

VOLUME II

Santee Town Center Specific  
Plan Update

Revised Draft Environmental Impact Report

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## **S.0 Executive Summary**

### **S.1 Project Overview**

This summary provides a brief synopsis of: (1) the proposed project; (2) the results of the environmental analysis contained within this Environmental Impact Report (EIR); (3) the major areas of controversy and issues to be resolved by decision-makers; and (4) the alternatives to the project that were considered. This summary does not contain the extensive background and analysis found in the document. Therefore, the reader should review the entire document to fully understand the project and its environmental consequences.

#### **S.1.1 Project Description**

The project analyzed in this Draft EIR is the comprehensive update to the Santee Town Center Specific Plan (TCSP), which was originally approved in October of 1986 and last amended in 2019. As the TCSP area is partially developed, the analysis focuses on updated development standards and impacts associated with potential future development and redevelopment within the TCSP. The proposed TCSP establishes five neighborhoods (Arts and Entertainment, Town Center Commercial, Mast Boulevard Residential, Park Avenue, and Facilities Based) and includes the following: a comprehensively updated TCSP, including expansion of the boundaries of the overall TCSP area and updated development standards to facilitate planned development throughout all five neighborhoods in the TCSP area; expansion of the boundaries of the existing Arts and Entertainment Overlay District (AEOD) to the new Arts and Entertainment Neighborhood (AEN); and conceptual development plans and objective design standards for four Housing Element sites in the southeastern portion of the AEN, pursuant to the densities permitted in the City's adopted 6<sup>th</sup> Cycle Housing Element and as allowed under state density bonus law under California Government Code Section 65915. Future development within the TCSP area would be guided and regulated through the proposed updated TCSP, the City Municipal Code, and the City General Plan. This Draft EIR analyzes the environmental effects of implementing the proposed TCSP as follows:

- The proposed approximately 651-acre TCSP area, encompassing all five neighborhoods, is analyzed at the program level;
- A sub-geography of the TCSP, the proposed approximately 342-acre AEN, is also analyzed at the program level; and
- Each of the Housing Element sites located within the AEN is analyzed at the project level, including:
  - The 11.11-acre Site 16A
  - The 8.61-acre Site 16B
  - The 7.75-acre Site 20A
  - The 10.00-acre Site 20B

#### **S.1.2 Project Location and Setting**

The project is located in the City of Santee (City), in San Diego County. The City of Santee is bordered by unincorporated San Diego County to the north and east, the City of El Cajon to the south, and the City of San Diego to the west. The proposed project takes place in the TCSP area

of the City, which is traversed by the San Diego River. The proposed TCSP area encompasses five neighborhoods and is bounded by Mast Boulevard to the north, Magnolia Avenue to the east, Mission Gorge Road to the south, and Mast Park to the west. The AEN is located wholly within the TCSP area, stretching across the San Diego River in the central portion of the TCSP area. The AEN is bordered by Riverwalk Drive and residential uses to the north, Magnolia Avenue and institutional land uses to the east, Mission Gorge Road to the south, and Cuyamaca Street to the west. The four Housing Element sites are located within the AEN south of the San Diego River. Site 16A and 16B are adjacent to Riverview Parkway and Las Colinas Detention Facility (Las Colinas). Site 20A and 20B area adjacent to Magnolia Avenue and Edgemoor Drive. The Historic Edgemoor Polo Barn is just north of Site 20A. The San Diego ~~Green-Copper~~ Line Trolley terminates in the southern portion of the AEN at the Santee Trolley Station.

### **S.1.3 Project Objectives**

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15124, the following primary objectives support the purpose of the project, assist the Lead Agency in developing a reasonable range of alternatives to be evaluated in this report, and ultimately aid decision-makers in preparing findings and overriding considerations, if necessary. The purpose of the project is to address the housing needs and objectives of the City and to meet the requirements of state law. The project has the following objectives:

- Allow for a unified comprehensive open space system to be an integral part of the design concept of the TCSP area. The river shall be an open space area for the benefit of the community;
- Provide and encourage both active and passive recreational opportunities to help meet the recreational needs of the community;
- Establish criteria for architectural designs and concepts that reinforce the sense of community identity and support high quality development. These criteria should foster uniqueness and cohesive design enhancing Santee's character;
- Use landscape design to enhance the quality of the environment, resiliency of the community, and contribute to high quality, safe, and sustainable development;
- Provide for the development of a varied, safe, efficient, and cost-effective transportation system to adequately support the mobility needs of the TCSP area with minimal negative impact on the community;
- Provide a variety of housing types and sizes with a mixture of ownership and rental housing;
- Create a variety of commercial and office/professional opportunities to provide goods, services, and employment opportunities to the region and establish the TCSP area as an activity center of the community;
- Incorporate community-serving, civic, and public uses within the TCSP area to become focal points for residents and visitors to enjoy;
- Limit new institutional uses within the TCSP area;

- Establish employment-supportive uses as part of new developments to provide job opportunities for the community and establish revenue sources within the TCSP area. These should include research and development and office/ professional uses; and
- Provide for housing development opportunities on Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B consistent with the City's adopted Housing Element for 2021-2029.

## **S.2 Summary of Significant Effects and Mitigation Measures that Reduce or Avoid the Significant Effects**

Table S-1, *Summary of Environmental Impacts*, located at the end of this section, summarizes the significant and less than significant effects identified during the environmental analysis completed for the project. Table S-1 also includes a mitigation framework to reduce the significant environmental effects, with a conclusion as to whether the impact has been mitigated to below a level of significance. The mitigation measures listed in Table S-1 are also discussed within each relevant section in Chapter 4.0.

## **S.3 Issues to be Addressed**

The Notice of Preparation (NOP) was distributed on September 1, 2023, for a 30-day public comment period. In addition, a public scoping meeting was held on September 7, 2023 from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. at the City of Santee, Building 5, 10601 Magnolia Avenue, Santee, CA 92071. The NOP, comment letters, and transcription of the scoping meeting comments are included in this EIR as Appendix A. Potentially significant impacts on the following environmental issues are analyzed in detail in the EIR:

- 4.1 Aesthetics
- 4.2 Agriculture-Forestry Resources
- 4.3 Air Quality
- 4.4 Biological Resources
- 4.5 Cultural Resources
- 4.6 Energy
- 4.7 Geology and Soils
- 4.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- 4.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- 4.10 Hydrology and Water Quality
- 4.11 Land Use and Planning
- 4.12 Noise
- 4.13 Population and Housing
- 4.14 Public Services
- 4.15 Recreation
- 4.16 Transportation
- 4.17 Tribal Cultural Resources
- 4.18 Utilities and Service Systems
- 4.19 Wildfire

## **S.4 Issues to be Resolved by the Decision-Making Body**

Issues to be resolved include how to reduce significant, unavoidable adverse environmental impacts associated with the project to the maximum extent feasible while achieving project

objectives, through adoption of mitigation measures and/or alternatives to the project identified in this EIR.

## **S.5 Project Alternatives**

To fully evaluate the environmental effects of projects, CEQA mandates that alternatives to the project be analyzed. Section 15126.6 of the CEQA Guidelines requires the discussion of “a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project” and the evaluation of the comparative merits of the alternatives. The alternatives discussion is intended to “focus on alternatives to the project or its location, which are capable of avoiding or substantially lessening any significant effects of the project,” even if these alternatives would impede to some degree the attainment of the project objectives.

The EIR addresses four project alternatives: the No Project Alternative, the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative, the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative, and the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative. Alternatives to the proposed project are evaluated in full in Chapter 9.0 of this document.

### **S.5.1 No Project Alternative**

Under the No Project Alternative, development within the current TCSP area boundaries would proceed pursuant to the adopted TCSP and 2021-2029 Housing Element and would not include updated development standards and conceptual development plans and design standards for Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B. Also, the No Project Alternative would not include the proposed roadway network upgrades and roadway connections or associated pedestrian and bicycle improvements, including the River Bridge spanning the San Diego River. Other improvements identified in the TCSP, including outdoor events in the AEN, would not be included in the TCSP as proposed under the project. This alternative would partially meet some of the project objectives stated in Chapter 3.0, Project Description, as the adopted TCSP does provide for mobility needs, a variety of housing types and commercial and office/professional opportunities, including employment-supportive uses. However, the proposed project is a comprehensive update to the adopted TCSP that addresses the future needs of the TCSP area and would better fulfill all of the project objectives.

### **S.5.2 Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative**

The Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative represents a modified update to the TCSP to avoid some of the biological impacts identified for the project. Under this alternative, the land use designations for an approximately 6-acre undeveloped area in the northeastern part of the TCSP area would be changed from Residential TC-R-14 (14 to 22 dwelling units per acre [du/ac]) to Floodway/Open Space. The 6-acre area is bound by Park Center Drive and Park/Open Space areas to the west, Institutional land uses to the north, and Residential land use to the south. The eastern part of the 6-acre site is bound by Cottonwood Avenue. This change would avoid impacts to 2.94 acres of biologically sensitive areas identified in the Biological Resources Technical Report (Appendix C). Also, the River Bridge over the San Diego River would not be included in the TCSP under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative, which would similarly avoid biologically sensitive areas in the TCSP area. The remaining aspects of the proposed TCSP, including the expansion of the TCSP area and AEN, updated development standards, proposed roadway network upgrades and roadway connections or associated pedestrian and bicycle improvements, and conceptual development plans and design standards for Housing Element

sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B, would remain as they are in the proposed project. While approximately 6 less acres of residential development would be developed under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative, overall buildout of the TCSP area is assumed to be the same as the proposed project and as assumed in the City's 6<sup>th</sup> Housing Element because development would likely be able to shift to other portions of residentially designated land, as needed. This alternative would partially meet some of the project objectives stated in Chapter 3.0, Project Description, as this alternative does provide for mobility needs, a variety of housing types and commercial and office/professional opportunities, including employment-supportive uses. Buildout of the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would not include the River Bridge, which would provide recreational opportunities, and be part of the open space system to unify areas north and south of the San Diego River within the AEN, and better meet the project objectives.

### **S.5.3 Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative**

The Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design (TOD) Alternative represents a modified update to the TCSP to further support the City's goals to provide additional affordable housing opportunities in the City and within close proximity to transit within an established Transit Priority Area (TPA). Under this alternative, the Trolley Commercial land use designations near the center of the TCSP area and AEN would be revised to allow transit oriented development, which is intended to integrate urban places and public spaces with access focused on pedestrian, bicycle, and transit as modes of transportation. Development would include increased density and reduced parking standards, which could result in fewer vehicle trips and less greenhouse gas emissions being generated. Specifically, this alternative would allow residential development up to 36 du/ac consistent with the Residential TC-R-3030 (30 to 36 du/ac) land use designation in the TCSP. For the purpose of this alternatives analysis, potential increases in residential development are estimated at an additional 1,515 du in the TPA portion of the TCSP area and AEN at a density of 34 du/ac. The remaining aspects of the proposed TCSP, including the expansion of the TCSP area and AEN, land use densities, updated development standards, proposed roadway network upgrades and roadway connections or associated pedestrian and bicycle improvements, and conceptual development plans and design standards for Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B, would remain as they are in the proposed project. This alternative would partially meet some of the project objectives stated in Chapter 3.0, Project Description, as this alternative does provide for mobility needs, a variety of housing types and commercial and office/professional opportunities, including employment-supportive uses.

### **S.5.4 No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative**

The No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative represents a modified update to the TCSP to avoid some of the potential noise impacts identified for the project. Under this alternative, outdoor performance uses would not be allowed within the Commercial Entertainment areas of the TCSP, north of the Town Center Transit Station, and would avoid an operational noise impact associated with outdoor gatherings of people for artistic, cinematic, theatrical, musical, sporting events, cultural, education or civic purposes. The reduced operational noise would also incrementally reduce potential noise impacts on nearby sensitive biological resources. The remaining aspects of the proposed TCSP, including the expansion of the TCSP area and AEN, updated development standards, proposed roadway network upgrades and roadway connections or associated pedestrian and bicycle improvements, and conceptual development plans and design standards for Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B, would remain as they are in the proposed project. This alternative would partially meet some of the project objectives stated in Chapter 3.0, Project Description, as this alternative does provide for mobility needs, a variety of housing types and commercial and office/professional opportunities, including employment-supportive uses.

### **S.5.5 Environmentally Superior Alternative**

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)(2) requires an EIR to identify the environmentally superior alternative. If the No Project Alternative is the environmentally superior alternative, the EIR must identify an environmentally superior alternative from the other alternatives. The project itself may not be identified as the environmentally superior alternative.

The No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would be the environmentally superior alternative because it would incrementally reduce significant impacts associated with biological resources and would avoid a noise impact compared to the project. Although this alternative would provide less flexibility for potential outdoor uses, the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would ultimately result in development of the same amount of residential and non-residential development as the project as no other aspects of the TCSP would be altered. The No Outdoor Performance Use would meet most project objectives; however, it might not as fully meet the project objective to allow for community-serving, civic, and public uses within the TCSP area to become focal points for residents and visitors to enjoy.

**Table S-1  
SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS**

Threshold	Impact Discussion	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
<b>4.1 Aesthetics</b>			
<p>Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?</p>	<p><b>TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, and 20B</b></p> <p>Overall adherence to applicable Municipal Code development review and design requirements, in addition to proposed TCSP Objective Design Standards that maximize views of public amenities like the San Diego River, would ensure that future development in the TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element sites 16A and 16B would not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic view or vista, and impacts would be less than significant.</p> <p><b>Housing Element Site 20A</b></p> <p>Site 20A is located in the vicinity of the Edgemoor Polo Barn, which the City values as an aesthetic resource. Future development at Site 20A in proximity to the Edgemoor Polo Barn could result in significant impacts to visual character and quality.</p>	<p><b>TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, and 20B</b></p> <p>No mitigation is required.</p> <p><b>Housing Element Site 20A</b></p> <p>MM-CUL-5</p>	<p>Less than Significant .</p>
<p>Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State Scenic Highway?</p>	<p>All future development in the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would be subject to the requirement for Development review consistent with Municipal Code Chapter 13.08. This would ensure consistency with General Plan policies and applicable design and development review requirements, including the Objective Design Standards for the TCSP area, as detailed in Section 4.1.2.3. Application of these development review requirements would ensure protection of key scenic resources. Impacts would be less than significant.</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>

Threshold	Impact Discussion	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
<p>In non-urbanized areas, would the project substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage points)? If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?</p>	<p><b>TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, and 20B</b></p> <p>Overall adherence to applicable Municipal Code development review and design requirements, in addition to proposed TCSP Objective Design Standards that preserve open space and recreational opportunities, would ensure that future development in the TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, and 20B would not have a substantial adverse effect on visual character or quality, and impacts would be less than significant.</p> <p><b>Housing Element Site 20A</b></p> <p>Housing Element Site 20A is located in the vicinity of the Edgemoor Polo Barn, which the City values as an aesthetic resource. Future development at Site 20A in proximity to the Edgemoor Polo Barn could result in significant impacts to visual character and quality.</p>	<p><b>TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, and 20B</b></p> <p>No mitigation is required.</p> <p><b>Housing Element Site 20A</b></p> <p>MM-CUL-5</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p>
<p>Would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area?</p>	<p>The TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would be required to comply with SMC standards related to light and glare (Chapter 13.08.070(G)), which requires that outdoor lighting be directed away from adjacent properties and set in a way to avoid any detriment to the surrounding area. Additionally, the Community Enhancement Element includes the standard for lighting and signage to minimize spillover of lighting through use of directional, cut-off and nonglare fixtures. General Plan policies would be implemented through the required development review process. Impacts would be less than significant.</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>
<p><b>4.2 Agriculture and Forestry Resources</b></p>			
<p>Would the project convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide or Local Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, or other agricultural resources, to non-agricultural use?</p>	<p>Because there are no current or planned agricultural uses in the project area, the proposed project would not result in impacts to conversion of FMMP farmland in the TCSP, AEN, or Housing Element sites. Impacts would be less than significant.</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>



Threshold	Impact Discussion	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
Would the project conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	There are no recent or current Williamson Act contract lands within the project site. There would be no conflicts with agricultural zoning or Williamson Act contracts in the TCSP, AEN, or Housing Element sites as a result of the proposed project. Impacts would be less than significant.	No mitigation is required.	Less than Significant
Would the project conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, Forest Land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section (12220(g)), Timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland-zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))?	The TCSP, AEN, and Housing Element sites do not contain any areas zoned as Timberland or Timberland Production. Therefore, no associated impacts in the TCSP, AEN, or Housing Element sites would result from the implementation of the proposed project. Impacts would be less than significant.	No mitigation is required.	Less than Significant
Would the project result in the loss of Forest Land or conversion of Forest Land to non-forest use?	The TCSP, AEN, and Housing Element sites do not contain any areas identified as forest resources under California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) or City policies and guidelines. Therefore, no associated impacts to forest land in the TCSP, AEN, or Housing Element sites would result from implementation of the proposed project. Impacts would be less than significant.	No mitigation is required.	Less than Significant
Would the project involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of Forest Land to non-forest use?	Based on the previous impact discussions and that no active Farmland or Forest land exists or is zoned in the vicinity of the project area, the project would not result in conversion of Farmland or Forest land within, or in the vicinity of, the TCSP area, AEN or Housing Element sites, and no associated farmland conversion impacts would occur from the implementation of the proposed project. Impacts would be less than significant.	No mitigation is required.	Less than Significant
<b>4.3 Air Quality</b>			
Would the project conflict with or obstruct the implementation of the applicable air quality plan, i.e., the San Diego RAQS?	As buildout of the project would not result in an increase in development or traffic generation over what would occur under buildout of the adopted zoning and land use designations, the project would not result in an increase in emissions that are not already accounted for in the Attainment Plan or RAQS. Impacts would be less than significant.	No mitigation is required	Less than Significant

Threshold	Impact Discussion	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
<p>Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is in non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?</p>	<p>The project's temporary construction-related criteria pollutant and precursor emissions would be below the SDAPCD's emission thresholds, including for those pollutants for which the SDAB is non-attainment (VOC, NO<sub>x</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub>). Therefore, the project's construction activities would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state AAQS. The long-term emissions of criteria pollutants and precursors generation by full buildout of the TCSP area and AEN would result in exceedances to SDAPCD's daily screening thresholds for VOC, CO, PM<sub>10</sub>, and PM<sub>2.5</sub>; impacts would be significant. The long-term emissions of the Housing Element sites would not exceed the SDAPCD daily screening thresholds, and impacts would be less than significant.</p>	<p><b>TCSP area and AEN</b> MM-AQ-1 <b>Housing Element sites</b> No mitigation is required.</p>	<p><b>TCSP area and AEN</b> Significant and unavoidable. <b>Housing Element sites</b> Less than Significant</p>
<p>Would the project expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?</p>	<p>The transportation projects identified in the TCSP meet the City's VMT screening criteria of "closing gaps in the transportation network" and/or "adding new or enhanced bicycle or pedestrian facilities on existing streets" and are presumed not to increase vehicle travel. Therefore, air quality impacts related to the exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial CO concentrations due to project traffic would be less than significant for the TCSP, AEN and Housing Element sites. Maximum daily particulate matter (i.e., PM<sub>10</sub> or PM<sub>2.5</sub>) emissions generated by construction equipment operation and haul-truck trips during construction (exhaust particulate matter, or DPM), combined with fugitive dust generated by equipment operation and vehicle travel, would be well below the SDAPCD screening-level thresholds. Considering this information, and the fact that any concentrated use of heavy construction equipment would occur at various locations throughout the project site only for short durations, construction of the project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial DPM concentrations, and the impact would be less than significant.</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>

Threshold	Impact Discussion	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
<p>Would the project result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) affecting a substantial number of people?</p>	<p>Existing sources of odors are either located far enough from the project area that they would not be detectable or would be diluted to an undetectable level before reaching a receptor. Once operational, future development implemented under the project would include residential and associated commercial uses that are generally not a source of objectionable odors. Therefore, project operation would not result in odors affecting a substantial number of people, and impacts would be less than significant for the TCSP, AEN, and Housing Element sites.</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>
<p><b>4.4 Biological Resources</b></p>			
<p>Would the project have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by CDFW or USFWS?</p>	<p>Development of the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would or could result in direct impacts to sensitive plant and animal species, including smooth tarplant, southwestern spiny rush, coastal California gnatcatcher, least Bell's vireo, western spadefoot toad, San Diegan legless lizard, California glossy snake, Belding's orange-throated whiptail, red diamond rattlesnake, Blainville's horned lizard, and two-striped garter snake. Impacts would be significant.</p>	<p><b>TCSP area and AEN</b> MM-BIO-6  <b>TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites</b> MM-BIO-1 through MM-BIO-5; MM-BIO-7 through MM-BIO-10</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>
<p>Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on any sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by CDFW or USFWS?</p>	<p><b>TCSP area and AEN</b> Development of the TCSP area and AEN would result in impacts to jurisdictional wetlands, riparian habitats, and Diegan coastal sage scrub. Impacts would be significant.</p> <p><b>Site 16A</b> Development of Site 16A would impact wetland and non-wetland waters of the U.S., streambed and riparian areas, and southern willow scrub. Impacts would be significant.</p> <p><b>Site 20A and 20B</b> Sites 16B, 20A, and 20B would not result in impacts to sensitive natural communities requiring mitigation, but construction could result in significant impacts to adjacent habitat.</p>	<p><b>TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites</b> MM-BIO-3 through MM-BIO-6; MM-BIO-11 and MM-BIO-12  <b>Housing Element Site 16A</b> MM-BIO-12</p>	<p>Less than significant.</p>

Threshold	Impact Discussion	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
<p>Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?</p>	<p><b>TCSP area, AEN, and Site 16A</b></p> <p>The project would result in potential impacts to USACE wetland and non-wetland waters, which are anticipated in Housing Element site 16A and in other portions of the AEN and TCSP area as determined through future site-specific studies. Impacts would be significant.</p> <p><b>Site 16B, 20A, and 20B</b></p> <p>No impact to wetlands is anticipated to occur in Sites 16B, 20A, or 20B.</p>	<p>MM-BIO-3, MM-BIO-4, MM-BIO-6, MM-BIO-11, MM-BIO-12 (Site 16A only)</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>
<p>Would the project interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?</p>	<p><b>TCSP area and AEN</b></p> <p>Retention of the river corridor as Open Space consistent with the TCSP is expected to protect wildlife movement and no impact to wildlife corridors would occur associated with the TCSP or AEN.</p> <p><b>Housing Element sites</b></p> <p>Sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B are primarily surrounded by developed land. Although Sites 16A and 16B are bounded, in part, by undeveloped land, they do not meet the criteria for a wildlife movement corridor as they are restricted by roads and other development. No impact to wildlife corridors would occur within the Housing Element sites.</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>
<p>Would the project conflict with the provisions of an adopted HCP, NCCP, or other approved local, regional, or state HCP?</p>	<p>The project area is located within the planning area for the City of Santee Draft Subarea Plan, which has not been adopted. Therefore, the project, as proposed, would not conflict with an adopted HCP, NCCP, or any other approved local, regional, or state HCP. However, in anticipation of the future adoption of the Santee Subarea Plan within the lifetime of future development activities covered by the proposed TCSP, implementation of BIO-6 and BIO-10 is recommended to ensure future development within the project area is consistent with the City of Santee Subarea Plan once adopted. Like BIO-6 and BIO-10, the Subarea Plan is expected to require site-specific surveys to be conducted during future project-level review to verify the presence of sensitive biological resources occurring on individual sites; determine the extent of any potential impacts; and provide mitigation to reduce the impacts to below a level of significance. Impacts would be less than significant.</p>	<p>MM-BIO-6 and MM-BIO-11</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>

Threshold	Impact Discussion	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
<p>Would the project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?</p>	<p>The project does not propose any activities that would conflict with the San Diego Final MSCP Plan or adopted local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources. Future development would be required to implement the mitigation framework, including BIO-5, BIO-6, BIO-7, BIO-8, BIO-10, BIO-11, and BIO-12, as applicable to ensure impacts associated with biological resources would be reduced to a level that is less than significant.</p>	<p>MM-BIO-5, MM-BIO-6, MM-BIO-7, MM-BIO-8, MM-BIO-11, and MM-BIO-12</p>	<p>Less than significant</p>
<p><b>4.5 Cultural Resources</b></p>			
<p>Would the project result in a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5?</p>	<p><b>TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, and 20B</b></p> <p>The presence of previously recorded historical resources within the TCSP area suggests that there is a potential for encountering previously unidentified resources during development of the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites. Impacts would be significant.</p> <p><b>Sites 20A</b></p> <p>Future development of Site 20A has the potential to cause substantial adverse changes to the Edgemoor Polo Barn. Impacts would be significant.</p>	<p><b>TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, and 20B</b></p> <p>MM-CUL-1 through MM-CUL-4</p> <p><b>Housing Element Site 20A</b></p> <p>MM-CUL-1 through MM-CUL-5</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>
<p>Would the project result in a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?</p>	<p>The presence of previously recorded archaeological resources within the TCSP area suggests that there is a potential for encountering previously unidentified resources during development of the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites. Impacts would be significant.</p>	<p>MM-CUL-1 through MM-CUL-4</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>
<p>Would the project result in the disturbance of any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?</p>	<p>The presence of previously recorded human remains within the TCSP area suggests that there is a potential for encountering previously unidentified resources during development of the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites. Impacts would be significant.</p>	<p>MM-CUL-1 through MM-CUL-4</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>

Threshold	Impact Discussion	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
<b>4.6 Energy</b>			
Would the project result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during Project construction or operation?	Construction and operation of the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would not require non-standard equipment or construction practices that would lead to excessive energy use during construction. Long-term operational use would comply with the California Building Code and applicable federal, state, and local energy and building regulations, including the Sustainable Santee Plan. Impacts would be less than significant.	No mitigation is required.	Less than Significant
Would the project conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	The proposed TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would comply with applicable energy standards and regulations during construction and would be built and operated in accordance with existing, applicable building regulations at the time of construction, as mandated by Title 24 energy efficiency standards. The project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of CALGreen or with SDG&E's implementation of the Renewables Portfolio Standard. Therefore, the project would not conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency, and impacts would be less than significant.	No mitigation is required.	Less than Significant
<b>4.7 Geology and Soils</b>			
Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving: (i) rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map, issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault (refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42); (ii) strong seismic ground shaking? (iii) seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction; or (iv) landslides?	The City is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Fault Zone and no active or potentially active faults are known to occur within or adjacent to the City. Adherence to General Plan Safety Element policies, the City's Municipal Code, and the California Building Code (CBC) would ensure that future development within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would not cause substantial adverse effects associated with fault rupture, or ground shaking, and impacts would be less than significant.	No mitigation is required.	Less than Significant

Threshold	Impact Discussion	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
<p>Would the project result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?</p>	<p>Short-term erosion and sedimentation impacts would be addressed through conformance with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) and associated Municipal Code requirements (Title 9, Chapter 9.06 Stormwater Management and Discharge Control). These regulations require erosion and sedimentation control during construction and implementation of best management practices to avoid erosion and off-site drainage. Therefore, adherence to applicable Municipal Code requirements would ensure that future development would not result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil, and impacts would be less than significant for the TCSP, AEN, and Housing Element sites.</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>
<p>Would the project be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?</p>	<p>The City is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Fault Zone and no active or potentially active faults are known to occur within or adjacent to the City. Adherence to General Plan Safety Element policies, the City's Municipal Code, and the CBC would ensure that future development within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would not cause substantial adverse effects associated with liquefaction and landslide, and impacts would be less than significant.</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>
<p>Would the project be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?</p>	<p><b>TCSP area and AEN</b>                      The TCSP area and AEN are underlain by sandy loam south of the San Diego River and riverwash, water, clay, loam, and sandy loam north of the San Diego River. Clays are generally considered expansive or potentially expansive. Development within these soils could result in a significant impact due to the soil's inability to support the proposed structures, especially during major rain events and/or flash floods. The presence of clay would require future development within the northern section of the TCSP area to adhere to Municipal Code requirements for project-specific geotechnical reports that would ensure site-specific measures are implemented to ensure safe building construction in areas with expansive soils. Adherence to Municipal Code requirements would ensure that future development would not create substantial direct or indirect risks associated with expansive soils, and impacts would be less than significant.</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>

Threshold	Impact Discussion	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
	<p><b>Housing Element sites</b></p> <p>The Housing Element sites are not underlain by expansive or potentially expansive soils. Impacts would be less than significant.</p>		
<p>Would the project have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?</p>	<p>Due to the urban and built out nature surrounding the TCSP area, AEN, and the Housing Element sites, there is no expectation that septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems would be part of any future development proposal. All sites would be served by Padre Dam Municipal Water District for wastewater service. No impacts would occur.</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>
<p>Would the project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?</p>	<p>Unique geologic features have not been identified in the project area. However, alluvial deposits of mountain valleys and older Quaternary alluvial fan deposits may have a moderate potential to contain paleontological resources. If grading associated with the TCSP area, AEN, or Housing Element sites were to occur at depths sufficient to disturb a moderate sensitivity geologic formation, potential impacts to paleontological resources would be significant.</p>	<p>MM-GEO-1</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>
<p><b>4.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions</b></p>			
<p>Would the project result in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions that may have a significant impact on the environment?</p>	<p><b>TCSP area and AEN</b></p> <p>Future development allowed throughout the TCSP area would not be increased by the project; however, development regulations and criteria in the proposed TCSP would replace the current TCSP. As a result, the project would not increase the amount of vehicle traffic expected to be generated in the City. Similarly, the project would not increase the amount of traffic in the City and would not result in an increase in the average VMT per capita. As buildout of the project would not result in an increase in anticipated development or traffic generation over what would occur under buildout of the adopted zoning and land use designations, the project would not result in an increase in emissions that are not already accounted for in the Sustainable Santee Plan. The transportation projects identified in the TCSP are intended to increase pedestrian and bicycle safety and connection within the TCSP area to aid in the reduction of VMT and mobile source emissions. Increasing residential and commercial density in transit corridors and within a TPA would support the City in achieving the GHG emissions reduction</p>	<p><b>TCSP area and AEN</b></p> <p>No mitigation is required.</p> <p><b>Housing Element sites</b></p> <p>MM-GHG-1 through MM-GEO-5</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>



Threshold	Impact Discussion	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
	<p>targets of the Sustainable Santee Plan, and thus, impacts associated with GHG emissions would be less than significant.</p> <p><b>Housing Element sites</b></p> <p>Consistency with Step 2 of the Sustainable Santee Plan Project Consistency Checklist would require implementation of applicable strategies and actions for reducing GHG emissions. This includes strategies related to energy efficiency, tree planting, electric vehicle charging, solid waste reduction, and clean energy. Specifically, Checklist Step 2, measures 2.1 (Increase Energy Efficiency in New Residential Units), 5.1 (Shade Trees), 7.1 (Increase Use of Electric Vehicles), 9.1 (Reduce Waste at Landfills), and 10.1 (Increased Clean Energy Use) are applicable to the Housing Element sites; however, because there are no uniformly applicable development codes in place that would ensure these measures be implemented during the development review process, the impact would be potentially significant.</p>		
<p>Would the project conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs?</p>	<p><b>TCSP area and AEN</b></p> <p>Because the project would be consistent with the Sustainable Santee Plan, the project would not conflict with state GHG reduction plans developed to achieve the goals, including the CARB Scoping Plan. Impacts would be less than significant.</p> <p><b>Housing Element sites</b></p> <p>Because there are no uniformly applicable development codes that would enforce the project-level CAP Checklist requirements during the development review process, development of the Housing Element sites may not be consistent with the plan and the impact would be potentially significant.</p>	<p><b>TCSP area and AEN</b></p> <p>No mitigation is required.</p> <p><b>Housing Element sites</b></p> <p>MM-GHG-1 through MM-GHG-5</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>
<b>4.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials</b>			
<p>Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?</p>	<p>With proper use and disposal of hazardous materials as required by state, regional, and local regulations, the project would not result in hazardous or unhealthful conditions within or in proximity to the project area. Compliance with all applicable regulations would ensure impacts associated with use, transport and disposal of hazardous materials associated with the TCSP area, AEN and Housing Element sites would be less than significant.</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>

Threshold	Impact Discussion	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
<p>Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?</p>	<p>Although there are regulations and standards in place to protect against the accidental release of asbestos and lead-based paints and other hazardous materials during demolition, there could be potentially unknown sources of surface or subsurface hazardous materials in the TCSP area, AEN, or Housing Element sites that may be subject to a release during development. Impacts would be significant.</p>	<p>MM-HAZ-1</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>
<p>Would the project emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?</p>	<p><b>TCSP area and AEN</b></p> <p>While facilities that emit hazardous air emissions or handle hazardous waste are not proposed by the project, specific future projects are not currently known. Accidental releases of hazardous materials could also occur with demolition and construction activities as described above. The TCSP area and AEN are within 0.25 mile of a school and consultation with and notification to the Santee School and Grossmont High School Districts would be required as future projects are proposed. Impacts would be significant.</p> <p><b>Housing Element sites</b></p> <p>There are no schools within 0.25 mile of the Housing Element Sites. Therefore, no impacts to hazards within 0.25 mile of a school would occur associated with the Housing Element sites. Impacts would be less than significant.</p>	<p><b>TCSP area and AEN</b></p> <p>MM-HAZ-1</p> <p><b>Housing Element sites</b></p> <p>No mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>
<p>Would the project be located on a site, which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would create a significant hazard to the public or environment?</p>	<p>No areas of the TCSP area, AEN, or Housing Element sites are listed as hazardous materials sites pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 (Cortese List). Therefore, it is not expected that grading, excavation, or construction activities would result in the release of hazardous materials associated with contaminated soils or underground tanks. Therefore, the project would not result in conditions leading to any reasonably foreseeable upset or accident involving the release of hazardous materials. No impact would occur.</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>

Threshold	Impact Discussion	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
<p>For a project located within an Airport Land Use Plan (ALUCP) or, where such plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, or a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?</p>	<p>Portions of the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites are within Safety Zones 3, 4, and 6 for Gillespie Field. Although conformance with applicable City policies, ALUCP design considerations applicable to development with airport safety zones, and compliance with applicable FAA conditions would minimize safety hazards for people residing or working in the project area, densities allowed by the TCSP would still exceed ALUCP recommended densities. Impacts associated with airport hazards would be significant.</p>	<p>No mitigation is available.</p>	<p>Significant and Unavoidable</p>
<p>Would the project impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?</p>	<p>No land uses are proposed that would impair implementation of or physically interfere with the City's emergency response plan, evacuation routes; or conflict with any of the Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan's specific hazard mitigation goals, objectives, and related potential actions. Specifically, the Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan requires each jurisdiction to develop and publish evacuation procedures that are published and available to the public. Furthermore, applications for all future projects within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would be reviewed and approved by the Santee Fire Department prior to issuance of building permit. Therefore, buildout of the proposed project would not conflict with emergency response, and impacts would be less than significant.</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>
<p>Would the project expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas, within brush fire management zones, or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?</p>	<p>The TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites are not located within the CAL FIRE Very High Hazard Severity Zone; however, portions of the project area are located in the Wildland Urban Interface Zone. The City's General Plan policies 4.2 through 4.13 provide guidance for the minimization of fire hazards including ensuring adequate response times, setting standards for emergency access, structural standards, other planning design measures required to be considered in all new development. Additionally, future discretionary projects would require review by the Building Official/Fire Marshal. No impact would occur.</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>

Threshold	Impact Discussion	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
<b>4.10 Hydrology and Water Quality</b>			
<p>Would the project violate any water quality standards, or waste discharge requirements, or otherwise substantially degrade surface and groundwater quality?</p>	<p>Future development, whether discretionary or by right, would be required to adhere to all applicable water quality standards as provided in various water quality regulations and plans including all pertinent requirements of the City’s Jurisdictional Runoff Management Plan (JRMP) (including WQIP and MS4 Permit), BMP Design Manual, NPDES General Construction Permit, as well as all regulations related to water quality. Additionally, new development would be required to adhere to the City’s Stormwater Ordinance applying source control and site design BMPs as project design features in order to reduce the discharge of pollutants into the stormwater conveyance system. Therefore, through regulatory compliance impacts related to water quality standards and waste discharge requirements would be less than significant.</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant.</p>
<p>Would the project substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede substantial groundwater management of the basin?</p>	<p>Future projects in the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would be required to comply with the City’s General Plan policies and regulations that prioritize infiltration and treatment of stormwater and generally require increased on-site infiltration and higher standards of water quality protection compared to water quality standards that would have been implemented on existing developed sites. Therefore, although development/redevelopment within the TCSP area, including the AEN and Housing Element sites, would increase impervious surfaces, prioritization of on-site infiltration would ensure groundwater recharge, and impacts to groundwater quality would be less than significant.</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>
<p>Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river through the addition of impervious surfaces in a manner which would: (i) result in a substantial erosion or siltation on or off-site; (ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site; (iii) create or contribute</p>	<p>Adherence to the City’s Stormwater and Grading Ordinances include requirements which focus on retention and infiltration of waters on-site and avoidance of changes to drainage velocities during both construction and post-construction/operational phases of development. These regulations would ensure avoidance of increases in erosion and siltation. With respect to construction-related measures, consistent with the Municipal Code Chapters 9.06 and 11.40, all future development proposing one acre or greater of grading would be required to prepare a construction SWPPP describing specific construction BMPs that address pollutant source reduction and provide erosion control measures necessary to reduce potential pollutant sources. Additionally, post construction, individual projects would be required to ensure the maintenance of post-construction BMPs</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>

Threshold	Impact Discussion	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
<p>runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or (iv) impede or redirect flood flows?</p>	<p>designed to retain volume and velocity of stormwater. The ongoing erosion control measures would ensure that surface water runoff flows leaving future development sites during both construction and operation of future projects would not carry substantial amounts of sediment to downstream waters. Therefore, through regulatory compliance, impacts related to erosion and siltation associated with development of the proposed project would be less than significant.</p> <p>Consistent with the City's General Plan Conservation Element policies and Municipal Code (Chapters 9.06 and 11.40), all future development, whether discretionary or by right, would be required to ensure the maintenance of stormwater flows would not result in increased surface runoff or redirect existing flood flows. Implementation of applicable stormwater BMPs and erosion control measures would be required to retain flows on-site and minimize the velocity of stormwater runoff. Through project-specific measures, impacts related to increased or redirected surface runoff associated with development of the proposed project would be less than significant.</p> <p>Future development of the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would contribute runoff to the existing stormwater drainage system. However, future development, whether discretionary or by right, would be required to adhere to state and local regulation and policies including preparation of project specific Stormwater Quality Management Plans, BMP Plan Sheets, drainage plans, and pollution control plans. Specifically, Municipal Code Section 9.06.250(B) requires priority development projects to include hydromodification management BMPs that are sized and designed to ensure that post-project runoff conditions (flow rates and durations) would not exceed the pre-development runoff conditions by more than 10 percent. This assists in ensuring that stormwater flows would not overwhelm the City's stormwater system. Additionally, the Development Impact Fee (DIF) and Dedication Ordinance requires new development to provide funds for the installation of needed drainage improvements. Through regulatory compliance and payment of the DIF, impacts related to exceeding the capacity of the stormwater system associated with development of the proposed project would be less than significant.</p>		

Threshold	Impact Discussion	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
<p>In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, would the project risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?</p>	<p>The California Department of Water Resources, Division of Dam Safety, reviews the safety of dams annually. The TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites are at least four miles away from all nearby dams and development within the project area would not increase the risk of a dam failure. Portions of the TCSP area, AEN, and Site 16A that are within flood zones associated with the San Diego River would be required to adhere to all state and local development regulations including the City's General Plan and Municipal Code. Development within the project area would not be expected to exacerbate flooding issues, considering the emphasis on stormwater retention and on-site infiltration. The project area is not in a tsunami or seiche zone and, therefore, the project would not be affected in the event of a tsunami. Overall, through regulatory compliance, impacts related to flood hazards associated with development of the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would be less than significant.</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>
<p>Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or substantial groundwater management plan?</p>	<p>Future development in the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites, whether discretionary or by right, would be required to adhere to all applicable water quality standards as provided in various water quality regulations and plans including all pertinent requirements of the City's JRMP (including WQIP and MS4 Permit), BMP Design Manual, NPDES General Construction Permit, as well as all regulations related to water quality. Future projects within the TCSP area would comply with the City's General Plan policies requiring the incorporation of construction BMPs for the protection of water quality. Additionally, new development would be required to adhere to the City's Stormwater Ordinance applying source control and site design BMPs as project design features in order to reduce the discharge of pollutants into the stormwater conveyance system. Impacts would be less than significant.</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>

Threshold	Impact Discussion	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
<b>4.11 Land Use and Planning</b>			
<p>Would the project physically divide an established community?</p>	<p><b>TCSP area and AEN</b></p> <p>The TCSP area is in an urbanized part of the City and the proposed TCSP would include updated development standards that would guide planned development throughout the TCSP area and AEN. The proposed TCSP identifies roadway improvements including bike lanes and multi-use pathways as well as new roadway connections to provide direct connections through the TCSP area and AEN. Development pursuant to the TCSP would be subject to Objective Design Standards and would not physically divide an established community. Further, the project proposes a River Bridge over the San Diego River that would improve connectivity in the TCSP area and AEN as the San Diego River currently separates much of the TCSP area from north to south. Significant impacts related to physically dividing an established community would not occur. Impacts would be less than significant.</p> <p><b>Housing Element sites</b></p> <p>The Housing Element sites are in the southeastern part of the AEN on vacant generally flat sites along existing roadways and near existing developed areas. Development of these Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B would occur in areas that have been either developed in the past or have been identified for development. Significant impacts related to dividing an established community would not occur. Impacts would be less than significant.</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>
<p>Would the project cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental impact?</p>	<p><b>TCSP area and AEN</b></p> <p>The TCSP area and AEN are consistent with the General Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and plans aimed at reducing GHGs or mitigating other environmental effects. Future development within the TCSP area and AEN would be subject to notification and consultation with the Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) at the time specific development proposals are submitted for City review. Conflicts with local planning documents are not anticipated; however, future development proposals within the TCSP area and AEN would be subject to review for consistency with the City's General Plan and Municipal Code. Impacts associated with conflicts with local land use plans would be less than significant; however, it is possible that future development</p>	<p>No mitigation is available.</p>	<p>Significant and Unavoidable</p>

Threshold	Impact Discussion	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
	<p>plans within the TCSP area and AEN within Gillespie Field Safety Zones 3 and 4 could be found incompatible with the ALUCP by the ALUC. Therefore, at this level of program review, a significant impact would occur with respect to consistency with ALUCPs. .</p> <p><b>Housing Element Sites</b></p> <p>Impacts associated with conflicts with local land use plans for future development at the Housing Element sites would be less than significant, except with respect to compatible density within Gillespie Field Safety Zones 3 and 4. The potential for future development within the Housing Element sites to exceed the density limits for the corresponding airport safety zone could result in a significant impact after consultation with the ALUC</p>		
<b>4.12 Noise</b>			
<p>Would the project result in generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?</p>	<p>Construction noise levels in the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would have the potential to increase ambient noise levels by 10 dBA or more, and impacts would be significant. Because there is no numerical standard set by the City Municipal Code, adequate reduction of future projects' noise levels is not guaranteed. Stationary operational noise is therefore considered significant for the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites. Noise levels from traffic associated with implementation of the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would increase by up to 0.3 CNEL. Noise level increases below 3 CNEL are not readily perceptible. Traffic operational noise is less than significant for the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites. Because no set plans are available for outdoor performance areas, including site layouts or locations of potential noise-amplification equipment, impacts are considered significant for the TCSP area and AEN.</p>	<p><b>TCSP area and AEN</b> MM-NOI-1 through MM-NOI-3</p> <p><b>Housing Element sites</b> MM-NOI-1 and MM-NOI-2</p>	<p><b>TCSP area and AEN</b> Significant and Unavoidable</p> <p><b>Housing Element sites</b> Less than Significant</p>



Threshold	Impact Discussion	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
<p>Would the project result in exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration of groundborne noise levels?</p>	<p><b>TCSP area and AEN</b> Impacts from future projects within the TCSP, excluding the Housing Element sites, are not known and, therefore, are considered significant.</p> <p><b>Housing Element sites</b> Vibration produced by the project would be lower than the “strongly perceptible” impact for humans of 0.1 inch per second PPV. Additionally, off-site exposure to such ground-borne vibration would be temporary as it would be limited to the short-term construction period. Construction of the Housing Element sites is anticipated to require the use of a vibratory roller, and are not anticipated to be used within 50 feet of any nearby residences. At these distances, impacts would be less than significant.</p>	<p><b>TCSP area and AEN</b> MM-NOI-4 <b>Housing Element sites</b> No mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>
<p>Would the project be located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan, or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, and expose people residing or working in the area to excessive noise levels?</p>	<p><b>TCSP area and AEN</b> Portions of the commercial areas north of Mission Gorge Road and west of Town Center Parkway are located within an area that would be exposed to 60 CNEL based on the noise contours in the Gillespie Field ALUCP. The commercial uses within these areas would not exceed the land use compatibility standards described in the City General Plan Noise Element. Impacts would be less than significant.</p> <p><b>Housing Element sites</b> The Housing Element sites would not be located in an area exposed to aircraft noise levels exceeding 60 CNEL. Impacts would be less than significant.</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>

Threshold	Impact Discussion	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
<b>4.13 Population and Housing</b>			
<p>Would the project induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?</p>	<p>The proposed TCSP would facilitate the potential future construction of up to 3,140 new residential units, 1,480 of which would be within the AEN in the Housing Element sites. These units would provide capacity for projected growth in the region consistent with the adopted zoning designations and densities currently allowed within the TCSP area. It is expected that SANDAG will update their housing and population projections with the next update of their regional transportation plan and sustainable communities strategy, which will use plan information proved by the City. No unplanned population growth would occur from implementation of the TCSP area. Impacts would be less than significant.</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>
<p>Would the project displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?</p>	<p><b>TCSP area</b></p> <p>While specific future projects within the TCSP area are not currently known, future residential development within the TCSP area would have the potential to displace some people and housing through demolition of existing residential structures. However, if a home were removed, more housing units would be provided in its place, which would accommodate more people and ensure no net loss of housing. Impacts related to displacement of people and housing would be less than significant.</p> <p><b>AEN and Housing Element sites</b></p> <p>While specific future projects within the AEN are not currently known, residential development in the AEN is only anticipated in the Housing Element sites. Sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B are vacant parcels that do not contain existing housing development. As a result, buildout of the AEN would not result in the demolition of existing housing, and impacts related to displacement of people and housing would be less than significant.</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>

