is required by the Federal and state Clean Air Acts to formally review the AQMP and adopt relevant plan revisions which will achieve the state and federal ambient air quality standards by the established deadline. The SCAQMD is proceeding with the 2007 AQMP pursuant to this mandate.

## 7.2 SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

CEQA requires an EIR to discuss significant irreversible environmental changes which would result from a proposed action should it be implemented. Irreversible changes include a large commitment of nonrenewable resources, committing future generations to specific uses of the environment (e.g., converting undeveloped land to urban uses), or enduring environmental damage due to an accident.

Implementation of the 2007 AQMP is not anticipated to result in any significant irreversible adverse environmental changes. The 2007 AQMP would place only an incremental demand on nonrenewable and limited resources, such as energy and water supplies, relative to the accelerated rate of use of these resources due to population growth and increased consumer demand. The largely irretrievable conversion of undeveloped/agricultural land to urban uses is a function of the growing population and local land use authority, not the 2007 AQMP. The 2007 AQMP is expected to result in long-term benefits associated with a reduction in the use of petroleum-based fuels.

Conversely, positive environmental changes are expected to result from implementation of the 2007 AQMP. The project will result in significantly reduced emissions of air pollutants, thereby improving air quality and related public health. Emission reductions will also directly improve the vitality of crops and other plants. The health of livestock, domestic animals and other wildlife will be indirectly enhanced by the positive effects on plant life, as well as by any direct benefits attributable to less air pollution. The damage to buildings and other structures which results from air pollution also will be diminished, as well as an improvement in aesthetics and visibility.

## 7.3 GROWTH-INDUCING IMPACTS

A growth-inducing impact is defined as 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." Growth-inducing impacts can generally be characterized in three ways. In the first instance, a project is located in an isolated area and brings with it sufficient urban infrastructure to result in development pressure being placed on the intervening and surrounding land. This type of induced growth leads to conversion of adjacent acreage to higher intensity uses because the adjacent land becomes more conducive to development and, therefore, more valuable because of the availability of the extended infrastructure.

A second type of growth-inducing impact is produced when a large project, relative to the surrounding community or area, affects the surrounding community by facilitating and indirectly promoting further community growth. The additional growth is not necessarily adjacent to the site or of the same land use type as the project itself. A project of sufficient magnitude can initiate a growth cycle in the community that could alter a community's size and character significantly.

A third and more subtle type of growth-inducing impact occurs when a new type of development is allowed in an area, which then subsequently establishes a precedent for additional development of a similar character (e.g., a new university is developed which leads to additional educational facilities, housing, commercial centers, etc.)

None of the above scenarios characterize the project in question. The control measures contained in the 2007 AQMP accommodate the project growth for the region – they are not the cause of residential, commercial, industrial, and infrastructure development. The 2007 AQMP may indirectly increase the efficiency of the region's urban form through encouraging more air quality efficient development patterns. The 2007 AQMP does not change jurisdictional authority or responsibility concerning land use or property issues. Land use authority falls solely under the purview of the local governments. The SCAQMD is specifically excluded from infringing on existing city or county land use authority (California Health & Safety Code §40414).

It should be noted that a secondary yet positive growth-inducing impact could result from implementation of the 2007 AQMP. As air quality improves, the area will become a more attractive, healthful place to live which may encourage additional migration to the region. However, it is not possible to predict whether or the extent to which this will occur. As further analysis would be speculative, this topic is not further discussed.