

6 OTHER CEQA CONSIDERATIONS

This chapter addresses other California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) considerations that are required as part of an EIR. These considerations are:

- ▶ Cumulative Impacts (Section 6.1),
- ▶ Growth-Inducing Impacts (Section 6.2),
- ▶ Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes (Section 6.3), and
- ▶ Significant Unavoidable Environmental Effects (Section 6.4).

6.1 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

Section 15130 of the State CEQA Guidelines requires the analysis of all cumulatively considerable impacts resulting from a proposed project. Section 15355 defines a cumulative impact as “two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts.” This chapter identifies cumulative impacts that could be created as a result of implementation of the Draft General Plan.

Cumulative impacts can originate from one project or from separate projects. Cumulative impacts result when two or more impacts of a project combine and increase the severity or significance of either impact. Cumulative impacts can also be created when impacts from separate projects combine to make a compound impact that is more severe than the impacts would have been had the projects occurred in isolation. This chapter examines the cumulative effects of the Draft General Plan—that is, the impacts of the Draft General Plan when combined with impacts resulting from the projected regional growth in Riverside County.

Effects related to greenhouse gas emissions are inherently cumulative in nature. A detailed discussion of effects of the Draft General Plan related to greenhouse gas emissions is presented in Section 4.7.

This EIR provides an analysis of overall cumulative impacts of the project taken together with other past, present, and probable future projects producing related impacts. The goal of the City’s analysis is twofold: first, to determine whether the overall long-term impacts of all such projects would be cumulatively significant; and second, to determine whether the implementation of the Draft General Plan itself would cause a “cumulatively considerable” (and thus significant) incremental contribution to any such cumulatively significant impacts. (See State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15130[a]-[b], Section 15355[b], Section 15064[h], Section 15065[c]; *Communities for a Better Environment v. California Resources Agency* [2002] 103 Cal.App.4th 98, 120.) In other words, the required analysis intends to first create a broad context in which to assess the project’s incremental contribution to anticipated cumulative impacts, viewed on a geographic scale well beyond the project site itself, and then to determine whether the project’s incremental contribution to any significant cumulative impacts from all projects is itself significant (i.e., “cumulatively considerable”).

Pursuant to Section 15130 of the State CEQA Guidelines, “(t)he discussion of cumulative impacts shall reflect the severity of the impacts and their likelihood of occurrence, but the discussion need not provide as great detail as is provided for the effects attributable to the project alone. According to state guidance, the discussion in this section is guided by the standards of practicality and reasonableness, and focuses on the cumulative impacts to which the identified other projects contribute rather than the attributes of other projects which do not contribute to the cumulative impact.” The Draft General Plan is considered to have a significant cumulative effect if:

1. The cumulative effects of development without the project are not significant and the project’s additional impact is substantial enough, when added to the cumulative effects, to result in a significant impact; or

2. The cumulative effects of development without the project are already significant and the project contributes measurably to the effect. The term “measurably” is subject to interpretation. The standards used herein to determine measurability are that either the impact must be noticeable to a reasonable person, or must exceed an established threshold of significance.

6.1.1 METHODS OF ANALYSIS

For the purposes of evaluating cumulative impacts, the State CEQA Guidelines allow the use of two alternative methods to determine the scope of projects to be considered:

- ▶ **List method**—A list of past, present, and probable future projects producing related or cumulative impacts, including, if necessary, those projects outside the control of the agency.
- ▶ **Regional growth projections method**—A summary of projections contained in an adopted general plan or related planning document, or in a prior environmental document that has been adopted or certified, which described or evaluated regional or areawide conditions contributing to the cumulative impact.

This analysis generally uses the regional growth projections method (sometimes called “the plan method”). The analysis examines population, housing, and employment growth projections for Riverside County prepared by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). However, the 2004 Airport Master Plan is also included in the cumulative scenario for the purpose of considering Hazards and Hazardous Materials impacts.

6.1.2 GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE

The geographic scope that could be affected by the proposed project varies depending on the issue topic. The general geographic area associated with different environmental effects of the proposed project was used to define the area considered for cumulative impacts. This environmental impact analysis throughout this EIR occurs at the planning area level. As such, this EIR already presents analysis of environmental effects over a broad area, comprising many of the contributions relevant to cumulative environmental effects. Cross-references to the impact sections of this EIR are provided for further reference. Significance conclusions, mitigation measures, and draft General Plan policies that would reduce impacts would also be generally applicable to cumulative impacts.

Table 6-1 provides information on the geographic scope considered for cumulative impacts on different resource areas addressed in this EIR.

6.1.3 REGIONAL GROWTH PROJECTIONS

Table 6-2 lists the estimated population, number of households, and number of jobs in incorporated Western Riverside County cities and the unincorporated county in the Western Riverside Council of Governments (WRCOG) area in from 2005 to 2030. The population of Riverside County, including all incorporated cities, is anticipated to increase to 3,143,468 in 2030, an increase of 1,412,445 since 2005 (SCAG 2008).

6.1.4 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS OF THE DRAFT GENERAL PLAN

AESTHETICS

The Draft General Plan would result in significant impacts related to effects on scenic vistas, degradation of existing visual character, and new sources of light and glare. These significant impacts would generally result from land use change as areas which are currently agricultural or open in character would be developed with urban uses, including residential, commercial, and industrial land uses.