Threshold	Impact Discussion	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
<b>4.14 Public Services</b>			
<p>Would the project promote growth patterns resulting in the need for and/or provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the following public services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Fire Protection;</li> <li>b. Police Protection;</li> <li>c. Schools;</li> <li>d. Parks;</li> <li>e. Other Public Facilities?</li> </ul>	<p>All future development, whether discretionary or by-right, would be required to adhere to the City's Municipal Code. Specifically, Chapter 12.50, would require payment of a DIF to ensure the costs of constructing public facilities that are reasonably related to the impacts of the new development. Likewise, future project compliance with the City's General Plan requires land developers to pay the cost of ensuring adequate public services and facilities, including fire services, police protection, schools, library services, and park facilities. Payment of a DIF is anticipated to sufficiently address any incremental increases in public services required by the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites, and impacts would be less than significant.</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>
<b>4.15 Recreation</b>			
<p>Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?</p>	<p>Development within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would not result in sufficient demand to directly require construction or expansion of a parks and recreational facilities, since each incremental housing development would pay its fair share toward anticipated park needs. At the time a future parkland project is proposed, it would require a separate environmental review and compliance with regulations in existence at that time would address potential environmental impacts related to the construction and operation of new park facilities. Therefore, impacts related to the need for and/or provision of new or physically altered parks and recreation facilities would be less than significant.</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>

Threshold	Impact Discussion	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
<p>Would the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?</p>	<p>The TCSP identifies several types of recreational facilities that are expected to occur in the TCSP area. Development within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would not result in sufficient demand to directly require construction or expansion of a parks and recreational facilities, since each incremental housing development would provide required park space or pay its fair share toward anticipated park needs. At the time a future parkland project is proposed, it would require a separate environmental review and compliance with regulations in existence at that time would address potential environmental impacts related to the construction and operation of new park facilities. Therefore, impacts related to the need for and/or provision of new or physically altered parks and recreation facilities would be less than significant.</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>
<p><b>4.16 Transportation</b></p>			
<p>Would the project conflict with a plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities?</p>	<p><b>TCSP area and AEN</b></p> <p>The project would result in improved pedestrian, bicycle, and transit amenities, and foster increased safety for all forms of transportation by providing transportation improvements that would serve all types of travel modes. Thus, impacts related to conflicts with an adopted plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system would be less than significant for the TCSP and AEN.</p> <p><b>Housing Element sites</b></p> <p>Future development of the Housing Element sites would be consistent with Policy 2.2 of the City’s General Plan Land Use Element, which encourages the development of higher density residential developments in areas close to the multi-modal transit station (at Santee Town Center near Housing Element sites 16A and 16B) and along major road corridors where transit and other convenience services are available (at Magnolia Avenue near Housing Element sites 20A and 20B). The project would add density in locations proximate to transit, providing consistency with City policies. The project would also comply with the Mobility Element and the Americans with Disabilities Act, which require bicycle, pedestrian, and transit accessibility. Therefore, the project would not conflict with an adopted plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system and impacts would be less than significant for the Housing Element sites.</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>

Threshold	Impact Discussion	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
<p>Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?</p>	<p><b>TCSP area</b></p> <p>Planned development in the TCSP area and Housing Element sites 20A and 20B within a TPA is presumed to have a less than significant VMT-related impact; however, areas of the TCSP area that are not within a TPA and do not meet other screening VMT criteria, such as the Mast Boulevard Residential Neighborhood and the new residential on the west side of Town Center Commercial Neighborhood, would result in a VMT impact. Since the transportation projects identified in the TCSP are intended to increase pedestrian and bicycle safety and connection within the TCSP area, the proposed transportation projects would not result in an increase in VMT Traffic impacts related to inconsistencies with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 subdivision (b) would be significant.</p> <p><b>AEN and Housing Element sites 16A and 16B</b></p> <p>The project includes planned development of the AEN and development of Housing Element sites 16A and 16B near Santee Trolley Square. The AEN and Housing Element sites 16A and 16B are within ½ mile of a major transit stop at the San Diego <del>Green-Copper</del> Line Trolley transit station in the Santee Trolley Square and future development is presumed to result in a less than significant transportation impact related to inconsistencies with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 subdivision (b).</p> <p><b>Sites 20A and 20B</b></p> <p>The project includes development of Housing Element sites 20A and 20B along Magnolia Avenue in the AEN. While there are bus stops on Magnolia Avenue near both sites, they are not considered major transit stops. As a result, Housing Element sites 20A and 20B are not within ½ mile of a major transit stop; however, the project would not result in changes to the zoning at these sites and the existing zoning designations per the 2021-2029 Sixth Cycle Housing Element would remain. Impacts related to inconsistencies with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 subdivision (b) as a result of development at Housing Element sites 20A and 20B would be significant.</p>	<p><b>TCSP area</b></p> <p>MM-TRA-1</p> <p><b>AEN and Housing Element sites 16A and 16B</b></p> <p>No mitigation is required.</p> <p><b>Housing Element sites 20A and 20B</b></p> <p>MM-TRA-1</p>	<p><b>TCSP area</b></p> <p>Significant and Unavoidable</p> <p><b>AEN and Housing Element sites 16A and 16B</b></p> <p>Less than Significant</p> <p><b>Housing Element sites 20A and 20B</b></p> <p>Significant and Unavoidable</p>

Threshold	Impact Discussion	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
<p>Would the project substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?</p>	<p><b>TCSP area and AEN</b></p> <p>The project includes several transportation improvement projects related to multi-use pathways, bike lanes, and roadways. These improvements are designed to enhance existing connections in the area to improve accessibility, encourage the use of multi-modal facilities, and decrease conflict between vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians. Specific plans have not been prepared for the transportation improvements in the TCSP area and AEN; however, all future development would be subject to policies set forth in the Mobility Element of the General Plan and designed in accordance with the City's Public Works Standards. Final plans for the proposed transportation infrastructure designs would be subject to review and approval by the City's Engineering Division prior to construction, which would include a review for design safety. Implementation of the project would not result in hazards due to a design feature and impacts in the TCSP area and AEN would be less than significant.</p> <p><b>Housing Element sites</b></p> <p>Development of Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B may require improvements to the existing roadway network at the time projects are ready to be built. These improvements would be subject to a review by the Engineering Department to ensure roads and access are configured consistent with established roadway design standards. Development projects on Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B would be subject to a ministerial review that would include consistency with the City's Public Works Standards. The Engineering Division review would consider the potential for design hazards and that improvements are designed consistent with established standards. Impacts related to hazards due to a design feature would be less than significant for the Housing Element sites.</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>

Threshold	Impact Discussion	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
<p>Would the project result in inadequate emergency access?</p>	<p><b>TCSP area and AEN</b></p> <p>Improvements in the TCSP area and AEN would involve connections to existing gaps in the transportation network, such as on Riverview Parkway, Cottonwood Avenue, Main Street, and Park Center Drive. Extending these roadways would create a more comprehensive transportation network by providing more direct connections between Town Center area and the adjacent residential neighborhood, and therefore, would improve overall emergency access in the TCSP area and AEN. Additionally, compliance with the applicable regulations and review requirements would ensure that future development within the TCSP area and AEN under the proposed project would not result in inadequate emergency access. Impacts would be less than significant.</p> <p><b>Housing Element sites</b></p> <p>Development of Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B may require improvements to the existing roadway network at the time plans are prepared for their development, which could affect emergency access. As stated above for the TCSP Area and AEN, all improvements would be subject to a review by the Engineering Department to ensure roads and access are configured consistent with established roadway design standards. Development projects on Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B would be subject to a ministerial review by the City’s Fire Department to provide adequate emergency access. Impacts related to inadequate emergency access would be less than significant within the Housing Element sites.</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>
<p><b>4.17 Tribal Cultural Resources</b></p>			
<p>Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in PRC Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural</p>	<p><b>TCSP area and AEN</b></p> <p>The TCSP area and AEN contain previously recorded historic resources. While the TCSP does not specifically propose alteration of a known historic resource, it can be assumed that future development within the TCSP area and AEN could have the potential to directly or indirectly impact resources through such activities. Because site-specific details of future projects are not known at this program-level of analysis, impacts to historic resources would be considered potentially significant.</p>	<p><b>TCSP area and AEN</b></p> <p>MM-CUL-1 through MM-CUL-4</p> <p><b>Housing Element sites</b></p> <p>MM-CUL-2 through MM-CUL-4</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>

Threshold	Impact Discussion	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
<p>value to a California Native American tribe, and that is listed or eligible for listing in the CRHR, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in PRC Section 5020.1(k)?</p>	<p><b>Housing Element sites</b></p> <p>Although no specific historical resources have been identified in the Housing Element sites, the presence of historical resources throughout the TCSP area suggests that there is a potential for encountering previously unidentified resources. Future development of Site 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B therefore has the potential to cause substantial adverse changes to historical resources. Impacts would be potentially significant.</p>		
<p>Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in PRC Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is a resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of PRC Section 5024.1? In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of PRC Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.</p>	<p>The NAHC Sacred Lands File search was positive for the presence of sacred lands within the project vicinity. In addition, the San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians and the Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians requested government-to-government consultation. The Barona Band of Mission Indians requested to receive the results of the cultural resources study and be kept apprised of any updates. Finally, the Jamul Indian Village deferred to closer tribes. The Barona Band of Mission Indians noted that the San Diego is a known use area and has the potential for intact buried cultural deposits. Through formal consultation under SB 18 and AB 52, no formal tribal cultural resources were specifically identified. Given the presence of sacred lands in the project vicinity and the potential for tribal cultural resources to underly the project site, ground-disturbing activities associated with project construction have the potential to cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of tribal cultural resources.</p>	<p>MM-CUL-1 through MM-CUL-4</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>



Threshold	Impact Discussion	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
<b>4.18 Utilities and Service Systems</b>			
<p>Would the project require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?</p>	<p>All future project applications, whether discretionary or ministerial, would be required to comply with relevant City regulations and adhere to the mitigation framework presented in this EIR, including MM-BIO-1 through MM-BIO-6, MM-CUL-1 through MM-CUL-4, MM-GEO-1, MM-HAZ-1, and MM-NOI-1 through MM-NOI-4, which would ensure that any physical impacts associated with construction of connections to existing utilities would be addressed as part of the City review for each individual project. Additionally, future projects would be required to comply with General Plan policies including Land Use Element Policy 3.6, which requires the review of development projects to ensure that all necessary utilities are available to serve the project. Impacts would be less than significant.</p>	<p>MM-BIO-1 through MM-BIO-6, MM-CUL-1 through MM-CUL-4, MM-GEO-1, MM-HAZ-1, and MM-NOI-1, MM-NOI-2, and MM-NOI-4</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>
<p>Would the project have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?</p>	<p>Based on the PDMWD estimated water supply, water efficiency of multi-family development, water conservation requirements, along with existing regulations that require new construction to be water efficient, it is not anticipated that the project would affect the ability of PDMWD to plan for adequate water supplies within the City during normal, dry, and multiple dry years. Nevertheless, PDMWD approved a Water Supply Assessment to ensure that there is an adequate water supply to serve the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites. Impacts would be less than significant.</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>
<p>Would the project result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?</p>	<p>Development anticipated within the TCSP would occur within areas of the City that are already served by existing wastewater infrastructure, including pipelines to the PDMWD WWTP and WRF. All future project applications, whether discretionary or ministerial would be required to adhere to the City's Municipal Code which requires the assurance of adequate water facilities through payment of development impact fees for the constructing public facilities, which are reasonably related to the impacts of the new development (SMC Chapter 12.30). <u>Wastewater impact fees are collected directly by Padre Dam Municipal Water District.</u> Additionally, future projects would be required to comply with General Plan policies including Land Use Element Policy 3.6, which requires the review of development projects to ensure that all necessary utilities are available to serve the project. Impacts would be less than significant.</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>

Threshold	Impact Discussion	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
<p>Would the project generate solid waste in excess of state or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?</p>	<p>In total, the TCSP area would increase solid waste generation by approximately 23,304 pounds per day. The AEN would increase solid waste generation by approximately 14,880 pounds per day. The Housing Element sites would increase solid waste generation by approximately 7,868 pounds per day. As detailed above, the Sycamore Landfill has a current remaining capacity of approximately 100 MCY, or 168.5 billion pounds, as of 2023. Future projects, whether discretionary or ministerial, would be required to adhere to state and local regulations relating to solid waste and recycling. Specifically, the City is required to meet solid waste diversion goals set forth in the California Integrated Waste Management Act which would decrease waste delivered to the landfill. Additional measures for the reduction of solid waste includes goals set by the state to reduce organic waste disposed of in landfills. The City would require future development to contract with available solid waste service providers that would provide the required solid waste disposal, including recycling and organic material recycling to meet exiting State and local requirements. Future projects would also be required to comply with General Plan Safety Element Policy 3.8 which promotes the safe, environmentally sound means of solid waste disposal for the community. Impacts would be less than significant.</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>
<p>Would the project comply with federal, state, or local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?</p>	<p>In total, the TCSP area would increase solid waste generation by approximately 23,304 pounds per day. The AEN would increase solid waste generation by approximately 14,880 pounds per day. The Housing Element sites would increase solid waste generation by approximately 7,868 pounds per day. The Sycamore Landfill has a current remaining capacity of approximately 100 MCY, or 168.5 billion pounds, as of 2023. Future projects, whether discretionary or ministerial, would be required to adhere to state and local regulations relating to solid waste and recycling. Future projects would also be required to comply with General Plan Safety Element Policy 3.8 which promotes the safe, environmentally sound means of solid waste disposal for the community. Impacts would be less than significant.</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation</p>

Threshold	Impact Discussion	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
<b>4.19 Wildfire</b>			
<p>Would the project substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?</p>	<p>The land uses and anticipated development within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would continue to guide development within the area and would not include land uses that would impair implementation of/or physically interfere with the City's emergency response efforts, evacuation routes, or conflict with any of the MHMP specific hazard mitigation goals, objectives, and related actions. Furthermore, applications for future projects within the TCSP area and AEN would be reviewed and approved by the City's Fire Department prior to issuance of building permits to ensure consistency with fire standards and regulations. Additionally, future development would be required to adhere to the City's General Plan (Safety Element) policies including, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.11, and 4.12 which address emergency response and emergency evacuation. Future development within the TCSP area and AEN would not conflict with emergency response and impacts would be less than significant.</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>
<p>Would the project, due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or uncontrolled spread of wildfire?</p>	<p>The TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites are within an urbanized part of the City and are generally not located near areas of high wildfire risk. None of the programmatic elements of the project are located within the CAL FIRE Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone; however, portions of the TCSP area are in a wildland-urban interface. Fire safety in general would be addressed by the City's General Plan policies 4.2 through 4.13 which provide guidance for the minimization of fire hazards including ensuring adequate response times, setting standards for emergency access, structural standards, other planning design measures required to be considered in all new development. Additionally, future projects would require review by the Building Official/Fire Marshal that would include review of defensible space and other wildfire protection/preventative measures. Impacts would be less than significant.</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>

Threshold	Impact Discussion	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
<p>Would the project require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?</p>	<p><b>TCSP area and AEN</b></p> <p>The proposed project identifies new roadways and pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and other infrastructure and public facilities improvements throughout the TCSP area, including the AEN. TCSP Chapter 4, Infrastructure and Public Facilities, discusses the water, wastewater, and stormwater facilities that would continue to serve the TCSP area and AEN. None of the required infrastructure needed to serve future development within the TCSP area or the AEN would exacerbate fire risk or result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment. Impacts would be less than significant on the TCSP area and AEN.</p> <p><b>Housing Element sites</b></p> <p>Development of Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B would rely on existing infrastructure in the area such as roads and other utilities and emergency services. None of the Housing Element sites would require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure that may exacerbate fire risk and impacts in the Housing Element sites would be less than significant.</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>
<p>Would the project expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope stability, or drainage changes?</p>	<p><b>TCSP area and AEN</b></p> <p>Wildfires can greatly reduce the amount of vegetation on hillsides. Slope failures, mudflows, and landslides are common in areas where steep hillsides and embankments are present, and such conditions would be exacerbated in a post-fire environment where vegetative cover has been removed. The TCSP area, including the AEN, is generally flat and surrounds the San Diego River. CAL FIRE mapping data indicates low to moderate erosion potential within the City limits. Future development within the TCSP area and AEN would not result in significant changes to runoff, slope stability, landslides, erosion, or drainage, and impacts would be less than significant.</p> <p><b>Housing Element sites</b></p> <p>The Housing Element sites are in the southeastern part of the AEN on vacant and graded areas that do not have high erosion potential. None of the sites are located near slopes or other factors that would expose people or structures to downslope or downstream flooding risks or landslides. Housing Element sites 16A and 20A are near the San Diego River and are identified as</p>	<p>No mitigation is required.</p>	<p>Less than Significant</p>

Threshold	Impact Discussion	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
	<p>partially within flood hazard areas of the San Diego River; however, development of the Housing Element sites would not result in significant changes to runoff, slope stability, or drainage on either site, and impacts associated with the Housing Element sites would be less than significant.</p>		

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## **1.0 Introduction**

This Environmental Impact Report (EIR; State Clearinghouse [SCH] No. 2023090032) has been prepared to address the potential environmental effects associated with the City of Santee (City) Town Center Specific Plan (TCSP) Project (project). The project includes the following key components: (1) a comprehensive update of development and design standards in an expanded TCSP area, including throughout five newly created neighborhoods; (2) updates to the Santee Arts and Entertainment Overlay District (AEOD), which are incorporated into the TCSP as a new Arts and Entertainment Neighborhood (AEN); and (3) conceptual planning and Objective Design Standards for four strategic Housing Element sites (16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B) within the TCSP area, which were previously analyzed programmatically within the Sixth Cycle Housing Element Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR). A detailed description of the project, including the required discretionary approvals, is provided in the Project Description in Chapter 3.0 of this EIR.

### **1.1 EIR Purpose and Legal Authority**

#### **1.1.1 EIR Purpose**

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15121, the purpose of this EIR is to provide public agency decision-makers and members of the public with detailed information about the potential significant environmental effects of the project, possible ways to reduce its significant effects, and reasonable alternatives that would reduce or avoid identified significant effects.

#### **1.1.2 EIR Legal Authority**

This EIR has been prepared by the City as lead agency, in compliance with the criteria, standards, and procedures of CEQA of 1970 as amended (Public Resources Code [PRC], Section 21000 et seq.), and the CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations [CCR], Title 14, Section 15000 et seq.).

##### **1.1.2.1 Lead Agency**

The City is the lead agency for the project, pursuant to Article 4 (Sections 15050 and 15051) of the CEQA Guidelines. The lead agency, as defined by CEQA Guidelines Section 15367, is the public agency that has the principal responsibility and authority for carrying out or approving a proposed project. As lead agency, the City of Santee Planning and Building Department conducted a preliminary review of the project and determined that an EIR was required. The analysis and findings in this EIR reflect the independent, impartial conclusions of the City.

##### **1.1.2.2 Responsible and Trustee Agencies**

In accordance with CEQA, this EIR is also prepared for review and use by Responsible and Trustee state agencies. Responsible Agencies are defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15381 as those agencies that have discretionary authority over one or more actions involved with project implementation. Trustee Agencies are defined by CEQA Guidelines Section 15386 as state agencies that have jurisdiction by law over natural resources affected by a project that are held in trust for the people of the state of California.

Responsible/Trustee Agencies for the proposed project include, but are not limited to:

- San Diego County Air Pollution Control District (SDAPCD),
- San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB),
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW).

The SDAPCD is an agency that regulates sources of air pollution within San Diego County (County) and would be responsible for issuing permits for construction of future projects associated with the proposed TCSP. CDFW is a Trustee agency that may have permitting authority for future projects with sensitive natural resources. The RWQCB would also be a Responsible Agency as it holds regional water quality in its trust through the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) compliance review process. The RWQCB regulates water quality through monitoring of compliance with the regional water quality permit (or “general permit”) in accordance with the Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 401 certification process. The RWQCB would have the responsibility of approving the Notice of Intent to comply with the terms of the general permit to discharge storm water associated with future construction activity allowed by the project.

It is the intent of the EIR to enable the City, other responsible agencies, and interested parties to evaluate the environmental impacts of the proposed project, thereby enabling them to make informed decisions with respect to the requested entitlements.

## **1.2 EIR Type, Scope, Organization, and Content**

### **1.2.1 Type of EIR**

This EIR has been prepared as a Program EIR, as defined in Section 15168 of the CEQA Guidelines. A Program EIR is recommended for a series of actions that are related geographically, as logical parts in a chain of contemplated actions, or in connection with the issuance of plans that govern the conduct of a continuing program [per CEQA Guidelines, Section 15168(a)]. The advantages of a Program EIR include the ability to provide a more exhaustive consideration of alternatives and cumulative effects than might be possible in a single project-specific EIR; to avoid duplication of basic policy considerations; and to provide the lead agency with the ability to consider broad program-wide policies and mitigation measures that would apply to specific projects within the overall program [CEQA Guidelines, Section 15168 (b)]. In addition to the program-level of analysis, this EIR provides a project-level analysis of conceptual plans for the Housing Element sites.

### **1.2.2 EIR Scope**

The scope of analysis for this EIR was determined by the City as a result of initial project review, consideration of agency and public comments received in response to the Notice of Preparation (NOP) circulated September 1, 2023, and comments received at a scoping meeting that was held on Thursday, September 7, 2023. The NOP provided a general description of the elements of the program, a summary of the probable environmental effects of the program to be addressed in the Draft EIR, and figures showing the project location. The NOP provided the public and interested public agencies with the opportunity to review the components proposed as part of the program and to provide comments or concerns on the scope and content of the Draft EIR.



During the scoping period, four comment letters were received from CDFW, California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), and County of San Diego Department of General Services (DGS). The comment letters are included in Appendix A along with the NOP. The main issues raised in the comment letters, and where they are discussed in the EIR, are shown in Table 1-1, *NOP Comment Letter Issue Areas*.

Through these scoping activities, the project was determined to have the potential to result in the following significant environmental impacts:

- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Air Quality
- Cultural Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Land Use and Planning
- Population and Housing
- Recreation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Wildfire
- Aesthetics
- Biological Resources
- Energy
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Noise
- Public Services
- Transportation
- Utilities and Service Systems

These issues are evaluated in Chapter 4.0 of this EIR. Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)(3)(A), impacts are identified as direct or indirect, short-term or long-term, and assessed on a “plan-to-ground” basis. The “plan-to-ground” analysis addresses the changes or impacts that would result from implementation of the project compared to existing ground conditions. An analysis of the impacts of the project compared to existing adopted plans, a “plan-to-plan” analysis, is presented within Chapter 9.0, Project Alternatives, under the No Project (Adopted Plan) Alternative.

**Table 1-1  
NOP COMMENT LETTER ISSUE AREAS**

<b>Agency of Letter Received</b>	<b>Issue Area(s)</b>	<b>Where Addressed in EIR</b>
California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The EIR should analyze the project's consistency with the draft Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) subarea plan, particularly development of the AEN.</li> <li>2. Any proposed changes should not lead to new, unanticipated direct or indirect impacts to the sensitive habitat and species described in the subarea plan.</li> <li>3. Species-specific surveys and assessments should be provided in the EIR and CDFW's California Natural Diversity Data Base should be consulted.</li> <li>4. The EIR should address specific acreages of impacted habitat; potential impacts and mitigation measures for lighting, noise, human activity, invasive species, and drainage; impacts to wildlife corridors; and indirect and cumulative effects on biological resources.</li> <li>5. Mitigation measures should be implemented for impacts to nesting birds, including avoidance of activity during the breeding season and sensitivity training for personnel.</li> <li>6. The EIR should identify potential impacts to stream or riparian resources to coordinate issuance of a Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement with CDFW.</li> <li>7. Surveys shall be conducted in the proposed project areas to locate signs of Crotch's Bumble Bee habitation; if bumble bees are detected, proper protocols must be followed according to the California Endangered Species Act.</li> </ol>	Section 4.4, Biological Resources
California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A vehicle miles traveled (VMT)-based Traffic Impact Study (TIS) should be conducted for the proposed project. The TIS may also need to identify near- and long-term safety or operational issues on or adjacent to state facilities.</li> <li>2. Caltrans brings to attention several improvements to State Route (SR) 52 west of the Santee Town Center and SR 67 east of the Santee Town Center that are currently in the planning stage.</li> </ol>	Section 4.8, Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Section 4.16, Transportation

Agency of Letter Received	Issue Area(s)	Where Addressed in EIR
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Caltrans encourages the City to begin coordination early in locations that may affect both parties. Caltrans hopes to coordinate with the City to evaluate potential Complete Streets projects, as well as discuss proposed policies, plans, and projects to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the EIR.</li> <li>4. Impacts to transportation access (including bicycle, pedestrian, and public transit) should be mitigated during project construction.</li> <li>5. The Coast, Canyons, and Trails Comprehensive Multimodal Corridor Plan, developed by Caltrans and the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), should be reviewed and incorporated into the proposed TCSP.</li> <li>6. Caltrans reminds the City that an encroachment permit will be required for any work within the Caltrans' right-of-way prior to construction and supporting documents from the City will be necessary.</li> <li>7. Perpetuation of survey monuments by a licensed land surveyor is required, if they are being destroyed by any construction.</li> </ol>	
Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The project could impact tribal cultural resources, in which case it would be considered to have a significant effect on the environment.</li> <li>2. The proposed project will be subject to Assembly Bill (AB) 52 and Senate Bill (SB) 18. Consultation per AB 52 and SB 18 with California Native American tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the project is recommended to occur as early as possible to avoid inadvertent discoveries of human remains and best protect tribal cultural resources.</li> <li>3. The project should perform a cultural resources assessment that includes an archaeological records search at the California Historical Research Information System; a report detailing the findings and recommendations of the records search and field survey; a Sacred Lands File Search; and a mitigation monitoring and reporting program (MMRP) plan.</li> </ol>	Section 4.17, Tribal Cultural Resources

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<b>Agency of Letter Received</b>	<b>Issue Area(s)</b>	<b>Where Addressed in EIR</b>
County of San Diego Department of General Services (DGS)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. DGS requests that an alternative be prepared for sites 20A and 20B in which the County develops the property with civic uses.</li><li>2. DGS requests that the EIR recognizes the County ownership of key properties being studied in detail.</li><li>3. The EIR should analyze the impacts of locating structures within a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) floodplain and identify appropriate mitigation measures.</li></ol>	Section 9.0, Project Alternatives and Section 4.9, Hazards and Hazardous Materials

## 1.2.3 EIR Organization and Content

### 1.2.3.1 Organization and Content

The EIR has been organized in accordance with the most recent CEQA Guidelines. A summary of the organization and content of this EIR is provided below:

- **Executive Summary** provides a brief description of the project, identifies areas of controversy, summarizes the EIR analysis, and provides a summary table identifying significant impacts, proposed mitigation measures, and impact level after mitigation. A summary of the project alternatives and a comparison of the potential impacts of the alternatives with those of the project are also included.
- **Chapter 1.0, Introduction** contains an overview of the legal authority, purpose, and intended uses of the EIR, as well as its scope and organization. It also provides a discussion of the CEQA environmental review process, including opportunities for public involvement.
- **Chapter 2.0, Environmental Setting** provides a description of the project's regional and local setting including its locational context, existing physical characteristics and land use, available public infrastructure and services, and relationship to other relevant plans.
- **Chapter 3.0, Project Description** provides a detailed description of the project, including background on its development, its main objectives, and key components. The discretionary actions required to implement the project are also described.
- **Chapter 4.0, Environmental Analysis** contains an evaluation of potential impacts for the environmental issues identified in the EIR scope. Each issue evaluation includes discussion of the existing conditions, including the existing regulatory framework, identification of the thresholds and methodology for determining the significance of impacts, an assessment of potential impacts, and an evaluation of the significance of the impacts considering the existing regulatory framework and/or new standards proposed in conjunction with the project. Where analysis demonstrates that potentially significant impacts could occur, an outline of the regulatory framework, including new project standards is provided and a conclusion regarding the adequacy of the regulatory framework and significance of the impact after consideration of the regulatory framework is stated.
- **Chapter 5.0, Significant Unavoidable Environmental Effects/Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes** discusses the significant unavoidable or irreversible impacts that would occur with project implementation. This chapter also describes the potentially significant irreversible changes that may be expected with implementation of the project.
- **Chapter 6.0, Growth Inducement** evaluates the potential for the project to induce economic or population growth, either directly or indirectly, within the project area and region.
- **Chapter 7.0, Cumulative Impacts** identifies the impacts of the project in combination with other planned and future development in the region.

- **Chapter 8.0, Effects Found Not to be Significant** identifies all the issues determined in the scoping and preliminary environmental review process to be not significant based on CEQA criteria, and briefly summarizes the basis for these determinations.
- **Chapter 9.0, Alternatives** provides a description and comparative analysis of alternatives to the project. A summary and tabular comparison of the project and the alternatives is included in Chapter 9.0. Finally, as required by CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)(2), the EIR identifies the environmentally superior alternative.
- **Chapter 10.0, References Cited** lists all the reference materials cited in the EIR.
- **Chapter 11.0, Individuals and Agencies Consulted** identifies all the individuals and agencies consulted during preparation of the EIR.
- **Chapter 12.0, Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program** documents all the mitigation measures identified in the EIR and required as part of the project.

### **1.2.3.2 Technical Appendices**

Technical appendices, used as a basis for much of the environmental analysis in the EIR, have been summarized in the EIR, and are printed under separate cover as part of the EIR. The technical appendices are available for review at the City of Santee Planning & Building Department at 10601 Magnolia Avenue, Santee, California 92071.

### **1.2.3.3 Incorporation by Reference**

As permitted by CEQA Guidelines Section 15150, this EIR has referenced several technical studies and reports. Information from these documents has been briefly summarized in this EIR, and the relationship to this EIR described. These documents are included in Chapter 10.0, References Cited, and are hereby incorporated by reference. They are available for review at the City of Santee Planning & Building Department at 10601 Magnolia Avenue, Santee, California 92071.

## **1.3 EIR Intended Use and Review Process**

### **1.3.1 EIR Intended Use**

This document is intended to be used by the City, as lead agency, in evaluating the project and related discretionary actions. In addition, this document is intended to be used by the City when acting on subsequent applications for development within the TCSP area to ensure compliance with applicable regulations and the mitigation framework included in this EIR.

### **1.3.2 EIR Process**

The EIR review and certification process occurs in two basic stages. The first stage is the Draft EIR, which offers agencies and the public the opportunity to comment on the document. The second stage is the Final EIR, which provides the basis for approving the project and reviewing subsequent projects within the TCSP area.

### **1.3.3 Draft EIR**

In accordance with Sections 15085 and 15087(a)(1) of the CEQA Guidelines, upon completion of the Draft EIR, a Notice of Completion is filed with the State of California's Office of Planning and Research and Notice of Availability of the Draft EIR is issued in a newspaper of general circulation in the area and mailed to members of the public who have requested receipt of such notices. The Draft EIR is made available for review to the public and interested and affected agencies on the City's website for the purpose of providing comments "on the sufficiency of the document in identifying and analyzing the possible impacts on the environment and ways in which the significant effects of the project might be avoided or mitigated" (Section 15204, CEQA Guidelines).

The Draft EIR and all related technical studies are available for review during the public review period at the offices of the City of Santee Planning & Building Department at 10601 Magnolia Avenue, Santee, California 92071. Copies of the Draft EIR are also available at the following public location:

San Diego County Library  
Reference Desk  
9225 Carlton Hills Boulevard #17  
Santee, CA 92071

The Draft EIR can be downloaded from the City's website at:

<https://www.cityofsanteeca.gov/business/active-projects-map>.

### **1.3.4 Final EIR**

Following public review of the Draft EIR, the City will provide written responses to comments per CEQA Guidelines Section 15088 and will consider all comments in making its decision whether to certify the Final EIR. Responses to the comments received during public review, associated revisions to the Draft EIR sections, a mitigation monitoring and reporting program (MMRP) plan, Findings of Fact, and a Statement of Overriding Considerations (if applicable for any impacts identified in the Draft EIR as significant and unmitigated) will be prepared and compiled as part of the Final EIR.

The culmination of this process is a public hearing where the City Council will determine whether to certify the Final EIR as being complete and in accordance with CEQA. The Final EIR will be available for public review at least 10 days before the City Council makes a final determination regarding certification of the EIR, to provide commenters the opportunity to review the written responses to the EIR comment letters.

### **1.3.5 Subsequent Environmental Review**

Section 15168 of the CEQA Guidelines allows a Program EIR to serve as the basis for environmental review of subsequent projects. As allowed in CEQA Guidelines Section 15168(c), future projects within the TCSP will be reviewed by the applicable lead agency considering the certified Final TCSP EIR. A written consistency evaluation is expected to be undertaken for each subsequent discretionary project within the TCSP area to determine whether additional environmental documentation beyond the Final EIR must be prepared. Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines 15168(c)(2), if the lead agency under CEQA finds that, pursuant to Section 15162, no

subsequent EIR would be required, the lead agency can approve the subsequent project to be within the scope of the Final EIR, and no new environmental document is required. Factors that a lead agency may consider in making the written determination that no new environmental document is required include, but are not limited to, consistency of the later activity with the type of allowable land use, overall planned density and building intensity, geographic area analyzed for environmental impacts and covered infrastructure as described in the Final EIR. This written determination, including applicability of the Final TCSP EIR mitigation measures and alternatives, would be included within the project record.

However, if the lead agency determines one or more of the three triggers described in CEQA Guidelines Section 15162(a) exist or other factors identified through the consistency evaluation process indicate additional environmental documentation is required, the Final TCSP EIR may be used to simplify the task of preparing the environmental document for the subsequent project. Specifically, the Final EIR may be incorporated by reference and to address regional influences, secondary effects, cumulative impacts, alternatives, and other factors that apply to the program as a whole. Potential environmental documents that may be appropriate to subsequent projects within the TCSP area include an Addendum to the Final TCSP EIR pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15164, a tiered Negative Declaration or Mitigated Negative Declaration using the requirements in CEQA Guidelines Section 15152, or a subsequent (CEQA Guidelines Section 15162) or supplemental EIR (CEQA Guidelines Section 15163).

The lead agency may also review projects within the TCSP area for applicability with CEQA Guidelines Sections 15182 and 15183. CEQA Guidelines Section 15182 provides that certain residential, commercial, and mixed use projects that are found to be consistent with a specific plan are exempt from CEQA unless one of the triggers in Section 15162 exists. If a subsequent project within the TCSP area is found to meet the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Section 15182, a Notice of Exemption may be filed, and no further environmental document would be required.

Further, Section 15183 of the CEQA Guidelines mandates that projects consistent with the development density established by existing zoning, community plan, or general plan policies for which an EIR was certified, shall not require additional environmental review, except as might be necessary to examine whether there are project-specific significant effects which are peculiar to the project or its site. Consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15183, future projects in the TCSP area may be examined in an initial study or other consistency evaluation to determine if any of the following conditions are met: (1) Impacts are peculiar to the project or the parcel on which the project would be located; (2) Impacts were not analyzed as significant effects in a prior EIR on the zoning action, general plan, or community plan, with which the project is consistent; (3) Impacts include potentially significant off-site impacts and cumulative impacts which were not discussed in the Final EIR; or (4) Impacts which were previously identified as significant effects which, as a result of substantial new information which was not known at the time the Final EIR was certified, are determined to have a more severe adverse impact than discussed in the Final EIR. If any future projects within the TCSP area have potentially significant adverse environmental effects that were not examined in the Final EIR, further environmental documentation may be required.



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## 2.0 Environmental Setting

### 2.1 Regional Setting

The Santee Town Center Specific Plan (TCSP) area is located in the City of Santee (City) in San Diego County, approximately 18 miles east of downtown San Diego. The City is bordered by the City of El Cajon on the south and southeast, the City of San Diego on the west and northwest, and County of San Diego unincorporated areas on the east and northeast (Figure 3-1, *Regional Location* in Section 3.0, Project Description). The City's incorporated boundaries encompass approximately 17 square miles or 10,615 acres. The TCSP area is located in the central part of the City. A United States Geological Survey (USGS) map and an aerial photograph of the City and surrounding area are shown on Figure 2-1, *USGS Map* below and Figure 3-2, *Project Boundaries*, and Figure 3-3, *Proposed Neighborhoods* in Section 3.0, respectively.







Regional access to the City is provided via State Routes (SR) SR 52, SR 67, and SR 125, and arterial and local streets. Public transit services in the City are provided by Metropolitan Transit Services (MTS), which includes bus and light rail (Trolley). The San Diego Trolley terminates in the southern portion of the Arts and Entertainment Neighborhood (AEN) at the Santee Trolley Station within the Santee Trolley Square shopping area. Refer to Section 4.16, Figure 4.16-1, *TCPS Transit Area Network* for the location of transit facilities in relation to the project components.

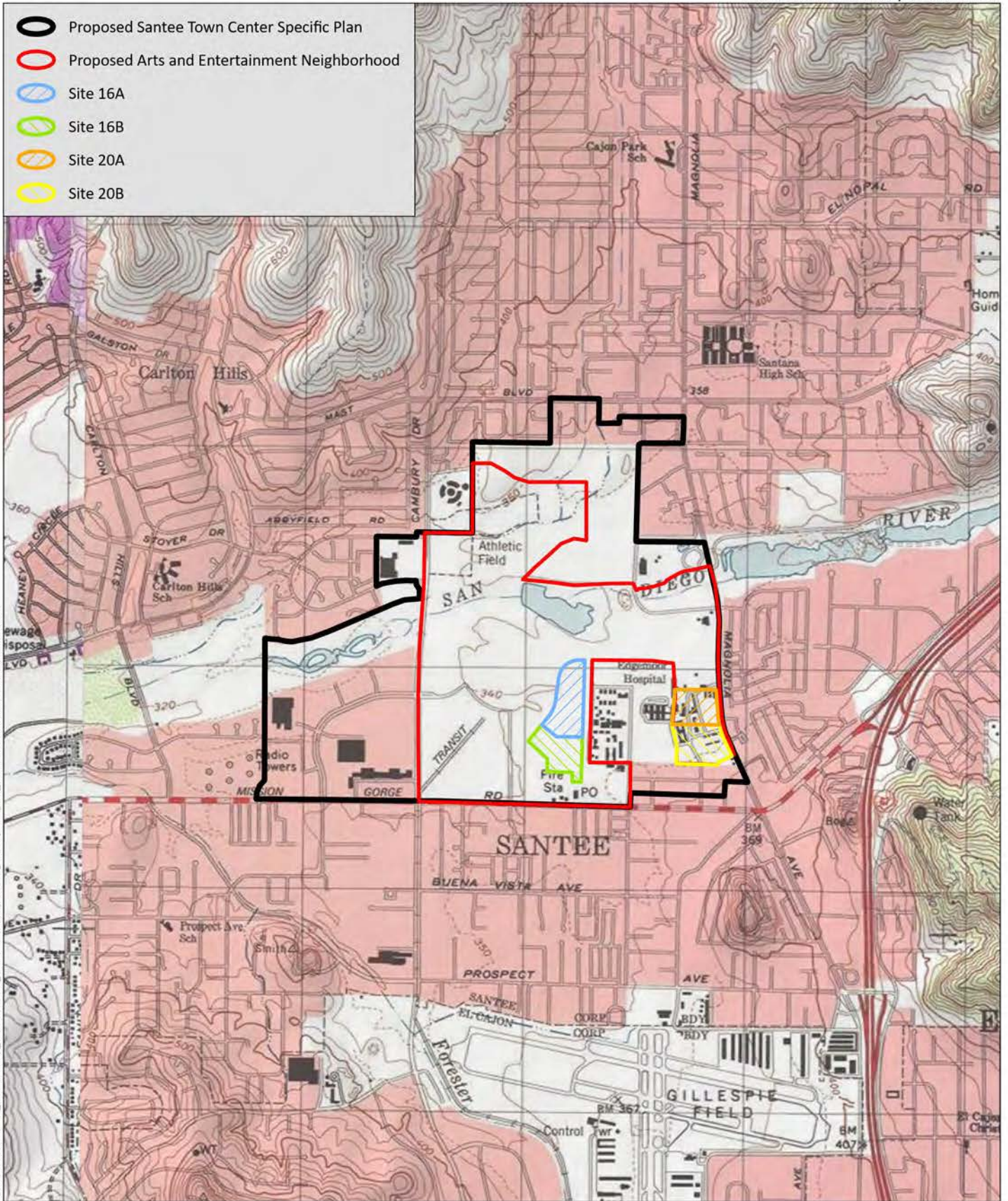
### 2.2 Project Location

The project area analyzed within the EIR includes the proposed, expanded 651-acre TCSP area, which includes five newly created neighborhoods, the largest of which, is the 341-acre proposed AEN, which includes four individual Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B.

#### 2.2.1 TCSP Area

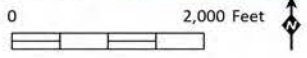
As shown on Figure 3-2, the TCSP area is located in the central part of the City and is traversed by the San Diego River. The area is generally bounded by Mast Boulevard to the north, North Magnolia Avenue and Cottonwood Avenue to the east, Mission Gorge Road and 3rd Street to the south, and Cuyamaca Street to the west, although portions extend further west. The proposed TCSP establishes five distinct neighborhoods for planning purposes: Arts and Entertainment, Town Center Commercial, Mast Boulevard Residential, Park Avenue Residential, and Facilities-Based (Figure 3-3). The Arts and Entertainment neighborhood and Housing Element sites are described below. The Town Center Commercial Neighborhood primarily consists of shopping areas with easy access to Mission Gorge Road and Cuyamaca Street. The Mast Boulevard Residential Neighborhood includes a series of existing residential neighborhoods, including vacant parcels located north of the San Diego River and south of Mast Boulevard, which are designated to allow for residential uses. This neighborhood is adjacent to the Town Center Community Park and Park Center Drive is a roadway that runs along this area. The Park Avenue Residential Neighborhood is along Park Avenue, east of Cottonwood Avenue, west of Magnolia Avenue and north of Mission Gorge Road. Existing residential development in this area consists of single-family residences found on lots that could accommodate multi-family residential development should the properties be redeveloped. Characteristics of this area such as the existing grid street pattern, Park Avenue's generous width, and proximity to retail and services, support the planned density for this neighborhood.

-  Proposed Santee Town Center Specific Plan
-  Proposed Arts and Entertainment Neighborhood
-  Site 16A
-  Site 16B
-  Site 20A
-  Site 20B



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Source: El Cajon 7.5' Quad (USGS)





## 2.2.2 AEN

The AEN, a proposed expansion and renaming of the existing Arts and Entertainment Overlay District (AEOD), is the largest proposed neighborhood in the TCSP area and its location relative to the surrounding area is shown on Figure 3-2. The area is generally bounded by Riverwalk Drive to the north, North Magnolia Avenue to the east, Mission Gorge Road to the south, and Cuyamaca Street to the west. Town Center Parkway and Riverview Parkway also occur in the southern part of the AEN.

## 2.2.3 Housing Element Sites

Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B are in the southeastern part of the AEN, generally south and east of Riverview Parkway, west of North Magnolia Avenue, and north of Mission Gorge Road. Sites 16A (11.11 acres) and 16B (8.61 acres) are located on one parcel (Assessor's Parcel Number [APN] 381-050-82-00) along Riverview Parkway and Site 16A is immediately north of and adjacent to Site 16B. Sites 20A (7.75 acres) and 20B (10.00 acres) are also located on one parcel (APN 382-050-81-00) along North Magnolia Avenue with Site 20A located immediately north of and adjacent to Site 20B. Existing conditions at the Housing Element sites are depicted on Figure 2-2, *Aerial Photograph of Housing Element Site 16A*, Figure 2-3, *Aerial Photograph of Housing Element Site 16B*, Figure 2-4, *Aerial Photograph of Housing Element Site 20A*, and Figure 2-5, *Aerial Photograph of Housing Element Site 20B*.

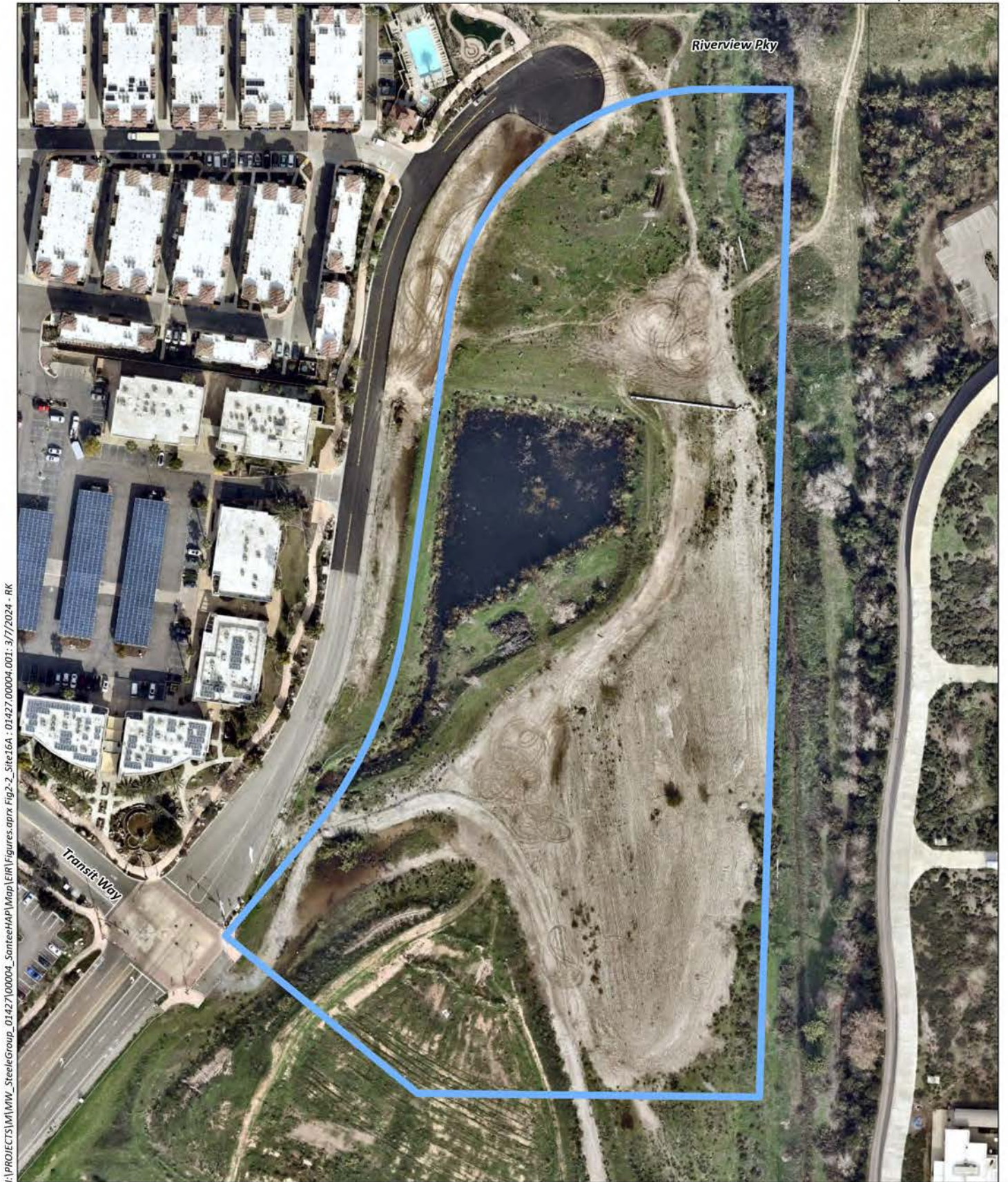
## 2.3 Existing Land Uses and Environmental Setting

Located in the San Diego River valley, the City was originally a rural development with dairies, ranches, and vineyards centered around the river. The flat river valley provides distant views toward the hillsides that surround the City. The City experienced steady population growth from the 1950s into the 1970s and increased industrial and commercial expansion throughout the 1980s after the City's official incorporation in December 1980. The City is predominantly urbanized and has approximately 59,478 residents as of July 1, 2023 (U.S. Census Bureau 2024).

