4.16 Growth-Inducing

This section summarizes the potential population, housing, and employment growth that may directly or indirectly occur due to the project. Although the Regional Connector Transit Corridor project does not include housing units, population could nevertheless increase due to the potential for transit-oriented development. This potential growth is analyzed at local and regional levels. Information in this section is based on the Growth-Inducing Impacts Technical Memorandum prepared for the project contained in Appendix DD of this EIS/EIR.

This section has been updated since publication of the Draft EIS/EIR to address comments received on the Draft EIS/EIR, as indicated in the Responses to Comments, Volumes F-2 and F-3, of this Final EIS/EIR, and based on refinements to the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). A vertical line in the margin is used to show where revisions have occurred to this section since publication of the Draft EIS/EIR, excluding minor edits for consistency and correction of formatting and minor typographical errors. No changes to the NEPA impact findings or CEQA impact determinations were identified as a result of refinements to the LPA, responses to comments, or other developments since publication of the Draft EIS/EIR.

The analysis of growth-inducing impacts associated with the LPA is detailed below in Section 4.16.3.5.

4.16.1 Regulatory Framework

NEPA requires projects to examine the indirect consequences or secondary impacts that may occur as a result of a proposed federal activity or action. NEPA guidelines require an evaluation of reasonably anticipated growth against the projections developed by a federally-designated metropolitan planning organization (MPO). The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is the federally-designated MPO for Los Angeles County and it has developed regional growth management plans that contain growth projections.

A growth-inducing impact is considered to be significant under CEQA if the proposed project has the potential to induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly through new homes or business or indirectly by creating new infrastructure that could support new homes or businesses.

More information regarding these laws and policies is available in Appendix DD, Growth-Inducing Impacts Technical Memorandum.

4.16.2 Affected Environment

4.16.2.1 Regional Population, Housing, and Employment Growth

As shown in Table 4.16-1, the existing population for the region is more than 18 million persons. The region is estimated to have a population of more than 24 million persons (an increase of approximately 26 percent over existing), 7.7 million households, and 10.2 million persons employed by 2035.

Table 4.16-1. Regional Population, Households, and Employment from 2008-2035

County	2008 Population	2035 Population	2008 Households	2035 Households	2008 Employment	2035 Employment
Imperial	186,041	320,448	51,987	102,878	66,703	132,551
Los Angeles	10,449,883	12,338,620	3,298,886	4,003,501	4,498,598	5,041,172
Orange	3,210,499	3,653,990	1,015,502	1,118,490	1,698,090	1,981,901
Riverside	2,112,571	3,596,680	675,135	1,183,097	728,067	1,413,522
San Bernardino	2,095,180	3,133,801	612,123	972,561	766,044	1,254,749
Ventura	841,675	1,013,753	268,967	330,189	361,942	463,227
SCAG Region	**18,895,849**	**24,057,292**	**5,922,600**	**7,710,716**	**8,119,444**	**10,287,122**

Source: Southern California Association of Governments 2008 Final Adopted Integrated Growth Forecast, May 2008

4.16.2.2 Local Population, Housing, and Employment Growth

Table 4.16-2 shows population growth projections at the local level. The population within the project area is estimated to increase by approximately 3,200 persons by 2035, with an annual average increase of less than 1 percent (0.60). This would be a greater growth rate than either the City of Los Angeles Council of Governments (CLACG) subregion or the City of Los Angeles.

Table 4.16-3 shows the expected household growth for the project area, City of Los Angeles, and CLACG subregion. The City of Los Angeles is estimated to increase by 274,287 households and would be comprised of approximately 21 percent of the region's total households. The project area is estimated to increase by 2,552 households, which would be a minimal share of the City of Los Angeles' total. This annual rate of growth for the project area would be slightly greater (0.98 percent) compared to the City (0.76 percent) and the CLACG subregion (0.75 percent).

Table 4.16-4 includes employment growth for the project area, City of Los Angeles, and the CLACG subregion. The table shows that the project area is expected to gain approximately 12,634 new jobs by 2035. This would be an annual growth rate of approximately 0.28 percent. The annual rate of growth for the project area would be similar to that of the City of Los Angeles, but lower than the CLACG subregion rate.

More information regarding existing population, housing, and employment data and projected growth within the region is available in Appendix DD, Growth-Inducing Impacts Technical Memorandum, of this EIS/EIR.

Table 4.16-2. Local Area Population Growth 2008-2035

Area	2008	2035	2008-2035 Population Change	2008-2035 Annual Average % Change
CLACG	4,099,008	4,509,434	410,426	0.37%
City of Los Angeles	4,016,324	4,415,772	399,448	0.37%
Project Area[1]	19,912	23,123	3,211	0.60%

Source: Southern California Association of Governments 2008 Final Adopted Integrated Growth Forecast, May 2008
Note:
[1] The project area is comprised of the following census tracts: 2060.30, 2060.40, 2062, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2077.10.