**Table 6-1
Geographic Scope of Cumulative Impacts**

Issue Area	Geographic Area
Aesthetic Resources	Western Riverside County
Agricultural Resources	Southern California
Air Quality	South Coast Air Basin; odor impacts are localized
Biological Resources	Western Riverside Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan area
Cultural Resources	Western Riverside County
Geology, Soils, Minerals, and Paleontological Resources	Planning area – effects are generally localized; paleontological resources are considered at a broader scale reflecting the extent of paleontologically-sensitive Pleistocene alluvium in the San Jacinto Valley.
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Global, regional, and local (project site and vicinity) (See Section 4.7)
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	Planning area – effects are generally localized
Hydrology and Water Quality	San Jacinto and Hemet Groundwater Basins
Land Use, Population, Employment, and Housing	Development in San Jacinto and Western Riverside County based on regional development projected by SCAG.
Noise	Planning area – effects are generally localized
Public Services, Utilities	Local service areas for local providers, such as SCE, Verizon, City of Hemet, and Hemet Unified School District. Larger area for effects related to Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
Traffic and Transportation	Regional and local facilities affected by project-generated land use and traffic

Land use changes which would occur in the planning area with implementation of the Draft General Plan occur in the context of broader regional growth and land use change throughout western Riverside County. Visual resources in Hemet are also visual resources for other communities within western Riverside County. As in the planning area, urbanization throughout the region would affect scenic vistas, change existing visual character, and increase light and glare effects. Because the actions taken by individual jurisdictions within western Riverside County vary, these cumulative impacts would be potentially **significant**, but by implementing the programs and policies of the Draft General Plan, the project's contribution to this cumulatively significant impact would be less than considerable. As with the analysis of the Draft General Plan, cumulative impacts would be reduced by the plan's policies and programs described in Impacts 4.1-1 through 4.1-3 in Section 4.1, "Aesthetics."

AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

The cumulative context for agricultural resources impacts is southern California; agricultural resources in Hemet also serve as resources for other nearby communities that consume food grown within southern California. Regional development in southern California will result in continued expansion of urban land uses into agricultural areas, resulting in significant cumulative impacts related to agricultural land conversion, conversion of Farmland, and conflict with agricultural zoning and Williamson Act contracts. The Draft General Plan's significant and unavoidable impacts related to agricultural resources also represent a considerable contribution to these significant cumulative impacts. As with the project-specific impacts, implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.2-1 would reduce this contribution, but even after implementation of all feasible mitigation, the Draft General Plan's contribution to this significant cumulative impact would remain considerable.

**Table 6-2
Cumulative Population Forecast, Hemet and Other Western Riverside County Cities: 2000-2030**

Jurisdiction	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	Increase 2005-2030
Banning	28,284	35,645	42,121	47,683	53,713	59,392	31,108
Beaumont	21,242	33,951	45,029	52,591	63,660	74,686	53,444
Calimesa	7,490	11,605	15,193	18,267	21,348	25,504	18,014
Canyon Lake	11,019	11,137	11,277	11,409	11,533	11,618	599
Corona	145,629	150,177	154,631	157,556	161,749	165,260	19,631
Hemet	68,589	85,741	100,831	107,529	120,349	132,576	63,987
Lake Elsinore	39,856	51,138	61,045	69,558	78,044	85,376	45,520
Moreno Valley	171,416	189,700	206,657	220,390	234,410	246,804	75,388
Murrieta	89,785	103,726	109,715	114,370	119,689	123,550	33,765
Norco	27,265	29,058	30,693	32,052	33,437	34,531	7,266
Perris	46,265	55,799	64,220	71,468	78,671	84,881	38,616
Riverside	288,977	300,523	312,924	335,468	353,162	372,782	83,805
San Jacinto	30,008	51,322	68,732	80,922	87,000	92,177	62,169
Temecula	92,382	99,387	103,150	112,551	117,800	121,495	29,113
WRCOG Unincorporated	435,178	526,517	592,744	664,725	728,424	783,622	348,444
WRCOG Total	1,503,385	1,735,426	1,918,962	2,096,539	2,262,989	2,414,254	910,869
Riverside County	1,931,332	2,242,745	2,509,330	2,809,003	3,089,999	3,343,777	1,412,445
Source: SCAG 2008							

AIR QUALITY

The cumulative context for air quality impacts is the South Coast Air Basin; as regional growth occurs, the increased population, VMT, and construction of new land uses throughout the basin would result in increased emission of criteria air pollutants and precursors in excess of SCAQMD's thresholds. Cumulative air quality impacts would be significant.

Construction-related criteria air pollutant and precursor emissions could exceed SCAQMD significance thresholds based on construction of the land uses envisioned in the Draft General Plan and identified in Table 3-1 in Chapter 3.0, "Project Description." In addition, implementation of the land uses identified in the Draft General Plan would result in a net increase of long-term operation-related emissions from mobile, stationary, and area sources. Thus, project-generated emissions would potentially result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of a criteria pollutant for which the region is in nonattainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard. As a result, the contribution of implementation of the Draft General Plan to this significant cumulative impact would be considerable.

As indicated in Impact 4.3-1, a variety of Draft General Plan policies are intended to improve air quality and reduce air emissions. Adherence to SCAQMD rules and regulations, Draft General Plan policies, and

implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.3-1a, 4.3-1b, 4.3-1c, 4.3-1d, and 4.3-14e would reduce this impact, but the project would still make a considerable contribution to this significant cumulative impact.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The geographic scope for cumulative biological impacts is the Western Riverside County MSHCP area. As described in Section 4.4.1, the Western Riverside County MSHCP is the regional plan with jurisdiction over biological resources in the planning area. Development in the planning area could have potential to impact biological resources, which could diminish the amount of biological resources within the region. However, adoption and implementation of the Draft General Plan is consistent with and would facilitate implementation of applicable policies and programs identified in the Western Riverside County MSHCP. Additionally, the Draft General Plan includes numerous objectives and policies to reduce impacts to biological resources over the long-term. Implementation of Draft General Plan programs and policies described in Section 4.4.3 would manage and reduce impacts to biological resources in Hemet consistent with the regional biological resources planning efforts contained in the MSHCP. Thus, implementation of the Draft General Plan would result in a less-than-significant cumulative impact to biological resources.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Impacts on cultural resources would be reduced to a less-than-significant level with implementation of Draft General Plan policies, and programs.