Developed land accounts for approximately 58 percent of the total area within the City, with approximately 42 percent of the lands remaining vacant or in open space areas associated with the San Diego River. Nearly half of the developed land in the City is occupied with residential uses (49 percent), including both single-family and multiple-family residences. Single-family residences are over one-third of the total developed acreage in the City and are particularly dominant north of the San Diego River. Public/Semi-Public land uses comprise 21 percent of developed area in the City and include schools, public and private parks, and churches. Commercial uses account for approximately 6 percent of developed area and are concentrated at the intersection of Mission Gorge Road and Cuyamaca Street, in the southern limits of the City, as well as along major City arterials. Industrial uses are approximately 5 percent of developed area and are found north of SR 67 in the east and along SR 52 in the south (City 2019a).

The central portion of the TCSP area is the San Diego River, which is designated as Floodway/Open Space and is not intended for development. Additional undeveloped land within the TCSP is located north of Town Center Parkway and East of Cuyamaca Street, as well as off Riverview Parkway and North Magnolia Avenue, north of Mission Gorge Road. Public infrastructure, including roads, water, sewer, energy, and communication facilities, are developed and available throughout the TCSP area.





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Source: Aerial (SanGIS, 2023)





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Source: Aerial (SanGIS, 2023)





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Source: Aerial (SanGIS, 2023)





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Source: Aerial (SanGIS, 2023)



### **2.3.1 TCSP Area**

The TCSP area, including its five newly proposed neighborhoods, comprises a mix of commercial, office, residential, institutional, and park/open space land uses. Areas north of the San Diego River are mostly developed with residential land uses and institutional uses. Areas south of the San Diego River include a mix of developed and undeveloped areas with commercial and residential land use designations generally north of Mission Gorge Road and west of Cuyamaca Street, along Town Center Parkway, south of Mission Creek Drive and north of River Park Drive, west of Cuyamaca Street. The TCSP area is developed with 1,756,567 square feet (sf) of non-residential development and 814 residences.

The TCSP area also includes two larger properties with institutional uses including the Las Colinas Detention Facility (Las Colinas) and the Edgemoor Skilled Nursing Facility. Both facilities serve regional purposes. Las Colinas is operated by the County Sheriff's Department. Edgemoor Skilled Nursing Facility is owned and operated by the County and provides care for individuals having complex medical needs who require specialized interventions from highly trained staff.

Existing land uses in the project vicinity include airports at Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Miramar and Gillespie Field. Both airports maintain Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans (ALUCPs) in coordination with the Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC). The ALUCP identifies two review areas and zones to regulate airport noise, safety, airspace obstruction, and other airport hazards. The northern portion of the TCSP area is located within MCAS Miramar's Review Area 2 and Gillespie Field's Review Area 1, while the southern portion of the TCSP area is within Review Gillespie Field's Review Area 2 and Safety Zones 3, 4, and 6.

### **2.3.2 AEN**

The AEN is the largest proposed neighborhood in the TCSP area and development is guided by the TCSP and the City's Municipal Code. There are 607,371 sf of non-residential development and 300 residences in the AEN under existing conditions. Areas in the northern part of the AEN include major recreational facilities including the Town Center Community Park (east and west), the Sportsplex, and the YMCA and Aquatics Center. Areas south of the San Diego River include a mix of office and commercial retail shopping and residential land uses, including some vacant properties along Town Center Parkway, Riverview Parkway, and Edgemoor Drive. Gillespie Field is approximately 0.6 mile south of the AEN and portions are within the airport's Airport Influence Area (AIA) Review Area 1, which identifies potential noise or safety concerns related to airport operations in proximity to urban development. The northern part of the AEN is located within MCAS Miramar's Review Area 2 and Gillespie Field's Review Area 1, while the southern portion of the AEN is within Gillespie Field's Review Area 2 and Safety Zones 3, 4, and 6.

### **2.3.3 Housing Element Sites**

Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B are in the southeastern portion of the AEN. These sites are identified in the City's adopted Housing Element for 2021-2029, which specifies individual lot size acreages as well as residential and non-residential development potential at each site.

#### **2.3.3.1 Housing Element Sites 16A and 16B**

Housing Element sites 16A and 16B are located north of Mission Gorge Road and east of Riverview Parkway in the Santee Town Center. The sites are 11.11 acres and 8.61 acres,



respectively, and are undeveloped and vacant. The sites are generally disturbed with some natural vegetation. The area surrounding the sites is primarily developed with Santee Trolley Square immediately west, Las Colinas to the east, and open space associated with the San Diego River to the north. Areas immediately south of Site 16B include commercial development along Mission Gorge Road. Housing Element Site 16A is located within MCAS Miramar's Review Area 2 and both Housing Element Site 16A and Site 16B are within Gillespie Field's Review Area 2 and Safety Zone 4. The northernmost tip of Site 16A is within Gillespie Field Safety Zone 6.

### **2.3.3.2 Housing Element Sites 20A and 20B**

Housing Element sites 20A and 20B are located just west of Magnolia Avenue, north of Mission Gorge Road. The sites are 7.75 acres and 10.00 acres, respectively, and are undeveloped and vacant. The sites are generally disturbed with some natural vegetation. The area surrounding the sites is generally developed with Las Colinas to the west, residential development along Mission Gorge Road to the south, and residential development to the east across from Magnolia Avenue. Both Housing Element Site 20A and Site 20B are within Gillespie Field's Review Area 2 and Safety Zones 4 and 6. Housing Element site 20A is adjacent to the Historic Edgemoor Polo Barn, which is a documented historic resource.

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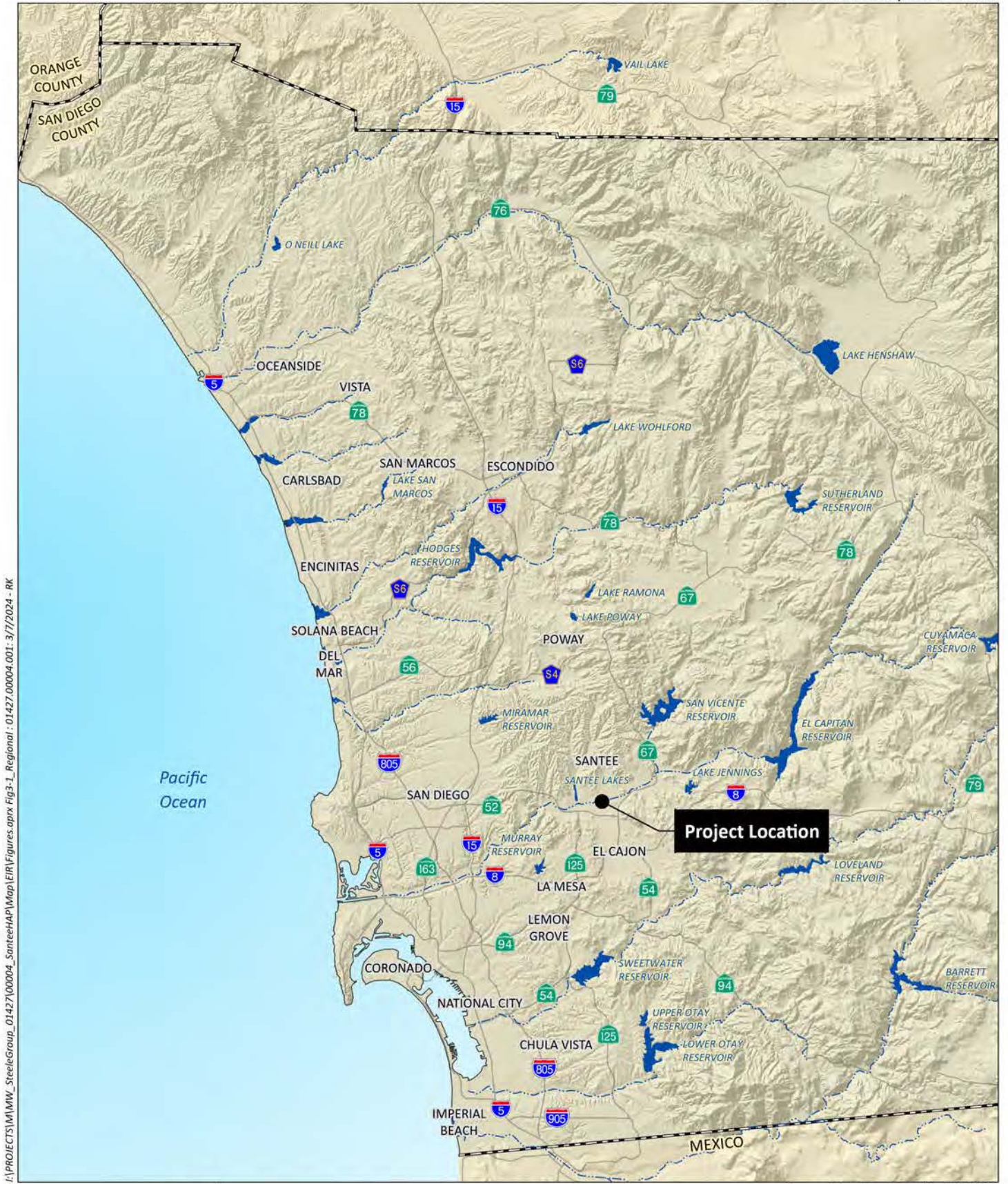
## 3.0 Project Description

The project analyzed in this Draft EIR is the comprehensive update to the Town Center Specific Plan (TCSP), which was originally approved in October of 1986 and last amended in 2019. As the TCSP area is partially developed, the analysis focuses on updated development standards and impacts associated with potential future development and redevelopment throughout the TCSP, including within its five newly proposed neighborhoods. As described in more detail throughout this Project Description, the proposed TCSP includes the following: an updated TCSP, including expansion of the boundaries of the overall TCSP area and updated development standards to continue to facilitate planned development throughout the five proposed neighborhoods of the TCSP area; expansion of the boundaries of the existing Arts and Entertainment Overlay District (AEOD) to a new Arts and Entertainment Neighborhood (AEN); and conceptual development plans and Objective Design Standards for Housing Element sites in the southeastern portion of the AEN, pursuant to the densities permitted in the City's adopted 6<sup>th</sup> Cycle Housing Element and as allowed under state density bonus law under California Government Code Section 65915. Future development within the TCSP area would be guided and regulated through, but not limited to, the proposed updated TCSP, the City Municipal Code, and the City General Plan. This Draft EIR analyzes the environmental effects of implementing the proposed TCSP as follows:

- The proposed approximately 651-acre TCSP area, including its five neighborhoods, is analyzed at the program level;
- A sub-geography of the TCSP, the proposed approximately 342-acre AEN, is also analyzed at the program level; and
- Each of the Housing Element sites located within the AEN is analyzed at the project level, including:
  - The 11.11 acre Site 16A
  - The 8.61 acre Site 16B
  - The 7.75 acre Site 20A
  - The 10.00 acre Site 20B

### 3.1 Project Location and TCSP Boundaries

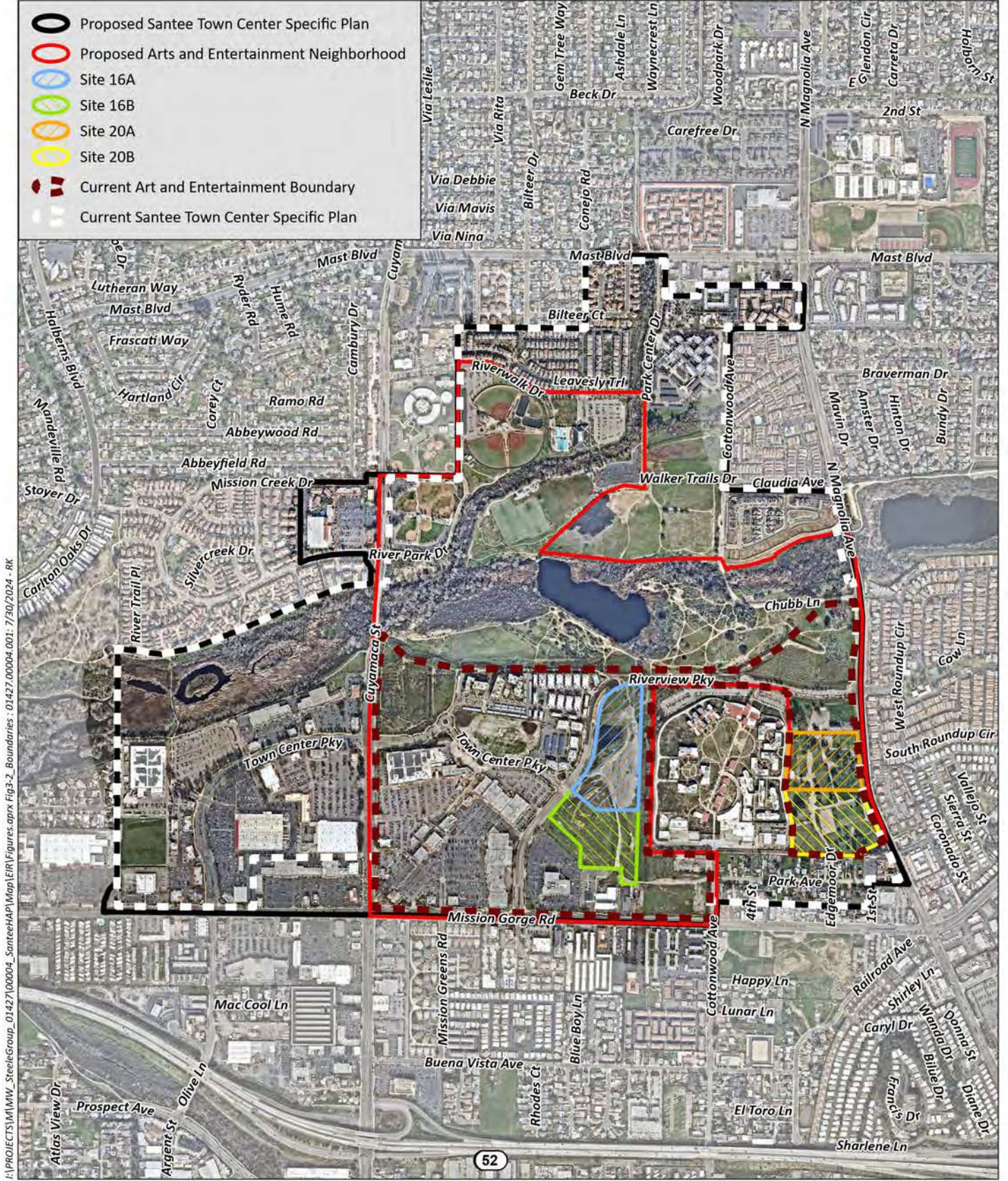
The project is located in the City of Santee (City), in San Diego County (County). The City is bordered by unincorporated San Diego County to the north and east, the City of El Cajon to the south, and the City of San Diego to the west, as seen on Figure 3-1, *Regional Location*. The proposed project takes place in the Town Center area of the City, which is bisected east-west by the San Diego River. The proposed TCSP area, including its five proposed neighborhoods, is bounded by Mast Boulevard to the north, Magnolia Avenue to the east, Mission Gorge Road to the south, and Mast Park to the west, as shown on Figure 3-2, *Project Boundaries*. The AEN is located wholly within the TCSP area, stretching across the San Diego River in the central portion of the TCSP area. The AEN is bordered by Riverwalk Drive and residential uses to the north, Magnolia Avenue and institutional land uses to the east, Mission Gorge Road to the south, and Cuyamaca Street to the west. The AEN boundary, and the Housing Element sites located within the AEN boundary are shown on Figure 3-2. The five proposed neighborhoods are shown in Figure 3-3, *Neighborhoods*. The San Diego Green-Copper Line Trolley terminates in the southern portion of the AEN at the Santee Trolley Station.



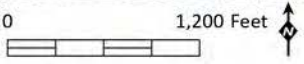
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Source: Base Map Layers (SanGIS, 2016)





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Source: Aerial (SanGIS, 2023)



## **3.2 Purpose and Objectives of the Proposed Town Center Specific Plan**

### **3.2.1 Purpose**

The original TCSP was adopted in October of 1986 to establish a hub of employment and commercial opportunities centered around the San Diego River (City 1986). Since its adoption, the TCSP has been amended 16 times, with the last comprehensive update approved in 2006 and the latest amendment, Amendment 19-1, adopted in December 2019. TCSP Amendment 19-1 established the AEOD with the intention of supporting tourism and attracting commercial, educational, and recreational uses to beautify and enliven the five proposed neighborhoods within the TCSP area. The proposed TCSP would involve expanding the overall TCSP boundary by approximately 42 acres (from 610 acres to 652 acres), creating five distinct, yet interconnected neighborhoods, and updating the land use and development standards within the TCSP consistent with densities and intensities established by existing zoning and the adopted and certified 2021-2029 Housing Element. The project would also involve expanding the former AEOD area by 170 acres (from 172 acres to 342 acres) and renaming the neighborhood the AEN. The purpose of the AEN is to create a mixed-use walkable environment with both day and night activities, becoming “Downtown Santee.”

The proposed project also aims to fulfill the goals of the 2021-2029 Sixth Cycle Housing Element, which was adopted by the City in October 2022 (City 2022a). The 2021-2029 Housing Element includes an inventory of underutilized parcels with potential to meet the City’s Regional Housing Needs Assessment housing production goals. After adoption of the Housing Element, the City was awarded funding for conceptual planning and project-level analysis of the Housing Element sites located within the AEN (sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B). These four sites were redesignated from commercial to residential use and specific zoning and density maximums were established as part of the 2021-2029 Housing Element. The proposed TCSP includes conceptual plans and development options to facilitate housing on each of the four sites consistent with the density maximums of the adopted Housing Element and state density bonus law. In summary, the update to the TCSP builds upon the goals and objectives established by the 1986 TCSP, its 2006 comprehensive update, Amendment 19-1, and the 2021-2029 Housing Element, while strengthening the original vision through new development standards and design guidelines. The proposed project is the most comprehensive update to the TCSP since 2006.

### **3.2.2 Community Outreach Process**

As part of the TCSP update process, the City undertook an extensive public outreach process, which began in 2021 and continued through 2023. Outreach consisted of conducting pop-up outreach at three City events to understand the community’s priorities and needs; hosting two community meetings to review opportunities and constraints; distributing an online questionnaire to help define overall and topic specific goals and receiving responses from 169 people; and consulting with the City Council on five separate occasions to gain feedback and suggestions for TCSP content. Feedback received during the community outreach process was used to develop the vision and content of the proposed TCSP.

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- Arts & Entertainment Neighborhood Town Center
- Commercial Neighborhood
- Mast Boulevard Residential Neighborhood
- Park Avenue Residential Neighborhood
- Facilities-Based Neighborhood

Source: City of Santee 2024

### 3.2.3 Project Objectives

Project objectives were developed through input received during the community outreach process and were used by the City as the Lead Agency in developing a reasonable range of alternatives to evaluate in this Draft EIR. These project objectives will ultimately aid in preparing the project findings and statement of overriding considerations, if necessary. In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15124(b), the following objectives have been identified for the proposed TCSP:

- Allow for a unified comprehensive open space system to be an integral part of the design concept of the TCSP area. The river shall be an open space area for the benefit of the community;
- Provide and encourage both active and passive recreational opportunities to help meet the recreational needs of the community;
- Establish criteria for architectural designs and concepts that reinforce the sense of community identity and support high quality development. These criteria should foster uniqueness and cohesive design enhancing Santee's character;
- Use landscape design to enhance the quality of the environment, resiliency of the community, and contribute to high quality, safe, and sustainable development;
- Provide for the development of a varied, safe, efficient, and cost-effective transportation system to adequately support the mobility needs of the TCSP area with minimal negative impact on the community;
- Provide a variety of housing types and sizes with a mixture of ownership and rental housing;
- Create a variety of commercial and office/professional opportunities to provide goods, services, and employment opportunities to the region and establish the TCSP area as an activity center of the community;
- Incorporate community-serving, civic, and public uses within the TCSP area to become focal points for residents and visitors to enjoy;
- Limit new institutional uses within the TCSP area;
- Establish employment-supportive uses as part of new developments to provide job opportunities for the community and establish revenue sources within the TCSP area. These should include research and development and office/ professional uses; and
- Provide for housing development opportunities on Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B consistent with the City's adopted Housing Element for 2021-2029.



### 3.3 Contents of Proposed Specific Plan

The proposed TCSP is organized into seven chapters that build upon the goals and objectives established by past plans while providing updated guidance for future development in the 651-acre TCSP area. Through illustrative design concepts and the establishment of objective development standards, the TCSP provides clear direction for the establishment of new residential, commercial, institutional, office, civic center, and open space uses; mobility networks; public services; and infrastructure improvements desired to create a successful Town Center for the City. Although this EIR incorporates the proposed TCSP by reference, the following provides a summary of the key components in each of the seven TCSP chapters.

#### Chapter 1: Introduction

The Introduction describes the role of the TCSP, the community outreach process, and the vision guiding the proposed TCSP. This chapter also summarizes the proposed TCSP's relationship to other planning documents, such as the City of Santee General Plan, the Sustainable Santee Plan, and the Housing Element.

#### Chapter 2: Land Use

This chapter establishes the land use plan and describes the various land use designations, standards, and corresponding zoning and development standards for the TCSP area.

#### Five Neighborhoods

The proposed TCSP would create five distinct neighborhoods defined by their location, existing development patterns, and potential uses: Arts and Entertainment, Town Center Commercial, Mast Boulevard Residential, Park Avenue, and Facilities Based. These neighborhoods are not identified in the current TCSP; they are provided to give structure to the Specific Plan and to help create distinct character in different portions of the TCSP area. The five neighborhoods are shown in Figure 3-3 and described below. When fully developed, the five neighborhoods are anticipated to result in an increase of approximately 3,140 dwelling units and 2,287,189 square feet (sf) of non-residential development for a total of 3,954 dwelling units and 4,043,756 sf of non-residential development in the TCSP area, as shown in Table 3-1, *TCSP Buildout Summary*, below (RRM 2024a; RRM 2024b). This development capacity is consistent with the densities and intensities allowed by existing zoning, the 2021-2029 Housing Element, and state density bonus law.

**Table 3-1  
TCSP BUILDOUT SUMMARY**

	Existing Non-residential Buildings (sf)	Existing Dwelling Units	Potential Non-residential Buildings (sf)	Minimum Allowable Number of Dwelling Units	Maximum Allowable Number of Dwelling Units	State Density Bonus Assumptions	Total Dwelling Units
TCSP Totals	1,756,567	814	4,043,756	2,622	3,441	513	3,954

sf = square feet

### Arts and Entertainment Neighborhood

The City adopted the AEOD in 2019 with the intent of encouraging land uses related to arts and culture, entertainment, commercial recreation, visitor, and civic uses. The AEOD has been expanded and is renamed the AEN in the proposed TCSP to be consistent with the TCSP neighborhood concept. The AEN incorporates the Trolley Square shopping center, Town Center Park East, Sportsplex USA, Rio Seco School, and the Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B. In addition to the four Housing Element sites, the AEN includes civic uses, a River Bridge, and an Entertainment Commercial site referred to as the Town Center Core. Potential uses for this site include spaces for public events, a movie theater, public recreation facilities, a performing arts center, and/or dance studios. Events within the Town Center Core may include outdoor events and gatherings of people for artistic, cinematic, theatrical, musical, sporting, cultural, education or civic purposes.

A River Bridge would connect areas north and south of the San Diego River, beginning at the southern edge of Town Center Park East and ending at Riverview Parkway, just north of Housing Element Site 16A. The River Bridge would support passive and active recreation as well as provide multi-modal connections by improving access to major recreational facilities such as the Town Center Community Park, the Sportsplex, the YMCA and Aquatics Center, located north of the river, to residents south of the San Diego River. Lookouts across the bridge would create opportunities for art installations, interpretive signage, and seating. Development of vacant sites within the proposed AEN would result in an increase of approximately 1,480 dwelling units and 1,930,428 sf of non-residential development for a total of 1,780 dwelling units and 2,399,474 sf of non-residential development in the AEN, as shown in Table 3-2, *Arts and Entertainment Neighborhood Buildout Summary*, below. This development capacity is consistent with the densities and intensities allowed by existing zoning, the 2021-2029 Housing Element, and state density bonus law.

**Table 3-2  
ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT NEIGHBORHOOD BUILDOUT SUMMARY**

	Existing Non-residential Buildings (sf)	Existing Dwelling Units	Potential Non-residential Buildings (sf)	Minimum Allowable Number of Dwelling Units	Maximum Allowable Number of Dwelling Units	State Density Bonus Assumptions	Total Dwelling Units
AEN Totals	607,371	300	2,537,799	1,225	1,482	298	1,780

sf = square feet

#### Housing Element Site 16A

Housing Element Site 16A (Assessor's Parcel Number [APN] 381-050-82-00) is located south of the San Diego River and adjacent to Riverview Parkway on 11.11 acres, as shown on Figure 3-2. Existing conditions at Site 16A are also depicted on Figure 2-2, *Aerial Photograph of Housing Element Site 16A*, in EIR Chapter 2.0, *Environmental Setting*. As shown, the site is currently vacant and contains vegetation, graded gravel, and a small water basin. For the purposes of the EIR analysis, it is assumed that the entire area within Site 16A would be graded and paved as a result of the proposed project. The site would continue to be designated Residential TC-R-30 (30 to 36 dwelling units per acre [du/ac]) in the proposed TCSP with a mixed-use overlay, consistent with the land use and density identified in the 2021-2029 Housing Element. Buildout of the site is expected to result in up to 520 dwelling units and 181,482 sf of non-residential square

footage, as shown on Table 3-3, *Housing Element Sites Buildout Summary*. This development capacity is consistent with the densities and intensities allowed by existing zoning, the 2021-2029 Housing Element, and state density bonus law.

#### Housing Element Site 16B

Housing Element Site 16B (APN 381-050-82-00) is located south of Site 16A and adjacent to Riverview Parkway on 8.61 acres, as shown on Figure 3-2. Existing conditions at Site 16B are also depicted on Figure 2-3, *Aerial Photograph of Housing Element Site 16B*. As shown, the site is currently vacant with vegetation and a gravel road. For the purposes of the EIR analysis, it is assumed that the entire area within Site 16B would be graded and paved as a result of the proposed project. The site is currently designated Residential TC-R-14 (14 to 22 du/ac) in the proposed TCSP with a mixed-use overlay, consistent with the land use and density identified in the Housing Element Update. Buildout of the site is expected to result in up to 189 dwelling units and 90,012 sf of non-residential buildings, as shown on Table 3-3. This development capacity is consistent with the densities and intensities allowed by existing zoning, the 2021-2029 Housing Element, and state density bonus law.

The TCSP identifies a new road, “Main Street,” connecting Town Center Parkway to Park Avenue. The road would run northwest to southeast through Site 16B and would be periodically closed to vehicular traffic for public events, such as farmers markets. Development along Main Street would contribute to the mixed-use goals for the site, with 90,012 potential sf of non-residential uses on the ground floor.

The TCSP identifies opportunities to include an art trail throughout Sites 16A and 16B that would connect from Mission Gorge Road to the San Diego River to the north. The trail would include sculpture and art installations and improve pedestrian connections throughout the TCSP area.

#### Housing Element Site 20A

Housing Element Site 20A (APN 381-050-81-00) is located south of Riverview Parkway and adjacent to Magnolia Avenue on 7.75 acres, as seen on Figure 3-2. Existing conditions at Site 20A are also depicted on Figure 2-4, *Aerial Photograph of Site 20A*. As shown, the site currently contains vegetation and paved areas. The Edgemoor Polo Barn, listed in the National Register of Historic Places by the United States Department of the Interior, is located north of this site. For the purposes of the EIR analysis, it is assumed that the entire area within Site 20A would be graded and paved as a result of the proposed project. The site is currently designated Residential TC-R-22 (22 to 30 du/ac) in the proposed TCSP with a mixed-use overlay, consistent with the land use and density identified in the Housing Element Update. Buildout of the site is expected to result in up to 303 dwelling units and 118,157 sf of non-residential buildings, as shown on Table 3-3. This development capacity is consistent with the densities and intensities allowed by existing zoning, the 2021-2029 Housing Element, and state density bonus law.

**Table 3-3  
HOUSING ELEMENT SITES BUILDOUT SUMMARY**

Site	Land Use Designation	Allowed Density Range	Existing Non-residential Buildings (sf)	Existing Dwelling Units	Potential Non-Residential Buildings (sf)	FAR Assumption for Non-residential	Mixed Use Overlay Assumption	Minimum Allowable Number of Dwelling Units	Maximum Allowable Number of Dwelling Units	State Density Bonus Assumption	Total Dwelling Units
16A	TC-R-30	30-36 DU/AC	N/A	N/A	181,482	N/A	10%	333	400	120	520
16B	TC-R-14	14-22 DU/AC	N/A	N/A	90,012	N/A	10%	121	189	N/A	189
20A	TC-R-22	22-30 DU/AC	N/A	N/A	118,157	N/A	10%	171	233	70	303
20B	TC-R-30	30-36 DU/AC	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	300	360	108	468
HE Sites Totals	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	389,651	N/A	N/A	925	1,182	298	1,480

sf = square feet

### Housing Element Site 20B

Housing Element Site 20B (APN 381-050-81-00) is located south of Site 20A and adjacent to Magnolia Avenue on 10.00 acres, as seen on Figure 3-2. Existing conditions at Site 20B are also depicted on Figure 2-5, *Aerial Photograph of Housing Element Site 20B*. As shown, the site currently contains vegetation, Edgemoor Drive, and a paved area. For the purposes of the analysis contained in this document, it is assumed that the entire area within Site 20B would be graded and paved as a result of the proposed project. The TCSP proposes a northward extension of Edgemoor Drive that would connect to and from Park Avenue and the Edgemoor Polo Barn property. The site is currently designated Residential TC-R-30 (30 to 36 du/ac) in the existing TCSP. Buildout of the site is expected to result in up to 468 dwelling units, as shown on Table 3-3. This development capacity is consistent with the densities and intensities allowed by existing zoning, the 2021-2029 Housing Element, and state density bonus law.

*Implementation of the proposed four Housing Element sites would result in an increase of approximately 1,480 dwelling units and 389,651 sf of non-residential buildings, as shown in Table 3-3 below. Because the four Housing Element sites are currently vacant, these numbers also represent the total capacity of dwelling units and non-residential buildings square footage allowed within the four Housing Element sites.*

### *Town Center Commercial Neighborhood*

The Town Center Commercial Neighborhood (TCCN) is located west of Cuyamaca Street with easy access to both Mission Gorge Road and Cuyamaca Street (see Figure 3-3). The TCCN contains primarily commercial uses and limited residential areas designated for 22 to 30 du/ac. The TCSP recognizes that commercial properties in this neighborhood have the potential to expand and redevelop, resulting in an increase of up to 205 dwelling units and 389,796 sf of non-residential square footage over existing conditions for a total of up to 205 dwelling units and 1,138,664 sf of non-residential development.

### *Mast Boulevard Residential Neighborhood*

Mast Boulevard Residential Neighborhood (MBRN), shown in Figure 3-3, includes an established residential neighborhood adjacent to Town Center Community Park and Park Center Drive. The neighborhood includes vacant parcels north of the San Diego River which are designated to allow for future residential development at a density of 14 to 22 du/ac. The intent is for new residential development to be designed with consideration of surrounding uses, including established neighborhoods and the San Diego River. Residential development in this neighborhood would increase by up to 793 new dwelling units for a total of up to 1,252 dwelling units.

### *Park Avenue Residential Neighborhood*

The Park Avenue Residential Neighborhood (PARN) is shown in Figure 3-3 and is currently developed with single-family residences. This neighborhood is located near a variety of retail and services and includes a grid street pattern and existing lots that could accommodate new multi-family development. The TCSP designates the neighborhood TC-R-22, allowing 22 to 30 du/ac to encourage higher densities upon redevelopment. Residential development in this neighborhood would increase by up to 662 new dwelling units for a total of up to 717 dwelling units.

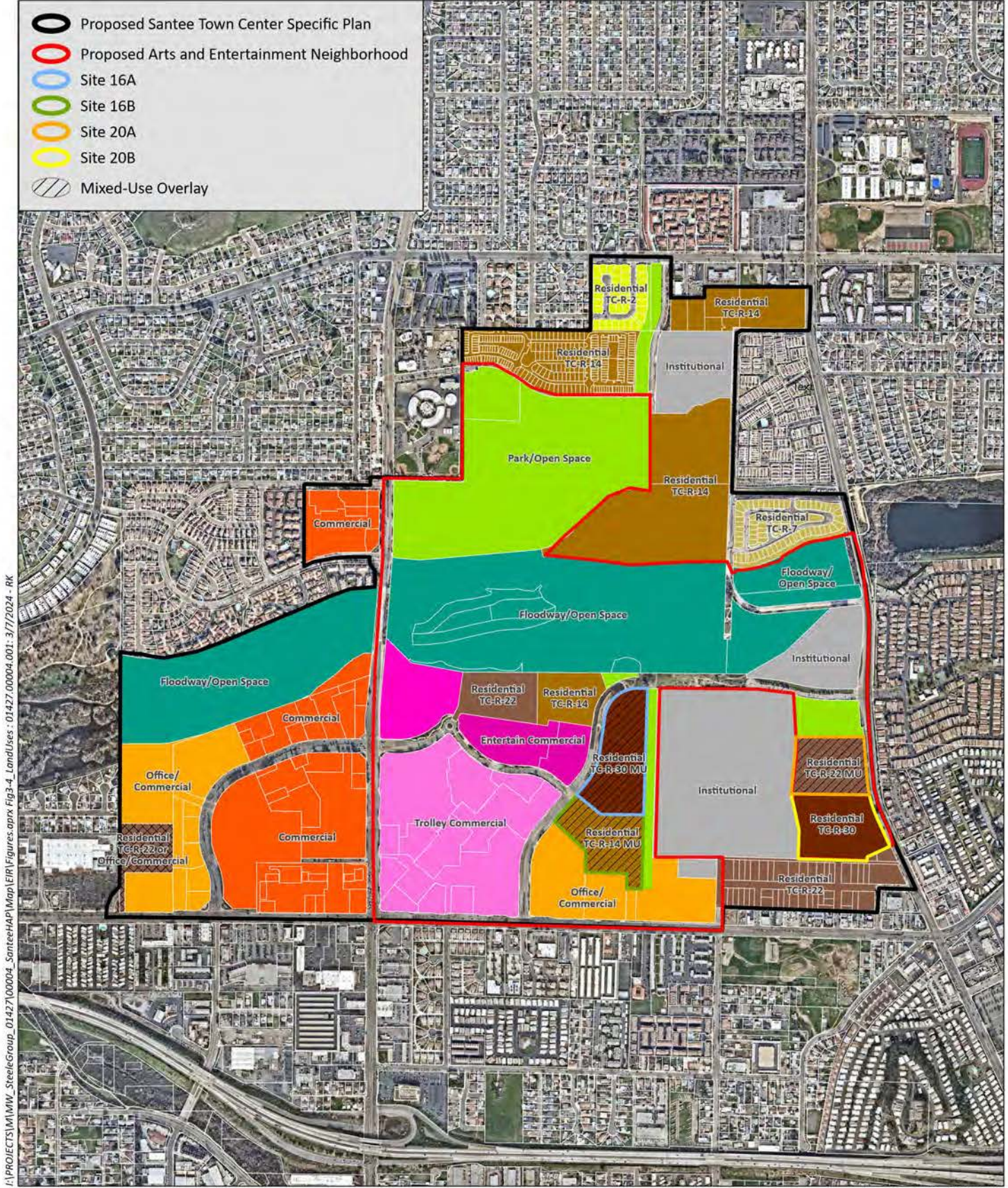
### *Facilities-Based Neighborhood*

The Facilities-Based Neighborhood (FBN) includes two properties, the Las Colinas Detention Facility (Las Colinas), south of the San Diego River, and the Edgemoor Skilled Nursing Facility, north of the San Diego River, that provide institutional and medical care services to the surrounding region. The FBN is shown in Figure 3-3. These properties have reached their development potential, no changes are proposed, and the TCSP does not encourage the adoption or expansion of such uses within the TCSP.

### Land Use Designations and Zoning

Land use designations for the TCSP area are shown in Figure 3-4, *TCSP Land Use Designations*. Table 3-4, *Land Use Designations and Applicable Zoning*, describes the density range and applicable citywide zoning for each designation. For each designation, allowable heights are determined by the applicable citywide zoning and state density bonus law. Please see the description of Chapter 7, below for detailed information regarding allowable and permitted uses within each zone.





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Source: Aerial (SanGIS, 2023)



**Table 3-4  
LAND USE DESIGNATIONS AND APPLICABLE ZONING**

<b>Specific Plan Land Use Designation</b>	<b>Density Range (du/ac)</b>	<b>Applicable City-wide Zoning</b>
Residential TC-R-2	2 - 6	R-2
Residential TC-R-7	7-14	R-7
Residential TC-R-14	14-22	R-14
Residential TC-R-22	22-30	R-22
Residential TC-R-30	30-36	R-30
Floodway/Open Space	N/A	Open Space
Park/Open Space	N/A	Open Space
Commercial	N/A	GC
Office Commercial	N/A	OP
Trolley Commercial	N/A	NC
Entertainment Commercial	N/A	NC
Institutional	N/A	OP
Mixed-Use Overlay	N/A	Underlying zone and mixed use overlay
Dual Zoning	N/A	R-22/GC

Source: TCSP (City 2023)

du/ac = dwelling units per acre

### Policies for Development

To facilitate cohesive character across the TCSP area, the Land Use and Urban Form chapter includes six Objective Design Standards with specific guidelines for new development:

1. Engaging the Street: describes building design criteria to ensure that buildings address unique site conditions, such as street facing entryways, porches, and floor-to-floor heights.
2. First 30': describes building design criteria to create a human-scale environment, such as articulation of entrances, balconies, and street-facing windows.
3. Integrated Parking: describes design elements to ensure that parking is incorporated into the pedestrian experience, such as tree planting, pedestrian walkways, and entry width.
4. Pedestrian Linkages: describes design criteria to create a welcoming and safe interface between development and the private realm, such as art, utilities, street furniture, and signage.
5. Open Space and Recreation: describes design criteria to ensure access to open space, such as paved area limitations, common outdoor areas, and tree planting.
6. Bird Safe Treatment: describes design criteria to reduce threats to birds, such as glass treatments, balconies, and landscaping.



### **Chapter 3: Mobility and Beautification**

The Mobility and Beautification chapter addresses the proposed transportation network and streetscape design for the TCSP area, including signage. The project would identify future connections using multi-use pathways (including sidewalk improvements), bike facilities, and roadways. These connections are intended to enhance and better connect the TCSP's five proposed neighborhoods. No changes to the public transportation system are proposed as part of the project.

The Mobility and Beautification chapter also provides standards related to signs and other features within the public realm. The sign standards aim to enhance wayfinding, community character, and provide a sense of place to the distinct neighborhoods. Figure 3-30 of the TCSP provides a sign location plan identifying the possible location and types of public signs, including gateways, monuments, wayfinding, directional, and neighborhood identification. The sign location plan also assumes the ultimate relocation of the restored Santee Drive-In sign within the City-owned theater site as shown on Figure 3-30 of the TCSP.

#### Pedestrian Network

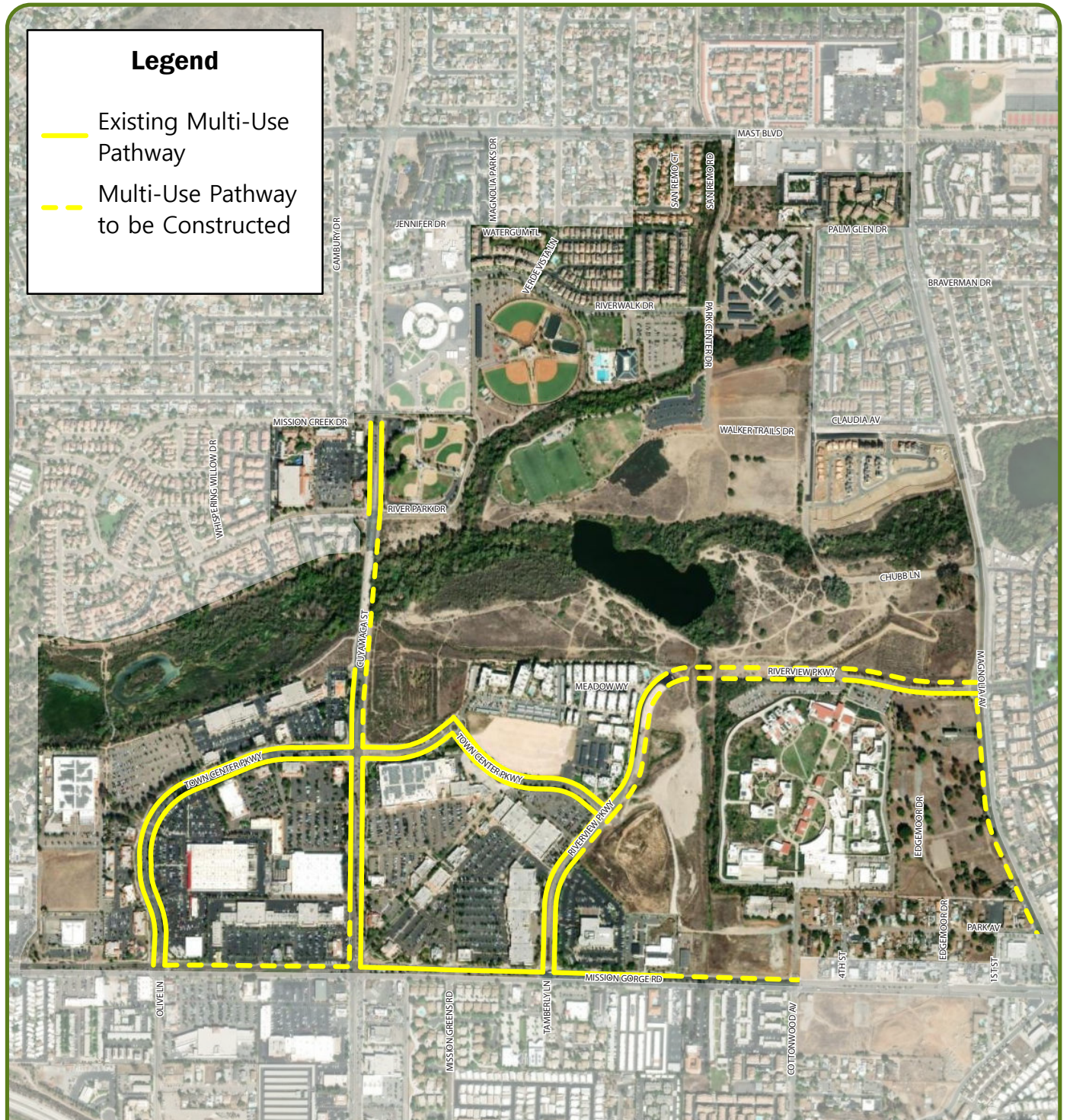
The proposed TCSP includes multi-use paths and pedestrian connections as shown on Figure 3-5, *TCSP Multi-Use Pathways*. Multi-use pathways provide safe, convenient, and comfortable pedestrian access between the different land uses and the five neighborhoods. These pathways also form the backbone of first mile and last mile connections between the transit center and proposed uses. Existing and planned multi-use pathways to be constructed are identified throughout the southern part of the TCSP, south of the San Diego River. One planned multi-use pathway, the River Bridge, is identified spanning the San Diego River along the east side of Cuyamaca Street.

#### Bicycle Network

The proposed TCSP updates the 1986 bicycle network to account for changes to existing and proposed development in the project area. The proposed TCSP specifies three types of bike facilities and their locations throughout the TCSP on Figure 3-6, *TCSP Bicycle Network*. The bicycle network would consist of the following types of facilities: Class I bike paths adjacent to but physically separated from motorists by a median; Class II bike lanes along a street or highway separated by striped lanes; and Class III bike routes, which are shared lanes for bikes and motorists indicated by road markings (i.e., sharrows).

### Legend

- Existing Multi-Use Pathway
- Multi-Use Pathway to be Constructed



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Source: City of Santee 2024





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Source: City of Santee 2024

The project would involve changes to the TCSP bicycle network. Specifically, the TCSP would involve amendments to the designations of 11 bicycle segments. Two Class II bike lanes exist along Riverview Parkway (between Mission Gorge Road and Town Center Parkway) and Town Center Parkway (between Cuyamaca Street and Parc One Driveway) and would be revised to Class III bike routes with sharrows, or shared lane markings. Three new Class I bike path segments are identified, including two segments in an east-west direction on either side of the San Diego River, and a segment between River Rock Court and the existing Walmart. Two Class II bike lanes are identified in a north-south direction, crossing the San Diego River along Cuyamaca Street and a future extension of Cottonwood Avenue. Six Class III bike routes are identified, including in the PCRN in the northern section of the TCSP along River Park Drive, Park Center Drive, Cottonwood Avenue, and throughout the AEN south of the San Diego River along Town Center Parkway, and two segments along Riverview Parkway.

### Roadway Network

The proposed TCSP updates the 1986 roadway network to account for changes to existing and proposed development in the TCSP area. Figure 3-7, *TCSP Roadway Network*, displays the types of current and proposed roadways. Arterial roads are high-capacity urban roads that deliver traffic to freeways or expressways, and between urban areas, at the highest level of service possible. Parkways are generally smaller, landscaped thoroughfares that carry vehicles throughout urban areas.

