SECTION 6.0
GROWTH INDUCEMENT
6.0 GROWTH INDUCEMENT

6.1 PURPOSE
Section 15126(d) of the CEQA Guidelines requires that an EIR discuss the ways in which a project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Included in this discussion are projects that would remove obstacles to population growth and projects that may encourage and facilitate other activities that, either individually or cumulatively, could significantly affect the environment. Increases in the population may further tax existing community service facilities so consideration must be given to this impact in the EIR. It must not be assumed, however, that growth in any area is necessarily beneficial, detrimental or of little significance to the environment. The purpose of this section is to evaluate the growth inducing potential of the proposed project.

6.2 THE PROJECT’S GROWTH INDUCING POTENTIAL

The project’s growth inducement discussion centers around two separate, but related issues: (1) population growth, which could result from enhanced higher education facilities that encourages people to move to the area for school or employment opportunities; and (2) increase in demand for housing as a result of the university’s student/faculty/staff population growth. Each is discussed below.

6.2.1 GROWTH INDUCEMENT RELATED TO ENHANCED EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

The proposed project involves demolition of certain existing campus facilities and replacement of those facilities with new facilities for improvement purposes. The project also involves development of campus housing facilities on the university-owned Adobe Falls/North Campus parcel. Implementation of the SDSU 2005 Campus Master Plan Revision would allow SDSU to expand facilities in order to accommodate the planned enrollment of 10,000 additional FTE students. Provision of additional academic and campus support facilities for existing students, faculty and staff, and the corresponding increase in enrollment, is consistent with CSU’s growth projections.

The SDSU 2005 Campus Master Plan Revision would allow construction of additional physical facilities to accommodate an increase of 13,432 students, faculty and staff. The project is not specifically prompting this growth, but rather responding to California’s projected population
growth in this region. An increasing statewide population is resulting in an increasing need for college education facilities. As indicated in the Providing for Progress: California Higher Education enrollment Demand and Resources into the 21st Century Report, California Postsecondary Education Commission (February 2000) ("Providing for Progress"), approximately 72% of the anticipated increase in college-bound students will be the result of the state’s growing population, which is attributed to rising birth rates, declining death rates and immigration from other regions of the Country as well as internationally.

It is also important to note that the remaining 28% of the projected statewide higher education enrollment increase will be the result of improved college participation rates (Providing for Progress, pg. 4). The rising cost of living in California coupled with the changing nature of the economy from an industrial to information and service based system is prompting more and more young people to pursue a college degree. These larger societal factors are occurring regardless of higher education facilities’ ability to support this growing demand. Further, statewide population growth over the last several years has already strained current higher education facilities – improvements are long overdue to support the existing demand for higher education. Therefore, on a statewide level, this project is growth accommodating rather than growth inducing.

On a regional scale, the proposed project would help support the higher education needs of the regional population. As indicated in Section 3.11, Population And Housing, while the proposed project will help support the region’s higher education needs, it will actually service less of the overall regional demand compared to the present condition. Therefore, this project is not growth inducing but instead growth accommodating. As indicated in Section 3.11, CSU San Marcos, the proposed university site in Chula Vista, and the growth and popularity of community colleges will help service the growing demand for higher education facilities and allow SDSU to service a smaller percentage of the 2005 need.

Section 3.11 shows that the project would not result in additional employment beyond that already contemplated in the SANDAG regional growth projections. SANDAG’s projections would equate to approximately 5,655 employees at SDSU by 2025. SDSU estimates this number to be approximately 5,252, which is essentially in line with SANDAG forecasts. Therefore, this project would not be growth inducing in terms of creating a large increase in regional employment opportunities. That said, it is important to note that in order to support growth of the state, regional and local economy, higher education opportunities are necessary for workforce training, continuing education and advancement of human knowledge and research.
Further, SDSU is one of the region’s largest employers, growth of which will result in additional job creation to further support the health of the region.

6.2.2 GROWTH INDUCEMENT RELATED TO ADDITIONAL HOUSING DEMAND

The population within the City of San Diego is also expected to increase by 37% by 2030; the population in the College area by 65% and Navajo Area by 11% by 2030. These SANDAG estimates are the basis for the City’s Progress Guide and General Plan Housing Element updates. These documents are mandated to accommodate the anticipated population growth estimated by the regional planning entity that is summarized in the Regional Housing Needs Assessment.

SANDAG growth forecasts are used to plan for public infrastructure, housing and job creation throughout the region. The project’s alignment with these forecasts would constitute a growth accommodating, rather than growth inducing impact. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in a significant environmental impact on regional resources due to an unintended increase in population.

The increase of 13,432 students, faculty and staff by 2025 to the region will necessitate additional housing units. This growth was assumed in regional growth forecasts that are the backbone for local housing elements, policies, land use designations, incentive programs and regulatory processes that are already in place to accommodate this increased housing demand. Each city will be updating their housing elements in 2005 to reflect the Regional Housing Needs Assessment ("RHNA") which incorporates SANDAG’s regional growth forecasts as the baseline for determining the number of units each jurisdiction must allow.