The cumulative context for Hemet with respect to cultural resources includes western Riverside County, where a similar environment and similar historic and prehistoric occupation patterns yield similar resources. Cumulative gains in population, households, and jobs would require a commensurate increase in infrastructure, capital facilities, services, housing, and commercial uses in the planning area and other nearby areas of western Riverside County. Each of these increases carries with it a corresponding increase in the magnitude of ground disturbance and the construction of new buildings and structures and other site development. The impact on archaeological deposits and human remains would be substantial given the past extent of urban development, and anticipated gains in population, jobs, and housing. However, state and local laws and regulations require analysis and avoidance of significant cultural resources impacts. Because these laws and regulations would be applied by all jurisdictions in the region, this cumulative impact is considered less than significant.

GEOLOGY, SOILS, MINERAL AND PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Future land uses consistent with the Draft General Plan would expose additional people and structures to ground shaking, fault rupture, liquefaction, and earthquake-induced landslides as development occurs in hazard areas throughout the planning area. Future land uses may also be constrained by unstable soils, including expansive, collapsible, or unstable soils, landsliding, debris flows, and erosion. However, implementation of State, federal and local laws and regulations, along with programs and policies of the Draft General Plan (as described in detail in the Geology and Soils program-level impact discussion) would reduce impacts related to soils, geology, mineral resources, and paleontological resources to a less-than-significant level.

Geology and soil hazards are related to conditions and circumstances at specific, individual sites. Although cumulative development in the region may include numerous projects with geologic and soil impacts, these impacts would affect each individual project, rather than resulting in an additive cumulative effect. Therefore, development of related projects and other development in the region are not considered to result in a cumulatively significant impact related to geology and soil hazards. There are no mineral resources designated as MRZ-2 in the planning area. MRZ-2 indicates the presence of known mineral resources. Portions of the planning area are designated as MRZ-3, indicating the potential presence of mineral resources. Because implementation of the Draft General Plan would not result in a change in the availability of known mineral resources with an MRZ-2 designation, there would not be a significant cumulative impact on the availability of regionally important mineral resources.

Fossil discoveries resulting from excavation and earth-moving activities associated with development are occurring with increasing frequency throughout the state. The value or importance of different fossil groups varies depending on the age and depositional environment of the rock unit that contains the fossils, their rarity, the extent to which they have already been identified and documented, and the ability to recover similar materials under more controlled conditions (such as for a research project). Unique, scientifically-important fossil discoveries are relatively rare, and the likelihood of encountering them is site-specific and is based on the type of specific geologic rock formations found underground. These geologic formations vary from location to location. When unique, scientifically-important fossils are encountered by construction activities, subsequent opportunities for data collection and study generally provide a benefit to the scientific community. Therefore, development of related projects and other development in the region are not considered to result in a significant cumulative impact to paleontological resources.

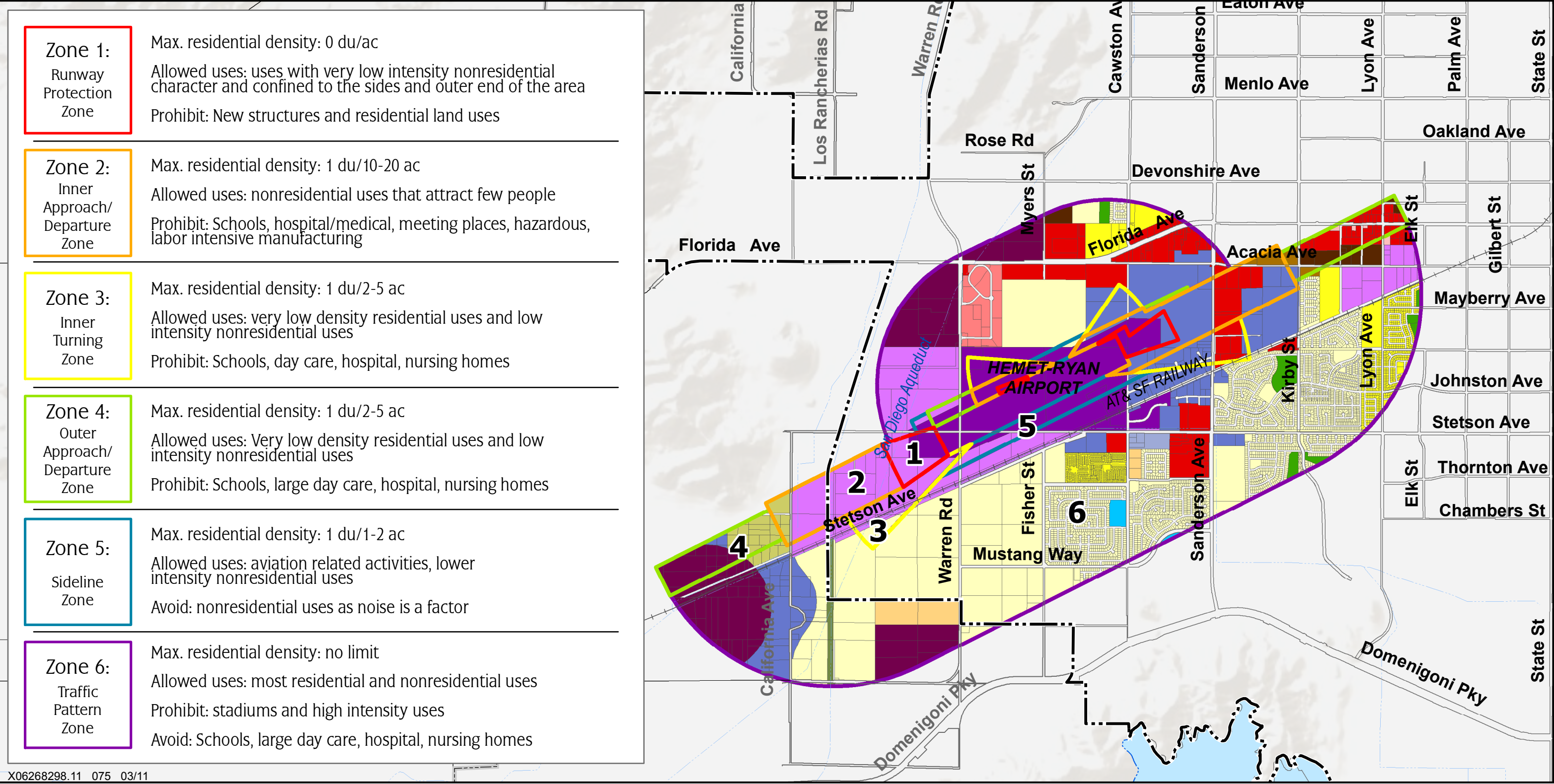
GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Greenhouse gas emissions impacts are inherently cumulative, and these effects are addressed in Section 4.7, “Greenhouse Gas Emissions.”