A major arterial roadway, Cuyamaca Street, currently connects the TCSP areas north and south of the San Diego River and establishes the border between the TCCN and the AEN. Existing parkways span the proposed PCRN, TCCN, AEN, and FBN. New parkways are proposed within sites 16A and 16B and across the San Diego River, connecting the FBN to the PCRN. Local roads currently exist in the PARN and the eastern edge of the AEN. A new local road is proposed in the southern portion of the PCRN, providing access to and throughout future residential uses.

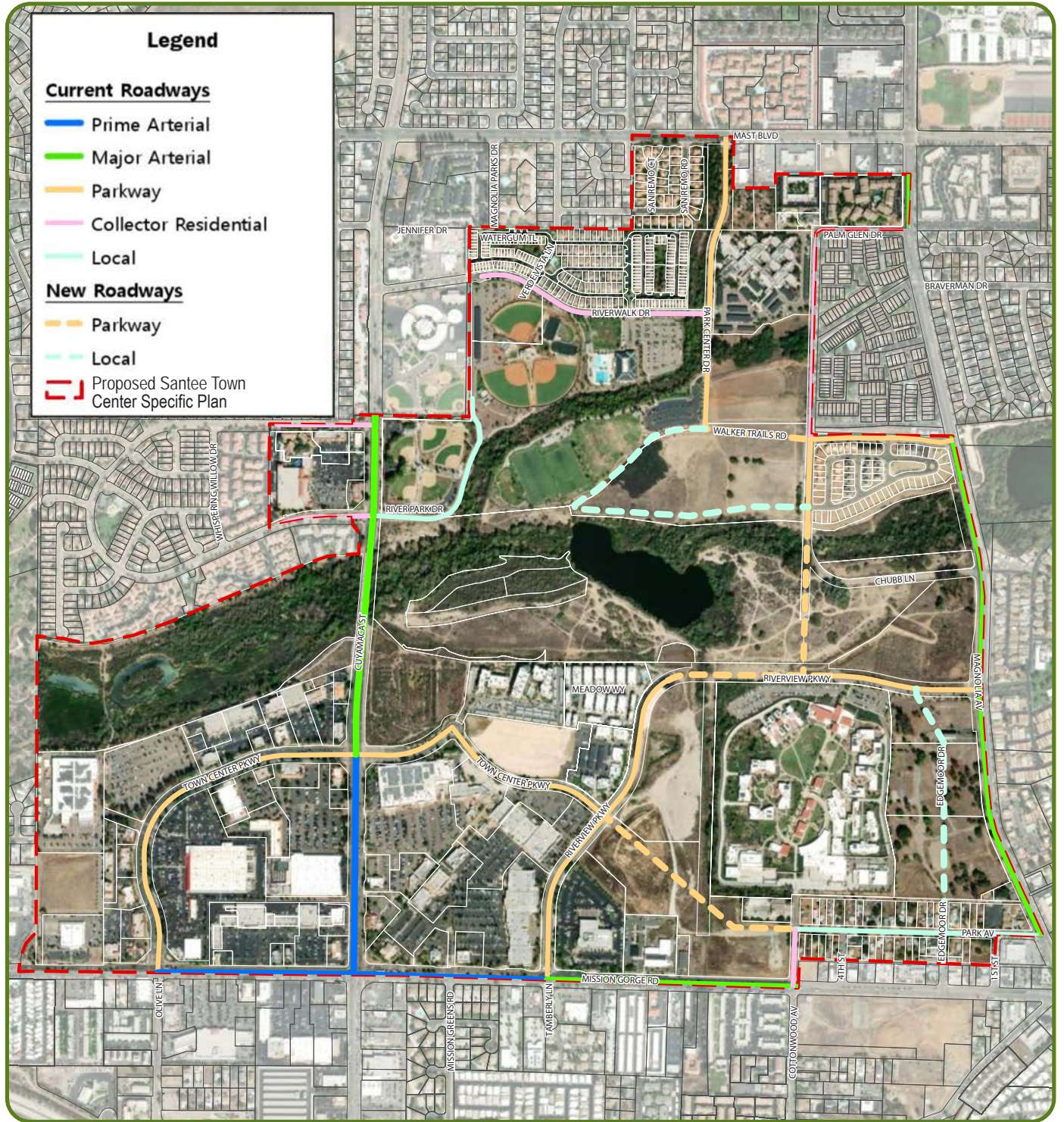
### Roadway Improvements

The Mobility and Beautification chapter provides diagrams and details for roadway improvements throughout the TCSP area. Major changes to existing roadways are summarized below:

- Cuyamaca Street from Mission Gorge Road to Town Center Parkway: implement missing segments of the multi-use pathway on the westside of the roadway.
- Cuyamaca Street from Town Center Parkway to River Park Drive: implement a multi-use pathway on the east side of the roadway and expand the total right of way from 78 feet to 93 feet.
- Riverview Parkway from Mission Gorge Drive to Meadow Way: change from a Class II to a Class III bike route, turn the 16-foot median into a 12-foot continuous left-turn lane, reduce the number of travel lanes from 4 to 2, and implement parallel parking on both sides of the roadway.
- Riverview Parkway from Cottonwood Avenue to Magnolia Avenue: implement a multi-use pathway on the north side of the roadway, create a Class II bike lane in both directions, and implement a median and parallel parking.



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Source: City of Santee 2024

The proposed TCSP also involves the creation of new roadways, which are summarized below:

- Riverview Parkway from Meadow Way to Cottonwood Avenue: implement 35-foot pathways, a Class III bike route, 2 travel lanes with a continuous left turn lane in the center, angled parking on both sides of the roadway, and a total 150-foot right-of-way.
- Cottonwood Avenue from Park Center Drive to Riverview Parkway: implement 5-foot sidewalks, a Class II bike lane, 2 travel lanes with a continuous left-turn lane in the center, and a total 58-foot right-of-way.
- Main Street from Riverview Parkway to Cottonwood Avenue: implement 8-foot sidewalks with 4-foot parkways, Class III bike routes, 2 undivided travel lanes, and a total 64-foot right-of-way.
- Park Center Drive from Mast Boulevard to Magnolia Avenue: implement 5-foot sidewalks with 4-foot parkways, 2 travel lanes, parallel parking on both sides, and a total 58-foot right-of-way.

### Policies for Development

The Mobility and Beautification chapter also establishes transportation and parking goals and policies, such as prohibiting a freeway from being located through the TCSP Area. Parking areas, including parking garages, are recommended to be strategically located to serve the TCSP area and transit areas. Potential parking structure locations are identified on Figure 3-8, *TCSP Potential Parking Garage Locations*. Other goals and policies address parking locations, transit centers, landscaping, and sidewalks. This chapter also addresses streetscape beautification through a set of twelve overarching principles, such as paving each neighborhood with unique sidewalk treatment to create distinct character between different TCSP areas. Figure 3-28, *Paving Plan*, of the proposed TCSP includes a paving plan with the types and locations of sidewalk treatments. The TCSP also recommends the use of specific street trees corridors to maintain a distinct character between the five neighborhoods.

### **Chapter 4: Infrastructure and Public Facilities**




This chapter describes existing and proposed infrastructure, public services, and public facilities to support the TCSP and potential future population growth.

#### Water, Wastewater, and Storm Drainage

Water service in the TCSP area would continue to be provided by the Padre Dam Municipal Water District (PDMWD). The PDMWD receives imported water from the San Diego County Water Authority via ~~two-three~~ connections along Mission Gorge Road near Mission Trails Park, ~~and at~~ the Lake Jennings Treatment Plant, and Connection No.7 (secondary connection). A large ~~transmission-distribution~~ pipeline from the El Capitan Reservoir is also located beneath Mission Gorge Road. Minor upgrades to water ~~transmission-distribution~~ facilities, including new connections and fire hydrants, would occur with new development within the TCSP area.



**Legend**

-  Potential Parking Garage Location
-  Transit Hub (multi-modal)
-  Proposed Santee Town Center Specific Plan



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Source: City of Santee 2024

The PDMWD would also continue to provide wastewater collection and disposal to the City and the TCSP area. There is a network of existing sewer pipelines throughout the TCSP area, including larger pipelines up to 27 inches in diameter near the intersection of Town Center Parkway and Cuyamaca Street owned by the San Diego County Sanitation District. The San Diego River poses a unique challenge for wastewater facilities to connect with downstream sewer pipelines which could require future development of localized pump/lift stations. A 10-inch diameter pipeline is proposed within Town Center Parkway and Riverview Parkway to serve the central portion of the TCSP area south of the San Diego River, and within Riverwalk Drive and Park Center Drive up to Mast Boulevard north of the San Diego River. There is an existing 15-inch diameter wastewater pipeline within the Mast Boulevard Residential Neighborhood north of the San Diego River, however, site grading and site layout would determine if the line would be available for use from both a conveyance and capacity standpoint. At least a 10-inch diameter wastewater pipeline would be required within Park Center Drive.

The adopted five-year budget for PDMWD identifies two capital projects within the TCSP area: the Mission Gorge Sewer and Sewer Lift Stations Rehabilitation. Both projects are planned to be implemented during Fiscal Years (FY) 2026 through 2027 and would increase sewage capacity and provide maintenance to the sewer system that serves the TCSP. The Mission Gorge Sewer project is planned to upgrade the existing 8-inch and 10-inch diameter pipeline to a 15-inch diameter pipeline. As part of the PMWD Master Plan, the Mission Creek Lift Station near Cuyamaca Street and the San Diego River was identified for upgrades to existing mechanical and/or electrical equipment.

The proposed TCSP provides details on storm drainage not available in the original TCSP. The TCSP area contains a network of underground pipelines with ultimate discharge to the San Diego River. The adopted Five-Year Capital Improvement Program for FY 2024 through 2028 identifies a major storm drainage pipeline project to update and expand pipeline beneath Mission Gorge Road between Cuyamaca Street and Cottonwood Avenue beginning in FY 2025 through 2028.

### Flood Hazards

The proposed TCSP provides details on flood hazards not described in the existing TCSP. The majority of the TCSP area is in Flood Zone X, which is defined as an area not anticipated to be affected by a 500-year storm event. However, the central portion of the TCSP adjacent to the San Diego River is in Zone AE, which is defined as a regulatory floodway. Regulatory floodways are the areas of watercourses where development must be limited to prevent upstream flooding. Development in this area must consist of open space trails, water-related activities, restoration, or other activities permitted by the Federal Emergency Management Agency ([FEMA] 2024).

### Dry Utilities

Dry utilities include telecommunications, natural gas, and electricity services, all of which exist in the TCSP area. Telecommunications services are not discussed in the original TCSP, but the proposed TCSP states that AT&T, Cox Communications, and Crown Castle would continue to provide telecommunications services in the TCSP area. SDG&E would continue to provide electricity and natural gas services to the TCSP area, and existing transmission and distribution facilities in the TCSP area would remain. Additional Underground Utility Districts, or areas where utilities such as poles, wires, or other overhead structures must be placed below ground for aesthetic and safety purposes, may be established during project buildout, as determined by the City Council.



### Community Services

Community services including library, school, police, and fire/emergency services are within proximity to the TCSP area. Library services would continue to be provided by the County of San Diego at the Santee Library. Elementary schools that serve the TCSP area would also continue to provide educational opportunities to children at Rio Seco School and Hill Creek School in the Santee School District, in addition to two high schools, Santana High School and West Hills High School in the Grossmont Union High School District.

The existing San Diego County Sheriff's Department would continue to provide service to the TCSP area at 8811 Cuyamaca Street, Santee, CA 92071. The Community Safety Center at Trolley Square provides on-site law enforcement services within TCSP area and would continue to do so throughout buildout of the TCSP.

The City's Municipal Fire Department would continue to provide service to the TCSP area. Fire Station No. 4 on Cottonwood Avenue was present at the time of the original TCSP's approval. Since the adoption of the original TCSP, Heartland Fire Station No. 5 has been added at 9130 Carlton Oaks Drive, approximately two miles west of Fire Station No. 4. The TCSP anticipates redevelopment of Fire Station No. 4 into a new facility approximately 20,000 square feet in size.

The Town Center Community Park includes the YMCA and Aquatics Center, Sportsplex USA, and Town Center Community Park East and West. Additional nearby parks include Mast Park and Walker Preserve Trail. All these parks and facilities would continue to serve the proposed TCSP area.

Solid waste services within the TCSP area are provided by Waste Management, Inc.

### **Chapter 5: Implementation**

The Implementation chapter identifies a series of potential funding sources and financing mechanisms to implement the TCSP. As the TCSP is built out over time, different tools for financing public infrastructure improvements are expected to be used. Table 5-1, *Potential Funding Sources/Mechanisms*, in the proposed TCSP describes potential funding sources and mechanisms for public and private development to facilitate buildout of the TCSP. Table 5-2, *Implementation Action Plan*, in the proposed TCSP identifies suggested timing priorities for a list of specific projects in terms of short range (1-3 years), mid-range (3-20 years), and long range (10-20 years). Some of the potential funding sources identified for the project include but are not limited to the City's General Fund, Special Assessment Districts, and Business Improvement Districts. See TCSP Table 5-2 for a complete list of projects, their timing, the responsibility for implementation, and potential funding sources for each project. The projects are organized into categories pertaining to public spaces, public improvements, circulation, streetscapes, and open space connectivity. The listed projects are components of the proposed project.

### **Chapter 6: Administration**

The Administration chapter describes the TCSP authority, the administrative procedures required for amendments and/or modifications to the TCSP, and processing requirements.

### Interpretations

The Director of Planning and Building is assigned the responsibility and authority to interpret the TCSP. Whenever the Director of Planning and Building makes an official interpretation of the TCSP, the interpretation shall be made in writing explaining the interpretation and the general circumstances surrounding the need for the interpretation. Any interpretation by the Director of Planning and Building may be appealed pursuant to Section 13.04.070 (Appeals) of the Santee Municipal Code.

### *Administration Process*

All development applications within the TCSP area shall follow established City procedures such as those for zone variances, conditional use permits, development permits and subdivisions. All development applications within the TCSP area would be evaluated for compliance with TCSP regulations and guidelines. Appeals are regulated pursuant to Section 13.04.070 (Appeals) of the Santee Municipal Code.

### *Allowable Land Uses*

A land use that is not listed within each applicable citywide zone or within the TCSP is not allowed, except where the Director of Planning and Building may find that a use may be permitted due to its consistency with the purpose/intent of the zoning district and similarity to other uses listed pursuant to Section 13.04.040 (Use Determination) of the Santee Municipal Code.

### *Nonconformity*

Section 13.04.110 (Nonconforming Uses and Structures) of the Santee Municipal Code is applicable to any nonconforming uses, structures, or parcels within the TCSP area. Land uses and structures existing as of the adoption date of this Specific Plan may continue to remain in accordance to Section 13.04.110 (Nonconforming Uses and Structures) of the Santee Municipal Code.

### Amendments to the TCSP

The TCSP may need to be revised over time, and California Government Code Section 65453 states that a specific plan “may be amended as often as deemed necessary by the legislative body.” Amendments may be initiated by a developer, an individual, or the City if accompanied by all required documentation, including an analysis of environmental impacts if deemed necessary by the Director of Planning and Building. Major amendments must be reviewed by the City Council and can be approved if:

1. The proposed amendment is consistent with the Town Center Specific Plan;
2. The proposed amendment is consistent with the City of Santee General Plan;
3. The proposed amendment would not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience, or welfare of the City, and;
4. The proposed amendment ensures future development with desirable character that will be harmonious with existing and proposed development.

## Chapter 7: Allowable and Permitted Uses

This chapter references applicable citywide zones for each land use designation and identifies land use regulations unique to the TCSP. Regulations unique to the TCSP are included for residential, commercial, mixed-use, institutional, park/open space and floodway/open space land uses. Tables 7-4 through 7-7, 7-9, 7-11, and 7-13 of the TCSP display land use regulations unique to the proposed TCSP, and indicate if uses are permitted, conditionally permitted, subject to a minor use conditional permit, or subject to a development permit. Notable changes from the 1986 TCSP include the establishment of the mixed-use overlay and trolley commercial districts, addition of alcohol production and micro-breweries as an allowable use, and the removal of sand mining and fishing as allowable uses.

### 3.3.1 Summary of Major Changes Between the Adopted Specific Plan and the Proposed Specific Plan

The original TCSP contains a land use plan, design manual, and implementation program, and emphasizes the preservation of the natural environment and the creation of new employment opportunities for City residents. Specific direction is provided through diagrams and written objectives. The proposed TCSP provides more detail for the arrangement and design of the Santee Town Center than the original TCSP. Instead of having a dedicated chapter, design guidelines are contained throughout the land use, mobility, and infrastructure discussions. The proposed TCSP also separates implementation, administration, and allowable and permitted uses into individual chapters. In summary, the proposed project envisions the following major changes related to the project objectives for the TCSP area:

- **Updated TCSP Boundaries.** The boundaries of the TCSP were increased by 42 acres, for a total of approximately 651 acres, to reflect past and proposed changes for updated planning purposes. The boundaries were updated as follows:
  - The boundary incorporates the shopping center located at the northwest corner of Mission Gorge Road and Cuyamaca Road; and
  - The boundary incorporates the shopping center located west of Cuyamaca Road, between Mission Creek Drive and River Park Drive.
- **Neighborhoods.** The proposed TCSP includes five distinct neighborhoods with unique land uses and visual character: The Arts and Entertainment Neighborhood (AEN), the Town Center Commercial Neighborhood (TCCN), the Mast Boulevard Residential (MBRN), the Park Avenue Residential Neighborhood (PARN), and the Facilities-Based Neighborhood (FBN).
- **Updated Land Uses.** The Land Use and Urban Form chapter updates the proposed land use plan to reflect the adopted land uses for the Housing Element sites (16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B). Residential land uses were also added to the western edge of the TCSP boundary and south of the San Diego River. The Office-Professional and Air Rights Overlays are no longer included in the TCSP. A Mixed-Use Overlay was added as shown on Figure 3-4. Outdoor performance uses are specifically called out in the Commercial Entertainment designation.

- **Updated Mobility Network.** The Mobility chapter updates the proposed roadway network to accommodate development that occurred after the original TCSP was approved and plan for new local multi-modal improvements to connect existing and proposed residential areas to the Santee Town Center. The Mobility Network includes a proposed River Bridge across the San Diego River.
- **Regulatory Updates.** The proposed TCSP removes the Town Center Development Committee and makes the Director of Planning and Building, in conjunction with the City Council, if necessary, the interpreter of the TCSP.

### **3.3.2 Relationship to Other City Planning Documents**

#### **3.3.2.1 City of Santee General Plan**

The City of Santee General Plan guides the long-term development of the city and designates the TCSP area in the Land Use Element. The TCSP implements the City of Santee General Plan by providing a vision and standards for future development and improvements within the TCSP area.

#### **3.3.2.2 Sustainable Santee Plan**

Sustainable Santee Plan calls for improvements in walking, biking, and transit ridership to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) in the City. The proposed TCSP implements components of the Sustainable Santee Plan by proposing a pedestrian-oriented development framework and multimodal mobility network in the TCSP area.

#### **3.3.2.3 Housing Element**

The City of Santee 2021-2029 Sixth Cycle Housing Element was adopted on July 14, 2021 and deemed compliant with state housing law by Housing and Community Development (HCD) on December 6, 2022. The TCSP would help carry out the goals of the Housing Element and provide additional housing for the City consistent with the assumptions of the 2021-2029 Housing Element.

## **3.4 Actions Associated with the Proposed Specific Plan**

### **3.4.1 Discretionary Actions**

Discretionary actions expected to be taken by the City associated with the project include:

- A General Plan Amendment GPA2023-1;
- Town Center Specific Plan Amendment TCSPA2023-1;
- Rezone 2023-1;
- Zoning Ordinance Amendment ZA2023-2;
- Environmental Impact Report AEIS2023-2.

Future discretionary projects associated with the TCSP would undergo individual environmental review as outlined in Section 1.3.5 of the Introduction to this EIR.

### **3.4.2 Ministerial Projects**

Future actions associated with the project could be processed ministerially after the approval of the Final TCSP EIR. Ministerial projects require only conformance with a fixed standard or objective and are exempt from future environmental review under CEQA. Eligible ministerial projects within the TCSP shall comply with all Objective Design Standards of the TCSP and all applicable design, performance, improvement and development standards of the Santee Municipal Code, the Santee General Plan, and applicable Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Programs. Where applicable, projects shall obtain regulatory permits and/or clearances as required by state or Federal law, including, but not limited to agencies such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), the United States Fish and Wildlife Agency, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the San Diego Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC), and the State Water Resources Control Board.

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## 4.0 Environmental Analysis

The following sections analyze the potential environmental impacts that may occur as a result of implementation of the proposed Town Center Specific Plan (TCSP). Impacts are assessed and reported at: 1) the program level for the TCSP area, which encompasses all five neighborhoods; 2) the program level for the Arts and Entertainment Neighborhood (AEN), specifically; and 3) at the project level for the four Housing Element sites (sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B).

Program-level and project-level impacts are assessed against the current on-the-ground conditions. In the absence of specific development proposals, evaluation of program-level impacts is based on buildout assumptions for the TCSP and AEN plan areas, which is expected to occur over a 20+ year timeframe. Evaluation of potential impacts associated with development of the Housing Element sites is based on site-specific information and analyses of the proposed conceptual plans presented within the TCSP.

The environmental issues addressed in the following sections are in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines and Statutes. Each issue analysis section is formatted to include a summary of existing conditions, including the regulatory context; the significance determination thresholds and methodology; an evaluation of potential project impacts; mitigation measures, where applicable; and a conclusion of significance after mitigation.

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## 4.1 Aesthetics

The following section analyzes the potential environmental impacts that may occur to aesthetics as a result of implementation of the proposed project.

### 4.1.1 Existing Conditions

#### 4.1.1.1 Topography and Landform

The Town Center Specific Plan (TCSP) area sits at approximately 330 to 360 feet above mean sea level. The area is relatively flat compared to the rest of the City of Santee (City) due to the project's proximity to the San Diego River valley. The flat river valley provides distant views toward the surrounding hillsides.

#### 4.1.1.2 Scenic Resources

##### Viewsheds and Scenic Vistas

A viewshed is generally defined as an area that can be seen from a given vantage point and viewing direction. A viewshed is composed of foreground items (items closer to the viewer) that are seen in detail and background items (items at some distance from the viewer) that frame the view.

A scenic vista is generally defined as a view of undisturbed natural lands exhibiting a unique or unusual feature that comprises an important or dominant portion of the viewshed. Scenic vistas may also be represented by a particular distant view that provides visual relief from less attractive views of nearby features.

The City of Santee General Plan 2000-2020 Community Enhancement Element identifies scenic vistas throughout the City, including the San Diego River, Mission Trails Regional Park, Mast Park, Rattlesnake Mountain, and the hills in the northern part of the City (City 2003a). The orientation of the San Diego River corridor within and near the project footprints creates impressive long vistas within the area and to the surrounding ridgelines and mountains to the east and Mission Trails Regional Park to the west.

##### Open Space

Open space within the TCSP area, Arts and Entertainment Neighborhood (AEN), and Housing Element sites is present along the San Diego River corridor. Sites 16A and 20A are adjacent to vacant land associated with the San Diego River. Town Center Park East provides additional open space north of the San Diego River in the TCSP area and AEN. Open space is also provided by City parkland (see Section 4.15 for parks close to the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites). Pursuant to the 2020 General Plan Community Enhancement Element (City 2003a), open space in the City provides a number of community design resources:

- Panoramic hillside views and backdrops;
- Visual relief to the intensive developed areas;
- Visual and physical links to the San Diego River and its tributaries;

- Opportunity areas for new high quality development; and
- Opportunity for recreational activities that reinforce the environmental setting such as hiking trails.

The City is also a participant in the Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) through its subarea planning efforts. The City's Draft Subarea Plan identifies preservation of approximately one fourth of the total area of the City as permanent open space. Although not adopted, the City generally considers the conservation strategies and preserve goals of the Draft Subarea Plan. For additional discussion on the City's Draft MSCP Subarea Plan, see Section 4.4.

### **Scenic Roads/Highways**

A "State Scenic Highway" refers to any interstate, state, or county street that has been officially designated as scenic and thereby requires special scenic conservation treatment. The closest scenic highway to the project area is State Route (SR) 52, approximately 1.8 miles south of the TCSP area. The segment of SR 52 closest to the proposed project area is not officially designated as scenic, but the City intends to explore pursuing its designation as a State Scenic Highway in the future (City 2003a). While there are no scenic highways within the project area, Mission Gorge Road is designated as a local scenic road in the City of Santee's General Plan. Mission Gorge Road runs adjacent to the TCSP area, directly abutting the Town Center Commercial Neighborhood the AEN. Recognizing the prominence of Mission Gorge Road and its role in establishing an image for the City, the Mission Gorge Road Design Standards were adopted to establish specific design guidelines for development along Mission Gorge Road. These include creating architectural themes along various segments, required streetscape landscaping, signage, and pedestrian and bicycle improvements (City 2003a).

### **Historic Structures**

The Edgemoor Farm Dairy Barn, commonly known as the Edgemoor Polo Barn, just east of the Las Colinas Detention Facility (Las Colinas) and north of Site 20A, dates to 1893 and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places at the state level. The Edgemoor Polo Barn is considered to be of significant architectural design and a design resource of the community, according to the General Plan (City 2003a). Policy 12.1 of the General Plan states that future development should respect and enhance the Edgemoor Polo Barn setting. The National Register nomination form states that "[it] is the wish of the County of San Diego and the City of Santee to establish a means by which the Edgemoor barn will be protected and perhaps be utilized as part of a future community center." (add nomination form reference).

### **Existing Project Setting**

#### TCSP

The TCSP area includes five proposed neighborhoods totaling approximately 651 acres of land located both north and south of the San Diego River. North of the San Diego River, the TCSP area encompasses single-family residences in the Mast Boulevard Residential Neighborhood, recreational facilities, medical facilities, commercial establishments, and Rio Seco middle school. South of the San Diego River, the TCSP area includes Santee Trolley Square and other commercial buildings in the Town Center Commercial Neighborhood, Las Colinas, the Santee Historical Society and Edgemoor Polo Barn, and single-family residences in the Park Avenue Residential Neighborhood. The San Diego River is the primary scenic resource in the TCSP area,

though views of the surrounding hillsides are also visible from the flat river valley. The Edgemoor Polo Barn in the southeast quadrant of the TCSP area is also considered an important design resource to the City. The TCSP area is visible from the west and south from SR 52, which is not officially designated in this area, and from Mission Gorge Road, which the City designates a local scenic road in the General Plan (City 2003a). The TCSP area is urbanized and the San Diego River is the only officially designated open space within its boundaries. Due to the area's urbanized nature, the TCSP area already contains sources of light and glare.

### AEN

The AEN includes approximately 342 acres of land located north and south of the San Diego River. North of the San Diego River, the AEN encompasses recreational facilities associated with the YMCA and Sportsplex USA and Rio Seco middle school. South of the San Diego River, the AEN includes Santee Trolley Square and Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B. The San Diego River is the primary scenic resource in the AEN, though views of the surrounding hillsides are also visible from the flat river valley. The Edgemoor Polo Barn in the southeast quadrant of the AEN is an important design resource to the City. The AEN is visible from SR 52, which is not officially designated in this area, and from Mission Gorge Road, which the City designates a local scenic road in the General Plan (City 2003a). The AEN is urbanized and the San Diego River is the only officially designated open space within its boundaries. Due to the area's urbanized nature, the AEN already contains sources of light and glare.

#### Sites 16A and 16B

Housing Element sites 16A and 16B are undeveloped sites. The area surrounding the sites is primarily developed with Santee Trolley Square immediately west of the site, Las Colinas to the east, and open space associated with the San Diego River to the north. Refer to Figure 3-2, *Project Boundaries*. Sites 16A and 16B sit just south of the San Diego River, which is the primary scenic resource in the project area. Because sites 16A and 16B are vacant, they do not currently contain sources of light and glare, but they are surrounded by other development.

#### Sites 20A and 20B

Housing Element sites 20A and 20B are undeveloped sites south of the Historic Edgemoor Polo Barn. To the west of Site 20A is Las Colinas and to the east is a gated manufactured home community for 55 years old and up residents. Site 20B is bordered by single family residential homes to the south, multi-family residential to the east, and Las Colinas and Riverview Office Park to the west. Refer to Figure 3-2. Because sites 20A and 20B are vacant, they do not currently contain sources of light and glare, but they are surrounded by other development. The Edgemoor Polo Barn sits just north of Site 20A and is an important design resource to the City.

### **4.1.1.3 Community Character**

In 1986, the City approved the original TCSP, which established guidelines for creating a people- and transit-oriented hub for commercial, civic, and residential uses along the San Diego River. Since its original approval, there have been a number of amendments to the TCSP establishing updated physical and design frameworks as well as changes to land use and zoning designations. Implementation of the TCSP is subject to site design considerations that ensure future building designs are compatible with existing uses including building setbacks, height offsets, and landscaping.

As detailed within the TCSP, visual resources consist primarily of two opportunities: the San Diego River and views of surrounding hillsides (City 1986). To preserve these resources, the existing TCSP includes architectural standards focused on minimizing view blockages. Specifically, projects located near the western boundary of the planning area are required to maintain views from the west and provide a buffer for the existing land uses along the western edge (City 1986).

#### **4.1.1.4 Light and Glare**

There are two common types of light intrusion: light that emanates from the interior of structures and passes out through windows and light that projects from exterior sources, such as street, security, and landscape lighting. Light spillover is typically defined as the presence of unwanted or misdirected light on properties adjacent to a subject property being illuminated. Light spillover can be a nuisance to adjacent areas and can diminish views of the clear night sky.

Glare is described as the distraction, discomfort, or impairment of vision caused by extreme contrasts in the field of vision, where light sources such as sunlight, lamps, luminaries, or reflecting surfaces are excessively bright in relation to the general brightness of surroundings. Glare also results from sunlight reflecting off flat building surfaces, with glass typically contributing the highest degree of reflectivity. In its simplest form, glare is a consequence of the normally helpful capability of the human eye to adapt to different light levels.

Sources of light and glare throughout the TCSP area and AEN consist of night lighting from residential windows, roadway lights, and lit commercial signs. The Housing Element sites are vacant and do not currently emit any light or glare. Existing night lighting from Santee Lakes Recreation Preserve and minimal security lighting from the Padre Dam Municipal Water District Ray Stoyer Water Reclamation Facility is visible from portions of the City. Daytime glare results from reflective building surfaces and headlights of vehicular traffic.

### **4.1.2 Regulatory Framework**

#### **4.1.2.1 State**

##### **California Scenic Highways Program**

Recognizing the value of scenic areas and the value of views from roads in such areas, the California State Legislature established the California Scenic Highway Program in 1963. This legislation sees scenic highways as “a vital part of the all-encompassing effort to protect and enhance California’s beauty, amenity and quality of life.” Under this program, a number of state highways have been designated as eligible for inclusion as scenic routes. As described in Section 4.1.1.2, there are no officially designated scenic highways within the TCSP area, AEN, or Housing Element sites. An eligible segment of SR 52 is approximately 1.8 miles south of the TCSP area, but the proposed project area is not visible from the roadway.

#### **4.1.2.2 Local**

##### **General Plan**

The City’s General Plan includes various goals, objectives, and policies that would help to improve aesthetic conditions throughout the City, including the following:

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### Community Enhancement Element

**Objective 9.0:** Provide a unifying and distinctive streetscape system throughout the City.

- **Policy 9.9:** Upon completion of the SR 52 to SR 67, the City shall explore pursuing its designation as a State Scenic Highway, all or in part, as appropriate.
- **Policy 10.1:** The City shall preserve the high quality scenic viewshed visible from the western entry along Mission Gorge Road and SR 52.
- **Policy 12.1:** The City should ensure that future development respects and enhances the Edgemoor “Polo Barn” setting.
- **Policy 13.1:** The City shall ensure the provision of open space which provides adequate visual relief from developed portions of the City.
- **Policy 13.3:** The City shall ensure that open space is provided in hillside areas proposed for development that performs multiple functions of view maintenance, resource protection and hazard avoidance.
- **Policy 14.1:** The City shall encourage and work with developers to minimize the impacts of grading for new development throughout the City.
- **Policy 14.2:** The City shall ensure that development is oriented along natural terrain contours to the extent possible to maintain landform integrity.
- **Policy 14.3:** The City shall require use of contour grading techniques and multi-layered landscaping, whenever possible, to ensure the natural appearance of manufactured slopes.
- **Policy 14.5:** The City shall encourage the protection of prominent ridgelines whenever feasible. This shall be accomplished by siting development below ridgelines in such a manner that permits the ridgelines to remain visible.

### Conservation Element

**Objective 1.0:** Protect areas of unique topography or environmental significance to the greatest extent possible.

- **Policy 1.1:** The City shall encourage that significant natural landforms be maintained during development whenever possible.
- **Policy 1.2:** The City should encourage, through the environmental review process, the preservation of hillsides with steep slopes as appropriate to minimize danger from landslides and mudslides, as well as to protect key visual resources.
- **Policy 1.3:** To protect and wisely manage hillsides and topographic resources, the City shall use hillside development guidelines, as follows:

Percent Natural Slope	Guideline
Less than 10%	This is not a hillside condition. Conventional grading techniques are acceptable.
10% to 19%	Development with grading will occur in this zone, but existing landforms should retain their natural character. Padded building sites are permitted on these slopes, but contour grading, split level architectural prototypes, with stacking and clustering are expected.
20% and over	Special hillside grading, architectural and site design techniques are expected, and architectural prototypes should conform to the natural landform. Compact development plans should be used to minimize grading footprints.

- **Policy 10.2:** The City should encourage the preservation of significant natural features, such as watercourses, ridgelines, steep canyons, and major rock outcroppings through the Development Review process.

## Municipal Code

### Title 11 – Grading Ordinance

The Grading Ordinance contains requirements regarding landform alteration and grading standards. The regulations specifically include standards relating to City review, construction of manufactured slopes, and revegetation.

### Title 13 – Zoning Ordinance

The Zoning Ordinance provides direction relating to development standards throughout the City. Chapter 13.08, Development Review, establishes review procedures for development proposals to ensure best practices are used in design and siting, protect and enhance property values, ensure compliance with intent and purpose of each zone, and ensure adequate access and circulation. Approval of a development review permit requires findings that:

- The proposed development meets the purpose and design criteria prescribed in these procedures and other pertinent sections of the zoning ordinance and municipal code; and
- The proposed development is compatible with the General Plan.

## Town Center Specific Plan

The 1986 TCSP supplements City zoning by establishing development standards within the planning area. The following goals and objectives are applicable to visual resources:

Goal: A unified comprehensive open space system should be an integral part of the basic design concept of the town center. The river shall be a centrally located open space area for the benefit of the community.

- **Objective 1.1:** Major views in the TCSP area should be protected.

Goal: Architectural designs and concepts should be guided by criteria which reinforce the sense of community identity. These criteria should foster uniqueness and cohesiveness of design enhancing Santee's character.

- **Objective 3.1:** Reinforce community identity through the application of a unifying architectural theme or features in the design of civic center, commercial, office professional, residential and recreational uses.
- **Objective 3.2:** Encourage the use of architectural styles that are in scale with the natural and man-made environment.
- **Objective 3.3:** Enhance Santee's character by using architectural techniques and elements which draw upon Santee's history and provide a tie to the area's heritage.
- **Objective 3.4:** Provide for variety and discourage monotony in dwelling design by use of creative guidelines.
- **Objective 3.5:** Promote building form that will respect and improve the integrity of open spaces and their public areas.
- **Objective 3.6:** In recognition of both functional and visual concerns, heights and mass of buildings should be varied to provide for a transition from lower scale development along the edges of the site to more intensive, large-scale development within the Town Center site.
- **Objective 3.7:** The height and placement of buildings should retain major views of the surrounding hill forms and maximize long distance view opportunities for buildings located within the Town Center area.
- **Objective 3.8:** Form and spacing of buildings within a particular development area should be sufficient to maintain necessary pedestrian and vehicular circulation, retain reasonable solar access to all major public or private outdoor areas or pedestrian paths and provide visual privacy to indoor residential uses.

Goal: Landscape design should enhance the quality of the environment and contribute to high quality, safe and energy efficient development.

- **Objective 4.3:** Landscape techniques which preserve and enhance rural character where possible should be utilized.
- **Objective 4.4:** Landscaping in excess of requirements should be encouraged.

#### Town Center Specific Plan Design Guidelines

The Town Center Specific Plan Design Manual, Section IV of the Plan, establishes design concepts and guidelines for the TCSP area and provides a clear yet flexible guide for the development and review of individual projects (City 1986). The Design Manual is organized into two sections. One section contains design concepts which serve as a guide in developing Town Center. The design concepts create a framework for the development of the Town Center. Section C contains design standards that are required to be applied in specific project development. Examples of design standards that are intended to address visual issues include:

- Residential areas should be sited to provide appropriate buffers, as well as open views;
- Landscaped areas should be consistent with existing landscaping;



- Streetscapes should be designed consistent with permitted street tree list;
- Parking areas should provide adequate screening and lighting;
- Open Space setbacks of 50 to 100 feet are required between development and areas of revegetation or floodways; and
- Exterior and architectural lighting should reinforce the character of projects, but ensure reduction of glare on adjacent properties and streets.

Section 2.7, *Objective Design Standards*, of the proposed TCSP includes updated design guidelines for future development in the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites. These Objective Design Standards would replace the design guidelines described above as set forth in the original TCSP.

#### 4.1.3 Significance Determination Thresholds

Consistent with Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines, impacts related to aesthetics would be significant if the project would:

1. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista.
2. Substantially damage scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State Scenic Highway.
3. In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings (Public views are those that are experienced from a publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.
4. Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

#### 4.1.4 Methodology

The following sections analyze the potential environmental impacts that may occur as a result of implementation of the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites.

#### 4.1.5 Issue 1: Scenic Vistas

*Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?*

##### 4.1.5.1 Impact Analysis

###### TCSP Area

Major views throughout the City include the San Diego River and surrounding mountains and hillsides. The City places a high value on protecting these views as they create a sense of place that defines the City. Future development and redevelopment could detract from existing scenic vistas and views.

Development at most sites within the TCSP area would constitute infill development resulting in development consistent with surrounding urbanization that would not affect existing views. While development of vacant parcels within the TCSP area would incrementally change the character of this area, views of the surrounding hillsides would continue to be visible from this low-lying area. Development of multi-family residential, multi-story commercial buildings, and multi-level parking garages would not create obstruction of views of the surrounding hillsides based on the location of development within the low-lying valley.

The proposed TCSP includes plans for a River Bridge to allow for multiple modes of transportation across the San Diego River. Conceptual plans for the River Bridge connect the footpaths north of Site 16A to the southern portion of Town Center Park East. While the River Bridge would be a noticeable feature in the San Diego River landscape, lookouts would also provide new opportunities for passive recreation and scenic enjoyment of the river valley. The TCSP includes objective design standards for the River Bridge that aim to minimize daytime shade and nighttime light spillover in protected habitat areas and preserve the scenic quality of the San Diego River.

Views of the San Diego River could be obstructed by future development, but development is not planned in areas that currently serve as designated scenic outlooks, such as Mast Park. Furthermore, compliance with design guidelines set forth in the General Plan and Santee Municipal Code (SMC), as described below, would result in less than significant impacts.

Both future ministerial and discretionary development would be required to adhere to relevant portions of the SMC including Chapter 13.08, et seq., which establishes the City's development review procedures. These procedures require the implementation of development review for projects that require a building permit. This review requires an evaluation of project consistency with development review criteria defined in Section 1308.070 including evaluation of the relationship of the building site to the surrounding area, landscaping design including design that ensures avoidance of potential for obstruction of views when landscaping is mature, grading design, signage, and lighting. In any instance where the TCSP conflicts with the requirements of the SMC, the TCSP provisions shall take precedence. Additional criteria is applicable to multi-family residential developments as follows:

- Site Buildings to Avoid Crowding. Where multiple buildings are proposed, the minimum building separation shall be 10 feet in accordance with Section 13.10.040(G).
- Site and Design Buildings to Avoid Repetitions of Building or Roof Lines. This may be achieved through variation in building setback; wall plane offsets; use of different colors and materials on exterior elevations for visual relief; and architectural projections above maximum permitted height in accordance with Section 13.10.050(C). The TCSP specifies building variation requirements in Objective Design Standard B, *First 30'*.
- In the Urban Residential (R-30) zone, for each 5-foot increase in building height over 45 feet, the wall plane shall be stepped back an additional 5 feet.
- Where adjacent to a single-family residential zone, design buildings to ensure a transition in scale, form, and height with adjacent residential properties. Setbacks are required in accordance with Table 13.10.040A. Designs may incorporate elements such as building massing and orientation, location of windows, building story setbacks, building materials, deep roof overhangs, and other architectural features that serve to further transition the scale.

- Projects shall be designed so that assigned parking spaces are located as close as practicable to the dwelling units they serve. Refer to Section 13.24.030(B) for additional parking standards.
- The visual impact of surface parking areas adjacent to public streets shall be minimized using mounded or dense landscape strips or low decorative masonry or stucco walls no more than 3.5 feet in height. Parking areas shall be treated with decorative surface elements to identify pedestrian paths, nodes, and driveways. The TCSP proposes additional requirements for surface parking, including a ratio of 1 tree planted for every 5 parking spaces, the addition of diamond planters after 6 parking spaces in a row, and a 3-foot minimum distance between parking and pedestrian walkways, which should be at least 5-foot wide.

In addition to the above design review requirements, development adjacent to the San Diego River would be subject to applicable setback and buffer requirements incorporated as in mitigation measure BIO-10 (refer to Section 4.4.6.2). Additionally, as detailed in SMC 13.08.010, the purpose of development review includes, but is not limited to, ensuring property is developed in a manner which respects the physical and environmental characteristics of each site and ensuring that each new development is designed to best comply with the intent and purpose of the zone in which the property is located and with the General Plan of the City. To that end, there are General Plan policies in the Community Enhancement and Conservation Elements of the City's General Plan that support preservation of scenic vistas. For example, future development is encouraged to preserve significant natural features, such as watercourses, ridgelines, steep canyons, and major rock outcroppings (City 2003b). Additionally, development within the TCSP area would be required to adhere to supplemental development regulations which include design guidelines for the planning area.

Overall adherence to applicable SMC development review and design requirements, in addition to proposed TCSP Objective Design Standards that relate to maximizing views of public amenities like the San Diego River, would ensure that future development would not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic view or vista, and impacts would be less than significant.

## **AEN**

Similar to the TCSP area, major views visible from the AEN include the San Diego River and surrounding mountains and hillsides. Future development and redevelopment within the AEN could change the character of the area, but views of the surrounding hillsides would continue to be visible. Compliance with the General Plan, SMC, and proposed TCSP Objective Design Standards that relate to maximizing views of public amenities like the San Diego River would ensure that impacts to views of the San Diego River would be less than significant.

## **Housing Element Sites**

Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B are largely undeveloped open lands that propose multi-family development at a higher density than current conditions.

### Housing Site 16A

Housing Site 16A is currently a vacant parcel with a land use designation of Residential TC-R-30, which allows 30 to 36 dwelling units per acre (du/ac). The site is surrounded by existing development to the east and west but sits directly south of the San Diego River. Development of

Site 16A could affect visibility to the San Diego River, but Site 16A is not a designated scenic resource or area intended for scenic enjoyment. Additionally, overall adherence to applicable SMC development review and design requirements, in addition to the objective design and performance standards proposed by the TCSP, such as connections to trails and open space, would ensure that future development would not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic view or vista, and impacts would be less than significant.

#### Housing Site 16B

Housing Site 16B is currently a vacant parcel with a land use designation of Residential TC-R-14, which allows for 14 to 22 du/ac and is surrounded by existing development to the east, south, and west, and would be constructed south of Site 16A. While Site 16B has the potential to obstruct views of the San Diego River, overall adherence to applicable SMC development review and design requirements, in addition to proposed objective design and performance standards proposed by the TCSP, such as connections to trails and open space, would ensure that future development would not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic view or vista, and impacts would be less than significant.

#### Housing Site 20A

Housing Site 20A is a mostly vacant parcel containing occasional asphalt and concrete foundations. The site has a land use designation of Residential TC-R-22, which allows 22 to 30 du/ac and is surrounded by existing development to the east and west but sits directly south of the San Diego River. Development of Site 20A could affect visibility to the San Diego River, but Site 20A is not a designated scenic resource or area intended for scenic enjoyment. Site 20A is adjacent to the Edgemoor Polo Barn, which the City values as an aesthetic resource. TCSP Objective Design Standard F, *Historic Site Adjacency*, states that development proposals within Site 20A shall demonstrate project site planning and building design that respects and enhances the Edgemoor Polo Barn site. This includes pedestrian connectivity between proposed uses and the Polo Barn site, landscaping that enhances the Polo Barn site, and building design that incorporates transitions in bulk and scale on areas adjacent to the Polo Barn site. Additionally, development proposals within Site 20A shall demonstrate how they would adhere to the Secretary of Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and standards and guidelines prescribed by the State Office of Historic Preservation. As described in Section 4.5, MM-CUL-5 involves the consideration of Objective Design Standard F during future project planning. If avoidance is not possible, the preferred alternative is to preserve the Edgemoor Polo Barn by moving it to another location. Overall adherence to applicable SMC development review and design requirements, in addition to proposed objective design and performance standards, would ensure that future development would not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic view or vista, and impacts would be less than significant.

#### Housing Site 20B

Housing Site 20B is a mostly vacant parcel containing occasional asphalt and concrete foundations. The site has a land use designation of Residential TC-R-30. The site is surrounded by existing development to the east, south, and west, but has the potential to obstruct views of the San Diego River if buildout is completed at a taller height than Site 20A. Overall adherence to applicable SMC development review and design requirements, in addition to proposed objective design and performance standards proposed by the TCSP, such as connections to trails and open space, would ensure that future development would not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic view or vista, and impacts would be less than significant.

#### 4.1.5.2 Mitigation Measures

##### TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites 16A, 16B, and 20B

No mitigation is required.

##### Housing Element Site 20A

For Housing Element Site 20A, implementation of MM-CUL-5 described in Section 4.4.5.2 would reduce potential adverse impacts associated with changes in visual quality and character surrounding the Edgemoor Polo Barn to less than significant. Specifically, application of the Secretary of Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties provides guidelines for future development that would ensure maintenance of the historical integrity of the Edgemoor Polo Barn. While the visual character of the site would change with new development, the visual quality of the Edgemoor Polo Barn would be retained through application of the Secretary of Interior Standards.