Table 4.16-3. Local Area Household Growth 2008-2035

Area	2008	2035	2008-2035 Household Change	2008-2035 Annual Average % Change
CLACG	1,361,906	1,638,823	276,917	0.75%
City of Los Angeles	1,342,291	1,616,578	274,287	0.76%
Project Area	9,654	12,206	2,552	0.98%

Source: Southern California Association of Governments 2008 Final Adopted Integrated Growth Forecast, May 2008

Table 4.16-4. Local Area Employment Growth 2008-2035

Area	2008	2035	2008-2035 Employment Change	2008-2035 Annual Average % Change
CLACG	1,839,988	2,037,472	197,484	0.40%
City of Los Angeles	1,879,666	1,994,134	114,468	0.23%
Project Area	169,328	181,962	12,634	0.28%

Source: Southern California Association of Governments 2008 Final Adopted Integrated Growth Forecast, May 2008

4.16.3 Environmental Impacts/Environmental Consequences

Growth-inducing impacts would be considered significant if the proposed project has the potential to induce either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, extending roads or other infrastructure) substantial population growth in an area.

The following sections summarize the evaluation of potential growth-inducing impacts for each alternative. Impact conclusions for all of the alternatives are based on the thresholds identified above in Section 4.16.1. Table 4.16-5 summarizes the results of the analysis.

Table 4.16-5. Summary of Potential Growth-Inducing Impacts

Alternative	Direct Effects/Impacts (NEPA/CEQA)	Indirect Effects/Impacts (NEPA/CEQA)	Adverse NEPA Effects After Mitigation	Significant CEQA Impacts After Mitigation
No Build	None	None	None	None
TSM	None	None	None	None
At-Grade Emphasis LRT	None	None	None	None
Underground Emphasis LRT	None	None	None	None
LPA[1]	None	None	None	None

Note:
[1] Potential growth inducement from the LPA (which only includes three stations) would be less than or equal to the growth-inducing impacts from the Fully Underground LRT Alternative (which included four stations).

4.16.3.1 No Build Alternative

The No Build Alternative would not result in new homes or businesses and therefore, would not directly induce growth. Current development trends in the project area indicate that development would occur without the proposed project. As such, the No Build Alternative would not indirectly induce growth. Since the No Build Alternative would not directly or indirectly cause growth-inducing impacts, this alternative would not contribute to cumulative growth-inducing impacts.

4.16.3.1.1 NEPA Finding

There would be no construction in the project area associated with additional transit infrastructure investment or housing as a result of the No Build Alternative. The No Build Alternative would not have a direct or indirect growth-inducing effect.

4.16.3.1.2 CEQA Determination

There would be no construction in the project area associated with additional transit infrastructure investment or housing as a result of the No Build Alternative. The No Build Alternative would not have a direct or indirect growth-inducing impact.

Based on CEQA thresholds of significance, the No Build Alternative would not have a significant impact associated with growth-inducement because it would not include construction of any housing, commercial facilities, or infrastructure that might foster growth.

4.16.3.2 TSM Alternative

Only minor transportation improvements would occur under the TSM Alternative. The TSM Alternative would not add any new housing or commercial facilities, or otherwise foster growth through significantly expanding transportation infrastructure. Therefore, the TSM Alternative would not directly induce growth.

The TSM Alternative would not provide opportunities for secondary development. Therefore, the TSM Alternative would not indirectly induce growth.

Since the TSM Alternative would not directly or indirectly cause growth-inducing impacts, this alternative would not contribute to cumulative growth-inducing impacts.

4.16.3.2.1 NEPA Finding

The TSM Alternative would not have a direct or indirect growth-inducing effect as the alternative would not include the addition of any new housing or expanded infrastructure.

4.16.3.2.2 CEQA Determination

The TSM Alternative would not have a direct or indirect growth-inducing impact as the alternative would not include the addition of any new housing or expanded infrastructure.

4.16.3.3 At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative

4.16.3.3.1 Direct Impacts

An important objective of the proposed project is to meet existing transportation demand and accommodate potential increased demand due to regional growth. The proposed project would provide a linkage in the regional transportation network, thereby increasing overall system efficiency. The At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative does not include a housing element that would directly increase population or employment and it would not substantially change land use and development patterns at the regional scale. Therefore, this alternative would not directly induce population growth.