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Hazards and hazardous materials impacts related to use, transport, or disposal of hazardous materials or emergency response plans are generally tied to a specific location, and are a result of increasing urbanization. The cumulative context for hazards and hazardous materials would generally be southern California, where similar terrain and transportation systems present similar hazards. Although regional growth projected in western Riverside County and southern California would increase the total urbanized area, cumulative impacts within individual areas, such as the Hemet planning area, would not be different from program-level impacts described in this EIR; these cumulative impacts would be less than significant. Cortese List impacts are similarly related to particular locations on the ground, and these cumulative impacts related to regional growth would be less than significant, as with program-level impacts described in this EIR.

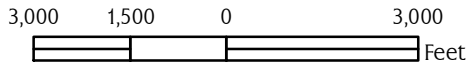
The Hemet-Ryan Airport Master Plan is currently being updated, and expansion of the airport’s runway is considered to be a part of the cumulative impact scenario for the Draft General Plan. Exhibit 6-1 illustrates the CALUPH safety zones which would be applied if the runway is expanded as proposed in the 2004 Master Plan, and provides brief descriptions of appropriate and prohibited land uses, as well as maximum permitted residential density, in each zone. Table 6-3 provides a listing of land use designations the Draft General Plan would apply to lands within each safety zone. The permitted uses in the land use designations that would be applied by the Draft General Plan include some prohibited uses in the applicable CALUPH zones, including residential uses above the maximum permitted density. However, the Draft General Plan includes goals and policies to minimize the risk of safety hazards associated with airport land use compatibility. Policy PS-4.1 would require the City to minimize potential aircraft hazards by adopting and implementing the Airport Protection Overlay Zone and the ALUP. Policy PS-4.2 would require the City to maintain open space as required for safety for both the present runway configuration and possible future expansion as identified in the ALUP and the Hemet-Ryan Airport Master Plan. Policies PS-4.4, PS-4.5, PS-4.7, and PS-4.8 would require each development application within the area covered by the ALUP to be evaluated for consistency with the ALUP and the General Plan, including review based on airport use, noise, potential risks, and safety practices. Avigation easements would be required in Safety Zones I, II, and III, and projects would be required to demonstrate consistency with specific requirements. Program PS-P-13 would require the City to evaluate land use restrictions outlined in the most recent adopted Hemet-Ryan Airport Land Use Plan, California Airport Land Use Planning Handbook, and Federal Aviation Administration notice responses for applicability to proposed development projects. Several policies in the Land Use Element (LU-10.1, LU-10.2, LU-10.3, LU-10.4, and LU-10.5) would require consistency review by the ALUC for all legislative projects and projects subject to CEQA review. Policy LU-10.4 specifically restricts land uses identified as incompatible within the Interim Airport Overlay. Policy LU-10.5 reduces maximum residential densities in the Transition Area unless otherwise found consistent by the ALUC. Program LU-P-35 requires projects to comply



X06268298.11 075 03/11



Sources:
Census Tiger Line Data 2005
DMJM 2011
ESRI 2010



LEGEND

General Plan Land Use Designations

- Rural Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Low Medium Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential

- Very High Density Residential
- Regional Commercial
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Community Commercial
- Mixed Use
- Office Professional

- Industrial
- Business Park
- Airport
- School
- Park
- Open Space

- Hemet City Boundary
- Planning Area
- Street
- Railroad
- Creek/Canal
- River/Lake

Exhibit 6.1
AIRPORT SAFETY ZONES
Hemet General Plan

Table 6-3
Draft General Plan Land Use Designations per California Airport Land Use Planning Handbook Zones:
2004 Draft Airport Land Use Plan

Zone 1:Runway Protection Zone	Zone 2: Inner Approach/Departure Zone	Zone 3: Inner Turning Zone	Zone 4: Outer Approach/ Departure Zone	Zone 5: Sideline Zone	Zone 6: Traffic Pattern Zone
Airport (ARPT)	Airport (ARPT)	Airport (ARPT)	Airport (ARPT)	Airport (ARPT)	Airport (ARPT)
Business Park (BP)	Business Park (BP)	Business Park (BP)	Business Park (BP)	Business Park (BP)	Business Park (BP)
Industrial (I)	Community Commercial (CC)	Community Commercial (CC)	Industrial (I)	Industrial (I)	Industrial (I)
	Industrial (I)	Industrial (I)	Mixed Use (MU)	Low Density Residential (LDR)	Mixed Use (MU)
	High Density Residential (HDR)	Low Density Residential (LDR)	Community Commercial (CC)		Regional Commercial (RC)
	Low Density Residential (LDR)		Neighborhood Commercial (NC)		Community Commercial (CC)
	Rural Residential (RR)		Very High Density Residential (VHDR)		Neighborhood Commercial (NC)
			High Density Residential (HDR)		Office Professional (OP)
			Low Medium Density Residential (LMDR)		Very High Density Residential (VHDR)
			Low Density Residential (LDR)		High Density Residential (HDR)
			Rural Residential (RR)		Medium Density Residential (MDR)
					Low Medium Density Residential (LMDR)
					Low Density Residential (LDR)
					Rural Residential (RR)
					Open Space (OS)
					Park (P)
					School (SCH)
Source: California Department of Transportation, Division of Aeronautics. 2002; City of Hemet 2011.					

with the Interim Airport Overlay, and states that the City will bring its General Plan into conformity with the updated ALUP within 180 days of the adoption of the ALUP update. Because the Draft General Plan would require review, including RCALUC review of future legislative actions for compatibility with the ALUP, this cumulative impact would be less than significant.