#### 4.1.5.3 Significance After Mitigation

##### TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites 16A, 16B, and 20B

Impacts associated with the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, and 20B would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

##### Housing Element Site 20A

Impacts to scenic quality associated with the Edgemoor Polo Barn would be reduced to less than significant through implementation of MM-CUL-5 for Site 20A.

#### 4.1.6 Issue 2: Scenic Resources

*Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State Scenic Highway?*

##### 4.1.6.1 Impact Analysis

###### TCSP Area

There are no designated State Scenic Highways within City limits. Only SR 52 located west of the City is a designated State Scenic Highway, which also runs in an east-west direction approximately 2 miles east of the eastern project site boundary (Caltrans 2018). Distant views to portions of the TCSP are visible from SR 52.

Mission Gorge Road is designated as a Local Scenic Road in the City's General Plan (City 2003a), which establishes Mission Gorge Road Design Standards. The southern boundary of the TCSP area is immediately adjacent to Mission Gorge Road and would be visible from the roadway. Complying with the Design Standards in the General Plan and the TCSP to the maximum extent feasible would ensure that the aesthetic value of the areas adjacent to Mission Gorge Road is not impacted. Relevant objective design standards from the TCSP include orienting main front entries to the street, changing material or adding columns between multiple entries along the same frontage, and disallowing "back-of-house" uses such as refuse areas or utility closets to face the

street. These standards would ensure that development visible from Mission Gorge Road would be visually interesting and site appropriate.

While development of the TCSP area could change the visual environment as viewed from surrounding locally scenic and state eligible roadways, the TCSP area is largely surrounded by urbanization and would represent infill development in a similar character to existing uses. Thus, while development would represent a visual change, it would not substantially change the predominant view of urbanization within the City. Distant views of the mountains would be retained as height limitations associated with each underlying zone would prohibit buildings of excessive height. Additionally, significant portions of the TCSP area, including the existing recreational uses north of the San Diego River and the San Diego River itself, would remain designated as open space. Impacts would be less than significant.

## **AEN**

Similar to the TCSP area, the southern boundary of the AEN is immediately adjacent to Mission Gorge Road, therefore potentially changing the visual environment as viewed from the local scenic roadway. However, the AEN is largely surrounded by urbanization and would represent infill development, and development would comply with the Mission Gorge Road Design Guidelines. Relevant objective design standards from the TCSP include orienting main front entries to the street, changing material or adding columns between multiple entries along the same frontage, and disallowing “back-of-house” uses such as refuse areas or utility closets to face the street. These standards would ensure that development visible from Mission Gorge Road would be visually interesting and site appropriate. Distant views of the mountains would be retained as height limitations associated with each underlying zone would prohibit buildings of excessive height. Impacts would be less than significant.

## **Housing Element Sites**

All Housing Element sites except for Site 20B would be sufficiently set back from Mission Gorge Road with intervening development such that they would not change the scenic environment as viewed from the roadway. Site 20B would be visible from Mission Gorge Road, but the site is largely surrounded by urbanization and would comply with the Mission Gorge Road Design Guidelines.

Additionally, all future development at the Housing Element sites would be subject to the requirement for Development Review consistent with SMC Chapter 13.08 which would ensure consistency with General Plan policies and applicable design and development review requirements including the objective design standards for the TCSP area. Relevant standards include orienting main front entries to the street, changing material or adding columns between multiple entries along the same frontage, and disallowing “back-of-house” uses such as refuse areas or utility closets to face the street. These standards would ensure that development visible from Mission Gorge Road would be visually interesting and site appropriate. Application of these development review requirements would ensure protection of key scenic resources. Impacts would be less than significant.

### **4.1.6.2 Mitigation Measures**

#### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

No mitigation is required.



### 4.1.6.3 Significance After Mitigation

#### TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

#### 4.1.7 Issue 3: Visual Character or Quality

*In non-urbanized areas, would the project substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage points). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?*

#### 4.1.7.1 Impact Analysis

##### TCSP Area

The TCSP area is composed of vacant and non-vacant parcels in an urbanized area of the City. The TCSP creates new zoning standards for the TCSP area, including the San Diego River floodway, that would apply to new development and redevelopment activities. The TCSP also includes Objective Design Standards that strive to create a human-scale environment that is compatible with and enhances the surrounding area; specific standards include breaking up building massing, ensuring parking does not function as a standalone element, implementing pedestrian-friendly fixtures and landscaping, and preserving open space and recreational opportunities. Sign standards are also included to enhance community character and wayfinding throughout the TCSP area, and assumes the ultimate relocation of the restored Santee Drive-In sign within the City-owned theater site in the Town Center Core. Future projects in the TCSP area would be reviewed for consistency with the standards and remaining applicable municipal code regulations mentioned in Section 4.1.5. No increase in density, height, bulk, or scale would occur, and the amount of protected open space in the community would not be reduced. Impacts would be less than significant.

##### AEN

Similar to the TCSP area, the AEN is composed of vacant and non-vacant parcels in an urbanized area of the City. The AEN would be subject to the TCSP zoning and design standards mentioned above, including breaking up building massing, ensuring parking does not function as a standalone element, implementing pedestrian-friendly fixtures and landscaping, and preserving open space and recreational opportunities. Future projects would be reviewed for consistency with the standards and remaining applicable municipal code regulations mentioned in Section 4.1.5. No increase in density, height, bulk, or scale would occur, and the amount of protected open space in the community would not be reduced. Impacts would be less than significant.

##### Housing Element Sites

Development with residential at the Housing Element sites could affect the visual character and quality of views toward the San Diego River. However, development would be subject to development review consistent with SMC Chapter 13.08 which would ensure consistency with General Plan policies and applicable design and development review requirements including supplemental development regulations. Relevant Objective Design Standards from the TCSP include breaking up building massing, ensuring parking does not function as a standalone

element, implementing pedestrian-friendly fixtures and landscaping, and preserving open space and recreational opportunities, as detailed in Section 4.1.2.3.

Additionally, development of Site 20A could result in indirect visual character and quality impacts due to changes affecting the visual environment surrounding the Edgemoor Polo Barn. Specifically, development within a visual radius of the barn could result in indirect impacts to the historic resource related to the visibility of the resource and/or altering its surrounding visual character. General Plan Policy 12.1 is aimed at the protection of historic buildings. Policy 12.1 requires that future development respects and enhances the Edgemoor Polo Barn setting. As part of the development review process, development at Site 20A would be required to demonstrate a project design that respects and enhances the adjacent historic resource. Development at Site 20A could result in significant impacts to visual character and quality and mitigation is required.

#### **4.1.7.2 Mitigation Measures**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites 16A, 16B, and 20B**

No mitigation is required.

##### **Housing Element Site 20A**

For Housing Element Site 20A, implementation of MM-CUL-5 described in Section 4.4.5.2 would reduce potential adverse impacts associated with changes in visual quality and character surrounding the Edgemoor Polo Barn to less than significant. Specifically, application of the Secretary of Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties provides guidelines for future development that would ensure maintenance of the historical integrity of the Edgemoor Polo Barn. While the visual character of the site would change with new development, the visual quality of the Edgemoor Polo Barn would be retained through application of the Secretary of Interior Standards.

#### **4.1.7.3 Significance After Mitigation**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites 16A, 16B, and 20B**

Impacts associated with the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, and 20B would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

##### **Housing Element Site 20A**

Impacts to scenic resources associated with the Edgemoor Polo Barn would be reduced to less than significant through implementation of MM-CUL-5 for Site 20A..

**4.1.8 Issue 4: Light or Glare**

*Would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area?*

**4.1.8.1 Impact Analysis****TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Development of the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites could introduce new sources of light and glare from increased development intensity. However, the TCSP area is in an urbanized area and light introduced with new development would be similar to existing sources of light. Additionally, development of the Housing Element sites would be required to comply with SMC standards related to light and glare (Chapter 13.08.070(G)), which requires that outdoor lighting be directed away from adjacent properties and set in a way to avoid any detriment to the surrounding area. Additionally, the Community Enhancement Element includes the standard for lighting and signage to minimize spillover of lighting through use of directional, cut-off and nonglare fixtures. General Plan policies would be implemented through the required development review process. Impacts would be less than significant.

**4.1.8.2 Mitigation Measures****TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

No mitigation is required.

**4.1.8.3 Significance After Mitigation****TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

## 4.2 Agriculture and Forestry Resources

The following section analyzes the potential environmental impacts that may occur to agriculture and forestry resources as a result of implementation of the proposed project.

### 4.2.1 Existing Conditions

#### 4.2.1.1 Regional Agricultural Setting

Despite numerous constraints to agriculture in San Diego County (County), such as high water and land costs, the region supports a \$1.78 billion agricultural economy (San Diego County 2023a). The majority of San Diego's important farmland lies in the northwestern corner of the County, east of Camp Pendleton. The San Pasqual Valley, approximately 15 miles north of the proposed project site, is another important agricultural resource, containing over 1,000 acres of prime farmland (California Department of Conservation [DOC] 2022). According to the DOC, the City of Santee contains primarily urban and built-up land. No areas of the City are explicitly used or zoned for agriculture (City 2003c).

#### 4.2.1.2 Project Area Conditions and Agricultural Resources

##### Historical Agricultural Use

In 1877, George A. Cowles purchased approximately 4,000 acres of land for a vineyard in what would later be known as the Santee area. Originally known as Cowleston, Santee gained its name in 1891 when Cowles's widow Jennie married Milton Santee, a local realtor and surveyor (City 2024a). Agriculture remained the area's primary focus through the late 1800s, with dairies and barns dotting the landscape. One such dairy farm was the Edgemoor Farm. Edgemoor Farm, established in 1908, was later purchased by the County of San Diego to be used as a geriatric hospital (Santee Historical Society 2024). As time went on, the County added new buildings to the property while still maintaining the original barn, though the dairy and farm had fallen into disuse by the 1950s. The preserved Edgemoor Polo Barn has since been placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

##### Current Agricultural Use

The DOC Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) produces Important Farmland maps and statistical data used for categorizing agricultural land and analyzing impacts. Agricultural lands are rated based on soil quality and irrigation status, with Important Farmland maps updated every two years based on aerial photograph review, computer mapping analysis, public input, and field reconnaissance. The map series identifies eight classifications and uses a minimum mapping unit size of ten acres. The program also produces a biannual report on the amount of land converted from agricultural to non-agricultural use. The program maintains an inventory of state agricultural land and updates its "Important Farmland Series Maps" every two years. Within the project's proposed Town Center Specific Plan (TCSP), Arts and Entertainment Neighborhood (AEN), and Housing Element site footprints, portions of land are designated as Farmland of Local Importance and Grazing Land (DOC 2022). This land is currently composed of vacant lots of either dirt, vegetation, or shallow water. Table 4.2-1, *Important Farmland within the Project Area*, shows the acreage of each FMMP land use category. Figure 4.2-1, *Farmland Designations and Soils*, shows the FMMP designations.

**Table 4.2-1  
IMPORTANT FARMLAND WITHIN THE PROJECT AREA**

FMMP Land Use Category	Acres by FMMP Category and Proportion of Total Site Acreage											
	TCSP		AEN		Housing Element Sites							
					16A		16B		20A		20B	
Farmland of Local Importance	100.6	15.4%	74.5	21.8%	8.9	80.3%	8.7	100%	0	-	0	-
Grazing Land	41.7	6.4%	40.9	12.0%	2.2	19.8%	0	-	0	-	0	-
Other Land	100.4	15.4%	56.6	16.6%	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
Urban and Built-Up Land	408.7	62.7%	169.7	49.7%	0	-	0	-	7.8	100%	9.9	100%
Total Acreage	651.4		341.7		11.0		8.7		7.8		9.9	

Source: DOC 2022

## 4.2.2 Regulatory Framework

### 4.2.2.1 State

#### Williamson Act

The California Land Conservation Act (also known as the Williamson Act) was adopted in 1965, set forth at Government Code section 51200 et seq. The act provides a comprehensive method for local governments to protect farmland and open space by allowing lands in agricultural use to be placed under contract (agricultural preserve) between a local government and a landowner. In return, landowners receive a reduction in their assessed property taxes based upon farming and open space uses as opposed to full market value.

#### California Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program

The DOC monitors the conversion of the state's farmland to and from agricultural use via the FMMP. According to the 2022 San Diego County Important Farmland Map, significant portions of the TCSP, AEN, and Housing Element sites contain "Farmland of Local Importance". The FMMP classifications are shown below:

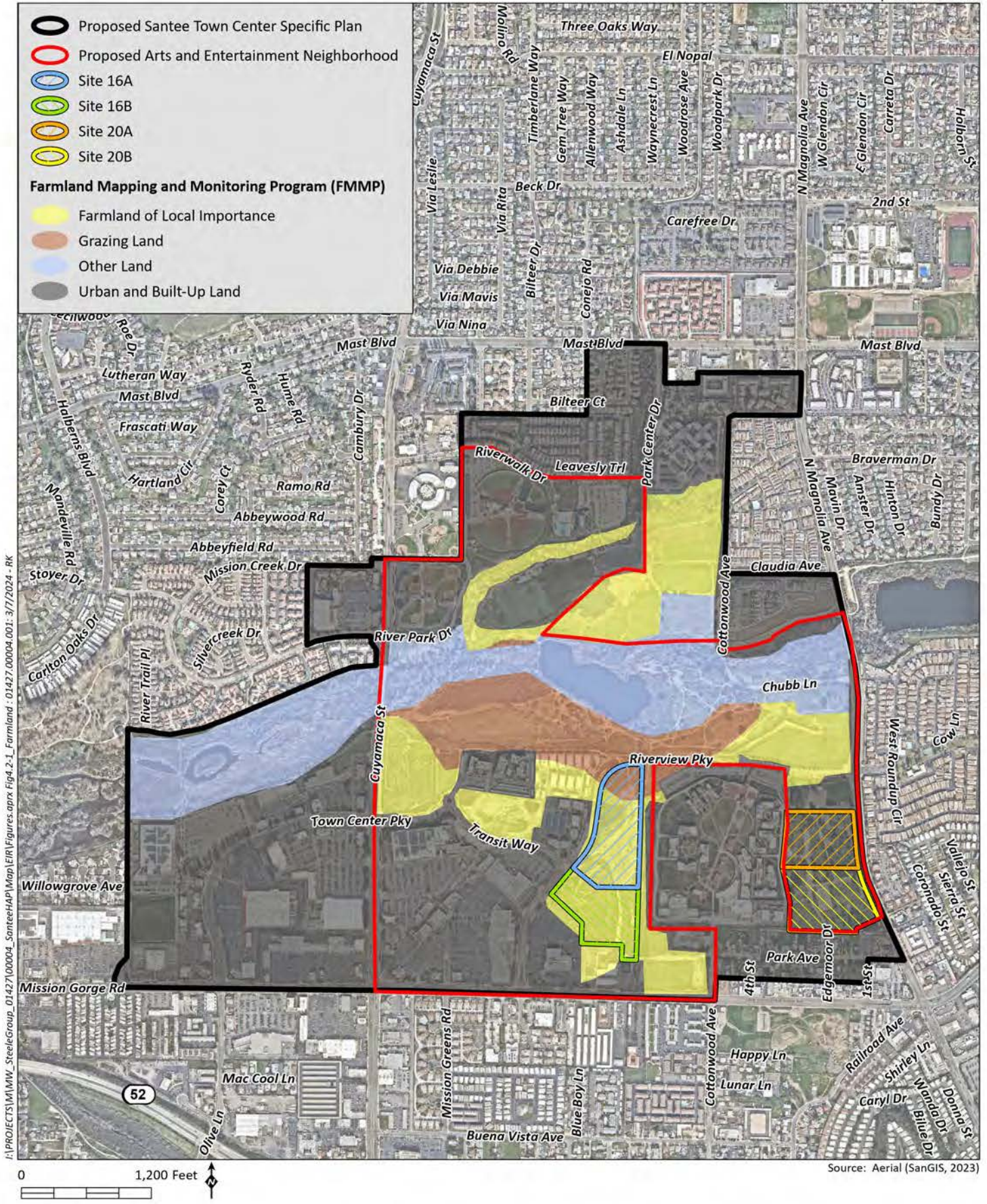
#### Prime Farmland

Prime Farmland has the best combination of physical and chemical features able to sustain long-term agricultural production. This land has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high yields. Land must have been used for irrigated agricultural production at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.

#### Farmland of Statewide Importance

Farmland of Statewide Importance is similar to Prime Farmland but with minor shortcomings, such as greater slopes or less ability to store soil moisture. Land must have been used for irrigated agricultural production at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.





I:\PROJECTS\1\MM\_SteelGroup\_01427\00004\_SanteeHAP\Map\EIR\Figures.aprx Fig 4.2-1\_Farmland : 01427.00004.001: 3/7/2024 - RK



### Unique Farmland

Unique Farmland has lesser quality soils used for the production of the state's leading agricultural crops. This land is usually irrigated, but may include non-irrigated orchards or vineyards as found in some climatic zones in California. Land must have been cropped at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.

### Farmland of Local Importance

Farmland of Local Importance has some importance to the local agricultural economy as determined by each county's board of supervisors and a local advisory committee. In some counties, Confined Animal Agriculture facilities are part of Farmland of Local Importance, but they are shown separately. In San Diego County, Farmland of Local Importance is defined as land that meets all the characteristics of Prime and Statewide, with the exception of irrigation. Farmlands not covered by the above categories but of significant economic importance to the County have a history of good production for locally adapted crops. The soils are grouped in types that are suited for truck crops (such as tomatoes, strawberries, cucumbers, potatoes, celery, squash, romaine lettuce, and cauliflower) and soils suited for orchard crops (avocados and citrus) (DOC 2022).

### Grazing Land

Grazing Land has existing vegetation suited to the grazing of livestock. This category was developed in cooperation with the California Cattlemen's Association, University of California Cooperative Extension, and other groups interested in the extent of grazing activities.

### Urban and Built-up Land

Urban and Built-Up Land is occupied by structures with a building density of at least 1 unit to 1.5 acres, or approximately 6 structures to a 10-acre parcel. This land is used for residential, industrial, commercial, construction, institutional, public administration, railroad and other transportation yards, cemeteries, airports, golf courses, sanitary landfills, sewage treatment, water control structures, and other developed purposes.

### Other Land

Other Land contains land not included in any other mapping category. Common examples include low density rural developments; brush, timber, wetland, and riparian areas not suitable for livestock grazing; confined livestock, poultry or aquaculture facilities; strip mines, borrow pits; and water bodies smaller than forty acres. Vacant and nonagricultural land surrounded on all sides by urban development and greater than 40 acres is mapped as Other Land.

### Water

Water includes perennial water bodies with an extent of at least 40 acres.

#### **4.2.2.2 Local**

##### **City of Santee General Plan**

In the Land Use Element of the City of Santee's General Plan, the project site is currently designated Town Center (TC), which is intended to fulfill the goals of the TCSP (City 2003c). There are no specific agricultural designations in the General Plan, but agricultural uses may, under special circumstances, be allowed under the Park/Open Space designation.

##### **City of Santee Zoning Ordinance**

Minor agricultural uses are permitted in Residential zones, while wholesale distributors or commercial operations are conditionally compatible. Agricultural uses are also conditionally compatible in Park/Open Space, Commercial (farmer's markets), and Industrial Zones. (City 2023a).

##### **City of Santee Town Center Specific Plan**

In October 1986, the City completed a focused effort to plan for the development of property in its geographic core. The original TCSP does not specifically permit agricultural uses and designates the Edgemoor Polo Barn, which was once used for agriculture, as Theme Commercial.

#### **4.2.3 Significance Determination Thresholds**

As defined in Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines and by the County of San Diego, project impacts to agriculture and forestry resources would be considered significant if the project was determined to:

- 1) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide or Local Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, or other agricultural resources, to non-agricultural use;
- 2) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract;
- 3) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, Forest Land (as defined in Public Resources Code (PRC) Section (12220(g)), Timberland (as defined by PRC Section 4526), or timberland-zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g));
- 4) Result in the loss of Forest Land or conversion of Forest Land to non-forest use; or
- 5) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of Forest Land to non-forest use.

#### 4.2.4 Methodology

The following sections consider the DOC's FMMP, aerial imagery, and current land use designations and zoning to determine if implementation of the project would result in a potentially significant impact to agricultural resources within, or adjacent to, the TCSP area, AEN, or Housing Element sites.

#### 4.2.5 Issue 1: Conversion of Important Farmland

*Would the project convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide or Local Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, or other agricultural resources, to non-agricultural use?*

##### 4.2.5.1 Impact Analysis

###### TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites

While parts of the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites contain land that qualify as Farmland of Local Importance, no portion of the project area has been used as farmland since at least 1980, when aerial imagery shows that the Town Center area was graded, likely in preparation for the further urban development seen in 1995 and 2000 aerial photographs (HELIX 2024b). The project area is planned for urban development in the City of Santee General Plan, and has been zoned for urban uses since the 1986 TCSP was adopted. Although the areas designated as Farmland of Local Importance have generally remained vacant and filled with dirt, standing water, or sparse vegetation, some portions of the areas and surrounding sites have been developed with urban uses. No agricultural uses have reemerged on the project site since farming ceased in the late 1900s, as visible in more recent aerial imagery. Because there are no current or planned agricultural uses in the project area, the proposed project would not result in impacts to conversion of FMMP farmland in the TCSP area, AEN, or Housing Element sites. Impacts would be less than significant.

##### 4.2.5.2 Mitigation Measures

###### TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites

No mitigation is required.

##### 4.2.5.3 Significance After Mitigation

###### TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

#### 4.2.6 Issue 2: Conflict with Agricultural Zoning

*Would the project conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?*

**4.2.6.1 Impact Analysis****TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

No zoning or land use designations that are focused on agricultural use occur within the boundaries of the TCSP area, AEN, or Housing Element sites. Agricultural uses are allowed under special circumstances in the park/open space land associated with the San Diego River, but no agricultural uses exist or are planned for the area according to the TCSP. There are no recent or current Williamson Act contract lands within the project site. There would be no conflicts with agricultural zoning or Williamson Act contracts in the TCSP area, AEN, or Housing Element sites as a result of the proposed project.

**4.2.6.2 Mitigation Measures****TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

No mitigation is required.

**4.2.6.3 Significance After Mitigation****TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

**4.2.7 Issue 3: Conflict with Timberland Zoning**

*Would the project conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, Forest Land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), Timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland-zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))?*

**4.2.7.1 Impact Analysis****TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

The TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites do not contain any areas zoned as Timberland or Timberland Production. Therefore, no associated impacts in the TCSP area, AEN, or Housing Element sites would result from the implementation of the proposed project.

**4.2.7.2 Mitigation Measures****TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

No mitigation is required.

**4.2.7.3 Significance After Mitigation****TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

**4.2.8 Issue 4: Loss or Conversion of Forest Land**

*Would the project result in the loss of Forest Land or conversion of Forest Land to non-forest use?*

**4.2.8.1 Impact Analysis****TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

The TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites do not contain any areas identified as forest resources under California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection ([CAL FIRE] 2024) or City policies and guidelines. Therefore, no associated impacts to forest land in the TCSP area, AEN, or Housing Element sites would result from implementation of the proposed project.

**4.2.8.2 Mitigation Measures****TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

No mitigation is required.

**4.2.8.3 Significance After Mitigation****TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

**4.2.9 Issue 5: Other Conversion of Farmland or Forest Land**

*Would the project involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of Forest Land to non-forest use?*

**4.2.9.1 Impact Analysis****TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Based on the previous impact discussions and that no active Farmland or Forest land exists or is zoned in the vicinity of the project area, the project would not result in conversion of Farmland or Forest land within, or in the vicinity of, the TCSP area, AEN or Housing Element sites, and no associated farmland conversion impacts would occur from the implementation of the proposed project.

**4.2.9.2 Mitigation Measures****TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

No mitigation is required.

### **4.2.9.3 Significance After Mitigation**

#### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.



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## 4.3 Air Quality

The following section analyzes the potential air quality impacts that may occur as a result of implementation of the proposed project. For the purpose of this air quality analysis, buildout of the Town Center Specific Plan (TCSP) area is anticipated to conservatively occur through a 2035 horizon year, and buildout of the Housing Element sites is anticipated to occur by the end of 2026 as part of the 2021-2029 Sixth Cycle Housing Element. This evaluation includes the potential for the proposed project to result in significant emissions of criteria pollutants, toxic air contaminants (TACs), or odors. Air quality modeling data are contained in Appendix B of this Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and include criteria pollutant emission data calculated using the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod).

### 4.3.1 Existing Conditions

#### 4.3.1.1 Regional Setting

The City of Santee (City) lies within the San Diego Air Basin (SDAB), which encompasses all of San Diego County (County). The SDAB is a coastal plain with connecting broad valleys and low hills, bounded by the Pacific Ocean to the west and high mountain ranges to the east. The topography in the SDAB region varies greatly, from beaches on the west, to mountains, and then desert to the east. The local climate is classified as Mediterranean. This type of climate is characterized by a repetitive pattern of frequent early morning cloudiness, hazy afternoon sunshine, daytime onshore breezes, and limited temperature change throughout the year. The average daily temperature is 62 degrees Fahrenheit. Limited rainfall occurs in winter while summers are often completely dry.

#### 4.3.1.2 Air Pollutants of Concern

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) has identified six pollutants of key concern known as “criteria pollutants.” These criteria pollutants are each common in outdoor environments across the United States and pose a threat to human health. Criteria pollutants include ozone (O<sub>3</sub>), carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>), particulate matter (PM; PM with a diameter of 10 microns or less [PM<sub>10</sub>] and PM with a diameter of 2.5 microns or less [PM<sub>2.5</sub>]), and lead (Pb). The following is a discussion of the criteria air pollutants (USEPA 2024a).

#### Ozone

Ozone is the primary component of smog. Ozone is not directly emitted into the air but is formed through complex chemical reactions between precursor emissions of oxides of nitrogen (NO<sub>x</sub>) and reactive organic gases (ROGs) (also known as volatile organic compounds [VOCs] or reactive organic compounds) in the presence of sunlight. The adverse health effects associated with exposure to ozone pertain primarily to the respiratory system. Scientific evidence indicates that ambient levels of ozone affect not only sensitive receptors, such as asthma sufferers and children, but healthy adults as well. Exposure to ozone has been found to significantly alter lung functions by increasing respiratory rates and pulmonary resistance, decreasing tidal volumes (the amount of air inhaled and exhaled), and impairing respiratory mechanics. Symptomatic responses include throat dryness, chest tightness, headache, and nausea. When taking a deep breath, symptoms include chest tightness, wheezing, or shortness of breath. About half of smog-forming emissions come from automobiles.

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## Carbon Monoxide

Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless gas that is formed when carbon in fuel is not burned completely. It is a component of motor vehicle exhaust, which contributes about 56 percent of all CO emissions nationwide. CO enters the bloodstream through the lungs by combining with hemoglobin, which normally supplies oxygen to the cells. However, CO combines with hemoglobin much more readily than oxygen does, resulting in a drastic reduction in the amount of oxygen available to the cells. Adverse health effects associated with exposure to CO concentrations include such symptoms as dizziness, headaches, and fatigue. CO exposure is especially harmful to individuals who suffer from cardiovascular and respiratory diseases.

Small-scale, localized concentrations of CO above the federal and state Ambient Air Quality Standards (AAQS) may occur at intersections with stagnation points such as those that occur on major highways and heavily traveled and congested roadways. Localized high concentrations of CO are referred to as “CO hotspots” and are a concern at congested intersections, where automobile engines burn fuel less efficiently and their exhaust contains more CO.

## Nitrogen Dioxide

Nitrogen dioxide is a brownish, highly reactive gas present in all urban environments. The major human-made sources of NO<sub>2</sub> are combustion devices, such as boilers, gas turbines, and mobile and stationary reciprocating internal combustion engines. Inhalation is the most common route of exposure to NO<sub>2</sub>. Because NO<sub>2</sub> has relatively low solubility in water, the principal site of toxicity is in the lower respiratory tract. The severity of the adverse health effects depends primarily on the concentration inhaled rather than the duration of exposure. An individual may experience a variety of acute symptoms, including coughing, difficulty with breathing, vomiting, headache, and eye irritation during or shortly after exposure. After a period of approximately 4 to 12 hours, an exposed individual may experience chemical pneumonitis or pulmonary edema with breathing abnormalities, cough, cyanosis, chest pain, and rapid heartbeat.

## Sulfur Dioxide

Sulfur dioxide is a combustion product, with the primary source being power plants and heavy industries that use coal or oil as fuel. SO<sub>2</sub> is also a product of diesel engine combustion. The health effects of SO<sub>2</sub> include lung disease and breathing problems for people with asthma. SO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere contributes to the formation of acid rain.

## Inhalable Coarse Particles

PM<sub>10</sub> is particulate matter (PM) with an aerodynamic diameter of 10 microns or less. Ten microns is about one-seventh of the diameter of a human hair. PM is a complex mixture of very tiny solid or liquid particles composed of chemicals, soot, and dust. Under typical conditions (i.e., no wildfires) particles classified under the PM<sub>10</sub> category are mainly emitted directly from activities that disturb the soil including travel on roads and construction, mining, or agricultural operations. Other sources include windblown dust, salts, brake dust, and tire wear.

Health studies have shown a significant association between exposure to PM and premature death in people with heart or lung diseases. Other important effects include aggravation of respiratory and cardiovascular disease, lung disease, decreased lung function, asthma attacks, and certain cardiovascular problems such as heart attacks and irregular heartbeat.

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## Inhalable Fine Particles

Airborne, inhalable particles with aerodynamic diameters of 2.5 microns or less have been recognized as an air quality concern requiring regular monitoring. Federal regulations required that PM<sub>2.5</sub> monitoring begin January 1, 1999. Similar to PM<sub>10</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub> is also inhaled into the lungs and causes serious health problems.

## Lead

Lead is a metal found naturally in the environment as well as in manufactured products. At high levels of exposure, lead can have detrimental effects on the central nervous system. The major sources of lead emissions have historically been mobile and industrial sources. As a result of the phase out of leaded gasoline, metal processing is currently the primary source of lead emissions.

### 4.3.1.3 Toxic Air Contaminants

A toxic air contaminant (TAC) is any air pollutant which may cause or contribute to an increase in mortality or serious illness or which may pose a present or potential hazard to human health. The California Air Resources Board (CARB) lists approximately 800 compounds that are assessed under its Air Toxics Hot Spots Program. These compounds may be carcinogenic or may cause acute or chronic non-cancer health problems. Of note, diesel-exhaust particulate matter (DPM) has been determined to be carcinogenic and therefore is categorized as a TAC.

### 4.3.1.4 Local Air Pollution Sources

#### Stationary Air Pollution Sources

##### Regulated Stationary Sources

Air pollutant emissions originate from a wide variety of stationary sources such as factories, power plants, gasoline stations, and other businesses and industrial operations. The local air district, the San Diego Air Pollution Control District (SDAPCD), is responsible for monitoring air quality and developing plans to reduce air pollution in the SDAB. The SDAPCD's Annual Emissions Reporting Program collects emissions data and makes it available to the public. Permitted stationary sources that are required to report annually in the City include the following (SDAPCD 2024):

- Sycamore Energy 1 LLC at 8514 Mast Boulevard
- Sycamore Landfill Inc. at 8514 Mast Boulevard
- Martin Marietta San Diego Aggregates, LLC at 8514 Mast Boulevard
- Compucraft Industries Inc. at 8787 Olive Lane
- ASAP Custom Cabinets, Inc. at 10207 Buena Vista Avenue, Suite D

Other stationary sources that are required to report every four years include, but are not limited to, gas stations, water and wastewater facilities, and auto body paint shops in the City.

### Unregulated Stationary Sources

In April 2005, CARB published the *Air Quality and Land Use Handbook: A Community Health Perspective* (CARB 2005). The term “sensitive receptor” refers to a person in the population who is more susceptible to health effects due to exposure to an air contaminant than the population at large or to a land use that may reasonably be associated with such a person. Examples include residences, schools, playgrounds, childcare centers, churches, athletic facilities, retirement homes, and long-term health care facilities. The handbook makes recommendations directed at protecting sensitive receptors from air pollutant emissions. As stated in the handbook, the concern is generally limited to siting new sensitive land uses within 50 feet of a gas station or constructing a new gas station within 50 feet of existing sensitive land use (CARB 2005).

### **Mobile Source Air Pollution**

CARB has identified DPM as a carcinogenic TAC. Vehicle traffic is responsible for the majority of DPM emissions in California as well as several other carcinogens. CARB recommends caution when siting sensitive land uses near heavily traveled roadways. Specific recommendations from CARB’s *Air Quality and Land Use Handbook: A Community Health Perspective* include maintaining a 500-foot buffer zone between sensitive receptors and freeways, urban road with 100,000 or more vehicles per day or rural road with 50,000 vehicles per day whenever possible (CARB 2005). Based on Caltrans Traffic Census Program, State Route (SR) 52 and SR 67 carry fewer than 100,000 vehicles per day (Caltrans 2024).

#### **4.3.1.5 Local Air Quality**

The SDAPCD maintains active air quality monitoring stations throughout the SDAB. Air pollutant concentrations and meteorological information are continuously recorded at these stations. The closest air quality monitoring station to the project site is the El Cajon station, located at 533 First Street in El Cajon, approximately three miles southeast of the City, which monitors air pollutant data for ozone, NO<sub>x</sub>, and PM<sub>2.5</sub>. Air quality is expressed as the number of days per year in which air pollution levels exceed federal standards set by the USEPA or state standards set by the CARB. Table 4.3-1, *Air Quality Measurements – El Cajon Monitoring Station*, presents a summary of the highest pollutant concentrations monitored during the 3 most recent years (2020 through 2022) for which the SDAPCD has reported data for this station.

**Table 4.3-1  
AIR QUALITY MEASUREMENTS – EL CAJON MONITORING STATION**

<b>Pollutant/Standard</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>
<b>Ozone (O<sub>3</sub>)</b>			
Maximum concentration 1-hour period (ppm)	0.094	0.088	0.100
Maximum concentration 8-hour period (ppm)	0.083	0.077	0.088
Days above 1-hour state standard (>0.09 ppm)	0	0	1
Days above 8-hour state/federal standard (>0.070 ppm)	14	3	2
<b>Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>)</b>			
Maximum 1-hour concentration (ppm)	0.044	0.038	0.036
Days above state 1-hour standard (0.18 ppm)	0	0	0
Days above federal 1-hour standard (0.100 ppm)	0	0	0
Annual average (ppm)	0.008	0.006	0.008
Exceed annual federal standard (0.053 ppm)	No	No	No
Exceed annual state standard (0.030 ppm)	No	No	No

Pollutant/Standard	2020	2021	2022
<b>Fine Particulate Matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>)</b>			
Maximum 24-hour concentration ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ )	38.2	30.2	26.4
Measured Days above 24-hour federal standard ( $>35 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ )	2	0	0
Annual average ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ )	11.6	10.4	*
Exceed state and federal annual standard ( $12 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ )	No	No	*

Source: CARB 2024a

ppm = parts per million;  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  = micrograms per cubic meter

#### 4.3.1.6 Odor

Odors are considered an air quality issue both at the local level (e.g., odor from wastewater treatment) and at the regional level (e.g., smoke from wildfires). The ability to detect odors varies considerably among the population and is subjective. Some individuals can smell minute quantities of specific substances while others may not have the same sensitivity but may have sensitivities to odors of other substances. In addition, people may have different reactions to the same odor; an odor that is offensive to one person (e.g., from a fast-food restaurant or bakery) may be perfectly acceptable to another. Unfamiliar odors may be more easily detected and likely to cause complaints than familiar ones.

Offensive odors can potentially affect human health in several ways. First, odorant compounds can irritate the eye, nose, and throat, which can reduce respiratory volume. Second, the VOC that causes odors can stimulate sensory nerves to cause neurochemical changes that might influence health, for instance, by compromising the immune system. Finally, unpleasant odors can trigger memories or attitudes linked to unpleasant odors, causing cognitive and emotional effects such as stress.

Several examples of common land use types that generate substantial odors include wastewater treatment plants, landfills, composting/green waste facilities, recycling facilities, petroleum refineries, chemical manufacturing plants, painting/coating operations, rendering plants, and food packaging plants. The TCSP area considered in this analysis is not located near any of these uses.

### 4.3.2 Regulatory Framework

#### 4.3.2.1 Federal

##### Federal Ambient Air Quality Standards

The federal Clean Air Act (CAA) was enacted in 1970 and amended in 1977 and 1990 [42 United States Code (USC) 7401] for the purposes of protecting and enhancing the quality of the nation's air resources to benefit public health, welfare, and productivity. In 1971, in order to achieve the purposes of Section 109 of the CAA [42 USC 7409], the USEPA developed primary and secondary national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS). Designated criteria pollutants of primary concern include ozone, CO, SO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>2</sub>, lead, PM<sub>2.5</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub>. The NAAQS "protect the public welfare from any known or anticipated adverse effects associated with the presence of such air pollutant in the ambient air" [42 USC 7409(b)(2)]. NAAQS are presented in Table 4.3-2, *Ambient Air Quality Standards*.



**Table 4.3-2  
AMBIENT AIR QUALITY STANDARDS**

Pollutant	Averaging Time	California Standard	Federal Standards Primary	Federal Standards Secondary
O <sub>3</sub>	1 Hour	0.09 ppm (180 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	–	–
	8 Hour	0.070 ppm (137 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	0.070 ppm (137 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	Same as Primary
PM <sub>10</sub>	24 Hour	50 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	150 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	Same as Primary
	AAM	20 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	–	Same as Primary
PM <sub>2.5</sub>	24 Hour	–	35 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	Same as Primary
	AAM	12 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	9 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	15.0 µg/m <sup>3</sup>
	1 Hour	20 ppm (23 mg/m <sup>3</sup> )	35 ppm (40 mg/m <sup>3</sup> )	–
CO	8 Hour	9.0 ppm (10 mg/m <sup>3</sup> )	9 ppm (10 mg/m <sup>3</sup> )	–
	8 Hour (Lake Tahoe)	6 ppm (7 mg/m <sup>3</sup> )	–	–
NO <sub>2</sub>	1 Hour	0.18 ppm (339 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	0.100 ppm (188 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	–
	AAM	0.030 ppm (57 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	0.053 ppm (100 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	Same as Primary
	1 Hour	0.25 ppm (655 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	0.075 ppm (196 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	–
SO <sub>2</sub>	3 Hour	–	–	0.5 ppm (1,300 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )
	24 Hour	0.04 ppm (105 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	–	–
	30-day Avg.	1.5 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	–	–
Lead	Calendar Quarter	–	1.5 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	Same as Primary
	Rolling 3-month Avg.	–	0.15 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	Same as Primary
Visibility Reducing Particles	8 Hour	Extinction coefficient of 0.23 per km – visibility ≥ 10 miles	No Federal Standards	No Federal Standards
Sulfates	24 Hour	25 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	No Federal Standards	No Federal Standards
Hydrogen Sulfide	1 Hour	0.03 ppm (42 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	No Federal Standards	No Federal Standards
Vinyl Chloride	24 Hour	0.01 ppm (26 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	No Federal Standards	No Federal Standards

Source: CARB 2016 and USEPA 2024a

<sup>1</sup> National Primary Standards: The levels of air quality necessary, within an adequate margin of safety, to protect public health.

<sup>2</sup> National Secondary Standards: The levels of air quality necessary to protect the public welfare from any known or anticipated adverse effects of a pollutant.

Note: More detailed information of the data presented in this table can be found at the CARB website

([www.arb.ca.gov](http://www.arb.ca.gov)).

O<sub>3</sub> = ozone; ppm = parts per million; µg/m<sup>3</sup> = micrograms per cubic meter; PM<sub>10</sub> = respirable particulate matter; AAM = Annual Arithmetic Mean; PM<sub>2.5</sub> = fine particulate matter; CO = carbon monoxide; mg/m<sup>3</sup> = milligrams per cubic meter; NO<sub>2</sub> = nitrogen dioxide; SO<sub>2</sub> = sulfur dioxide; km = kilometer; – = No Standard.

### 4.3.2.2 State

#### California Ambient Air Quality Standards

The State of California has developed the California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) which generally has set more strict standards for criteria pollutants. In addition to the federal criteria pollutants, the CAAQS also specify standards for visibility-reducing particles, sulfates, hydrogen sulfide, and vinyl chloride. Similar to the federal CAA, the state classifies specific geographic areas as either "attainment," "unclassified," or "nonattainment" areas for each pollutant based on the comparison of measured data with the CAAQS. CAAQS are presented in Table 4.3-2. The SDAB is a nonattainment area for the state ozone standards, the state PM<sub>10</sub> standard, and the state PM<sub>2.5</sub> standard.

#### State Implementation Plan

The State Implementation Plan (SIP) is a collection of documents that set forth the state's strategies for achieving the NAAQS. In California, the SIP is a compilation of new and previously submitted plans, programs (such as monitoring, modeling, permitting, etc.), district rules, state regulations and federal controls. The CARB is the lead agency for all purposes related to the SIP under state law. Local air districts and other agencies, such as the Department of Pesticide Regulation and the Bureau of Automotive Repair, prepare SIP elements and submit them to CARB for review and approval. The CARB then forwards SIP revisions to the USEPA for approval and publication in the Federal Register. All of the items included in the California SIP are listed in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) at 40 CFR 52.220.

#### Air Toxics Program

The public's exposure to TACs is a significant public health issue in California. DPM emissions have been established as TACs. In 1983, the California State Legislature enacted a program to identify the health effects of TACs and to reduce exposure to these contaminants to protect the public health (AB 1807: Health and Safety Code Sections 39650–39674). The California State Legislature established a two-step process to address the potential health effects from TACs. The first step is the risk assessment (or identification) phase. The second step is the risk management (or control) phase of the process.

The California Air Toxics Program establishes the process for the identification and control of TACs and includes provisions to make the public aware of significant toxic exposures and for reducing risk. Additionally, the Air Toxics "Hot Spots" Information and Assessment Act (AB 2588, 1987, Connelly Bill) was enacted in 1987 and requires stationary sources to report the types and quantities of certain substances routinely released into the air. The goals of the Air Toxics "Hot Spots" Act are to collect emission data, to identify facilities having localized impacts, to ascertain health risks, to notify nearby residents of significant risks, and to reduce those significant risks to acceptable levels.

The Children's Environmental Health Protection Act, California Senate Bill 25 (Chapter 731, Escutia, Statutes of 1999), focuses on children's exposure to air pollutants. The act requires CARB to review its air quality standards from a children's health perspective, evaluate the statewide air quality monitoring network, and develop any additional air toxic control measures needed to protect children's health. Locally, toxic air pollutants are regulated through the SDAPCD Regulation XII. Of particular concern statewide are DPM emissions. DPM was established as a TAC in 1998, and is estimated to represent a majority of the cancer risk from TACs statewide

(based on the statewide average). Diesel exhaust is a complex mixture of gases, vapors, and fine particles. This complexity makes the evaluation of health effects of diesel exhaust a complex scientific issue. Some of the chemicals in diesel exhaust, such as benzene and formaldehyde, have been previously identified as TACs by the CARB and are listed as carcinogens either under the state's Proposition 65 or under the federal Hazardous Air Pollutants program.

### 4.3.2.3 Local

#### San Diego Air Pollution Control District

The SDAPCD and San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) are responsible for developing and implementing the clean air plan for attainment and maintenance of the ambient air quality standards in the SDAB. The regional air quality plan for San Diego County for attainment of the NAAQS is SDAPCD's *2020 Plan for Attaining the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for Ozone in San Diego County* (Attainment Plan; SDAPCD 2020). The Attainment Plan, which would be a revision to the SIP, outlines SDAPCD's plans and control measures designed to attain the NAAQS for ozone. For attainment of the CAAQS, the SDAPCD must prepare an updated State Ozone Attainment Plan to identify possible new actions to further reduce emissions. Initially adopted in 1992, the Regional Air Quality Strategy (RAQS) identifies measures to reduce emissions from sources regulated by the SDAPCD, primarily stationary sources such as industrial operations and manufacturing facilities. As part of the RAQS, the SDAPCD developed Transportation Control Measures (TCMs) for the air quality plan prepared by SANDAG in accordance with AB 2595 and adopted by SANDAG in 1992. The RAQS is periodically updated to reflect updated information on air quality, emission trends, and new feasible control measures, and was last updated in 2023 (SDAPCD 2023). These plans accommodate emissions from all sources, including natural sources, through implementation of control measures, where feasible, on stationary sources to attain the standards. Mobile sources are regulated by the USEPA and CARB, and the emissions and reduction strategies related to mobile sources are considered in the Attainment Plan, RAQS, and SIP.

The SDAPCD is also responsible for establishing and enforcing local air quality rules and regulations that address the requirements of federal and state air quality laws. Development projects in the City are subject to the following SDAPCD rules (as well as others):

- Rule 51, Nuisance: prohibits emissions that cause injury, detriment, nuisance, or annoyance to any considerable number of persons or to the public; or which endanger the comfort, repose, health, or safety of any such persons or the public; or which cause injury or damage to business or property.
- Rule 52, Particulate Matter: establishes limits to the discharge of any PM from non-stationary sources.
- Rule 54, Dust and Fumes: establishes limits to the amount of dust or fume discharged into the atmosphere in any 1 hour.
- Rule 55, Fugitive Dust Control: sets restrictions on visible fugitive dust from construction and demolition projects.
- Rule 67, Architectural Coatings: establishes limits to the VOC content for coatings applied within the SDAPCD.

### 4.3.3 Significance Determination Thresholds

Consistent with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, impacts related to air quality would be significant if the project would:

- 1) Conflict with or obstruct the implementation of the applicable air quality plan.
- 2) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard.
- 3) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.
- 4) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) affecting a substantial number of people.

### 4.3.4 Methodology

To determine whether the project would result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of PM<sub>10</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub>, or the ozone precursors NO<sub>x</sub> and VOCs, emissions were evaluated based on the quantitative emission thresholds established by the SDAPCD and SCAQMD. As part of its air quality permitting process, the SDAPCD has established thresholds in Rule 20.2 for the preparation of Air Quality Impact Assessments (SDAPCD 2019). Rule 20.2 does not contain thresholds for VOCs. The SDAPCD and City of Santee do not have thresholds related to VOCs; therefore, this analysis considers guidance provided by the County of San Diego to consider the impact of VOC emissions. The County recommends the use of the SCAQMD (Coachella Valley portion) screening level established for VOCs, as these thresholds are generally stricter emissions thresholds than established by the SDAPCD. Therefore, to evaluate the significance of VOC emissions, this analysis used the SCAQMD daily threshold and its annual equivalent (County 2007).

