

5.0 OTHER CEQA DISCUSSIONS

This section discusses additional issues required for analysis under CEQA, including growth inducement and significant irreversible environmental effects.

5.1 GROWTH INDUCING IMPACTS

The *CEQA Guidelines* require a discussion of a proposed project's potential to foster economic or population growth, including ways in which a project could remove an obstacle to growth. Growth does not necessarily create significant physical changes to the environment. However, depending upon the type, magnitude, and location of growth, it can result in significant adverse environmental effects. The proposed Single-Use Carryout Bag Ordinance's growth-inducing potential is therefore considered significant if it could result in significant physical effects in one or more environmental issue areas. The most commonly cited example of how an economic effect might create a physical change is where economic growth in one area could create blight conditions elsewhere by causing existing competitors to go out of business and the buildings to be left vacant.

5.1.1 Economic and Population Growth

The proposed Single-Use Carryout Bag Ordinance would prohibit specified retail establishments in Huntington Beach from providing single-use plastic carryout bags to customers at the point of sale, and would create a mandatory 10 cent (\$0.10) charge for each paper bag distributed by these stores. The intent of the Single-Use Carryout Bag Ordinance is to reduce the amount of single-use carryout bags, and to promote the use of reusable bags by Huntington Beach retail customers. The Single-Use Carryout Bag Ordinance would apply to three specified categories of retail establishments located within the City of Huntington Beach's corporate limits. The proposed Single-Use Carryout Bag Ordinance would not include development of any physical structures or involve any construction activity. Therefore, the proposed Single-Use Carryout Bag Ordinance would not be growth-inducing as it would not affect long-term employment opportunities or increase the City's population.

Revenues generated by sales of paper bags would remain with the affected stores. The Single-Use Carryout Bag Ordinance would not affect economic growth and therefore would not be significant.

5.1.2 Removal of Obstacles to Growth

The proposed Single-Use Carryout Bag Ordinance would prohibit specified retail establishments in Huntington Beach from providing single-use plastic carryout bags to customers at the point of sale, and would create a mandatory 10 cent (\$0.10) charge for each paper bag distributed by these stores. No improvements to water, sewer, and drainage connection infrastructure would be necessary. No new roads would be required. Because the proposed Ordinance would not include any physical development or construction related activities and would not involve the extension of infrastructure into areas that otherwise could not accommodate growth, it would not remove an obstacle to growth.



5.2 IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

The *CEQA Guidelines* require that EIRs reveal the significant environmental changes that would occur with project development. CEQA also requires decisionmakers to balance the benefits of a proposed project against its unavoidable environmental risks in determining whether to approve a project. This section addresses non-renewable resources, the commitment of future generations to the proposed Ordinance, and irreversible impacts associated with the proposed Ordinance.

The proposed Single-Use Carryout Bag Ordinance would prohibit specified retail establishments in Huntington Beach from providing single-use plastic carryout bags to customers at the point of sale, and would create a mandatory 10 cent (\$0.10) charge for each paper bag distributed by these stores. As a City Ordinance, the proposed Single-use Carryout Bag Ordinance would not include development of any physical structures or involve any construction activity. Therefore, the proposed Ordinance would not alter existing land uses or cause irreversible physical alterations related to land development or resource use. To the contrary, the express purpose of the Ordinance is to reduce the wasteful use of resources and associated environmental impacts.

The manufacturing of carryout bags and the additional truck trips associated with delivering carryout bags (single-use paper and reusable bags) to Huntington Beach would incrementally reduce regional air pollutant emissions. As discussed in Section 4.1, *Air Quality*, air pollutant emissions would not be increased beyond existing thresholds and with anticipated reductions in the overall number of carryout bags in Huntington Beach, emissions would be reduced compared to existing conditions. Similarly, as discussed in Section 4.3, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*, the manufacturing of carryout bags, the additional truck trips associated with delivering carryout bags, and the disposal/degradation of carryout bags in landfills would represent a commitment to energy resources (oil and electricity) that are irreversible and may increase GHG emissions. However, although the proposed Ordinance would result in net increase of GHG emissions (approximately 0.015 CDE/person/year) compared to existing conditions, the Single-Use Carryout Bag Ordinance would be consistent with applicable plans, policies and regulations related to reducing GHG emissions. Thus, the proposed Single-Use Carryout Bag Ordinance would not result in any significant impacts related to air quality and GHG emissions.