Growth in southern California would place an increasing number of residents and structures in wildfire hazard zones. This cumulative impact would be potentially significant; however, implementation of the policies and programs described in this section would mitigate the Draft General Plan's contribution to this potentially significant cumulative impact, because the City would require fee payments, maintenance of open space, and fire service planning. These steps would enable development within wildfire hazard zones of the City to be adequately served by fire protection. Thus, with implementation of Draft General Plan policies and programs, the project would make a less-than-considerable contribution to this cumulative impact.

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Development that would occur pursuant to the Draft General Plan and the plans of surrounding communities, including San Jacinto and Riverside County, would not result in significant cumulative impacts related to hydrology and water quality. Although the amount of impervious surfaces and stormwater runoff and associated pollutants would increase, these plans would require compliance with the same laws and regulations as the Draft General Plan. Compliance with federal, state, and local regulations as described in Impact 4.9-1 would result in less-than-significant cumulative impacts associated with increased stormwater flow and pollutants, as with the Draft General Plan. Erosion and sedimentation impacts on surface water would occur during grading and construction activity. However, implementing BMPs in accordance with the Santa Ana and San Diego RWQCBs NPDES permits would result in less-than-significant cumulative impacts.

Cumulative impacts of regional development on groundwater recharge and drawdown of groundwater supplies would be potentially significant due to the cumulative increase in impervious surfaces and increased demand for groundwater. Implementation of the programs and policies of the Draft General Plan, as described in Impact 4.9-3 would result in a less-than-considerable contribution to this significant cumulative impact.

Flood hazard impacts are determined by conditions and circumstances at specific, individual project sites. Although cumulative development in the region may introduce numerous projects subject to flood hazard impacts, these impacts would affect each individual project, rather than resulting in an additive cumulative effect. Therefore, development of related projects and other development in the region are not considered to result in a cumulatively significant impact related to exposure of people or structures to flood hazards.

LAND USE, POPULATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND HOUSING

Development that would occur pursuant to the Draft General Plan and the plans of surrounding communities, including San Jacinto and Riverside County, would not result in significant cumulative impacts related to land use, population, or housing. These plans establish a framework for the orderly development of the region, and would not result in land uses or circulation routes that would physically divide existing communities, conflict with existing plans, policies, or regulations, or require construction of replacement housing elsewhere. Although these plans provide a mechanism for accommodating the growth forecast for the region and for individual jurisdiction, implementation of these plans would not induce population growth. In addition, the analysis in Section 4.10, "Land Use, Population, and Housing," indicates that Draft General Plan policies and programs are consistent with regional plans. Therefore, implementation of the Draft General Plan would not contribute to a significant cumulative land use impact.

NOISE

The Draft General Plan would result in less-than-significant impacts related to construction noise and would not contribute to a significant cumulative impact.

Longer-term noise from cumulative development throughout the planning area would primarily occur from motor vehicle traffic. Future land uses consistent with the Draft General Plan would create new vehicle trips that would increase existing noise levels substantially (+3 dBA) above ambient noise levels affecting sensitive receptors, resulting in a significant and unavoidable impact to sensitive receptors. Additional anticipated regional traffic would add to the cumulative increase in noise along major arterials in the planning area. Therefore, implementation of the Draft General Plan would result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to a significant cumulative impact.

The Draft General Plan would result in less-than-significant impacts related to exposing noise sensitive receptors to stationary and area-source noise levels and would not contribute to a significant cumulative impact.

The Draft General Plan would result in less-than-significant impacts to exposing new residential land uses or other sensitive receptors to aircraft noise and would not contribute to a significant cumulative impact.

Implementation of the Draft General Plan would not expose sensitive receptors to unacceptable levels of vibration related to the BNSF rail line or light industrial activities. However, short-term construction has the potential to expose sensitive receptors to unacceptable levels of vibration. Short-term construction is a localized activity and would affect only land uses that are immediately adjacent to a specific future project site. Each construction project would be required to comply with Draft General Plan policies and Mitigation Measure 4.11-5 to reduce significant impacts to the extent feasible. Thus, the Draft General Plan would not make a cumulatively considerable contribution to a significant cumulative vibration impact, and is therefore less than significant.

PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES

The geographic scope of cumulative public services impacts is generally limited to the service district or jurisdiction; the cumulative scenario for each service is the district or jurisdiction providing the service. Future regional growth will result in increased demand for police protection, fire protection, schools, libraries, and recreation and open space throughout the region. Local and regional service providers must continue to evaluate the levels of service desired and the funding sources available to meet increases in demand. In addition, local agencies must consistently review and update mutual aid agreements between the various service providers. Funding and implementation of these services will generally be ensured by concurrency requirements, assessment district requirements, and development impact fees. Because service providers and jurisdictions are generally planning for projected regional growth, with expanded facilities funded through impact fees, cumulative public service impacts would be less than significant.

TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION

The traffic analysis included in this EIR addresses cumulative impacts to the regional transportation system. A regional traffic model was used to analyze impacts of the proposed General Plan at buildout, along with projected regional growth. The regional traffic model already assumes a level of growth for other nearby jurisdictions based on plans and population/employment projections. In sum, all scenarios studied in Section 4.13, "Transportation and Circulation," of this EIR are considered cumulative by nature because anticipated land use forecasts for other areas are already included in the traffic model. Please refer to this section for more details on the project's cumulative transportation impacts.