These screening criteria were used as numeric methods to determine if the project would result in a significant impact to air quality or an adverse effect on human health. The screening thresholds are shown in Table 4.3-3, *Air Quality Impact Screening Levels*.

**Table 4.3-3  
AIR QUALITY IMPACT SCREENING LEVELS**

Pollutant	Emission Rate		
	Pounds/Hour	Pounds/Day	Tons/Year
Nitrogen Oxides (NO <sub>x</sub> )	25	250	40
Sulfur Oxides (SO <sub>x</sub> )	25	250	40
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	100	550	100
PM <sub>10</sub>	--	100	15
Lead (O <sub>3</sub> )	--	3.2	0.6
Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs), Reactive Organic Gases (ROGs)	--	75	13.7
Fine Respirable Matter (PM <sub>2.5</sub> )	--	67	10

Source: SDAPCD 2019; County 2007

Air emissions from mobile, area, and energy sources were calculated using the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod), version 2022.1. CalEEMod is a computer model used to estimate air emissions resulting from land development projects throughout the state of California. CalEEMod was developed by the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA) in collaboration with the California air quality management and pollution control districts.

In brief, CalEEMod is a computer model that estimates criteria air pollutant and GHG emissions from mobile (i.e., vehicular) sources, area sources (fireplaces, woodstoves, and landscape maintenance equipment), energy use (electricity and natural gas used in space heating, ventilation, and cooling; lighting; and plug-in appliances), water use and wastewater generation, and solid waste disposal. Emissions are estimated based on land use information input to the model by the user. In various places the user can input additional information and/or override the default assumptions to account for project- or location-specific parameters. For this assessment, the default parameters were relied upon unless otherwise described below.

#### **4.3.4.1 Construction Emissions**

The quantity, duration, and intensity of construction activity influence the amount of construction emissions and related pollutant concentrations that occur at any one time. As such, the emission forecasts provided herein reflect a specific set of conservative assumptions based on the expected construction scenario wherein a relatively large amount of construction activity is occurring in a relatively intensive manner. Because of this conservative assumption, actual emissions could be less than those forecasted. If construction is delayed or occurs over a longer period, emissions could be reduced because of (1) a more modern and cleaner-burning construction equipment fleet mix than assumed in CalEEMod, and/or (2) a less intensive buildout schedule (i.e., fewer daily emissions occurring over a longer time interval).

The modeling recognizes the project must conform with SDAPCD Rule 67, limiting the VOC content of architectural coatings to 50 grams per liter and paved area coatings to 100 grams per liter. The modeling also recognizes that the project must perform fugitive dust control in accordance with the SDAPCD Rule 55, specifically watering exposed areas twice per day, enforcing a 15-mph speed limit on unpaved surfaces, and maintaining a minimum moisture content of 12 percent for unpaved roads.

#### **TCSP Area and AEN**

Construction-related activities are temporary, short-term sources of emissions. Sources of construction-related air emissions include construction equipment exhaust; construction-related trips by workers, delivery and hauling truck trips; and fugitive dust from grading activities. The quantity of air pollutants generated by the construction of projects within the proposed TCSP would vary depending upon the number of projects occurring simultaneously and the size of each individual project. Since the proposed TCSP is a land use plan that guides physical development for 20+ years, specific construction details such as the exact number and timing of all development projects are unknown. The intensity of construction activity associated with the proposed TCSP could be the same during each year. It is more likely, however, that some periods of construction (and associated emissions) would be more intense than other periods due to market conditions and population and housing demands.

While neither SDAPCD nor the City of Santee provides additional guidance on construction assumptions for plan-level analyses, some air districts such as the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (SMAQMD) suggest that lead agencies conservatively assume that construction-generated emissions associated with the build-out of a plan should be evaluated assuming 25 percent of the total land uses would be constructed in a single year (SMAQMD 2016). This conservative assumption was used to evaluate the potential construction-related air quality impacts from projects that could occur under the proposed TCSP Amendment. The land uses modeled in the 25 percent scenario are listed in Table 4.3-4, *Land Use Profile – First Year of Construction*. Modeling relied upon CalEEMod default activities, fleet mixes, and vehicle trips based on land use type and size.

**Table 4.3-4  
LAND USE PROFILE – FIRST YEAR OF CONSTRUCTION**

Land Use	Acres	Building Size
Retail	132.89	592,258 square feet
Regional Shopping	8.81	24,625 square feet
Civic/Institutional	45.74	187,223 square feet
Office Commercial	24.76	240,206 square feet
Park	59.36	59.36 acres
Residential (TC-R-14)	42.31	793 dwelling units
Residential (TC-R-22)	23.58	867 dwelling units

Note: Housing Element sites excluded, as they are provided separately.

Given that exhaust emissions from the construction equipment fleet are expected to decrease over time as stricter standards take effect, 25 percent of the construction emissions were conservatively modeled to occur in 2027, following development of the Housing Element sites. As construction occurs in later years, advancements in engine technology, retrofits, and turnover in the equipment fleet are anticipated to result in lower levels of emissions.

### Housing Element Sites

Construction emissions for Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B were conservatively modeled assuming construction would begin in January 2025 and last approximately 18 months. It should be noted that there are currently no plans being reviewed nor projects entitled by the City for these sites. Construction activities would include site preparation, grading, building construction, architectural coatings, and paving. Construction is assumed to occur six days per week with equipment operating up to eight hours per day. Architectural coatings are assumed to occur concurrently with the last five months of building construction. The construction schedule assumed in the modeling is shown in Table 4.3-5, *Housing Element Sites Anticipated Construction Schedule*.

**Table 4.3-5  
HOUSING ELEMENT SITES ANTICIPATED CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE**

Construction Activity	Construction Period Start	Construction Period End	Number of Working Days
Site Preparation	1/1/2025	1/23/2025	20
Grading	1/24/2025	3/17/2025	45
Building Construction	3/18/2025	5/28/2026	375
Architectural Coatings	1/1/2026	7/8/2026	162
Paving	5/29/2026	7/8/2026	35



Construction would require the use of heavy off-road equipment. Construction equipment estimates are based on default values in CalEEMod, Version 2022.1. Table 4.3-6, *Housing Element Sites Construction Equipment Assumptions*, presents a summary of the assumed equipment that would be involved in each stage of construction.

**Table 4.3-6  
HOUSING ELEMENT SITES CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT ASSUMPTIONS**

Equipment	Horsepower	Number	Hours/Day
<b>Site Preparation</b>			
Rubber Tired Dozers	367	3	8
Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes	84	4	8
<b>Grading</b>			
Excavators	36	2	8
Graders	148	1	8
Rubber Tired Dozers	367	1	8
Scrapers	426	2	8
Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes	84	2	8
<b>Building Construction</b>			
Cranes	367	2	4.4
Forklifts	82	4	7.5
Generator Sets	14	2	5
Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes	84	4	6.6
Welders	46	2	5
<b>Architectural Coating</b>			
Air Compressors	37	1	6
<b>Paving</b>			
Pavers	81	2	8
Paving Equipment	89	2	8
Rollers	36	2	8

Source: CalEEMod

Worker commute trips and vendor delivery trips were modeled based on CalEEMod defaults. Worker trips are anticipated to vary between 18 and 1,279 trips per day, depending on construction phase. The CalEEMod default worker, vendor and haul trip distances were used in the model.

#### 4.3.4.2 Operational Emissions

Operation emissions are long term and include mobile, energy, and area sources. Sources of operational emissions associated with future development under the proposed project include the following:

- Vehicle traffic;
- Natural gas consumption; and
- Area sources including architectural coatings, consumer products, and landscaping equipment.

## Area Source Emissions

Area sources typically include emissions from landscaping equipment, the use of consumer products, the reapplication of architectural coatings for maintenance, and hearths. Project emissions associated with area sources were estimated using the CalEEMod default values except for hearths, as the project would not include wood burning stoves or fireplaces, or natural gas fireplaces.

## Energy Emissions

Development within the project would use electricity for lighting, heating, and cooling. Natural gas and electricity would be supplied by San Diego Gas and Electric (SDG&E). Direct emissions from the burning of natural gas typically results from furnaces, hot water heaters, and kitchen appliances. Electricity generation typically entails the off-site generation of electricity, such as through combustion of fossil fuels, including natural gas and coal, which is then transmitted to end users. A building's electricity use is thus associated with the off-site or indirect emission of GHGs at the source of electricity generation (power plant). CalEEMod conservatively assumes the use of natural gas appliances based on historical data while newer construction typically includes more electric appliances. Default natural gas and electricity demand quantities from CalEEMod were used in this analysis and the emissions factors for SDG&E provided in CalEEMod were applied to these energy demand values to calculate the resulting emissions.

## Vehicular (Mobile) Sources

Operational emissions from mobile source emissions are associated with vehicle trip generation and trip length. Based on the project trip generation rate from the Local Transportation Study, the four strategic Housing Element sites would generate 8,520 new average daily trips (ADT) while the remaining TCSP land uses would generate an additional 51,511 ADT (Intersecting Metrics 2024). Default vehicle speeds, trip purpose, and trip distances from CalEEMod were applied to these trips.

### 4.3.5 Issue 1: Consistency with Air Quality Plans

*Would the project conflict with or obstruct the implementation of the applicable air quality plan, i.e., the San Diego RAQS?*

#### 4.3.5.1 Impact Analysis

The Attainment Plan outlines SDAPCD's plans and control measures designed to attain the NAAQS for ozone. In addition, the SDAPCD relies on the SIP, which includes the SDAPCD's plans and control measures for attaining the ozone NAAQS. These plans accommodate emissions from all sources, including natural sources, through implementation of control measures, where feasible, on stationary sources to attain the standards. Mobile sources are regulated by the USEPA and CARB, and the emissions and reduction strategies related to mobile sources are considered in the Attainment Plan and SIP.

The Attainment Plan relies on information from CARB and SANDAG, including projected growth in the County and mobile, area, and all other source emissions, to project future emissions and determine the strategies necessary for the reduction of stationary source emissions through regulatory controls. CARB mobile source emission projections and SANDAG growth projections are based on population and vehicle trends and land use plans developed by cities and the

County. As such, projects that propose development consistent with the growth anticipated by the local general plans would be consistent with the Attainment Plan. If a project proposes development which is less dense than anticipated within the applicable General Plan, the project would likewise be consistent with the Attainment Plan. If a project proposes development that is greater than that anticipated in the applicable General Plan and SANDAG's growth projections upon which the Attainment Plan is based, the project may be in conflict with the Attainment Plan and SIP and may have a potentially significant impact on air quality. This situation would warrant further analysis to determine if the project and the surrounding projects exceed the growth projections used in the Attainment Plan for the specific subregional area.

### **TCSP Area**

As described above, the Attainment Plan and San Diego RAQS outlines the steps needed to accomplish attainment of NAAQS and CAAQS by the earliest practicable date. Projects that would be consistent with adopted land use designations would not conflict with the Attainment Plan or RAQS. Projects that would not be consistent with the land uses may be inconsistent with the Attainment Plan or RAQS and warrant further analysis to determine consistency. If it can be demonstrated that changes in land uses would generate fewer air emissions than land uses that are consistent with adopted land use designations, the changes would not conflict with the Attainment Plan or RAQS.

The project would result in a comprehensive update to the existing TCSP involving expanding the TCSP area by 42 acres, updating the boundaries of the TCSP districts to create five neighborhoods within the TCSP, and identifying potential future residential and non-residential development potential within the TCSP area. Although development regulations and design criteria in the proposed TCSP would replace the current TCSP regulations, development densities and intensities currently allowed throughout the TCSP area would not be increased by the project. As a result, the project would not increase the amount of vehicle traffic expected to be generated in the City. Similarly, the project would not result in an increase in the average VMT per capita. As buildout of the project would not result in an increase in anticipated development or traffic generation over what would occur under buildout of the adopted zoning and land use designations, the project would not result in an increase in emissions that are not already accounted for in the Attainment Plan or RAQS. Therefore, buildout of the TCSP would not exceed the assumptions used to develop the Attainment Plan or RAQS, and impacts would be less than significant.

### **AEN**

The TCSP would involve updated development standards and land use allowances with the AEN. However, because there is no change to allowed densities and intensities compared to existing zoning, buildout of the project would not result in traffic generation over what would occur under buildout of the adopted zoning and land use designations. Therefore, the project would not result in an increase in emissions that are not already accounted for in the Attainment Plan or RAQS. Therefore, buildout of the AEN would not exceed the assumptions used to develop the Attainment Plan or RAQS, resulting in a less than significant impact.

### **Housing Element Sites**

The project assumes the development of Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B consistent with the densities and intensities allowed by existing zoning, the 2021-2029 Housing Element, and state density bonus law. When compared to the existing zoning and land use

designations, the project would not increase the development potential allowed at the Housing Element sites, which would also not increase the projected amount of vehicle traffic generated in the City. The project would not increase the amount of projected traffic in the City and would not result in an increase in the average VMT per capita. As buildout of the project would not result in an increase in development or traffic generation over what would occur under buildout of the adopted zoning and land use designations, the project would not result in an increase in emissions that are not already accounted for in the Attainment Plan or RAQS.

Future development within Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B would not result in an increase in development or an increase in traffic generation over what would occur under buildout of the adopted zoning and land use designations and would therefore not result in an increase in emissions. Therefore, buildout of Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B would not exceed the assumptions used to develop the Attainment Plan or RAQS, resulting in a less than significant impact.

#### **4.3.5.2 Mitigation Measures**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

No mitigation is required.

#### **4.3.5.3 Significance After Mitigation**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

### **4.3.6 Issue 2: Cumulative Net Increases of Criteria Pollutants**

*Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is in non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?*

#### **4.3.6.1 Impact Analysis**

The project would generate criteria pollutants in the short-term during construction and the long-term during operation. To determine whether a project would result in a cumulatively considerable net increase in criteria pollutant emissions for which the project region is in non-attainment under an applicable federal or state AAQS, the project's emissions are evaluated based on the quantitative emission thresholds established by the SDAPCD and applicable law (as shown in Table 4.3-3). The SDAB is in non-attainment for ozone (VOCs and NO<sub>x</sub> are precursors), PM<sub>10</sub>, and PM<sub>2.5</sub>.

#### **Construction**

Construction emissions are described as "short-term" or temporary in duration; however, they have the potential to represent a significant impact with respect to air quality. Construction of the project would result in the temporary generation of VOC, NO<sub>x</sub>, CO, SO<sub>2</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>, and PM<sub>2.5</sub> emissions. VOC, NO<sub>x</sub>, CO, and SO<sub>2</sub> emissions are primarily associated with mobile equipment exhaust, including off-road construction equipment and on-road motor vehicles. Fugitive PM dust

emissions are primarily associated with site preparation and vary as a function of such parameters as soil silt content, soil moisture, wind speed, acreage of disturbance area, and VMT by construction vehicles.

### TCSP Area and AEN

The TCSP area and AEN temporary construction emissions were estimated using CalEEMod as described in Section 4.3.4.1. The results of the modeling of the program level construction emissions of criteria pollutants and ozone precursors are shown in Table 4.3-7, *Maximum Daily Program Construction Emissions*. The data are presented as the maximum anticipated daily emissions for comparison with the applicable daily thresholds.

**Table 4.3-7  
MAXIMUM DAILY PROGRAM CONSTRUCTION EMISSIONS**

	Pollutant Emissions (pounds/day)					
	VOC	NO <sub>x</sub>	CO	SO <sub>x</sub>	PM <sub>10</sub>	PM <sub>2.5</sub>
Town Center Specific Plan	12.0	95.2	121.1	0.2	20.0	10.0
Daily Thresholds	75	250	550	250	100	67
<b>Exceed Thresholds?</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>

Source: CalEEMod; SDAPCD 2019; County 2007

VOC = volatile organic compound; NO<sub>x</sub> = nitrogen oxides; CO = carbon monoxide; SO<sub>x</sub> = sulfur oxides; PM<sub>10</sub> = particulate matter 10 microns or less in diameter; PM<sub>2.5</sub> = particulate matter 2.5 microns or less in diameter

As shown in Table 4.3-7, the TCSP area and AEN temporary construction-related criteria pollutant and precursor emissions would be below the SDAPCD's emission thresholds, including for those pollutants for which the SDAB is non-attainment (VOC, NO<sub>x</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub>). Therefore, the project's construction activities would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state AAQS. Construction-related impacts would be less than significant for the TCSP, including the AEN.

### Housing Element Sites

The Housing Element sites' temporary construction emissions were estimated using CalEEMod as described in Section 4.3.4.1. The results of the modeling of the Housing Element sites construction emissions of criteria pollutants and ozone precursors are shown in Table 4.3-8, *Maximum Daily HE Site Construction Emissions*. The data are presented as the maximum anticipated daily emissions for comparison with the applicable daily thresholds.

**Table 4.3-8  
MAXIMUM DAILY HE SITE CONSTRUCTION EMISSIONS**

	Pollutant Emissions (pounds/day)					
	VOC	NO <sub>x</sub>	CO	SO <sub>x</sub>	PM <sub>10</sub>	PM <sub>2.5</sub>
Housing Element Sites	64.0	31.7	75.0	0.1	12.4	5.2
Daily Thresholds	75	250	550	250	100	67
<b>Exceed Thresholds?</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>

Source: CalEEMod; SDAPCD 2019; County 2007

VOC = volatile organic compound; NO<sub>x</sub> = nitrogen oxides; CO = carbon monoxide; SO<sub>x</sub> = sulfur oxides; PM<sub>10</sub> = particulate matter 10 microns or less in diameter; PM<sub>2.5</sub> = particulate matter 2.5 microns or less in diameter

As shown in Table 4.3-8, the project's temporary construction-related criteria pollutant and precursor emissions would be below the SDAPCD's emission thresholds, including for those

pollutants for which the SDAB is non-attainment (VOC, NO<sub>x</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub>). Therefore, the project's construction activities would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state AAQS. Construction-related impacts would be less than significant for the Housing Element sites when considered together and, therefore, also less than significant for each of the Housing Element sites.

## Operation

### TCSP and AEN

The TCSP area and AEN long-term maximum daily operational emissions were estimated using CalEEMod as described in Section 4.3.4.2. The results of the modeling of the project's operational emissions of criteria pollutants and precursors are shown in Table 4.3-9, *Maximum Daily Program Operational Emissions*. The data are presented as the maximum anticipated daily emissions for comparison with the applicable thresholds.

**Table 4.3-9  
MAXIMUM DAILY PROGRAM OPERATIONAL EMISSIONS**

Source	Pollutant Emissions (pounds/day)					
	VOC	NO <sub>x</sub>	CO	SO <sub>x</sub>	PM <sub>10</sub>	PM <sub>2.5</sub>
Mobile	167.0	105.5	1,197.2	3.3	332.0	85.4
Area	114.3	<0.1	224.5	<0.1	0.2	0.1
Energy	0.9	15.3	8.3	0.1	1.2	1.2
<b>Total Daily Program Emissions<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>282.3</b>	<b>120.8</b>	<b>1,430.0</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>333.4</b>	<b>86.7</b>
Daily Thresholds	75	250	550	250	100	67
<b>Exceed Daily Thresholds?</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>

Source: CalEEMod (Appendix A); SDAPCD 2019; County 2007

<sup>1</sup> Totals may not sum due to rounding.

VOC = volatile organic compound; NO<sub>x</sub> = nitrogen oxides; CO = carbon monoxide; SO<sub>x</sub> = sulfur oxides;

PM<sub>10</sub> = particulate matter 10 microns or less in diameter; PM<sub>2.5</sub> = particulate matter 2.5 microns or less in diameter

As shown in Table 4.3-9, the long-term emissions of criteria pollutants and precursors generated by full buildout of the TCSP would result in exceedances to SDAPCD's daily screening thresholds for VOC, CO, PM<sub>10</sub>, and PM<sub>2.5</sub>.

On-road vehicles represent the primary source of the operational emissions exceedances to VOC, CO, PM<sub>10</sub>, and PM<sub>2.5</sub>. The project includes several transportation projects including adding new multi-use pathways and bike routes to existing roadways as well as identifying roadway connections throughout the TCSP area and AEN. The TCSP identifies improvements along portions of existing Cuyamaca Street and Riverview Parkway, and identifies new roadways including Riverview Parkway, Cottonwood Avenue, Main Street, and Walker Trails Drive. The roadway improvements on Cuyamaca Street and Riverview Parkway would contribute to the multimodal transportation network by providing new bicycle and pedestrian facilities on those roadways, which would promote non-auto use. Additionally, the proposed roadway connections along Riverview Parkway, Cottonwood Avenue, Main Street, and Walker Trails Drive would provide direct connections through the TCSP area and AEN, as well as onto major arterial roadways and would improve traffic congestion in the area. The transportation projects identified in the TCSP meet the City's VMT Analysis Guidelines screening criteria of "closing gaps in the transportation network" and/or "adding new or enhanced bicycle or pedestrian facilities on existing streets" and are presumed not to increase vehicle travel. The transportation projects identified in

the TCSP are intended to increase pedestrian and bicycle safety and connection within the TCSP area to aid in the reduction of VMT and mobile source emissions. However, mobile source emissions remain significant. Mitigation measure AQ-1 is required to address operational source emissions impacts associated with area sources.

### Housing Element Sites

The long-term maximum daily operational emissions generated by the Housing Element sites were estimated using CalEEMod as described in Section 4.3.4.2. The results of the modeling of the project's operational emissions of criteria pollutants and precursors are shown in Table 4.3-10, *Maximum Daily Housing Element Site Operational Emissions*. The data are presented as the maximum anticipated daily emissions for comparison with the applicable thresholds.

**Table 4.3-10  
MAXIMUM DAILY HOUSING ELEMENT SITE OPERATIONAL EMISSIONS**

Source	Pollutant Emissions (pounds/day)					
	VOC	NO <sub>x</sub>	CO	SO <sub>x</sub>	PM <sub>10</sub>	PM <sub>2.5</sub>
Mobile	33.1	23.5	219.8	0.5	44.9	11.7
Area	41.5	<0.1	83.9	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1
Energy	0.2	3.8	1.6	<0.1	0.3	0.3
<b>Total Daily HE Site Emissions<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>74.8</b>	<b>27.2</b>	<b>305.4</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>45.2</b>	<b>12.0</b>
Daily Thresholds	75	250	550	250	100	67
<b>Exceed Daily Thresholds?</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>

Source: CalEEMod (Appendix A); SDAPCD 2019; County 2007

<sup>1</sup> Totals may not sum due to rounding.

VOC = volatile organic compound; NO<sub>x</sub> = nitrogen oxides; CO = carbon monoxide; SO<sub>x</sub> = sulfur oxides; PM<sub>10</sub> = particulate matter 10 microns or less in diameter; PM<sub>2.5</sub> = particulate matter 2.5 microns or less in diameter

As shown in Table 4.3-10 the long-term emissions of criteria pollutants and precursors generated by the Housing Element sites would not exceed the SDAPCD daily screening thresholds, including for those pollutants for which the SDAB is non-attainment (VOC, NO<sub>x</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub>). Therefore, the Housing Element sites' operational activities would not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state AAQS. Therefore, operational impacts would also be less than significant for each of the Housing Element sites.

### **4.3.6.2 Mitigation Measures**

#### **TCSP Area and AEN**

The following mitigation measure would reduce potential area source emissions of the project:

- AQ-1** Use of electrically powered landscape equipment. Electric receptacles/outlets shall be installed at the exterior of all single-family units, all multi-family buildings (including those with affordable units), and all common area buildings, so that homeowners and landscape contractors hired by the homeowners' association may utilize electrically powered lawnmowers, leaf blowers, and chainsaws. Project plans shall include: (1) all necessary receptacles/outlets; and (2) a note that states "All landscape maintenance contracts provided by the applicable homeowners association must require that landscape contractors use electrically powered lawn mowers, leaf blowers, and chain saws." City staff must verify both requirements prior to approval of the final plans.



## Housing Element Sites

No mitigation is required.

### 4.3.6.3 Significance After Mitigation

#### TCSP Area and AEN

Electric lawn equipment including lawn mowers, leaf blowers, and chain saws are available. When electric landscape equipment is used in place of conventional gas-powered equipment, direct emissions from fossil fuel combustion are eliminated. Implementation of Measure AQ-1 would result in an average reduction of area source related VOC emissions by 20 percent (from 114.3 pounds per day to 91.5 pounds per day) and the virtual elimination of CO and particulate matter emissions. As shown in Table 4.3-11, *Maximum Daily Program Operational Emissions with Mitigation*, with implementation of mitigation measure MM-AQ-1, VOC, CO, PM<sub>10</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub> emissions would be reduced, but remain above their respective threshold.

**Table 4.3-11  
MAXIMUM DAILY PROGRAM OPERATIONAL EMISSIONS WITH MITIGATION**

Source	Pollutant Emissions (pounds/day)					
	VOC	NO <sub>x</sub>	CO	SO <sub>x</sub>	PM <sub>10</sub>	PM <sub>2.5</sub>
Mobile	167.0	105.5	1,197.2	3.3	332.0	85.4
Area	91.5	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1
Energy	0.9	15.3	8.3	0.1	1.2	1.2
<b>Total Daily Program Emissions<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>259.4</b>	<b>120.8</b>	<b>1,205.5</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>333.2</b>	<b>86.6</b>
Daily Thresholds	75	250	550	250	100	67
<b>Exceed Daily Thresholds?</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>

Source: CalEEMod (Appendix A); SDAPCD 2019; County 2007

<sup>1</sup> Totals may not sum due to rounding.

VOC = volatile organic compound; NO<sub>x</sub> = nitrogen oxides; CO = carbon monoxide; SO<sub>x</sub> = sulfur oxides;

PM<sub>10</sub> = particulate matter 10 microns or less in diameter; PM<sub>2.5</sub> = particulate matter 2.5 microns or less in diameter

Impacts related to operational emissions from full buildout of the TCSP would remain significant and unavoidable. No additional feasible mitigation measures have been identified that would reduce these impacts to a less than significant level at the program-level.

## Housing Element Sites

Less than significant without mitigation.

### 4.3.7 Issue 3: Sensitive Receptors

*Would the project expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?*

#### 4.3.7.1 Impact Analysis

Impacts to sensitive receptors are typically analyzed for operational period CO hotspots and exposure to TACs. An analysis of the project's potential to generate these pollutants thereby exposing existing sensitive receptors to these pollutants is provided below.

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## TCSP Area, AEN and Housing Element Sites

### Localized Carbon Monoxide Hotspots

CO concentration is a direct function of motor vehicle activity (e.g., idling time and traffic flow conditions) particularly during peak commute hours and meteorological conditions. Under specific meteorological conditions (e.g., stable conditions that result in poor dispersion), CO concentrations may reach unhealthy levels with respect to local sensitive land uses such as residential areas, schools, and hospitals.

A CO hotspot is an area of localized CO pollution caused by severe vehicle congestion on major roadways, typically near intersections. If a project increases average delay at signalized intersections operating at level of service (LOS) E or F or causes an intersection that would operate at LOS D or better without the project to operate at LOS E or F with the project, a quantitative screening is recommended.

The project includes several transportation projects including adding new multi-use pathways and bike routes to existing roadways as well as identifying roadway connections throughout the TCSP area and AEN. The TCSP identifies improvements along portions of existing Cuyamaca Street and Riverview Parkway, and identifies new roadway connections including Riverview Parkway, Cottonwood Avenue, Main Street, and Walker Trails Drive. The roadway improvements on Cuyamaca Street and Riverview Parkway would contribute to the multimodal transportation network by providing new bicycle and pedestrian facilities on those roadways, which would promote non-auto use. Additionally, the proposed roadway connections along Riverview Parkway, Cottonwood Avenue, Main Street, and Walker Trails Drive would provide direct connections through the TCSP area and AEN, as well as onto major arterial roadways and would improve traffic congestion in the area. The transportation projects identified in the TCSP meet the City's VMT screening criteria of "closing gaps in the transportation network" and/or "adding new or enhanced bicycle or pedestrian facilities on existing streets" and are presumed not to increase vehicle travel or intersection delay. Therefore, air quality impacts related to the exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial CO concentrations due to project traffic would be less than significant for the TCSP, AEN and Housing Element sites.

### Exposure to Toxic Air Contaminants

In addition to impacts from criteria pollutants, project impacts may include emissions of pollutants identified by the state as TACs. State law has established the framework for California's TAC identification and control program, which is generally more stringent than the federal program. The state has formally identified more than 200 substances as TACs and is adopting appropriate control measures for their sources. The greatest potential for TAC emissions during construction would be emissions of DPM from heavy equipment operations and heavy-duty trucks. The following measures are required by state law to reduce DPM emissions:

- Fleet owners of mobile construction equipment are subject to the CARB Regulation for In-use Off-road Diesel Vehicles (13 CCR 2449), the purpose of which is to reduce DPM and criteria pollutant emissions from in-use (existing) off-road diesel-fueled vehicles.
- All commercial diesel vehicles are subject to Title 13, Section 2485 of the California Code of Regulations, limiting engine idling time. Idling of heavy-duty diesel construction equipment and trucks during loading and unloading shall be limited to five minutes; electric auxiliary power units should be used whenever possible.

Health effects from carcinogenic air toxics are usually described in terms of cancer risk. SDAPCD Rule 1200 establishes acceptable risk levels and emission control requirements for new and modified facilities that may emit additional TACs. Under Rule 1200, permits to operate may not be issued when emissions of TACs result in an incremental cancer risk greater than 1 in 1 million without application of Toxics Best Available Control Technologies (T-BACT), or an incremental cancer risk greater than 10 in 1 million with application of T-BACT. “Incremental cancer risk” is the net increased likelihood that a person continuously exposed to concentrations of TACs resulting from a project over a 9-, 30-, and 70-year exposure period will develop cancer based on the use of standard Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) risk methodology.

Generation of DPM from construction projects typically occurs in a localized area (e.g., near locations with multiple pieces of heavy construction equipment working in close proximity) for a short period of time. Because construction activities and subsequent emissions vary depending on the phase of construction, the construction-related emissions to which nearby receptors are exposed to would also vary throughout the construction period. Concentrations of DPM emissions are typically reduced by 70 percent at approximately 500 feet (CARB 2005).

The dose of TACs to which receptors are exposed is the primary factor used to determine health risk. Dose is a function of the concentration of a substance in the environment and the extent of exposure a person has with the substance; a longer exposure period to a source of emissions would result in higher health risks. Current models and methodologies for conducting cancer health risk assessments are associated with longer-term exposure periods (typically 30 years for individual residents based on guidance from OEHHA) and are best suited for evaluation of long duration TAC emissions with predictable schedules and locations. These assessment models and methodologies do not correlate well with the temporary and highly variable nature of construction activities.

Cancer potency factors are based on animal lifetime studies or worker studies where there is long-term exposure to the carcinogenic agent. There is considerable uncertainty in trying to evaluate the cancer risk from projects that will only last a small fraction of a lifetime (OEHHA 2015). Moreover, as shown in Table 4.3-7, maximum daily particulate matter (i.e., PM<sub>10</sub> or PM<sub>2.5</sub>) emissions generated by construction equipment operation and haul-truck trips during construction (exhaust particulate matter, or DPM), combined with fugitive dust generated by equipment operation and vehicle travel, would be well below the SDAPCD screening-level thresholds. Considering this information, and the fact that any concentrated use of heavy construction equipment would occur at various locations throughout the project site only for short durations, construction of the project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial DPM concentrations, and the impact would be less than significant.

Additionally, CARB has published the *Air Quality and Land Use Handbook: A Community Health Perspective* (CARB 2005), which identifies certain types of facilities or sources that may emit substantial quantities of TACs and therefore could conflict with sensitive land uses, such as “schools and schoolyards, parks and playgrounds, daycare centers, nursing homes, hospitals, and residential communities.” The *Air Quality and Land Use Handbook: A Community Health Perspective* is a guide for siting new sensitive land uses. The enumerated facilities or sources include the following:

- High-traffic freeways and roads,
- Distribution centers,

- Rail yards,
- Ports,
- Refineries,
- Chrome plating facilities,
- Dry cleaners, and
- Large gas dispensing facilities.

CARB recommends that sensitive receptors not be located downwind or in proximity to such sources to avoid potential health hazards.

The project would not include any of the previously listed land uses, so it would not expose visitors, residents, or employees of the project to TAC emissions from these sources. Impacts would be less than significant for the TCSP, AEN, and Housing Element sites.

#### **4.3.7.2 Mitigation Measures**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN and Housing Element Sites**

No mitigation is required.

#### **4.3.7.3 Significance After Mitigation**

##### **TCSP area, AEN and Housing Element Sites**

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

#### **4.3.8 Issue 4: Odors**

*Would the project result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) affecting a substantial number of people?*

##### **4.3.8.1 Impact Analysis**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN and Housing Element Sites**

In the context of land use planning, one of the most important factors influencing the potential for an odor impact to occur is the distance between the odor source and receptors. The City considers prudent land use planning as the key mechanism to avoid odor impacts. The greater the distance between an odor source and receptor, the less concentrated the odor emission would be when it reaches the receptor. Odors can be generated from a variety of source types including both construction and operational activities. Although less common, construction activities that include the operation of a substantial number of diesel-fueled construction equipment and heavy-duty trucks can generate odors from diesel exhaust emissions. A project's operations, depending on the project type, can generate a large range of odors that can be considered offensive to receptors. Examples of common land use types that typically generate significant odor impacts include, but are not limited to the following:

- Wastewater treatment plants
- Sanitary landfills
- Composting/green waste facilities
- Recycling facilities
- Petroleum refineries
- Chemical manufacturing plants
- Painting/Coating operations
- Rendering plants
- Food packaging plants

When land uses such as these or other odor-generating land uses are sited proximate to sensitive receptors, odor impacts may occur and further analysis of the nature of the odor source, the prevailing wind patterns, number of potentially effected receivers and other considerations would be warranted.

Existing sources of odors in the City include the Sycamore Landfill and a water reclamation plant. However, these uses are located one mile or more from the TCSP area and would not result in odors affecting a substantial number of people.

Emissions from construction equipment, such as diesel exhaust, and VOCs from architectural coatings and paving activities may generate odors; however, these odors would be temporary, intermittent, and not expected to affect a substantial number of people. Additionally, noxious odors would be confined to the immediate vicinity of construction equipment. By the time such emissions reach a receptor (e.g., people in residential units, day care centers, schools, nursing homes), they would be diluted to well below any level of air quality concern. Therefore, construction would not result in emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people, and impacts would be less than significant.

Once operational, future development implemented under the project would include residential and associated commercial uses that are generally not a source of objectionable odors. Therefore, project operation would not result in odors affecting a substantial number of people, and impacts would be less than significant for the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites.

#### **4.3.8.2 Mitigation Measures**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

No mitigation is required.

#### **4.3.8.3 Significance After Mitigation**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

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## 4.4 Biological Resources

The following sections analyze the potential biological impacts that may occur as a result of implementation of the proposed project. This section is based on the Biological Resources Technical Report (HELIX 2024a) prepared for the project provided in Appendix C of this EIR.

### 4.4.1 Existing Conditions

#### 4.4.1.1 Vegetation Communities

Estimated acreages of sensitive vegetation communities are reported in Table 4.4-1, *Vegetation Communities by Project Location*, below.

**Table 4.4-1  
VEGETATION COMMUNITIES BY PROJECT LOCATION**

Vegetation Community	Town Center Specific Plan (TCSP) Area	Arts and Entertainment Neighborhood (AEN)	Site 16A	Site 16B	Site 20A	Site 20B
<b>Wetland Habitats</b>						
Southern Riparian Forest (61300)	0.42	--	--	--	--	--
Southern Arroyo Willow Riparian Forest (61320)	85.31	43.19	--	--	--	--
Southern Riparian Scrub (63300)	0.84	--	--	--	--	--
Southern Riparian Scrub – Disturbed (63300)	0.68	--	--	--	--	--
Southern Riparian Scrub – Restoration (63300)	0.89	0.14	--	--	--	--
Southern Willow Scrub (63320)	0.96	0.96	0.19	--	--	--
Tamarisk Scrub (63810)	3.98	3.98	--	--	--	--
Arrowweed Scrub (63820)	2.06	0.10	--	--	--	--
Open Water (64100)	11.06	8.68	--	--	--	--
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>106.20</i>	<i>57.05</i>	<i>0.19</i>	--	--	--
<b>Upland Habitats</b>						
Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub (32500)	0.3	--	--	--	--	--
Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub, Disturbed (32500)	15.7	15.7	--	--	--	--
Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub: Baccharis-dominated (32530)	6.6	6.6	--	--	--	--
Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub: Baccharis-dominated, Disturbed (32530)	0.9	0.9	--	--	--	--
Non-native Grassland (42200)	5.1	0.9	--	--	--	--
Eucalyptus Woodland (79100)	1.7	1.3	--	--	--	--
Artificial Detention Basin (N/A)	2.0	2.0	1.3	--	--	--
Disturbed Habitat (11300)	128.4	98.2	9.5	8.5	5.9	7.9
Developed (12000)	384.6	155.2	<0.1 (0.02)	0.1	1.8	2.0
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>545.3</i>	<i>280.8</i>	<i>10.8</i>	<i>8.6</i>	<i>7.7</i>	<i>9.9</i>
<b>Total</b>	<b>651.50</b>	<b>337.85</b>	<b>10.99</b>	<b>8.6</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>9.9</b>

### Wetlands

#### Southern Riparian Forest

Southern riparian woodlands and forests are composed of winter-deciduous trees that require water near the soil surface. Willow (*Salix* spp.), cottonwood (*Populus* spp.), and western sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*) form a dense medium height woodland or forest in moist canyons



and drainage bottoms. Associated understory species include mule fat (*Baccharis salicifolia*), stinging nettle (*Urtica dioica* ssp. *holosericea*), and wild grape (*Vitis girdiana*; Beauchamp 1986).

There is 0.42 acre of southern riparian forest mapped within the project area. Southern riparian forest is found in the northern portion of the project area along an unnamed tributary to the San Diego River (Figure 4.4-1, *Vegetation and Sensitive Resources/Impacts*).

#### Southern Arroyo Willow Riparian Forest

Southern arroyo willow riparian forest is an open to dense riparian community that is dominated by arroyo willow (*Salix lasiolepis*). Arroyo willow requires moist, bare mineral soil for germination and establishment. This community occurs along large stream courses where there is an abundant supply of water at or near the surface for most of the year. Though southern arroyo willow riparian woodland may not differ in floristic composition from some riparian scrub communities, it does so in physiognomy. The absence of large, frequent disturbances, usually in the form of floods, allows the component tree species to attain a sizable height.

There are 85.31 acres of southern arroyo willow riparian forest mapped within the project area. Southern arroyo willow riparian forest is found along the San Diego River and an unnamed tributary to the San Diego River (Figure 4.4-1).

#### Southern Riparian Scrub – including disturbed and restoration

Southern riparian scrub is a generic term for several shrub dominated communities that occur along drainages and/or riparian corridors including southern willow scrub, mule fat scrub, and tamarisk scrub. Disturbed southern riparian scrub contains many of the same shrub species as undisturbed southern riparian scrub but is sparser and has a higher proportion of non-native perennial and annual species. Southern riparian scrub - restoration contains many of the same shrub species as naturally occurring southern riparian scrub but is less mature, artificially irrigated, and maintained.

There is 0.84 acre of southern riparian scrub, 0.68 acre of disturbed southern riparian scrub, and 0.89 acre of southern riparian scrub restoration within the project area. Southern riparian scrub (including disturbed and restoration) is found along the fringes of the San Diego River and within an unnamed tributary to the San Diego River (Figure 4.4-1).

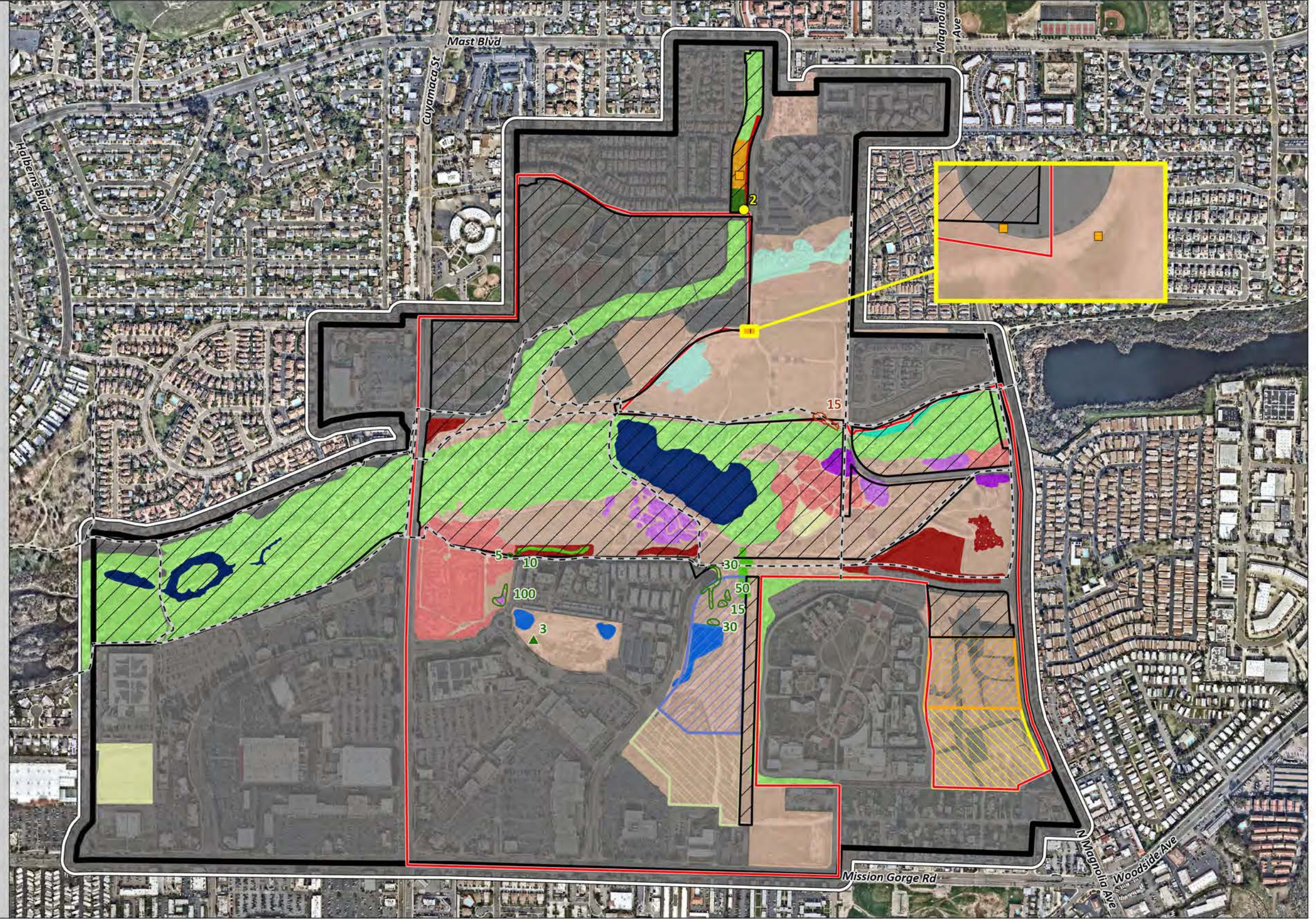
#### Southern Willow Scrub

Southern willow scrub consists of dense, broad-leaved, winter-deciduous stands of trees dominated by shrubby willows in association with mule fat, and with scattered emergent cottonwood and western sycamores. This vegetation community occurs on loose, sandy, or fine gravelly alluvium deposited near stream channels during flood flows. Frequent flooding maintains this early seral community, preventing succession to a riparian woodland or forest (Holland 1986). In the absence of periodic flooding, this early seral type would be succeeded by southern cottonwood or western sycamore riparian forest.

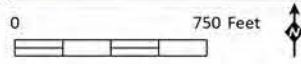
There is 0.96 acre of southern willow scrub mapped within the project area. Southern willow scrub is found within an unnamed drainage east of Riverview Parkway (Figure 4.4-1).



- Proposed Santee Town Center Specific Plan
- Study Area
- Proposed Arts & Entertainment District Overlay
- Property 16A
- Property 16B
- Property 20A
- Property 20B
- Impact Avoidance Area
- Impact Avoidance Area (SD River Trails)
- Special Status Plant Species**
- San Diego Marsh Elder (*Iva hayesiana*)
- Southwestern Spiny Rush (*Juncus acutus* ssp. *leopardii*)
- Smooth Tarplant (*Centromadia pungens* ssp. *laevis*)
- Smooth Tarplant (*Centromadia pungens* ssp. *laevis*)
- Rabbit Tobacco (*Pseudognaphalium leucocephalum*)
- Holland/Oberbauer Classification**
- Riparian Forests and Woodlands**
- (61300) Southern Riparian Forest
- (61320) Southern Arroyo Willow Riparian Forest
- Riparian Shrublands**
- (63300) Southern Riparian Scrub - Disturbed
- (63300) Southern Riparian Scrub - Restoration
- (63320) Southern Willow Scrub
- (63810) Tamarisk Scrub
- (63820) Arrowweed Scrub
- Upland Forestes and Woodlands**
- (79100) Eucalyptus Woodland
- Soft-leaved, Drought-Deciduous Shrublands**
- (32500) Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub
- (32500) Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub - Disturbed
- (32530) Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub - Baccharis-dominated
- (32530) Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub - Baccharis-dominated -Disturbed
- Upland Herbaceous Vegetation**
- (11300) Disturbed Habitat
- (42200) Non-native Grassland
- Unvegetated**
- (12000) Developed
- (64100) Open Water
- (N/A) Artificial Dentention Basin



I:\PROJECTS\MM\MMW\_SteelGroup\_01427100004\_SanteeHAP\Map\BTR\Figures.aprx Fig 4.4-1\_Vegetation\_Impacts - 01427.4.1 - 8/23/2024 - RK



Source: Aerial Photo (SanGIS 2023)



### Tamarisk Scrub

Tamarisk scrub is typically composed of shrubs and/or small trees of exotic tamarisk species (*Tamarix* spp.) but may also contain willows, salt bushes (*Atriplex* spp.), catclaw acacia (*Acacia greggii*), and salt grass (*Distichlis spicata*). This habitat occurs along intermittent streams in areas where high evaporation rates increase the salinity level of the soil. Tamarisk is a phreatophyte, a plant that can obtain water from an underground water table. Because of its deep root system and high transpiration rates, tamarisk can substantially lower the water table to below the root zone of native species, thereby competitively excluding them. As a prolific seeder, it may rapidly displace native species within a drainage.