At the regional level, the proposed project would reduce the need to make several transfers to get from one destination to another, resulting in increased efficiency of travel between the San Gabriel Valley and the Westside or Long Beach. Although in some circumstances such transportation improvements could induce growth, this is unlikely in this case as the areas along these routes are fully urbanized so it would be unlikely that the increased regional connectivity would induce housing construction.

4.16.3.3.2 Indirect Impacts

At the corridor level, the Regional Connector project, combined with supportive public policies, plans, and favorable real estate conditions, could attract transit-supportive development, including employment opportunities, higher-density residential development, and new services and amenities. The pattern of land development could be affected by a greater concentration and intensity of land use activities along the proposed route and particularly along the station areas, making secondary land use impacts most notable close to stations.

Experience gained from existing Metro projects such as the Red and Purple Lines suggests that developers in the Los Angeles area are interested in creating transit- and pedestrian-oriented mixed-use development, and that these types of developments can be very successful. The experience in other cities with similar transit infrastructure also supports this idea. However, policies supportive of the desired type of development must usually be in place.

Even with no change in public policy, some changes in land use may potentially occur as a result of the proposed project; however, these changes would largely represent a redistribution of growth rather than an increase. Downtown Los Angeles and Little Tokyo are currently densely developed. The transit corridor stations could attract transit-supportive land uses to these areas. These uses could be developed in existing or new buildings on vacant lots close to the stations.

The proposed project would likely enhance the attractiveness of the corridor for living or conducting business. The project could improve transit accessibility for people desiring to come to destinations within the project area and for area residents or others bound for other regional locations.

Employment opportunities may increase in the project area, and these opportunities would be enhanced by the light rail project. The proposed project would provide new jobs, particularly during construction, and new access to local employment opportunities for all communities within or connected to the project corridor. Short-term construction-related jobs created by the proposed project and long-term employment opportunities created by improved access would benefit the entire community.

Under the At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative, the indirect impacts on neighborhoods would generally be positive. Station areas could become centers of neighborhood activity and investment and, therefore, could boost neighborhood social cohesion and improve economic conditions for commercial buildings within the corridor and, in particular, those adjacent to the stations. The Regional Connector could also encourage additional growth of existing street level retail uses in both downtown and Little Tokyo. This new accessibility could also act as a catalyst for using underutilized space in commercial buildings.

The At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative would not result in direct business displacement and, therefore, would not undermine the economic base of these communities. Commercial properties near stations would have a reasonable potential to increase in value - a potential secondary effect.

A low potential exists for the project to cause secondary adverse impacts to historic properties. This could occur through redevelopment at or near station areas that are adjacent to historic properties. Such development may potentially introduce new buildings at a scale and appearance that would be out of character with the historic properties, or may result in the demolition of historic buildings to accommodate new development. On the other hand, underutilized historic buildings in the corridor may increase in desirability due to their proximity to the proposed project. This could be considered a beneficial secondary impact if development is undertaken with the goal of complementing the historic setting of these resources.

Potential indirect growth-inducing effects may result from the micro-scale growth or development near proposed stations. These potential effects, described in more detail in Appendix DD, Growth-Inducing Impacts Technical Memorandum, would be due to implementation of local and state land use policies or local planning objectives, which may encourage transit-oriented development, station area planning, or housing density bonuses adjacent to transit corridors.

The At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative would not remove any barriers to growth, or otherwise directly or indirectly induce growth. The At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative would likely influence patterns of growth along the transit corridor, most notably in the proposed station areas. The most likely outcome would be an acceleration or redistribution of currently planned growth.

4.16.3.3.3 NEPA Finding

The At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative would not have a direct or indirect growth-inducing effect on the project area.

4.16.3.3.4 CEQA Determination

The At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative would not have a direct or indirect growth-inducing impact on the project area.

4.16.3.4 Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative

Like the At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative, the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative would not include any housing and therefore, would not directly induce growth. The discussion of direct impacts in Section 4.16.3.3.1 is applicable to the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative.

The potential indirect impacts associated with the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative would be similar to those under the At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative. The Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative would likely complement patterns of growth along the transit corridor, most notably in the proposed station areas. The most likely outcome would be an acceleration and/or redistribution of currently planned growth rather than an increase. The Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative would not indirectly induce growth. The discussion of indirect impacts in Section 4.16.3.3.2 is applicable to the Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative.

4.16.3.4.1 NEPA Finding

The Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative would not have a direct or indirect growth-inducing effect on the project area.

4.16.3.4.2 CEQA Determination

The Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative would not have a direct or indirect growth-inducing impact on the project area.