Regional population and employment growth is anticipated to result in traffic volumes that would exceed acceptable levels of service at two intersections; Sanderson and Florida Avenues, and Sanderson and Devonshire

Avenues. This represents a significant cumulative impact. While the proposed General Plan includes various policies to reduce traffic demand and mitigation for roadway segments and intersections, traffic is anticipated to exceed level of service standards at these intersections. The Draft General Plan would make a **cumulatively considerable** contribution to this **significant** cumulative impact.

UTILITIES AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY

The geographic scope of cumulative utilities impacts is generally limited to the service provider under analysis. The analysis in Section 4.14 of this Program EIR assesses the cumulative, long-term impacts of growth within the planning area on water service, sewer service, gas and electricity services, and solid waste services. As concluded for each of these issue areas, with the exception of water supply, impacts will be less than significant after implementing mitigation measures.

Future growth within the planning area will increase demand for these utilities and services, including energy. To meet this increased demand, service providers will continue to evaluate their available levels of service and the funding sources available to meet increases in demand. Although the ability of local service providers to provide specific levels of services varies throughout the region, sound local planning to accommodate future growth, and adherence to Draft General Plan policies and programs along with implementation of the mitigation measures contained in this Program EIR would reduce cumulative utilities impacts to a less-than-significant level, with the exception of water supply and energy consumption.

Due to uncertainty regarding long-term provision of adequate water supply, the Draft General Plan in combination with other future cumulative projects that increase water demand could result in decreases in imported water from Metropolitan, as well as groundwater from the Hemet/San Jacinto basin. This is a statewide issue, however, resulting from the cumulative nature of projects within and beyond the region. Therefore, implementation of the Draft General Plan would contribute to a cumulatively considerable, significant, and unavoidable water supply impact.

Although the Draft General Plan includes numerous policies and programs to increase energy efficiency and reduce energy usage, the demand for energy and consumption of energy resources would still increase. Future land use patterns, new construction and building renovations, and commuting patterns would increase demand for energy in the planning area. Cumulative development western Riverside County and southern California would result in a significant cumulative increase in the demand for energy and the need for construction of additional facilities to generate and/or distribute electricity. This is considered a significant cumulative impact. Implementation of the Draft General Plan would make a cumulatively considerable contribution to this significant cumulative impact.

6.2 GROWTH-INDUCING EFFECTS

Section 15126 of the CEQA Guidelines requires that an EIR discuss the ways in which a proposed project could directly or indirectly foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing. Direct growth-inducing impacts are generally associated with the provision of urban services and the extension of infrastructure to an undeveloped area. The extension of services and facilities to an individual site can reduce development constraints for other nearby areas and can serve to induce further development in the vicinity. Indirect or secondary growth-inducing impacts consist of growth induced in the region by the additional demands for housing, employment, and goods and services associated with population increase caused by, or attracted to, new development.

The purpose of a general plan is to guide growth and development in a community. Accordingly, the Draft General Plan is premised on a certain amount of growth taking place. Riverside County has experienced steadily increasing levels of growth for decades and this trend is expected to continue. The focus of the Draft General Plan, then, is to provide a framework in which the growth can be managed and to tailor it to suit the needs of the

community and surrounding area. Implementation of the Draft General Plan would result in a more cohesive community, bring new employment opportunities to Hemet, and foster a stable economic base. The Draft General Plan provides the necessary tools to accommodate future growth, provides direction for new development and redevelopment projects, and establishes the desired mix and relationship between land use types.

The Draft General Plan anticipates that growth will occur in the region and supports a regional land use pattern that enables orderly growth. The Draft General Plan also contains policies that address the provision of sufficient services and infrastructure as growth occurs and to accommodate projected growth. However, implementation of the Draft General Plan would induce growth in the Planning Area.

6.3 SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

Section 15126(f) of the CEQA Guidelines requires that an EIR describe any significant irreversible environmental changes that would be involved in the proposed action should it be implemented. Development in accordance with Draft General Plan land use policies could result in the consumption of nonrenewable resources. This use would have an irreversible effect on such resources. The irreversible commitment of limited resources is inherent in any development project, or in the case of the Draft General Plan, cumulative development projects. Resources anticipated to be irreversibly committed over the life of the General Plan include, but are not limited to, lumber and other related forest products; sand, gravel, and concrete; petrochemicals; construction materials; steel, copper, lead, and other metals; and water. Future land uses consistent with the Draft General Plan represent a long-term commitment to the consumption of fossil fuel oil and natural gas. These increased energy demands relate to construction, lighting, heating, and cooling of residences and buildings, and transportation to and from the planning area. The commitment of resources would be a long-term obligation because once land is developed it is highly infeasible to revert such land uses to a less urban use or open space.

6.4 SIGNIFICANT AND UNAVOIDABLE EFFECTS

According to Sections 15126.2(a) and 15126.2(b) of the State CEQA Guidelines, an EIR shall identify and focus on the significant environmental effects of the proposed project, including effects that cannot be avoided if the proposed project were implemented.

This section describes significant environmental impacts, including impacts that are mitigated but would not be reduced to a less-than-significant level. Individual impacts are discussed below.

Although some significant environmental impacts are identified as significant and unavoidable, the City may still approve the project if it determines that social, economic, legal, technological, or other factors override the unavoidable impacts. The City would then be required to prepare a “Statement of Overriding Considerations” that discusses the specific reasons for approving the project, based on information in the EIR and other information in the record.

6.4.1 AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

Expansion of non-agricultural development will introduce potential land use conflicts in existing agricultural areas, and could result in the conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural uses. The Draft General Plan includes policies and programs that express the City’s intent to conserve agricultural lands within the planning area by supporting the use of tools like conservation easements to protect agricultural uses (OS-3.1, OS-3.2, OS-3.3, OS-3.4, OS-P-12, OS-P-13). Furthermore, program LU-P-48 requires the City to develop an agricultural buffer ordinance. However, even with implementation of these policies and programs, 2,166 acres of Farmland could potentially convert to non-agricultural uses through implementation of the Draft General Plan. Any actions taken by the City, including implementation of Draft General Plan policies and programs and mitigation measures proposed in this EIR could reduce, but not completely eliminate, the conversion of Farmland associated with urban development and other conflicts between agricultural and urban uses which might indirectly result in

conversion of agricultural lands. The policies and programs contained within the Draft General Plan would not prevent these conflicts, and additional conversion or hastening of planned conversion might still occur. No feasible mitigation is available to reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level. The Draft General Plan would have a significant and unavoidable impact related to the conversion of Farmland over the 20-year General Plan timeline (Impact 4.2-1).