There are 3.98 acres of tamarisk scrub mapped within the project area. Tamarisk scrub is found as patches intermixed within disturbed habitat south of the San Diego River (Figure 4.4-1).

### Arrowweed Scrub

Arrowweed scrub occurs as moderate to dense streamside thickets strongly dominated by arrowweed (*Pluchea sericea*) and may also include cattails (*Typha* spp.), southwestern spiny rush (*Juncus acutus* ssp. *leopoldii*), and salt grass, especially around the margins of the thickets.

There are 2.06 acres of arrowweed scrub mapped within the project area. Arrowweed scrub is found as a single patch located north of the San Diego River (Figure 4.4-1).

### Open Water

Open water is an unvegetated habitat. It is made up of year-round bodies of saline or fresh water. Fresh water bodies include lakes, streams, ponds, or rivers.

There are 11.06 acres of open water mapped within the project area. Open water occurs along the San Diego River (Figure 4.4-1).

## **Uplands**

### Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub - including disturbed

Diegan coastal sage scrub is one of the two major shrub types that occur in southern California, occupying xeric sites characterized by shallow soils (the other is chaparral). Diegan coastal sage scrub may be dominated by a variety of species depending upon soil type, slope, and aspect. Typical species found within Diegan coastal sage scrub include California sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*), California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), laurel sumac (*Malosma laurina*), lemonadeberry (*Rhus integrifolia*), white sage (*Salvia apiana*), and black sage (*Salvia mellifera*). Disturbed Diegan coastal sage scrub contains many of the same shrub species as undisturbed Diegan coastal sage scrub but is sparser and has a higher proportion of non-native perennial and annual species.

There is 0.3 acre of Diegan coastal sage scrub mapped within the project area. There are 15.7 acres of disturbed Diegan coastal sage scrub mapped within the project area. Diegan coastal sage scrub (including disturbed) is found both north and south of the San Diego River as remnant patches within disturbed habitat (Figure 4.4-1).

### Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub: Baccharis Dominated – including disturbed

Within Diegan coastal sage scrub: baccharis dominated, coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis*) is the dominant species in the shrub canopy. Associated species include California sagebrush, California buckwheat, and goldenbush. The herbaceous layer contains codominant species which includes bromes (*Bromus* spp.), barleys (*Hordeum* spp.), Bermuda grass (*Cynodon dactylon*), giant wild rye (*Elymus condensatus*), purple needlegrass (*Stipa pulchra*), and deergrass (*Muhlenbergia rigens*). Diegan coastal sage scrub: baccharis dominated is usually open and often occurs on floodplains as a transition between riparian and upland habitat types. Disturbed Diegan coastal sage scrub: baccharis dominated contains many of the same shrub species as undisturbed Diegan coastal sage scrub: baccharis dominated but is sparser and has a higher proportion of non-native perennial and annual species.

There are 6.6 acres of Diegan coastal sage scrub: baccharis dominated mapped within the project area. There is 0.9 acre of disturbed Diegan coastal sage scrub: baccharis dominated mapped within the project area. Diegan coastal sage scrub: baccharis dominated (including disturbed) is found both north and south of the San Diego River as remnant patches within disturbed habitat (Figure 4.4-1).

### Non-Native Grassland

Non-native grassland may be composed of dense to sparse cover of annual grasses. It is 0.2 to 1 meter tall. In years of high rainfall, it can be associated with native wildflowers. In San Diego County, associated species include oats (*Avena* spp.), bromes, filaree (*Erodium* spp.), mustards (*Brassica* spp.), tocalote (*Centaurea melitensis*), California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*), lupines (*Lupinus* spp.), and plantain (*Plantago* spp.), among others. In some areas, depending on rainfall, forbs can be dominant. Germination often occurs with the onset of fall rains and continues through the spring. Grass species are often dead in the summer and fall. It is usually found on fine textured to clay soils.

There are 5.1 acres of non-native grassland mapped within the project area. Non-native grassland occurs as an isolated patch north of Mission Gorge Road and west of Town Center Parkway and as an isolated patch south of the San Diego River (Figure 4.4-1).

### Eucalyptus Woodland

Eucalyptus woodland is dominated by eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus* spp.), an introduced tree that has often been planted purposely for wind blocking, ornamental, and hardwood production purposes. Most groves are monotypic, with the most common species being either the blue gum (*Eucalyptus gunnii*) or red gum (*E. camaldulensis* ssp. *obtusata*). The understory within well-established groves is usually very sparse due to the closed canopy and allelopathic nature of the abundant leaf and bark litter.

There are 1.7 acres of eucalyptus woodland mapped within the project area. Eucalyptus woodland occurs as isolated patches north and south of the San Diego River (Figure 4.4-1).

### Artificial Detention Basin

Artificial detention basins on-site consist of open water habitat excavated in uplands. These detention basins are considered an artificially-created community because they act as holding basins for storm water as a result of human activities in historically non-wetland areas.

A total of three artificial detention basins totaling 2.0 acres are present in the project area (Figure 4.4-1).

#### Disturbed Habitat

Disturbed habitat includes those areas that have been disturbed and are no longer considered native habitat, but still have a soil substrate. Vegetation is usually made up of invasive non-native species and ornamentals, and particularly those species that take advantage of disturbed areas. Commonly associated species include thistles (*Sonchus* spp.), Russian thistle (*Salsola tragus*), mustards, pampas grass (*Cortaderia selloana*), and fountain grass (*Pennisetum setaceum*). The habitat no longer provides animal species with many beneficial uses, other than for dispersal. Examples of areas that are considered disturbed habitat include graded pads, areas actively managed for fuels, dirt parking lots, firebreaks, off-road vehicle trails, and home sites.

There are 128.4 acres of disturbed habitat mapped within the project area. Disturbed habitat occurs on undeveloped lands to the north and south of the San Diego River (Figure 4.4-1).

#### Developed Land

Developed areas are those that have been built on or physically altered to the extent that native vegetation is not supported. Developed land is often characterized by permanent or semi-permanent structures, pavement, hardscape, or landscaped areas that require irrigation. Areas where no natural land is evident due to large quantities of debris or other material being placed upon it are also considered developed. Usually, plants in these areas are invasive non-native plants or ornamental.

There are 384.6 acres of developed land mapped within the project area. Developed land occurs throughout the project area (Figure 4.4-1).

### **4.4.1.2 Sensitive Species**

#### **Sensitive Plants**

##### Special Status Plant Species Observed

Three special-status plant species were observed within the project area during the general biological survey and one additional special status plant species was observed within the project area during surveys for the Cottonwood and Park project (Dudek 2024):

1. Smooth tarplant
2. San Diego marsh elder
3. Southwestern spiny rush
4. White rabbit-tobacco

##### Sensitive Plant Species with Potential to Occur

The potential for special status plant species to occur within the project area was evaluated based on the elevation, soils, vegetation communities, and level of disturbance, as well as species

status, previous occurrences, and distribution in the vicinity of the study area. No special status plant species were determined to have a high potential to occur within the project area.

### **Sensitive Wildlife**

Special status animal species include those that have been afforded special status and/or recognition by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and/or California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). In general, the principal reason an individual taxon (species or subspecies) is given such recognition is the documented or perceived decline or limitations of its population size or geographical extent and/or distribution, resulting in most cases from habitat loss.

#### Special Status Animal Species Observed

Special status animal species were not observed or detected in the project area during the general biological survey.

#### Sensitive Animal Species with Potential to Occur

Special status animal species that were not observed or otherwise detected, but were evaluated for the potential to occur on-site are included in Appendix D, *Special Status Animal Species Observed or with Potential to Occur*, of the Biological Resources Technical Report. An explanation of status codes is included as Appendix E, *Explanation of Status Codes for Plant and Animal Species*, of the Biological Resources Technical Report (HELIX 2024a).

A total of 11 special-status animal species were determined to have high potential to occur in the project area:

1. San Diegan legless lizard
2. California glossy snake
3. Belding's orange-throated whiptail
4. San Diegan tiger whiptail
5. Red diamond rattlesnake
6. Blainville's horned lizard
7. Western spadefoot toad
8. Two-striped garter snake
9. Cooper's hawk
10. Coastal California gnatcatcher
11. Least Bell's vireo

#### Nesting Birds

Trees and shrubs both within and adjacent to the project area could provide suitable nesting habitat for numerous bird species known to the region.

### Raptor Foraging

Raptor species were not observed in the project area during the biological survey. Raptor species that have shown the ability to adapt to urban and suburban environments may use the area for foraging and could use on-site trees for nesting. These include red-shouldered hawk (*Buteo lineatus*) and Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*; State Watch List). Suitable foraging habitat for these species are fallow fields or open lands greater than five acres that are characterized by fossorial activity and/or the presence of trees. Raptors typically utilize tall trees for nesting and perching. Although present, the area of potential foraging habitat for raptors is limited within the project area. The habitat within the project area does not provide high-quality raptor habitat, as many on-site trees with potential for nesting are located adjacent to roadways with heavy traffic. Additionally, potential foraging habitat (fallow fields/open lands with fossorial activity) is limited within the project area, and nearby disturbance such as roads, freeways, and proximity to human activity are also a deterrent for foraging raptors.

#### **4.4.1.3 Jurisdictional Waters**

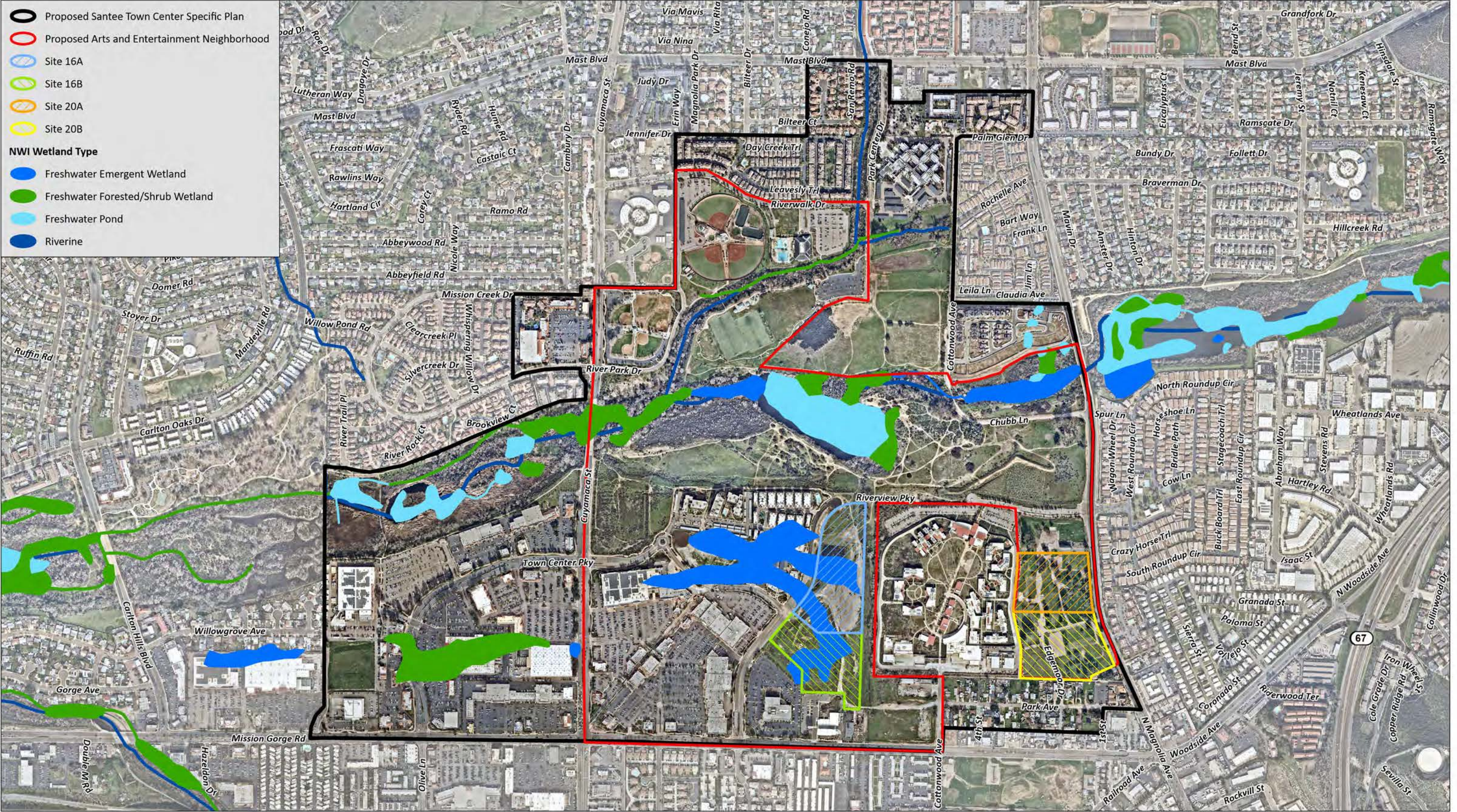
In the context of this assessment, jurisdictional waters and wetlands include waters of the U.S., including wetlands regulated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) pursuant to the Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 404; waters of the State regulated by the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) pursuant to Section 401 of the CWA and State Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act; and streambed and riparian habitat regulated by the CDFW pursuant to Sections 1600 *et seq.* of the California Fish and Game Code (CFG Code).

Potential jurisdictional aquatic resources present within the study area consist of waters of the U.S. subject to the regulatory jurisdiction of USACE, waters of the State subject to the regulatory jurisdiction of the RWQCB, and streambed and riparian habitat subject to the regulatory jurisdiction of the CDFW. These potential jurisdictional resources are primarily associated with the San Diego River, unnamed drainages, and riparian-associated vegetation occurring along the river and drainages.

The jurisdictional delineation review area consisted of the proposed Riverview Parkway project site and encompassed the entire parcel (Assessor's Parcel Number 381-050-82-00). Within the Riverview Parkway project site, a total of 0.33 acre (2,117 linear feet) of waters of the U.S. may be subject to USACE and RWQCB regulatory jurisdiction pursuant to Sections 404 and 401 of the CWA. Additionally, 1.13 acres of streambed and riparian resources occur within the jurisdictional delineation review area and would be subject to CDFW jurisdiction pursuant to Sections 1600–1616 of the CFG Code. Figure 4.4-2, *Potential Jurisdictional Wetlands and Waters*, shows the locations of potential jurisdictional resources in the project boundaries.



-  Proposed Santee Town Center Specific Plan
  -  Proposed Arts and Entertainment Neighborhood
  -  Site 16A
  -  Site 16B
  -  Site 20A
  -  Site 20B
- NWI Wetland Type**
-  Freshwater Emergent Wetland
  -  Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland
  -  Freshwater Pond
  -  Riverine



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Source: Aerial (SanGIS, 2023); Potential Jurisdictional Wetlands and Waters (National Wetlands Inventory)



### USACE Jurisdiction

USACE-jurisdictional waters within the jurisdictional delineation review area include wetland and non-wetland waters of the U.S. (Table 4.4-2, *Aquatic Resources within the Jurisdictional Delineation Review Area*). A total of 0.33 acre (2,117 linear feet) of potential waters of the U.S. were delineated in the jurisdictional delineation review area. Potential waters of the U.S. consist of 0.05 acre of wetland and 0.28 acre of non-wetland waters.

### RWQCB Jurisdiction

RWQCB-jurisdictional waters within the jurisdictional delineation review area include wetland and non-wetland waters of the State (Table 4.4-2). A total of 0.33 acre (2,117 linear feet) of potential waters of the State were delineated in the jurisdictional delineation review area. Potential waters of the State consist of 0.05 acre of wetland and 0.28 acre of non-wetland waters. No isolated waters or isolated wetlands meeting the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB)'s State Wetland Definition were identified in the jurisdictional delineation review area. Thus, no waters or wetlands subject to RWQCB regulation solely under the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act were observed in the project area.

### CDFW Jurisdiction

CDFW habitat was delineated within the jurisdictional delineation review area (Table 4.4-2). A total of 1.18 acres of CDFW jurisdictional habitat occur within the jurisdictional delineation review area, composed of 0.54 acre of riparian habitat (including vegetated streambed) and 0.64 acre of unvegetated streambed.

**Table 4.4-2  
AQUATIC RESOURCES WITHIN THE JURISDICTIONAL DELINEATION REVIEW AREA**

Type	Acres <sup>1</sup> (Linear Feet)
<b>USACE Waters of the U.S.</b>	
Wetland Waters (WW-1)	0.04 (210)
Wetland Waters (WW-2)	0.01 (68)
Non-wetland Waters (NWW-1)	0.19 (1,360)
Non-wetland Waters (NWW-2)	0.08 (366)
Non-wetland Waters (NWW-3)	0.01 (92)
Non-wetland Waters (NWW-4)	<0.01 (0.001; 21)
<b>Waters of the U.S. Total</b>	<b>0.33 (2,117)</b>
<b>RWQCB Waters of the State</b>	
Wetland Waters (WW-1)	0.04 (210)
Wetland Waters (WW-2)	0.01 (68)
Non-wetland Waters (NWW-1)	0.19 (1,360)
Non-wetland Waters (NWW-2)	0.08 (366)
Non-wetland Waters (NWW-3)	0.01 (92)
Non-wetland Waters (NWW-4)	<0.01 (0.001; 21)
<b>Waters of the State Total</b>	<b>0.33 (2,117)</b>
<b>CDFW Jurisdictional Areas</b>	
Riparian (including vegetated streambed)	0.54
Streambed	0.64
<b>CDFW Total</b>	<b>1.18</b>

<sup>1</sup> Acreages are rounded to nearest 0.01 acre. Linear feet is rounded to the nearest foot.

#### 4.4.1.4 Wildlife Movement and Corridors

Wildlife corridors connect otherwise isolated pieces of habitat and allow movement or dispersal of plants and animals. Local wildlife corridors allow access to resources such as food, water, and shelter within the framework of their daily routine. Regional corridors provide these functions over a larger scale and link two or more large habitat areas, allowing the dispersal of organisms and the consequent mixing of genes between populations. A corridor is a specific route that is used for the movement and migration of species and may be different from a linkage in that it represents a smaller or narrower avenue for movement. A linkage is an area of land that supports or contributes to the long-term movement of animals and genetic exchange by providing live-in habitat that connects to other habitat areas. Many linkages occur as stepping-stone linkages that are made up of a fragmented archipelago arrangement of habitat over a linear distance.

With respect to wildlife movement in the region, conservation targets generally include conserving core blocks of coastal sage scrub and chaparral habitat, as well as maintaining linkages between critical biological resource areas. The Mission Trails/Kearny Mesa/East Elliot/Santee Biological Resource Core Area (BRCA), as identified in the Final Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) Plan, surrounds the northern and western portions of the City and overlaps a small portion of the project area. This BRCA is generally associated with Mission Trails Regional Park to the west and habitat along the San Diego River. Undeveloped habitat in the project area functions as both "live-in" habitat for a wide variety of large and small wildlife, and functions as partial territory for the largest of mammals (i.e., mule deer, bobcat, and coyote). The project area also acts as a movement corridor (e.g., San Diego River) between County open space, Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Miramar, and Santee Lakes. The San Diego River is expected to be a key component for the movement of wildlife in the region, namely birds and mammals. The San Diego River supports a permanent water source and cover for a wide range of species known to the region. Large mammals, such as southern mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus fuliginata*) and coyote (*Canis latrans*), would be expected to travel to and from the San Diego River and expansive habitat blocks associated with Mission Trails Regional Park. Large mammals would also be expected to travel along the San Diego River and riparian corridor. Birds would be expected to move unobstructed between key habitat blocks of coastal sage scrub and riparian habitat providing important breeding, foraging and dispersal functions. Key blocks of coastal sage scrub where gnatcatchers are known to occur include Mission Trails Regional Park, with additional habitat extending further north within Sycamore Canyon Preserve, and to the southeast into Crestwood Ecological Reserve.

The project area incorporates a variety of land uses and includes mixed uses that place residential use within walking distance of commercial and recreational uses (Figure 3-4, *TCSP Land Uses*). The San Diego River runs through the project area, and most of the on-site reach of the river is characterized by dense southern arroyo willow riparian forest habitat. East-west wildlife movement in the region would likely follow the San Diego River. The upland vegetation communities/land use types present outside and along the San Diego River corridor provide minimal cover for wildlife movement and, as evaluated on their own, do not function as a wildlife movement corridor. However, the upland undeveloped lands in the project area are contiguous with the San Diego River, which does function as a wildlife corridor.

#### 4.4.2 Regulatory Framework

Biological resources in the project area are subject to regulatory review by federal, state, and local agencies. Under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), impacts associated with a proposed project or program are assessed with regard to significance criteria determined by the

CEQA Lead Agency (in this case, the City) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines. Biological resource-related laws and regulations that apply include the federal Endangered Species Act (FESA), Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), CWA, CEQA, California Endangered Species Act (CESA), Native Plant Protection Act (NPPA), CFG Code, Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, Natural Communities Conservation Planning (NCCP) Act, MSCP, Santee General Plan, City of Santee Draft MSCP Subarea Plan, Habitat Loss Permit Ordinance, and Santee Municipal Code (SMC).

#### **4.4.2.1 Federal**

##### **Federal Endangered Species Act**

Administered by the USFWS, the FESA provides the legal framework for the listing and protection of species (and their habitats) that are identified as being endangered or threatened with extinction. Actions that jeopardize endangered or threatened species and the habitats upon which they rely are considered a “take” under the FESA. Section 9(a) of the ESA defines take as “to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or attempt to engage in any such conduct.” “Harm” and “harass” are further defined in federal regulations and case law to include actions that adversely impair or disrupt a listed species’ behavioral patterns.

The USFWS designates critical habitat for endangered and threatened species. Critical habitat is a term defined and used in the FESA and refers to specific geographic areas that contain features considered necessary for endangered or threatened species to recover. Critical habitat designations can include areas that are not currently occupied by the species, as the ultimate goal is to restore healthy populations of listed species within their native habitats so that they can be removed from the list of threatened or endangered species. Once an area is designated as critical habitat pursuant to the FESA, all federal agencies must consult with the USFWS to ensure that any action they authorize, fund, or carry out is not likely to result in the destruction or adverse modification of the critical habitat. Only activities that involve a federal permit, license, or funding require consultation with the USFWS.

Sections 7 and 10(a) of the FESA regulate actions that could jeopardize endangered or threatened species. Section 7 describes a process of federal interagency consultation for use when federal actions may adversely affect listed species. In this case, take can be authorized via a letter of Biological Opinion issued by the USFWS for non-marine related listed species issues. A Section 7 consultation (formal or informal) is required when there is a nexus between endangered species’ use of a site and if there is an associated federal action for a proposed impact (e.g., the USACE would initiate a Section 7 consultation with the USFWS for impacts proposed to USACE jurisdictional areas that may also affect listed species or their critical habitat). Section 10(a) allows the issuance of permits for incidental take of endangered or threatened species with the preparation of a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) when there is no federal nexus. The term “incidental” applies if the taking of a listed species is incidental to, and not the purpose of, an otherwise lawful activity. An HCP demonstrating how the taking would be minimized and how steps taken would ensure the species’ survival must be submitted for issuance of Section 10(a) permits. The MSCP is a regional HCP that was developed pursuant to Section 10(a) of the ESA.

##### **Migratory Bird Treaty Act**

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act has protections for all migratory bird species that are native to the United States or that have territories protected under the federal MBTA, as amended under the

Migratory Bird Treaty Reform Act of 2004 (Federal Register [FR] Doc. 05-5127). The MBTA is generally protective of migratory birds but does not actually stipulate the type of protection required. In common practice, the MBTA is used to place restrictions on the disturbance of active bird nests during the nesting season (generally February 1 to September 15; beginning January 15 for raptors). In addition, the USFWS commonly places restrictions on disturbances allowed near active raptor nests.

### **Clean Water Act of 1972**

Federal wetland regulation (non-marine issues) is guided by the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 and the CWA. The Rivers and Harbors Act deals primarily with discharges into navigable waters, while the purpose of the CWA is to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of all waters of the U.S. Permitting for projects filling waters of the U.S. is overseen by the USACE under Section 404 of the CWA. Most development projects are permitted using Individual Permit or Nationwide Permit instruments.

#### **4.4.2.2 State**

### **California Endangered Species Act**

The CESA established that it is state policy to conserve, protect, restore, and enhance state endangered species and their habitats. Under state law, plant and animal species may be formally designated rare, threatened, or endangered by official listing by the California Fish and Game Commission. The CESA authorizes that private entities may “take” plant or wildlife species listed as endangered or threatened under the FESA and CESA, pursuant to a federal Incidental Take Permit, if the CDFW certifies that the incidental take is consistent with CESA (CFG Code Section 2080.1[a]). For state-only listed species, Section 2081 of the CFG Code authorizes the CDFW to issue an Incidental Take Permit for state listed threatened and endangered species if specific criteria are met. The MSCP is a regional Natural Communities Conservation Plan that was granted take coverage under Section 2081 of the CESA for specific species.

### **Native Plant Protection Act**

Sections 1900 through 1913 of the CFG Code (Native Plant Protection Act) direct the CDFW to carry out the state legislature’s intent to “...preserve, protect, and enhance endangered or rare native plants of this state.” The NPPA gives the California Fish and Game Commission the power to designate native plants as “endangered” or “rare” and protect endangered and rare plants from “take.”

### **California Fish and Game Code, Section 1600**

The CFG Code provides specific protection and listing for several types of biological resources. Section 1600 of the CFG Code requires a Streambed Alteration Agreement (SAA) for any activity that would alter the flow, change, or use any material from the bed, channel, or bank of any perennial, intermittent, or ephemeral river, stream, and/or lake. Typical activities that require an SAA include excavation or fill placed within a channel, vegetation clearing, structures for diversion of water, installation of culverts and bridge supports, cofferdams for construction dewatering, and bank reinforcement. Notification is required prior to any such activities.

Pursuant to CFG Code Section 3503, it is unlawful to take, possess, or needlessly destroy the nest or eggs of any bird, except as otherwise provided by this code or any regulation made

pursuant thereto. Raptors and owls, and their active nests, are protected by CFG Code Section 3503.5, which states that it is unlawful to take, possess, or destroy any birds of prey or to take, possess, or destroy the nest or eggs of any such bird unless authorized by the CDFW. Section 3513 states that it is unlawful to take or possess any migratory non-game bird, as designated in the MBTA. These regulations could require that construction activities (particularly vegetation removal or construction near nests) be reduced or eliminated during critical phases of the nesting cycle, unless surveys by a qualified biologist demonstrate that nests, eggs, or nesting birds will not be disturbed.

### **Natural Communities Conservation Planning Act**

The NCCP program is a cooperative effort to protect habitats and species. It began under the state's NCCP Act of 1991, legislation broader in its orientation and objectives than the CESA or FESA. These laws are designed to identify and protect individual species that have already declined significantly in number. The NCCP Act of 1991 and the associated Southern California Coastal Sage Scrub NCCP Process Guidelines (1993), Southern California Coastal Sage Scrub NCCP Conservation Guidelines (1993), and NCCP General Process Guidelines (1998) have been superseded by the NCCP Act of 2003.

The primary objective of the NCCP program is to conserve natural communities at the ecosystem level, while accommodating compatible land use. The program seeks to anticipate and prevent the controversies and gridlock caused by species' listings by focusing on the long-term stability of wildlife and plant communities and including key interests in the process.

This voluntary program allows the state to enter into planning agreements with landowners, local governments, and other stakeholders to prepare plans that identify the most important areas for a threatened or endangered species, and the areas that may be less important. These NCCP plans may become the basis for a state permit to take threatened and endangered species in exchange for conserving their habitat. The CDFW and USFWS worked to combine the NCCP program with the federal HCP process to provide take permits for state and federal listed species. Under the NCCP, local governments, such as the County, can take the lead in developing these NCCP plans and become the recipients of state and federal take permits.

#### **4.4.2.3 Regional**

##### **San Diego County Multiple Species Conservation Program**

The California NCCP Act of 1991 (Section 2835) allows the CDFW to authorize take of species covered by plans in agreement with NCCP guidelines. A Natural Communities Conservation Program initiated by the State of California focuses on conserving coastal sage scrub, and in concert with the USFWS and the federal ESA, is intended to avoid the need for future federal and state listing of coastal sage scrub-dependent species.

The San Diego MSCP Plan for the southwestern portion of San Diego County was approved in August 1998 and covers 85 species (County 1998). The City of San Diego, portions of the unincorporated County, and 10 additional city jurisdictions make up the San Diego MSCP Plan area. It is a comprehensive, long-term habitat conservation plan that addresses the needs of multiple species by identifying key areas for preservation as open space, to link core biological areas into a regional wildlife preserve.



The San Diego Final MSCP Plan includes the cities of Del Mar, Poway, San Diego, Santee, El Cajon, La Mesa, Lemon Grove, National City, Chula Vista, Coronado, and Imperial Beach. Local jurisdictions implement their respective portions of the plans by developing subarea plans which describe their specific implementing mechanisms, preserve boundaries, and species and habitats protection while preserving the integrity of the MSCP. The City is currently in the process of developing its Subarea Plan, which would provide conservation strategies to protect species and habitat in hardline conservation lands, upland standards areas, San Diego River conservation opportunities areas and City-owned preserve lands.

#### 4.4.2.4 Local

##### Santee General Plan

Section 65302 (d) of the California Planning and Zoning Laws requires each City's General Plan to contain a Conservation Element which is intended to address the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources. These resources may include water, forests, rivers, soils, minerals, fisheries, and wildlife.

Objective 7.0 of the Santee General Plan Conservation Element requires the following policies to preserve significant biological resources.

- **Policy 7.1:** The City shall encourage the preservation and enhancement of significant biological resources in areas designated as permanent open space.
- **Policy 7.2:** The City shall require that all development proposals provide appropriate mitigation for identified significant biological resources including selective preservation, sensitive site planning techniques and in-kind mitigation for identified impacts.
- **Policy 7.3:** The City shall require that, for all development proposals involving the setting aside of land for permanent open space either on-site or off-site, provisions are in place to ensure the long term management of the open space and biological resources.

##### MSCP Santee Subarea Plan

The City is currently participating in the MSCP through preparation of a Subarea Plan (Plan). The Plan provides a framework for promoting the protection and enhancement of natural resources, including listed species and species that may become listed during the permit term and their habitats, while streamlining the permitting process for planned development, infrastructure development, and infrastructure and facilities operations and maintenance activities (Covered Activities). The Plan will enable the City of Santee to receive listed species take permits for identified activities and projects conducted by the City and those under their jurisdiction where the City has discretion over the activity. The Plan Area covers 10,500.8 acres, including lands within the jurisdiction of the City of Santee plus offsite conservation areas. The permits that would ultimately be issued by the Wildlife Agencies will address 20 Covered Species that are currently listed as threatened or endangered or may become listed during the permit term, that may be impacted by Covered Activities, and that will benefit from Plan-related conservation and management.

## Santee Municipal Code

The SMC requires that all new developments, subdivisions, or tracts that are planned in Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ) and/or Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) areas have a minimum of 100 horizontal feet of defensible space between flammable structures and wildland areas. Typically, defensible space comprises two brush management areas: Zone 1 (the first 50 feet from flammable structures) and Zone 2 (the second 50 feet). Zone 1 may consist of pavement; walkways; turf; and permanently landscaped, irrigated, and maintained ornamental plantings. Fire resistant trees are allowed if placed or trimmed so that crowns are maintained more than 10 feet from the structure(s). Zone 2 may include low-growing, fire resistant shrubs and ground covers. Zone 2 must have an average plant height of under 24 inches and cover of native, non-irrigated vegetation of under 30 percent.

### 4.4.3 Significance Determination Thresholds

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, impacts related to biological resources would be significant if the project would:

- 1) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the CDFW or USFWS.
- 2) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the CDFW or USFWS.
- 3) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means.
- 4) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites.
- 5) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance.
- 6) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted HCP, NCCP, or other approved local, regional, or state HCP.

### 4.4.4 Methodology

The biological resources documented in this section were determined through an extensive review of the most current biological literature and geographical information systems (GIS) data available for the City as presented in Appendix C of this EIR. This vegetation mapping was further refined based on site visits on July 25, 2023 to map existing vegetation communities, document the locations of special-status species, identify and map potential jurisdictional resources (i.e., wetlands, waters, and riparian vegetation), and evaluate the potential for other sensitive biological resources and special-status species to occur within the project area and immediate vicinity. Estimated acreages of sensitive vegetation communities are reported in Table 4.4-1 above.

The sensitive flora and fauna species are known to occur within the City based on information obtained from the literature review, which is described in more detail in the Biological Resources Technical Report conducted for the project Appendix C). General flora and fauna species were determined based on the identified vegetation communities and the species that typically occur in these habitats. An in-house search of databases including, but not limited to, the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB), California Native Plant Society Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants, and United States Fish and Wildlife Service databases was also performed to identify historical occurrences of sensitive plants and wildlife species within one mile of the undeveloped project areas. Additionally, HELIX reviewed the *Riverview Parkway Project USACE Aquatic Resources Delineation Report*, the *Riverview Parkway CDFW Jurisdictional Delineation Report*, and *Restoration/Revegetation Plan for the Riverview Parkway Project*.

#### **4.4.5 Issue 1: Sensitive Species**

*Would the project have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by CDFW or USFWS?*

##### **4.4.5.1 Impact Analysis**

###### **Impacts to Vegetation Communities**

Implementation of the proposed project is anticipated to result in direct impacts to 448.89 acres of habitat (Table 4.4-3, *Vegetation Community/Land Use Type Impacts and Mitigation Requirements*; Figure 4.4-1). These impacts are associated with future development activities throughout the TCSP area, including supporting infrastructure and mobility improvements, such as the proposed San Diego River Bridge linking Town Center Community Park north of the river to the Trolley Square area south of the river and the Art Walk Trail along the Las Colinas Channel. Direct impacts presented in Table 4.4-1 account for all the proposed projects known and potential impacts within the defined TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites. No additional direct impacts are anticipated to occur outside of the TCSP boundary. No direct impacts are anticipated to occur to conserved lands or land uses designated by the TCSP as Park/Open Space and Floodway/Open Space (Figure 3-4).

###### **Impacts to Special Status Species**

Several special status plant and animal species were observed in the project area during biological surveys. Project impacts would primarily occur in existing developed and disturbed areas. However, portions of the proposed project area extend into native habitats, including wetland and riparian habitats and sensitive uplands habitats, where special status plant and animal species have been detected or have the potential to occur. Potential project effects on special status plant and animal species are described below.

**Table 4.4-3  
VEGETATION COMMUNITY/LAND USE TYPES IMPACTS AND MITIGATION REQUIREMENTS<sup>1,2</sup>**

Vegetation Community	TCSP Area	Arts and Entertainment Neighborhood	Site 16A	Site 16B	Site 20A	Site 20B	Mitigation Ratio	Maximum Mitigation Acres
<b>Wetland Habitats</b>								
Southern Riparian Forest (61300)	0.01	--	--	--	--	--	3:1	0.03
Southern Arroyo Willow Riparian Forest (61320)	6.57	1.52	--	--	--	--	3:1	19.71
Southern Riparian Scrub (63300)	0.01	--	--	--	--	--	3:1	0.03
Southern Riparian Scrub – Disturbed (63300)	0.68	--	--	--	--	--	3:1	2.04
Southern Riparian Scrub – Restoration (63300)	0.03	0.03	--	--	--	--	3:1	0.09
Southern Willow Scrub (63320)	0.47	0.47	0.19	--	--	--	3:1	1.41
Tamarisk Scrub (63810)	0.16	0.16	--	--	--	--	3:1	0.48
Arrowweed Scrub (63820)	1.96	0.03	--	--	--	--	3:1	5.88
Open Water (64100)	--	--	--	--	--	--	3:1	--
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>9.89</i>	<i>2.21</i>	<i>0.19</i>	--	--	--	--	<i>29.67</i>
<b>Upland Habitats</b>								
Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub (32500)	--	--	--	--	--	--	2:1	--
Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub, Disturbed (32500)	8.7	8.7	--	--	--	--	2:1	17.4
Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub: Baccharis-dominated (32530)	4.5	4.5	--	--	--	--	2:1	13.5
Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub: Baccharis-dominated, Disturbed (32530)	0.9	0.9	--	--	--	--	2:1	2.7
Non-native Grassland (42200)	4.2	--	--	--	--	--	0.5:1	2.1
Eucalyptus Woodland (79100)	1.1	0.7	--	--	--	--	--	--
Artificial Detention Basin (N/A)	2.0	2.0	1.3	--	--	--	--	--
Disturbed Habitat (11300)	85.7	55.9	9.5	8.5	5.9	7.9	--	--
Developed (12000)	331.9	108.2	<0.1 (0.02)	0.1	1.8	2.0	--	--
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>439.0</i>	<i>189.9</i>	<i>10.8</i>	<i>8.6</i>	<i>7.7</i>	<i>9.9</i>	--	<i>35.7</i>
<b>Total</b>	<b>448.89</b>	<b>193.11</b>	<b>10.99</b>	<b>8.6</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>9.9</b>	--	<b>65.37</b>

<sup>1</sup> Vegetation categories and numerical codes are from Holland (1986) and Oberbauer (2008).

<sup>2</sup> Upland habitats are rounded to the nearest 0.1 acre, while wetland habitats are rounded to the nearest 0.01; thus, total reflects rounding.

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## TCSP and AEN

### *Special Status Plant Species*

Development of the TCSP area and the AEN would result in impacts to three special status plant species: smooth tarplant, southwestern spiny rush, and white rabbit-tobacco. All other special status plant species observed on-site would either remain undisturbed or be conserved in open space. A total of 243 smooth tarplant individuals, two southwestern spiny rush individuals, and six white rabbit-tobacco individuals observed within the project area would be impacted by the proposed project. No special status plant species were determined to have a high potential to occur within the project area.

### *Federal or State Listed Plant Species*

No impacts would occur to federally and/or state listed plant species as none were documented within the TCSP area or the AEN.

### *CRPR 1 or 2 Listed Plant Species*

Generally, impacts to plant species with a California Native Plant Society (CNPS) California Rare Plant Ranks (CRPR) of 1 or 2 are considered potentially significant due to their higher sensitivity status, and the impact analysis evaluates substantial adverse effects to these species. Implementation of the proposed project has potential to result in direct impacts to the following special status plant species with a CRPR of 1 or 2: smooth tarplant.

#### Smooth Tarplant

Approximately 243 individuals of smooth tarplant occur in the TCSP area and the AEN. Implementation of mitigation measure BIO-6 would ensure that future development impacts on smooth tarplant in the TCSP area and the AEN are reduced to a less than significant level.

#### White rabbit-tobacco

Approximately six individuals of white rabbit-tobacco occur in the TCSP area and the AEN. Implementation of mitigation measure BIO-6 would ensure that future development impacts on smooth tarplant in the TCSP area and the AEN are reduced to a less than significant level.

### *CRPR 3 or 4 Listed Plant Species*

CRPR 3 and 4 species are relatively widespread and impacts to such species would not substantially reduce their populations in the region and are not significant. Implementation of the project is anticipated to result in direct impacts to the following special status plant species with a CRPR of 3 or 4: southwestern spiny rush.

#### Southwestern Spiny Rush

One individual occurs within the TCSP area on conserved land designated as Park/Open Space along an unnamed tributary to the San Diego River. A second individual occurs within the TCSP area outside conserved lands at the southern terminus of Park Center Drive. Additionally, a third individual occurs within the TCSP area and AEN outside conserved lands at the southern terminus of Park Center Drive. Project impacts to southwestern spiny rush would be less than

significant because this relatively widespread species is known to occur elsewhere in the project vicinity, such that the local long-term survival of the species would not be impacted by impacts to two individuals. The impacted individuals are not part of a population at the periphery of the species' range, located in an area where the taxon is especially uncommon, or occurring on unusual substrates. Lastly, there are numerous documented occurrences of this species throughout the region, including on conserved lands, indicating that the project does not represent a geographically significant population.

#### *Other Special Status Plant Species*

Implementation of the proposed project is not anticipated to result in impacts to other special status plant species known from or with high potential to occur in the project area. These species are expected to be avoided by project activities due either to the species' location being outside of the proposed development footprint, or the lack of suitable conditions (habitat, soils, hydrology, elevations, etc.) within the development footprint. However, due to the long-term nature of the project, potential additional or new populations of special status plant species could be discovered in the future, including MSCP Narrow Endemic species. Project impacts to special status plant species may be considered significant depending on the species, sensitivity, and the number of plants to be impacted. Significant impacts to special status plant species, if determined to occur, would require mitigation, including species-specific mitigation, consistent with the City's General Plan (City 2003b). Implementation of mitigation measure BIO-6 would ensure that future development impacts on sensitive resources that occur adjacent to project work limits are avoided. Additionally, mitigation measure BIO-5 would ensure that temporary impacts to vegetation communities will be revegetated to native habitats following completion of construction activities.

#### *Special Status Animal Species*

Implementation of the proposed project has potential to result in direct impacts to habitats occupied or suitable for special status wildlife species. These habitats include wetland and riparian habitats, open water/lake, Diegan coastal sage scrub and various subtypes of this habitat, and non-native grassland. Such impacts would be a result of development activities such as vegetation removal, which could cause loss of habitat and/or direct injury or mortality to individuals. These impacts are described below.

#### *Federally or State Listed Animal Species*

Implementation of the proposed project would impact locations where the following three listed animal species have been documented within the proposed project area or have high potential to occur: coastal California gnatcatcher, least Bell's vireo, and western spadefoot toad; additional information is provided below. Nesting and migratory birds also may be impacted by future development.

#### *Coastal California Gnatcatcher*

Implementation of the proposed project within both the TCSP area and AEN would result in impacts to coastal California gnatcatcher (CAGN) from the removal of 14.1 acres of Diegan coastal sage scrub (comprising disturbed, baccharis-dominated, and disturbed baccharis-dominated). Impacts from the TCSP area and AEN total no more than 8.7 acres of disturbed Diegan coastal sage scrub and 5.4 acres of Diegan coastal sage scrub: Baccharis dominated



(including disturbed). Impacts to occupied and potential CAGN habitat within the TCSP area and AEN are considered significant and would require mitigation.

If construction or operational activities in the TCSP area or AEN were to occur during the gnatcatcher breeding season (March 1 through August 15) and impact occupied CAGN habitat, direct impacts to nesting CAGN would be considered significant and would require mitigation. Through the implementation of mitigation measures BIO-6, BIO-7, BIO-8, and BIO-9 impacts to this species would be reduced to less than significant. Additionally, mitigation measure BIO-5 would ensure that temporary impacts to vegetation communities will be revegetated to native habitats following completion of construction activities.

#### Least Bell's Vireo

A maximum amount of 7.93 acres of suitable habitat for least Bell's vireo may be impacted by development of the TCSP area, AEN, and Site 16A areas. Suitable breeding habitat for the least Bell's vireo within the TCSP area comprises 0.01 acre of southern riparian forest, 6.57 acres of southern arroyo willow riparian forest, 0.72 acre of southern riparian scrub (including disturbed and restoration), 0.47 acre of southern willow scrub, and 0.16 acre of tamarisk scrub. Suitable breeding habitat for the least Bell's vireo within the AEN comprises 1.52 acres of southern arroyo willow riparian forest, 0.03 acre of southern riparian scrub (restoration), 0.47 acre of southern willow scrub, and 0.16 acre of tamarisk scrub. If construction or operational activities were to occur during the vireo breeding season (March 15 through September 15) and impact occupied least Bell's vireo habitat, direct impacts to nesting least Bell's vireo would be considered significant and would require mitigation. Additionally, indirect impacts to least Bell's vireo would occur if construction activities were to take place during the vireo breeding season and were to generate noise levels greater than 60 A-weighted decibels (dBA), or exceed ambient noise levels if greater than 60 dBA, within occupied least Bell's vireo habitat. Through the implementation of mitigation measures BIO-6, BIO-7, BIO-8, and BIO-9, impacts to this species would be reduced to less than significant. Additionally, mitigation measure BIO-5 would ensure that temporary impacts to vegetation communities will be revegetated to native habitats following completion of construction activities.

#### Western Spadefoot Toad

The western spadefoot toad has high potential to occur in sparse riparian habitat along the San Diego River. Construction activities related to the implementation of the proposed project could impact western spadefoot toad. Through implementation of mitigation measure BIO-6 and BIO-10 impacts to this species would be reduced to less than significant. Additionally, mitigation measure BIO-5 would ensure that temporary impacts to vegetation communities will be revegetated to native habitats following completion of construction activities. Therefore, impacts to western spadefoot toad would be less than significant.

#### Nesting Birds

The project area contains trees, shrubs, and other vegetation that provide suitable nesting habitat for common birds, including raptors (such as Cooper's hawk), protected under the MBTA and CFG Code. Construction of the proposed project could result in the removal or trimming of trees and other vegetation during the general bird nesting season (January 15 through July 15 for raptors and February 1 – September 15 for general avian species) and, therefore, could result in impacts to nesting birds in violation of the MBTA and CFG Code. The proposed project construction or operation within 500 feet of breeding habitat for nesting birds could result in

adverse indirect impacts related to construction or operational noise. Impacts to nesting birds and temporary (foraging, migration, and dispersal) habitat would be significant. However, through the implementation of mitigation measures BIO-7, BIO-8, and BIO-9, impacts to nesting birds would be reduced to less than significant.

#### Other Special Status Animal Species

Implementation of the proposed project could result in impacts to the following seven other special status animal species with high potential to occur: San Diegan legless lizard, California glossy snake, Belding's orange-throated whiptail, San Diegan tiger whiptail, red diamond rattlesnake, Blainville's horned lizard, and two-striped garter snake.

Potential impacts to other special status animal species would result from the removal of 9.89 acres of wetland and riparian habitats, 18.3 acres of sensitive upland habitats, and 420.7 acres of non-sensitive upland habitats that may support these species. These impacts would be less than significant due to the small number of individuals that would potentially be affected, the relatively small amount of habitat to be impacted, and the large amount of suitable habitat in the project area that would be avoided by activities and would continue to be preserved within conserved lands. Impacts to MSCP-covered species would be less than significant based on adequate species coverage and suitable habitats protected under the MSCP.

#### Housing Element Sites

##### *Special Status Plant Species*

The Housing Element sites would result in impacts to two special status plant species: smooth tarplant and southwestern spiny rush. All other special status plant species observed on-site would either remain undisturbed or be conserved in open space. A total of 110 smooth tarplant individuals observed within the Housing Element sites would be impacted by the proposed project. No special status plant species were determined to have a high potential to occur within the project area.

##### *Federal or State Listed Plant Species*

No impacts would occur to federally and/or state listed plant species as none were documented within the Housing Element sites.