4.16.3.5 Locally Preferred Alternative

4.16.3.5.1 Direct Impacts

An important objective of the proposed project is to meet existing transportation demand and accommodate potential increased demand due to regional growth. The proposed project would provide a linkage in the regional transportation network, thereby increasing overall system efficiency. Like the At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative, the LPA would not include a housing element that would directly induce growth and it would not substantially change land use and development patterns at the regional scale. Therefore, the LPA would not directly induce population growth.

At the regional level, the proposed project would reduce the need to make several transfers to get from one destination to another, resulting in increased efficiency of travel between the San Gabriel Valley and the Westside or Long Beach. The areas along these routes are fully urbanized so it would be unlikely that the increased regional connectivity would induce housing construction.

4.16.3.5.2 Indirect Impacts

Potential indirect impacts associated with the LPA would be similar to those under the At-Grade Emphasis LRT Alternative and Underground Emphasis LRT Alternative. At the corridor level, the Regional Connector project, combined with supportive public policies, plans, and favorable real estate conditions, could attract transit-supportive development, including employment opportunities, higher-density residential development, and new services and amenities. The pattern of land development could be affected by a greater concentration and intensity of land use activities along the proposed route and particularly along the station areas, making secondary land use impacts most notable close to stations.

Experience gained from existing Metro projects such as the Metro Red and Purple Lines suggests that developers in the Los Angeles area are interested in creating transit- and pedestrian-oriented mixed-use development, and that these types of developments can be very successful. The experience in other cities with similar transit infrastructure also supports this idea. However, policies supportive of the desired type of development must usually be in place.

Even with no change in public policy, some changes in land use may potentially occur as a result of the proposed project; however, these changes would largely represent a redistribution of growth rather than an increase. Downtown Los Angeles and Little Tokyo are currently densely developed. The transit corridor stations could attract transit-supportive land uses to these areas. These uses could be developed in existing or new buildings on vacant lots close to the stations.

The proposed project would likely enhance the attractiveness of the corridor for living or conducting business. The project could improve transit accessibility for people desiring to come to destinations within the project area and for area residents or others bound for other regional locations.

Employment opportunities may increase in the project area, and these opportunities would be enhanced by the light rail project. The proposed project would provide new jobs, particularly

during construction, and new access to local employment opportunities for all communities within or connected to the project corridor. Short-term construction-related jobs created by the proposed project and long-term employment opportunities created by improved access would benefit the entire community.

Under the LPA, the indirect impacts on neighborhoods would generally be positive. Station areas could become centers of neighborhood activity and investment and, therefore, could boost neighborhood social cohesion and improve economic conditions for commercial buildings within the corridor and, in particular, those adjacent to the stations. The Regional Connector could also encourage additional growth of existing street level retail uses in both downtown and Little Tokyo. This new accessibility could also act as a catalyst for using underutilized space in commercial buildings. Additionally, commercial properties near stations would have a reasonable potential to increase in value - a potential secondary effect.

A low potential exists for the project to cause secondary adverse impacts to historic properties. This could occur through redevelopment at or near station areas that are adjacent to historic properties. Such development may potentially introduce new buildings at a scale and appearance that would be out of character with the historic properties, or may result in the demolition of historic buildings to accommodate new development. On the other hand, underutilized historic buildings in the corridor may increase in desirability due to their proximity to the proposed project. This could be considered a beneficial secondary impact if development is undertaken with the goal of complementing the historic setting of these resources.

Potential indirect growth-inducing effects may result from the micro-scale growth or development near proposed stations. These potential effects, described in more detail in Appendix DD, Growth-Inducing Impacts Technical Memorandum, would be due to implementation of local and state land use policies or local planning objectives, which may encourage transit-oriented development, station area planning, or housing density bonuses adjacent to transit corridors.

The LPA would not remove any barriers to growth, or otherwise directly or indirectly induce growth. The LPA would likely complement patterns of growth along the transit corridor, most notably in the proposed station areas. The most likely outcome would be an acceleration and/or redistribution of currently planned growth near the eastern end of the alignment. This potential effect would not be significant. The LPA would not indirectly induce new growth.

The LPA would not directly induce growth and would not indirectly induce new growth. Therefore, the LPA would not result in a considerable contribution to cumulative growth-inducing impacts.

4.16.3.5.3 NEPA Finding

The LPA would not have a direct or indirect growth-inducing effect on the project area.

4.16.3.5.4 CEQA Determination

The LPA would not have a significant direct or indirect growth-inducing impact on the project area and would not result in a considerable contribution to cumulative growth-inducing impacts.

4.16.4 Mitigation Measures

None of the alternatives, including the LPA, would directly or indirectly induce growth. Therefore, mitigation measures would not be required for this project.