6.4.2 AIR QUALITY

Implementation of the Draft General Plan would result in new criteria air pollutant emissions in excess of established SCAQMD thresholds, impeding implementation of the AQMP. Adherence to SCAQMD rules and regulations, Draft General Plan policies, and implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.3-1a, 4.3-1b, 4.3-1c, 4.3-1d, and 4.3-1e would reduce this impact, but not to a less-than-significant level. SCAQMD's thresholds are designed to be applied to individual projects, rather than larger programs like general plans. Despite the City's implementation of policies and programs designed to improve air quality, implementation of the Draft General Plan, a 20-year program, could result in emissions in excess of project-based thresholds for criteria air pollutants and precursors for which the region is in nonattainment. No additional feasible mitigation is available. The impact related to compliance with the SCAQMD Air Quality Management Plan (Impact 4.3-1) would remain significant and unavoidable.

Similarly, implementation of the Draft General Plan would include the construction of new commercial, industrial, and residential uses, resulting in short-term construction emissions and long-term operational emissions in excess of SCAQMD thresholds. SCAQMD's thresholds are designed to be applied to individual projects, rather than larger programs like general plans. Despite the City's implementation of policies and programs designed to improve air quality, implementation of the Draft General Plan, a 20-year program, could result in emissions in excess of project-based thresholds for criteria air pollutants and precursors for which the region is in nonattainment. No additional mitigation is available beyond Draft General Plan policies and programs and Mitigation Measures 4.3-1a, 4.3-1b, 4.3-1c, 4.3-1d, and 4.3-1e. Impacts related to short-term construction emissions and long-term operational emissions (Impacts 4.3-2 and 4.3-3) would remain significant and unavoidable.

Implementation of the Draft General Plan would potentially expose sensitive receptors to criteria air pollutants, toxic air contaminants, and carbon monoxide. A variety of Draft General Plan policies are intended to improve air quality and reduce air emissions. Adherence to SCAQMD rules and regulations, Draft General Plan policies, and implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.3-1a, 4.3-1b, 4.3-1c, 4.3-1d, 4.3-1e, 4.3-4a, and 4.3-4b would reduce this impact, but not to a less-than-significant level. No additional feasible mitigation is available. Impacts to sensitive receptors are largely related to the future location of the SR 79 expressway in West Hemet; although the City would apply all necessary measures to reduce risks to new sensitive receptors near SR 79 as described in Mitigation Measure 4.3-4a and 4.3-4b, existing sensitive receptors along the SR 79 alignment could still be affected. The impact of air pollutants on sensitive receptors (Impact 4.3-4) would remain significant and unavoidable.

6.4.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Future construction of land uses consistent with the Draft General Plan would result in increased generation of GHG emissions. Approximately 46,405 MT CO₂ emissions are anticipated between 2012 and 2030 with implementation of the Draft General Plan. This value accounts only for exhaust emissions that would be generated by heavy-duty equipment, haul trucks, and vehicle trips. Construction exhaust emissions would be temporary and short term, as they would not continue on an ongoing basis year after year throughout the operational life of the development, as is the case with large stationary-source facilities.

In addition, the regulatory environment that continues to evolve to implement AB 32 is expected to reduce some construction emissions. The ARB Scoping Plan does not directly discuss construction emissions; however, it does

recommend measures to improve the efficiency of medium- and heavy-duty on-road vehicles and expended efficiency strategies for off-road vehicles (e.g., forklifts, bulldozers). In addition, existing air quality programs in California, including the Diesel Risk Reduction Plan and the 2007 State Implementation Plan, will result in the accelerated phase-in of cleaner technology for diesel engine fleets, including construction equipment (ARB 2008). Implementation of these plans would likely result in more emissions-efficient future construction equipment than existing fleets. For these reasons, GHG emissions associated with construction activity are expected to decrease over time.

Neither ARB nor SCAQMD provide guidance or a method to evaluate construction GHG emissions. Nonetheless, due to the intensity and duration of construction of future land uses consistent with the Draft General Plan, new construction would make an incremental, cumulatively considerable contribution to GHG emissions. Construction would be temporary, but resulting GHGs would persist in the atmosphere. Although new regulations are expected to implement AB 32, and although existing regulations will help reduce construction emissions throughout the state, GHG emissions associated with construction of future land uses consistent with the Draft General Plan would result in a cumulatively considerable incremental contribution to this significant cumulative impact. Although adherence to state regulations, Draft General Plan policies and programs, and implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.7-1 would reduce incremental construction GHG emissions, the cumulatively considerable incremental contribution to construction GHG emissions from future land uses consistent with the Draft General Plan (Impact 4.7-1) would remain significant and unavoidable.

Future land uses consistent with the Draft General Plan would result in increased generation of GHGs, which would contribute considerably to cumulative GHG emissions. A variety of Draft General Plan policies and programs are designed to reduce GHG emissions. These include efforts to reduce water use, increase energy efficiency of new and existing structures, increase use of clean and renewable energy sources, increase use of recycled materials in construction, employ emission reduction best management practices, reduce emissions from vehicles, and arrange land uses to reduce vehicle trips.

The Draft General Plan also requires preparation of a Climate Action Plan (CAP), which will identify GHG emission reduction and adaptation strategies, including quantified GHG reduction measures. The CAP will establish a comprehensive, communitywide GHG emissions reduction strategy for Hemet. The City intends for the CAP to be a Plan for the Reduction of GHG Emissions, as defined in Section 15183.5 of the State CEQA Guidelines. However, uncertainty exists whether, when, and to what degree the emission reduction measures proposed in the Draft General Plan and future CAP would be implemented, and if the City would be able to achieve AB 32 goals by implementing them. These are new programs for the City, containing non-standard programs with which the City has limited or no implementation experience. Adherence to state regulations, Draft General Plan policies and programs, and future preparation of a CAP would reduce both communitywide GHG emissions and net emissions attributable to implementation of the Draft General Plan. However, due to uncertainty regarding the degree of Draft General Plan and future CAP implementation, implementation of the Draft General Plan would represent a cumulatively considerable incremental contribution to this significant cumulative impact.

No additional feasible mitigation measures beyond Mitigation Measure 4.7-2 and those proposed in the Draft General Plan are available to reduce GHG emissions. Implementation of state regulations, Draft General Plan policies and programs, and Mitigation Measure 4.7-2 would reduce this impact, but not to a less-than-significant level. Therefore, this impact would remain significant and unavoidable.

6.4.4 NOISE

Exterior noise levels at 100 feet from roadway centerlines could be above 65 db, which is identified as an acceptable exterior level for some sensitive receptors. Although implementation of Draft General Plan policies and programs would reduce traffic noise impacts on new development, because design features (e.g., insulation; windows and doors; exterior berms, landscaping, and sound barriers) would be required, exterior noise levels

would still increase more than the standards in Table 4.11-9, and exterior noise levels at 100 feet from roadway centerlines could still be above 65 db. The increases in noise levels would also affect existing development that is located adjacent to larger roadways. Although the City would require implementation of barriers and other noise controls in new development, Existing sensitive receptors could be exposed to excessive roadway noise. No additional feasible mitigation is available beyond Draft General Plan policies and programs. The impact of transportation noise on sensitive receptors (Impact 4.11-2) would remain significant and unavoidable.

6.4.5 TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION

Implementation of the Draft General Plan would result in two intersections (Sanderson Avenue at Devonshire and Florida Avenues) operating at unacceptable LOS E or LOS F in 2030. As early as 1992, when the EIR for the last comprehensive General Plan update was prepared, the City recognized that certain segments and intersections would exceed LOS “D” ---- the voter approved LOS standard under Measure C. These segments include portions of Florida Avenue, Stetson Avenue, and Sanderson Avenue. Consequently, the City Council approved a Statement of Overriding Considerations for circulation for the 1992 EIR. Measure C incorporated these problematic roads in the measure language with the result that while most intersections within the City need to comply with the “D” level of service, portions of Florida, Sanderson and Stetson do not need to comply. The traffic study prepared for the Draft General Plan shows LOS of E and F at the same areas along Florida Avenue and Sanderson Avenue (but an improvement to acceptable service levels for Stetson Avenue). Specifically, the Florida/Sanderson intersection and the Sanderson/Devonshire intersection would both exceed a “D” LOS at buildout of the Draft General Plan. Widening to address this LOS deficiency could only occur if businesses along Florida Avenue were acquired through eminent domain and demolished to allow roadway construction. In developing the Draft General Plan, which actually reduces traffic impacts compared to the 1992 General Plan, the City continues to accept LOS higher than level “D” for Florida and Sanderson for the same reasons as those considered in 1992 and especially for the fact that the City believes that the costs of eminent domain and demolition of existing business exceeds the benefits of slightly better capacity. No additional mitigation is available beyond Draft General Plan policies and programs and buildout of the roadway system illustrated on the Circulation Diagram. This impact (Impact 4.13-1) would remain significant and unavoidable.

6.4.6 UTILITIES

Although all three of the water suppliers to the Planning Area (EMWD, LHMWD, and the City of Hemet) have identified adequate water supplies to meet demand that would be created by future land uses consistent with the Draft General Plan, the long term availability of these supplies is uncertain. Although all three agencies indicate adequate water supplies based on their UWMPs, EMWD and LHMWD rely on water from Metropolitan for a portion of their supply. Potential climate change effects, variable hydrology, environmental impacts in the Bay-Delta, and other factors underlie uncertainty regarding Metropolitan’s water supply. This uncertainty has increased since each water agency prepared its UWMP in 2005. Metropolitan is taking actions (including conservation programs, increasing local storage and groundwater storage, and water transfers) to ensure an adequate supply, and the successful implementation of these long-range actions would reduce the uncertainty surrounding Metropolitan’s supply.

Future groundwater pumping activities in the San Jacinto Groundwater Basin may also be constrained compared to assumptions made within the water agencies’ 2005 UWMPs. The Groundwater Management Plan has a goal to increase public water supply from the basin by 15,000 AFY, and identifies management actions and physical improvements to reach that goal (described in Section 4.14.1). The City is taking actions which would help to sustain a groundwater yield that meets increased water needs in the San Jacinto Valley, including infrastructure improvements, groundwater recharge, water conservation, and increased use of graywater. However, in the short- and medium-term, implementation of the Hemet/San Jacinto Water Management Plan could potentially require reductions of up to 10% per year, with a total reduction that could reach 35% of the base production rights for each provider serving the planning area.

Actions described in the Draft General Plan, Metropolitan's IRP, and the Hemet/San Jacinto Water Management Plan present a range of activities being undertaken by multiple agencies to ensure reliable water supplies that meet the future needs of the planning area. Furthermore, Policy CSI-2.2 and Program CSI-P.2 would preclude the approval of development in the future which could not be supplied with an adequate amount of water.

Although implementation of Draft General Plan policies would result in water conservation and the requirement for new developments to provide proof of adequate water supply, and the City is taking action to improve groundwater recharge and supply, uncertainty surrounding future water supply to the planning area and southern California as a whole results in a significant water supply impact, and no additional mitigation measures beyond these actions would be feasible for implementation by a single jurisdiction. Thus, the impact related to adequate water supply (Impact 4.14-4) is considered significant and unavoidable.