##### *CRPR 1 or 2 Listed Plant Species*

Generally, impacts to plant species with a CNPS CRPR of 1 or 2 are considered potentially significant due to their higher sensitivity status, and the impact analysis evaluates substantial adverse effects to these species. Implementation of the proposed project has potential to result in direct impacts to the following special status plant species with a CRPR of 1 or 2: smooth tarplant.

##### Smooth Tarplant

Approximately 110 individuals of Smooth Tarplant occur on Site 16A (Figure 4.4-1). Mitigation measures BIO-1 and BIO-2 would reduce proposed project impacts on Site 16A to less than significant. Mitigation measure BIO-3 and BIO-4 would require the installation of temporary construction fencing and biological monitoring where work limits occur adjacent to known

sensitive resources to be avoided, including smooth tarplant individuals. Implementation of mitigation measures BIO-3 and BIO-4 would ensure that additional impacts on sensitive resources that occur adjacent to project work limits are avoided. Additionally, Mitigation measure BIO-5 would ensure that temporary impacts to vegetation communities will be revegetated to native habitats following completion of construction activities.

#### *CRPR 3 or 4 Listed Plant Species*

CRPR 3 and 4 species are relatively widespread and impacts to such species would not substantially reduce their populations in the region and are not significant. Implementation of the project is not anticipated to result in direct impacts to the following special status plant species with a CRPR of 3 or 4: southwestern spiny rush, as these individuals do not occur on sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B (Figure 4.4-1).

#### *Other Special Status Plant Species*

Implementation of the proposed project is not anticipated to result in impacts to other special status plant species known from or with high potential to occur in the project area. These species are expected to be avoided by project activities due either to the species' location being outside of the proposed development footprint, or the lack of suitable conditions (habitat, soils, hydrology, elevations, etc.) within the development footprint. However, due to the long-term nature of the project, potential additional or new populations of special status plant species could be discovered in the future, including MSCP Narrow Endemic species. Project impacts to special status plant species may be considered significant depending on the species, sensitivity, and the number of plants to be impacted. Significant impacts to special status plant species, if determined to occur, would require mitigation, including species-specific mitigation, consistent with the City's General Plan (City 2003b). Implementation of mitigation measure BIO-6 would ensure that future development impacts on sensitive resources that occur adjacent to project work limits are avoided. Additionally, mitigation measure BIO-5 would ensure that temporary impacts to vegetation communities will be revegetated to native habitats following completion of construction activities.

#### *Special Status Animal Species*

Implementation of the proposed project has potential to result in direct impacts to habitats occupied or suitable for special status wildlife species. These habitats include wetland and riparian habitats, open water/lake, Diegan coastal sage scrub and various subtypes of this habitat, and non-native grassland. Such impacts would be a result of development activities such as vegetation removal, which could cause loss of habitat and/or direct injury or mortality to individuals. These impacts are described below.

#### *Federally or State Listed Animal Species*

Implementation of the proposed project would impact locations where the following three listed animal species have been documented within the proposed project area or have high potential to occur: coastal California gnatcatcher, least Bell's vireo, and western spadefoot toad; additional information is provided below. Nesting and migratory birds also may be impacted by future development as follows.

### Coastal California Gnatcatcher

Habitat suitable for CAGN does not occur on sites 16A, 16B, 20A, or 20B. Impact to Coastal California Gnatcatcher would be less than significant in the Housing Element sites.

### Least Bell's Vireo

Suitable breeding habitat for the least Bell's vireo within Site 16A comprises 0.19 acre of southern willow scrub. If construction activities were to occur during the vireo breeding season (March 15 through September 15) and impact occupied least Bell's vireo habitat, direct impacts to nesting least Bell's vireo would be considered significant and would require mitigation. Additionally, indirect impacts to least Bell's vireo would occur if construction activities were to take place during the vireo breeding season and were to generate noise levels greater than 60 dBA, or exceed ambient noise levels if greater than 60 dBA, within occupied least Bell's vireo habitat. Through the implementation of mitigation measures BIO-6, BIO-7, and BIO-8 impacts to this species would be reduced to a less than significant level. Additionally, mitigation measure BIO-5 would ensure that temporary impacts to vegetation communities will be revegetated to native habitats following completion of construction activities.

### Western Spadefoot Toad

The western spadefoot toad has high potential to occur in sparse riparian habitat along the San Diego River. Construction related to the implementation of the proposed project, including the Housing Element sites, could impact western spadefoot toad. Through implementation of mitigation measure BIO-6 and BIO-10 impacts to this species would be reduced to less than significant. Additionally, mitigation measure BIO-5 would ensure that temporary impacts to vegetation communities will be revegetated to native habitats following completion of construction activities. Therefore, impacts to western spadefoot toad would be less than significant in the Housing Element sites.

### Nesting Birds

The project area contains trees, shrubs, and other vegetation that provide suitable nesting habitat for common birds, including raptors (such as Cooper's hawk), protected under the MBTA and CFG Code. Construction of the proposed project could result in the removal or trimming of trees and other vegetation during the general bird nesting season (January 15 through July 15 for raptors and February 1 through September 15 for general avian species) and, therefore, could result in impacts to nesting birds in violation of the MBTA and CFG Code. The proposed project construction within 500 feet of breeding habitat for nesting birds could result in adverse indirect impacts related to construction noise. Impacts to nesting birds and temporary (foraging, migration, and dispersal) habitat would be significant. However, through the implementation of mitigation measures BIO-7 and BIO-8, impacts to nesting birds would be reduced to less than significant.

### *Other Special Status Animal Species*

Implementation of the proposed project could result in impacts to the following seven other special status animal species with high potential to occur: San Diegan legless lizard, California glossy snake, Belding's orange-throated whiptail, San Diegan tiger whiptail, red diamond rattlesnake, Blainville's horned lizard, and two-striped garter snake.

Potential impacts to other special status animal species would result from the removal of 9.89 acres of wetland and riparian habitats, 18.3 acres of sensitive upland habitats, and 420.7 acres of non-sensitive upland habitats that may support these species. These impacts would be less than significant due to the small number of individuals that would potentially be affected, the relatively small amount of habitat to be impacted, and the large amount of suitable habitat in the project area that would be avoided by activities and would continue to be preserved within conserved lands. Impacts to MSCP-covered species within the Housing Element sites would be less than significant based on adequate species coverage and suitable habitats protected under the MSCP.

#### **4.4.5.2 Mitigation Measures**

The following mitigation measures would ensure that potential impacts on special status plant and animal species are avoided by the project.

#### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

**BIO-1** Focused surveys for smooth tarplant will be completed during the blooming period for this species (April to September) before clearing and grubbing for development of sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B. Smooth tarplant observed in a proposed impact area will be flagged and avoided during construction. If impacts to smooth tarplant individuals cannot be avoided, mitigation will consist of on- or off-site preservation, translocation, and/or restoration within a BRCA, with a preference for species salvage and transplantation on-site if feasible, as determined by a qualified biologist and approved by the City. Seed material will be sourced from within 25 miles of the project area, but if seed is not available, due to seasonality or a poor seeding year, seed collected from southeastern San Diego County may be used. If species are transplanted for mitigation, these species will be included in a plant salvage and translocation plan according to mitigation measure BIO-2.

**BIO-2** Prior to vegetation clearing for development of the sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B, if smooth tarplant is being impacted and translocation is selected as part of the mitigation package according to mitigation measure BIO-1, a plant salvage and translocation plan shall be prepared for smooth tarplant impacted by the project. The plan shall, at a minimum, evaluate options for plant salvage and relocation, including native plant mulching, selective soil salvaging, and application/relocation of resources within the project area. Relocation efforts may include seed collection and/or transplantation to a suitable receptor site and will be based on the most reliable methods of successful relocation. The program shall contain a recommendation for method of salvage and relocation/application based on the feasibility of implementation and the likelihood of success. The program shall include, at a minimum, an implementation plan, maintenance and monitoring program, success criteria, estimated completion time, and any relevant contingency measures. The resource salvage plan shall be prepared by a qualified biologist and shall be implemented according to the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the project, to the satisfaction of the City.

**BIO-3** To help ensure errant impacts to sensitive vegetation communities and jurisdictional waters outside of the impact footprint are avoided during construction in the Housing Element sites, environmental exclusionary fencing, where determined necessary by the qualified biologist, would be installed at the edges of the impact limits before the initiation of grading. All construction staging shall occur within the approved limits of

construction. A qualified biologist will monitor the installation of environmental fencing wherever it would abut sensitive vegetation communities. The biologist will periodically monitor the limits of construction operations to ensure that avoidance areas are delineated with temporary fencing and that fencing remains intact. Unless otherwise determined by the monitoring biologist, periodically means once every 14 days after environmental exclusionary fencing has been installed at the edges of the impact limits.

**BIO-4** Prior to vegetation clearing for development of the Housing Element sites a qualified biologist shall conduct a Worker Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP) training session for project and construction personnel prior to the commencement of work. The training shall include a description of the species of concern and their habitats, the general provisions of the Endangered Species Acts (FESA and CESA), the penalties associated with violating the provisions of the acts, the general measures that are being implemented to conserve the species of concern as they relate to the project, and the access routes to and project area boundaries.

**BIO-5** Immediately following completion of temporary construction activities within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites, the contractor shall restore the temporary impact areas to pre-construction contours and revegetate the areas with native plant material, as follows: excavated soils and cleared native plant material shall be stockpiled within an appropriate staging area along the edge of the work corridor to the extent feasible; excavated soils shall be backfilled upon completion of construction and recontoured to pre-existing conditions; cleared native plant material shall be distributed over the temporarily disturbed areas; native seed application and installation of native container plants. Plant and seed material will be sourced from within 25 miles of the project area, but if plant and seed material is not available, due to seasonality or a poor seeding year, seed collected from southeastern San Diego County may be used. Maintenance and monitoring of the revegetation shall be provided for a period up to 25 months or for a period sufficient to establish native plant material and to provide vegetative cover that prevents soil erosion. Appropriate landscaping will be selected based on the vegetation communities within the portion of the study area adjacent to the project. In areas supporting native (or disturbed native) vegetation communities, revegetation of temporarily impacted areas will be with appropriate native plant materials. Only non-invasive plant species will be included in the revegetation plans (species not listed on the California Invasive Plant Inventory prepared by the California Invasive Plant Council ([Cal-IPC] 2024). A qualified landscape architect and/or qualified biologist shall review landscape plant palettes prior to implementation to ensure that no invasive species are included. Any planting stock brought onto the project area shall be inspected to ensure it is free of pest species that could invade natural areas, including but not limited to, Argentine ants (*Linepithema humile*) and South American fire ants (*Solenopsis invicta*). Inspections of planting stock for habitat revegetation shall be by a qualified biologist. Any planting stock found to be infested with such pests shall be quarantined, treated, or disposed of according to best management practices (BMPs) by qualified personnel, in a manner that precludes invasions into natural habitats. Temporary irrigation via irrigation lines and appurtenances (or alternate method approved by the City and qualified biologist) shall be provided by the contractor for a period sufficient to establish plant material and to provide vegetative cover that prevents soil erosion. Irrigation shall be performed in a manner that avoids runoff, seepage, and overspray



onto adjacent properties, non-irrigated areas, walls, roadways, waterways, or structures.

### **TCSP Area and AEN Only (No Housing Element Sites)**

**BIO-6** Applications for future development outside of sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B, where the City has determined a potential for impacts to sensitive biological resources, shall be required to comply with the following mitigation measure:

- a. Prior to issuance of any construction permit or any earth-moving activities, a site specific general biological resources survey shall be conducted to identify the presence of any sensitive biological resources, including any sensitive plant or wildlife species. A biological resources report shall be submitted to the City to document the results of the biological resources survey. The report shall include (1) the methods used to determine the presence of sensitive biological resources; (2) vegetation mapping of all vegetation communities and/or land cover types; (3) the locations of any sensitive plant or wildlife species; (4) an evaluation of the potential for occurrence of any listed, rare, and narrow endemic species; and (5) an evaluation of the significance of any potential direct or indirect impacts from the proposed project. If suitable habitat for sensitive species is identified based on the general biological survey, then focused presence/absence surveys shall be conducted in accordance with applicable resource agency survey protocols and incorporated into the biological resources report. If potentially significant impacts to sensitive vegetation communities and biological resources are identified, project-level grading and site plans shall incorporate project design features to avoid or minimize direct impacts on sensitive biological resources to the extent feasible, and the report shall also recommend appropriate mitigation to reduce the impacts to below a level of significance, where feasible. Mitigation measures shall be consistent with the standards contained in the Santee Subarea Plan, and projects shall be required to obtain all necessary permits to ensure compliance with applicable federal, state, and local regulations, such as the federal and state Endangered Species Acts. Mitigation ratios for sensitive vegetation community impacts are:

- Wetland habitats – 3:1 ratio
- Diegan coastal sage scrub – 2:1 ratio
- Non-native grassland – 0.5:1 ratio

Mitigation ratios shall be doubled for sensitive vegetation community impacts within the Preserve and Open Space System designated by the Santee Subarea Plan, once adopted.

- b. Environmentally Sensitive Areas shall be identified in the biological resources report and avoided to the maximum extent practicable. In areas near or adjacent to Environmentally Sensitive Areas (i.e., natural habitats and vegetation, wetlands, wildlife areas, wildlife corridors), the biological resources report will consider the following measures:

*Avoidance of Environmentally Sensitive Areas.* In areas near or adjacent to Environmentally Sensitive Areas, construction limits shall be clearly demarcated using highly visible barriers (such as silt fencing), which shall be installed under the supervision of a qualified biologist prior to the commencement of work. Construction personnel shall strictly limit their activities, vehicles, equipment, and construction materials to the project footprint, including designated staging areas, and routes of travel. The construction areas shall be limited to the minimal area necessary to complete the proposed project. The fencing shall remain in place until the completion of all construction activities and shall be promptly removed when construction is complete.

*Biological Monitoring.* A qualified biological monitor shall conduct construction monitoring of all work conducted within/adjacent to environmentally sensitive areas during all vegetation removal and ground-disturbing activities such as staging and grading, for the duration of the proposed project to ensure that practicable measures are being employed to avoid incidental disturbance of habitat outside the project footprints and to survey for sensitive wildlife species. When vegetation removal and ground-disturbing activities are not occurring, as needed monitoring at the project areas shall occur.

*Worker Environmental Awareness Program.* In areas near or adjacent to Environmentally Sensitive Areas, a qualified biologist shall conduct a WEAP training session for project and construction personnel prior to the commencement of work. The training shall include a description of the species of concern and their habitats, the general provisions of the Endangered Species Acts (FESA and CESA), the penalties associated with violating the provisions of the acts, the general measures that are being implemented to conserve the species of concern as they relate to the project, and the access routes to and project area boundaries.

*Best Management Practices.* During future project construction activities, the following BMPs shall be implemented:

- All equipment maintenance, staging, and dispensing of fuel, oil, or any other such activities shall occur in developed or designated non-sensitive upland habitat areas. The designated upland areas shall be located to prevent runoff from any spills from entering Waters of the US.
- A construction Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and a soil erosion and sedimentation plan shall be developed (where requirements are met) to minimize erosion and identify specific pollution prevention measures that shall eliminate or control potential point and nonpoint pollution sources onsite during and following the project construction phase. The SWPPP shall identify specific BMPs during project construction to prevent any water quality standard exceedances. In addition, the SWPPP shall contain provisions for changes to the plan such as alternative mechanisms, if necessary, during project design and/or construction to achieve the stated goals and performance standards.

- Trash shall be stored in closed containers so that it is not readily accessible to scavengers and shall be removed from the construction site on a daily basis.
- Water quality shall be visually monitored by the biological monitor to ensure that no substantial increases in turbidity occur during construction. All relevant natural resource permits and authorizations shall be obtained from appropriate agencies (i.e., USACE, RWQCB, and CDFW) prior to the initiation of construction activities. Permit conditions contained within the permits and authorizations shall be employed throughout the duration of the project.
- Hydrologic connectivity shall be maintained within drainages during the duration of construction. Brush, debris material, mud, silt, or other pollutants from construction activities shall not be placed within drainages and shall not be allowed to enter a flowing stream.
- Dust control measures shall be implemented by the contractor to reduce excessive dust emissions. Dust control measures shall be carried out at least two times per day on all construction days, or more during windy or dry periods, and may include wetting work areas, the use of soil binders on dirt roads, and wetting or covering stockpiles.
- No pets shall be allowed in, or adjacent to, the project areas.
- Rodenticides, herbicides, insecticides, or other chemicals that could potentially harm wildlife or native plants shall not be used near or within Environmentally Sensitive Areas within or near the roadway segments.
- Construction equipment shall be cleaned of mud or other debris that may contain invasive plants and/or seeds and inspected to reduce the potential of spreading noxious weeds before mobilizing to the site and before leaving the site during construction.
- The cleaning of equipment will occur at least 300 feet from Environmentally Sensitive Area fencing.
- *Use of Native Plants.* All project-related planting and landscaping shall not use plants listed on California Invasive Plant Council. Locally native plants shall be used near open space and native areas to the greatest extent feasible.

### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

- BIO-7** Grubbing or clearing of vegetation within the TCSP area, AEN, or Housing Element sites during the general avian breeding season (February 1 to September 15), least Bell's vireo breeding season (March 15 to September 15), coastal California gnatcatcher breeding season (March 1 to August 15), or raptor breeding season (January 15 to July 15) shall be avoided to the extent feasible. If grubbing, clearing, or grading would occur during the breeding season, a pre-construction survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist no more than three days prior to the commencement

of activities to determine if active bird nests are present in the affected areas. If there are no nesting birds (includes nest building or other breeding/nesting behavior) within 300 feet of the survey area (500 feet for raptors), clearing, grubbing, and grading shall be allowed to proceed in that area. Furthermore, if clearing, grubbing, or grading activities are to resume in an area where they have not occurred for a period of seven or more days during the breeding season, an updated survey for avian nesting will be conducted by a qualified biologist within three days prior to the commencement of clearing, grubbing, or grading activities in that area. If active nests or nesting birds are observed within 300 feet of the survey area (500 feet for raptors), the biologist shall flag a buffer around the active nests, and clearing, grubbing, or grading activities shall not occur within 300 feet of active nests (500 feet for raptors) until nesting behavior has ceased, nests have failed, or young have fledged as determined by a qualified biologist. If the qualified biologist determines that the species will not be impacted with a reduced buffer (i.e., less than 300 feet for general avian species and 500 feet for raptors), potentially with the implementation of avoidance measures to reduce noise, as necessary, and/or the qualified biologist monitors the active nest during clearing, grubbing, or grading to ensure no impacts to the species occur, these activities may occur outside the reduced buffer during the breeding season, as long as the species is not impacted.

**BIO-8** If heavy equipment would be in operation during construction within the TCSP area, AEN, or Housing Element sites during the breeding season for least Bell's vireo (March 15 to September 15), coastal California gnatcatcher (March 1 to August 15), or raptors (January 15 to July 15), pre-construction survey(s) shall be conducted by a qualified biologist, as appropriate, to determine whether these species occur within the areas potentially impacted by noise. If pre-construction surveys determine that active nests belonging to these species are absent from the potential noise impact area (within 300 feet for vireo or gnatcatcher, 500 feet for raptors, or as otherwise determined by a qualified biologist), clearing, grubbing, and grading shall be allowed to proceed. If pre-construction surveys determine the presence of active nests belonging to these species, then clearing, grubbing, and grading within 300 feet of the nest location(s) for vireo or gnatcatcher and 500 feet for raptors, shall: (1) be postponed until a permitted biologist determines the nest is no longer active; (2) be allowed to continue if nest monitoring by a qualified biologist determines that noise levels are not adversely affecting the nesting birds, or (3) not occur until a temporary noise barrier or berm is constructed at the edge of the clearing, grubbing, or grading footprint and/or around the piece of equipment to ensure that noise levels are reduced to below 60 dBA hourly average or to the maximum hourly average ambient noise level if it already exceeds 60 dBA at the nest location. Decibel output for Item (3) will be confirmed by a qualified noise specialist and intermittent monitoring by a qualified biologist will be required to ensure that conditions have not changed.

**BIO-9** If periodic noise (such as events) or continuous noise (such as mechanical equipment) generated by standard operational operation of land uses activities within the TCSP, AEN, or Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B will produce noise levels that will adversely affect nesting birds during the breeding season for least Bell's vireo (March 15 to September 15), coastal California gnatcatcher (March 1 to August 15), or raptors (January 15 to July 15), activities nearby to suitable special-status species habitat on preserved land will be designed and implemented to minimize noise impacts to preserves and wildlife. Operational activities shall ~~(4)~~ be allowed to continue if a ~~temporary~~ noise barrier or berm is constructed at the edge of the suitable special-

~~status species habitat to ensure that noise levels are reduced to below 60 A-weighted decibels (dBA) hourly average or the maximum hourly average ambient noise level measured existing ambient if it already exceeds 60 dBA at the edge of suitable habitat during the breeding season, or (2) operational activities that would be above 60 dBA Leq hourly at the edge of suitable habitat shall be allowed to continue with incorporation of noise reduction strategies in equipment, siting and site design, features, timing, noise barriers, landscaping, and buffer separation.~~

- BIO-10** A focused pre-construction survey for special status animal species will be completed by a qualified biologist prior to clearing and grubbing within the TCSP area, AEN, or sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B. Aside from birds, which are covered by other mitigation measures, this survey will focus on the special status animal species identified as having high potential to occur on-site: western spadefoot toad, San Diegan legless lizard, California glossy snake, Belding's orange-throated whiptail, San Diegan tiger whiptail, red diamond rattlesnake, Blainville's horned lizard, and two-striped garter snake. Occupied special status species habitat observed in the proposed impact area will be flagged and avoided during construction until the qualified biologist determines that special status species are no longer using the habitat.

#### 4.4.5.3 Significance After Mitigation

##### TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites

Implementation of mitigation measures BIO-1 through BIO-10 would reduce impacts to less than significant in the TCSP, AEN, and Housing Element sites.

#### 4.4.6 Issue 2: Sensitive Vegetation Communities

*Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on any sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by CDFW or USFWS?*

##### 4.4.6.1 Impact Analysis

###### TCSP Area

The project would result in impacts to jurisdictional wetlands and riparian habitats as defined by the USACE, RWQCB, and CDFW and shown in Figure 4.4-2. These impacts would be considered potentially significant. These impacts would be reduced to a less than significant level through the implementation of mitigation measure BIO-11, which requires the project to obtain wetland permits through the appropriate wetland permitting agencies and would require the in-kind creation of new wetland of the same type lost, at a ratio determined by the applicable regulatory agencies that would prevent any net loss of wetland functions and values.

Indirect impacts to adjacent jurisdictional waters and wetlands could occur through inadvertent intrusion into these adjacent areas by construction vehicles, equipment, and personnel. These impacts would be mitigated through the implementation of mitigation measure BIO-6.

The proposed project, if fully built out, would result in impacts to Diegan coastal sage scrub (including disturbed), Diegan coastal sage scrub: Baccharis-dominated, and non-native grassland, which are considered sensitive natural communities and require mitigation. The project would also result in impacts to eucalyptus woodland, artificial detention basin, disturbed habitat,

and developed land, which are not considered sensitive natural communities. Impacts to non-sensitive vegetation communities are not considered significant and, therefore, do not require mitigation.

Impacts to up to 8.7 acres of Diegan coastal sage scrub (disturbed), 5.4 acres of Diegan coastal sage scrub: Baccharis-dominated (including disturbed), and 4.2 acres of non-native grassland, totaling 18.3 acres) would be reduced to less than significant through implementation of mitigation measure BIO-6. Additionally, mitigation measure BIO-5 would ensure that temporary impacts to vegetation communities will be revegetated to native habitats following completion of construction activities.

## **AEN**

The AEN portion of the project would result in impacts to jurisdictional wetlands and riparian habitats as defined by the USACE, RWQCB, and CDFW. These impacts would be considered potentially significant. These impacts would be reduced to a less than significant level through the implementation of mitigation measure BIO-11, which requires the project to obtain wetland permits through the appropriate wetland permitting agencies and would require the in-kind creation of new wetland of the same type lost, at a ratio determined by the applicable regulatory agencies that would prevent any net loss of wetland functions and values.

Indirect impacts to adjacent jurisdictional waters and wetlands could occur through inadvertent intrusion into these adjacent areas by construction vehicles, equipment, and personnel. These impacts would be mitigated through the implementation of mitigation measure BIO-6.

The AEN portion of the proposed project would result in impacts to Diegan coastal sage scrub (including disturbed) and Diegan coastal sage scrub: Baccharis-dominated, which are considered sensitive natural communities and require mitigation. The project would also result in impacts to eucalyptus woodland, artificial detention basin, disturbed habitat, and developed land, which are not considered sensitive natural communities. Impacts to non-sensitive vegetation communities are not considered significant and, therefore, do not require mitigation.

Impacts to 8.7 acres Diegan coastal sage scrub (disturbed) and 5.4 acres Diegan coastal sage scrub: Baccharis-dominated (including disturbed; totaling 14.1 acres) would be reduced to less than significant through implementation of mitigation measure BIO-6. Mitigation measure BIO-5 would ensure that temporary impacts to vegetation communities will be revegetated to native habitats following completion of construction activities.

## **Site 16A**

Development of Site 16A would not result in impacts to sensitive upland natural communities requiring mitigation. Site 16A would result in impacts to artificial detention basin, disturbed habitat, and developed land, which are not considered sensitive natural communities. Impacts to southern willow scrub are discussed below under CDFW jurisdiction.

### Waters of the U.S.

According to the Biological Resources Technical Report prepared for the project (Appendix C), development of Site 16A would impact a total of 0.37 acre of wetland and non-wetland waters of the U.S. (Table 4.4-4, *Impacts to Jurisdictional Waters [River Parkways Project]*), comprising 0.04 acre of wetland waters of the U.S. and 0.32 acre of non-wetland waters of the U.S. Mitigation



would require re-aligning and widening the Las Colinas Channel as mitigation for the Riverview Parkway Project, comprising creation of 0.74 acre waters of the U.S. and 1.24 acres riparian habitat. Additionally, 0.08 acre of existing waters of the U.S. that would be temporarily affected by recontouring (will remain within the widened Las Colinas Channel) will also be revegetated and maintained. These impacts would be mitigated through the implementation of mitigation measure BIO-12. Implementation of mitigation measures BIO-3 and BIO-4 would ensure that additional impacts on sensitive resources that occur adjacent to project work limits are avoided.

**Table 4.4-4  
IMPACTS TO JURISDICTIONAL WATERS (RIVER PARKWAYS PROJECT)<sup>1</sup>**

Habitat	USACE	RWQCB	CDFW
<b>Wetlands/Riparian</b>			
Wetland waters of the U.S./State	0.04	0.04	--
Southern willow scrub	--	--	1.18
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>0.04</b>	<b>0.04</b>	<b>1.18</b>
<b>Non-wetland Waters</b>			
Non-wetland waters of the U.S./State	0.32	0.32	--
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>0.32</b>	<b>0.32</b>	<b>--</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.37</b>	<b>0.37</b>	<b>1.18</b>

<sup>1</sup> Impacts are presented in acre(s) rounded to the nearest 0.01. Totals calculated by adding the raw acreage and then rounding to the nearest 0.01.

#### California Department of Fish and Wildlife Jurisdiction

Development of Site 16A would impact a total of 1.18 acres of CDFW jurisdictional streambed and riparian areas (Table 4.4-4). A total of 0.19 acre of CDFW jurisdictional habitat, comprising southern willow scrub, occurs within Site 16A. By re-aligning and widening the Las Colinas Channel, mitigation will comprise restoration of 1.24 acres riparian habitat. These impacts would be mitigated through the implementation of mitigation measure BIO-12. Implementation of mitigation measures BIO-3 and BIO-4 would ensure that additional impacts on sensitive resources that occur adjacent to project work limits are avoided.

#### **Sites 16B, 20A, and 20B**

The proposed sites 16B, 20A, and 20B would not result in impacts to sensitive natural communities requiring mitigation. Sites 16B, 20A, and 20B would result in impacts to disturbed habitat and developed land, which are not considered sensitive natural communities. Impacts to non-sensitive vegetation communities are not considered significant and, therefore, do not require mitigation. Implementation of mitigation measures BIO-3 and BIO-4 would ensure that additional impacts on sensitive resources that occur adjacent to project work limits are avoided. Additionally, mitigation measure BIO-5 would ensure that temporary impacts to vegetation communities will be revegetated to native habitats following completion of construction activities.

#### 4.4.6.2 Mitigation Measures

##### TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites

**BIO-11** Applications where the City has determined a potential for impacts to jurisdictional waters and wetlands shall be required to comply with the following permitting and mitigation framework.

Before the issuance of any construction permit or any earth-moving activities, a site specific general biological resources survey (BIO-6) shall be conducted to identify the presence of any sensitive biological resources, including any wetlands. Should any potential jurisdictional waters or wetlands be identified on-site during the general biological resources survey, then a jurisdictional wetlands delineation shall be conducted following the methods outlined in the USACE's 1987 *Wetlands Delineation Manual* and the *Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Delineation Manual for the Arid West Region* or most current USACE guidance. The limits of any riparian habitats on-site under the sole jurisdiction of CDFW shall also be delineated, as well as any special aquatic sites that may not meet federal jurisdictional criteria but are regulated by the RWQCB.

Avoidance measures based on project-level grading and site plans shall be incorporated into the project design to minimize direct impacts to jurisdictional waters consistent with federal, state, and City guidelines. Unavoidable impacts to wetlands shall be minimized to the maximum extent practicable and would be subject to alternatives and mitigation analyses consistent with the USACE's and RWQCB's permit processes. Unavoidable impacts would require the project to submit permit applications to the USACE under CWA Section 404, the RWQCB under CWA Section 401 and/or the State Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, and/or the CDFW under CFG Code Sections 1600 *et seq.*, depending on the jurisdictional resources impacted. The permits issued for the project will set the mitigation requirements, which typically require the in-kind creation of new wetland of the same type lost, at a ratio determined by the applicable regulatory agencies that would prevent any net loss of wetland functions and values. (See mitigation measure BIO-12 for the proposed mitigation package for the Riverview Parkway Project.) Wetland creation on-site or within the same wetland system should be given preference over replacement off-site or within a different system. The City shall also control use and development in surrounding areas of influence to wetlands with the application of buffer zones as may be required for wetlands pursuant to federal and/or state permits in accordance to the Land Use Adjacency Guidelines, conservation measures and wetland protection standards in the Draft Subarea Plan Chapter 5. Use and development within buffer areas shall be limited to minor passive recreational uses, such as trails, with fencing, desiltation, or erosion control facilities, or other improvements deemed necessary to protect the habitat, to be located in the upper (upland) half of the buffer when feasible. All wetlands and buffers shall be permanently conserved or protected through the application of an open space easement or other suitable device.

##### Housing Element Site 16A Only

**BIO-12** Site 16A would result in impacts to 0.37 acre of wetland and non-wetland waters of the U.S., 0.37 acre of wetland and non-wetland waters of the State, and 1.18 acres CDFW Jurisdictional Habitat. By re-aligning and widening the Las Colinas Channel,

mitigation will comprise creation of 0.74 acre waters of the U.S., 0.74 acre waters of the State, and 1.24 acres riparian habitat. Additionally, 0.08 acre of existing waters of the U.S./State that would be temporarily affected by recontouring (will remain within the widened Las Colinas Channel) will also be revegetated and maintained.

#### 4.4.6.3 Significance After Mitigation

##### TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites

The proposed project would result in significant impacts to sensitive natural communities; however, with the implementation of mitigation measures BIO-3, BIO-4, BIO-5, BIO-6, BIO-11, and BIO-12 (Site 16A only), impacts on sensitive natural communities would be reduced to a less than significant level.

#### 4.4.7 Issue 3: Wetlands

*Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?*

##### 4.4.7.1 Impact Analysis

##### TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Site 16A

As previously stated in Section 4.4.6.1, implementation of Site 16A would result in a total of 0.37 acre of wetland and non-wetland waters of the U.S. Impacts to wetland and non-wetland waters of the U.S. would be considered potentially significant. Development of the Riverview Parkway Property, which is inclusive of Site 16A and associated mitigation within the Las Colinas Channel, would impact a total of 1.18 acres of CDFW jurisdictional streambed and riparian areas. A total of 0.19 acre of CDFW jurisdictional habitat, comprising southern willow scrub, occurs within Site 16A. By re-aligning and widening the Las Colinas Channel as mitigation for the Riverview Parkway Project, the mitigation will comprise the restoration of 1.24 acres of riparian habitat. These impacts would be mitigated through the implementation of mitigation measure **BIO-12**. Implementation of mitigation measures **BIO-3** and **BIO-4** would ensure that additional impacts on sensitive resources that occur adjacent to project work limits are avoided.

Impacts to USACE wetland and non-wetland waters, which are anticipated in Site 16A and in other portions of the AEN and TCSP area as determined through future site-specific studies, would require the implementation of mitigation measures BIO-6, BIO-11, and BIO-12 above. These measures require the project to obtain wetland permits through the appropriate wetland permitting agencies and would require the in-kind creation of new wetland of the same type lost, at a ratio determined by the applicable regulatory agencies that would prevent any net loss of wetland functions and values.

Potential indirect impacts on jurisdictional resources would be prevented during construction through successful implementation of standard BMPs as part of the project's SWPPP. Implementation of a SWPPP and associated BMPs are a regulatory requirement for the proposed project. Specific BMPs may include but would not necessarily be limited to maintaining the project work areas free of trash and debris; employing appropriate standard spill prevention practices and clean-up materials; installing and maintaining sediment and erosion control measures; maintaining effective control of fugitive dust; and properly storing, handling, and disposing of

toxins and pollutants, including waste materials. Mitigation measures BIO-3 and BIO-4 identified in Section 4.4.5 would further ensure that no impacts on adjacent resources occur.

#### **Housing Element Sites 16B, 20A, and 20B**

No impact to wetlands is anticipated to occur in Housing Element sites 16B, 20A, and 20B. The Housing Element sites 16B, 20A, and 20B would result in impacts to disturbed habitat and developed land, which are not considered sensitive natural communities. Impacts to non-sensitive vegetation communities are not considered significant and, therefore, do not require mitigation.

#### **4.4.7.2 Mitigation Measures**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Implementation of required BMPs in combination with mitigation measures BIO-3 and BIO-4 identified in Section 4.4.5 would ensure that construction activities are contained within the proposed work limits and that potentially significant direct and indirect impacts on jurisdictional resources are avoided. Implementation of mitigation measures BIO-6, BIO-11, and BIO-12 (Site 16A only) would ensure that the project does not have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands.

#### **4.4.7.3 Significance After Mitigation**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

The proposed project would result in significant impacts to jurisdictional resources; however, with the implementation of mitigation measures BIO-3, BIO-4, BIO-6, BIO-11, and BIO-12 (Site 16A only) impacts on federally protected wetlands would be reduced to less than significant.

#### **4.4.8 Issue 4: Wildlife Corridors**

*Would the project interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?*

#### **4.4.8.1 Impact Analysis**

##### **TCSP Area and AEN**

The TCSP and AEN contain areas associated with the San Diego River and its tributaries. While the City of Santee Draft Subarea Plan identifies the San Diego River as a regionally significant wildlife movement corridor, the City of Santee Draft Subarea Plan shows the TCSP area and AEN development areas as being located outside of the Preserve. Retention of the river corridor as Open Space consistent with the TCSP and the implementation of Objective Design Standards related to Bird Friendly Design would ensure no impact to wildlife corridors would occur associated with the TCSP or AEN.

##### **Housing Element Sites**

Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B are primarily surrounded by developed land. Although Housing Element sites 16A and 16B are bounded, in part, by undeveloped land, they

do not meet the criteria for a wildlife movement corridor as they are restricted by roads and other development. Additionally, they are not identified as a wildlife movement corridor in the City of Santee Draft Subarea Plan. No impact to wildlife corridors would occur within the Housing Element sites.

#### **4.4.8.2 Mitigation Measures**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

No mitigation is required.

#### **4.4.8.3 Significance After Mitigation**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

No impact would occur.

#### **4.4.9 Issue 5: Habitat Conservation Planning**

*Would the project conflict with the provisions of an adopted HCP, NCCP, or other approved local, regional, or state HCP?*

##### **4.4.9.1 Impact Analysis**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

As noted above, the project area is located within the planning area for the City of Santee Draft Subarea Plan, which has not been adopted. Therefore, the project, as proposed, would not conflict with an adopted HCP, NCCP, or any other approved local, regional, or state HCP. However, in anticipation of the future adoption of the Santee Draft Subarea Plan within the lifetime of future development activities covered by the proposed TCSP, implementation of BIO-6 and BIO-11 is recommended to ensure future development within the project area is consistent with the City of Santee Draft Subarea Plan by requiring site-specific surveys to be conducted for future project-level review to verify the presence of sensitive biological resources occurring on individual sites; determine the extent of any potential impacts; and provide mitigation to reduce the impacts to below a level of significance.

Further, all future projects (discretionary projects and ministerial projects as discussed in SMC Chapter 13.11) would be required to address sensitive species and vegetation communities identified in the City of Santee Draft Subarea Plan, once adopted, and therefore impacts associated with conflicts with an adopted HCP, NCCP, or any other approved local, regional, or state HCP would be less than significant.

Additionally, SMC Code Chapter 8.06 regulates the planting, maintenance, and removal of public trees and Chapter 11.38 regulates the obstruction or interference of any natural watercourse or channel. Chapters 13.08 and 13.16 also require development review procedures and standards pertaining to biological resources. Future development, discretionary or ministerial, would be subject to the City's adopted regulations pertaining to trees or natural water courses. All future projects and residents within the project area would be required to adhere to these policies and regulations; therefore, impacts in the TCSP, AEN, and Housing Element sites would be less than significant.

#### **4.4.9.2 Mitigation Measures**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Compliance with existing regulations and implementation of mitigation measures BIO-6 and BIO-11 would ensure future projects remain consistent with the appropriate habitat conservation plans.

#### **4.4.9.3 Significance After Mitigation**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

With implementation of MM-BIO-6 and MM-BIO-11, impacts to habitat conservation plans associated with future development should the Santee Draft Subarea Plan be adopted, would be less than significant.

#### **4.4.10 Issue 6: Policies and Ordinances Protecting Biological Resources**

*Would the project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?*

##### **4.4.10.1 Impact Analysis**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

The project does not propose any activities that would conflict with the San Diego Final MSCP Plan, City of Santee Draft Subarea Plan, or local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources. Future development would be required to implement the mitigation framework, including BIO-5, BIO-6, BIO-7, BIO-8, BIO-11, and BIO-12 as applicable to ensure impacts associated with biological resources would be reduced to a level that is less than significant.

##### **4.4.10.2 Mitigation Measures**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Compliance with existing regulations and implementation of mitigation measures BIO-5, BIO-6, BIO-7, BIO-8, BIO-11, and BIO-12 would ensure project consistency with the San Diego Final MSCP Plan and the City of Santee Draft Subarea Plan.

##### **4.4.10.3 Significance After Mitigation**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

The project could result in potential significant impacts to sensitive biological resources addressed under the MSCP; however, compliance with existing regulations and implementation of measures BIO-6, BIO-7, BIO-11, and BIO-12 would help ensure that impacts are avoided and the project activities are not in conflict with the San Diego Final MSCP Plan or the City of Santee Subarea Plan, once adopted.



## **4.5 Cultural Resources**

The following section analyzes the potential environmental impacts that may occur to cultural resources as a result of implementation of the proposed project.

### **4.5.1 Existing Conditions**

The following information is from the cultural resources report prepared for the proposed project by HELIX Environmental Planning (HELIX) and included as Appendix D of this EIR.

#### **4.5.1.1 Cultural Setting**

##### **Prehistoric Period**

The following culture history outlines and describes the known prehistoric background for the San Diego area with references to cultural traditions of potential relevance to prehistoric resources in the project area and vicinity. The approximately 10,000 years of documented prehistory of the San Diego region has often been divided into three periods: Early Prehistoric Period (San Dieguito Tradition/complex), Archaic Period (Milling Stone Horizon, Encinitas Tradition, La Jolla, and Pauma complexes), and Late Prehistoric Period (Cuyamaca and San Luis Rey complexes).

##### **Early Prehistoric Period**

The Early Prehistoric Period represents the time period of the first known inhabitants in California. In some areas of California, it is referred to as the Paleo-Indian period and is associated with the Big-Game-Hunting activities of the peoples of the last Ice Age occurring during the Terminal Pleistocene (between 15,000 and 11,000 years ago) and the Early Holocene, beginning circa 10,000 years ago. In the western United States, most evidence for the Paleo-Indian or Big-Game-Hunting peoples, derives from finds of large, fluted spear and projectile points (Fluted-Point Tradition) in places such as Clovis and Folsom in the Great Basin and the Desert Southwest. In California, most evidence for the Fluted-Point Tradition derives principally from areas along the margins of the Great Basin and the Desert Southwest such as the Sierras, the southern Central Valley, and the deserts of southeastern California, with several, mostly isolated, occurrences of fluted spear points encountered on or near the coast of California. Three of these isolated fluted points or point fragments have occurred in San Diego County, all occurring in the mountainous or eastern areas of the county. One was found in relative proximity to the east of the project area in the Cuyamaca Pass area, another approximately 7.5 miles northeast of Warner Springs, and the other near Ocotillo Wells in the east county area. Several others have occurred in proximity to the county, including one along the coast in adjacent Orange County to the northwest and two in Baja California to the south.

Results from recent archaeological investigations on the northern Channel Islands west of Santa Barbara have revealed that humans that were not Big Game hunters (e.g., no fluted points have been found on the islands, to date) were occupying the islands as early as the terminal Pleistocene, roughly 12,000 years ago. These results, instead, document a fully maritime-adapted population on the islands at this early date that was exploiting shellfish and using seaworthy boats to navigate the channel waters. Fishing has also been documented in the islands as early as 10,000 years ago by the presence of bone-gorge fishhooks. Such early dates, however, for a similar cultural pattern are still lacking for the adjacent southern California mainland. This absence on the mainland may be due to the rise in sea level brought about by post-Pleistocene deglaciation that possibly inundated sites located along this lower elevation, late Pleistocene/early Holocene

coastline. At this time in San Diego County, the shoreline stood two to six kilometers farther seaward than today's coast.

Despite the occurrence of isolated fluted points in the San Diego area and vicinity, the earliest archaeological site documented to be 10,000 years old belongs to the San Dieguito Tradition. The San Dieguito Tradition, with an artifact assemblage distinct from that of the Fluted Point Tradition, has been documented mostly in the coastal and near coastal areas in San Diego County, as well as in the southeastern California deserts, but with some evidence for it recently proposed at a site to the east in the mountains of San Diego County and at a site in the coastal area to the north in Los Angeles County. The content of the earliest component of the C.W. Harris Site (CA-SDI-149), located along the San Dieguito River and approximately 15 miles to the northwest of the project area, formed the basis upon which Warren and others identified the "San Dieguito complex," and which Warren later reclassified as the San Dieguito Tradition. This tradition is characterized by an artifact inventory consisting almost entirely of flaked stone biface and scraping tools, but lacking the fluted points associated with the Fluted Point Tradition. Diagnostic artifact types and categories associated with the San Dieguito Tradition include elongated bifacial knives; scraping tools; crescentics; leaf-shaped projectile points; and in the desert, Silver Lake and Lake Mojave projectile points.

The subsistence system or emphasis of the San Dieguito Tradition, while not yet entirely agreed upon, is suggested by Warren as having an orientation toward a hunting rather than a gathering economy. This characterization is based on an artifact assemblage of primarily hunting associated tools, in contrast to the more gathering-oriented complexes that were to follow in the Archaic Period. Other researchers have interpreted the San Dieguito subsistence system to be possibly ancestral to, or a developmental stage for, the predominantly gathering-oriented "La Jolla/Pauma complex" of the subsequent Archaic Period. Based on uncalibrated radiocarbon dates, Warren originally indicated the San Dieguito Tradition to have begun sometime circa 9000 years before present (BP) and to have ended sometime between 8500 and 7500 BP. Recent calibrations of these dates, however, have indicated that some are significantly earlier, i.e., circa 10,000 BP.

### **Archaic Period**

In the southern coastal region, the subsequent Archaic Period dates from circa 8600 BP to circa 1300 BP. A large number of archaeological site assemblages dating to this period have been identified at a range of coastal and near coastal inland sites. This appears to indicate that a relatively stable, sedentary hunting and gathering complex, possibly associated with one people, was present in the coastal and immediately inland areas of what is now San Diego County for more than 7,000 years. These assemblages, designated as the La Jolla/Pauma complexes, are considered part of Warren's "Encinitas Tradition" and Wallace's "Milling Stone Horizon." In general, the content of these site assemblages includes manos and metates; shell middens; terrestrial and marine mammal remains; burials; rock features; bone tools; doughnut stones; discoidals; stone balls; plummets; biface points/knives; beads made of stone, bone, or shell; and cobble-based tools at coastal sites and increased hunting equipment and quarry-based tools at inland sites. As defined by True, the "Pauma complex" aspect of this culture is associated with sites located in inland areas that lack shellfish remains but are otherwise similar in content to the La Jolla complex. The Pauma complex may, therefore, simply represent a non-coastal expression of the La Jolla complex. During the latter half of the Archaic Period, artifacts such as dart points, mortars, and pestles, which are essentially absent during the Early Archaic Period, begin to occur in site assemblages dating after circa 5500 BP. Also noted by Warren was an increase in the presence of larger mammal remains in La Jolla complex faunal assemblages during the latter part of the Archaic Period. This new, and subsequently increasing, use of these resources represents

a significant shift in the Encinitas/La Jolla/Pauma complex subsistence system in the southern coastal region.

Sites dating to the Archaic Period are more numerous along the coast. Inland archaeological sites in the San Diego County area, attributable to the Early Milling Stone Horizon, Encinitas Tradition, and/or the La Jolla/Pauma complex are known. However, similar to the San Dieguito complex, most of the substantiating archaeological evidence for the Encinitas Tradition/La Jolla/Pauma complex (Milling Stone Horizon) in present-day San Diego County is derived from sites in near-coastal valleys, estuaries, and/or embayments that are present along the San Diego coast south of the San Luis Rey River. The location of the project area, approximately 10 to 15 miles from the coast, places it within the rising elevation, near coastal, inland foothill area where sites that can be radiometrically dated to the Archaic Period, and that contain La Jolla or Pauma complex assemblages, are less common.

While not plentiful, sites in inland foothill circumstances with evidence for exclusively Archaic Period occupation are rare. Instead, many inland sites with evidence for Archaic Period occupation also have evidence for subsequent Late Prehistoric occupation as well. One such site located adjacent to the project area along the San Diego River in the Mission Gorge area, approximately 14 miles from the ocean, CA-SDI-9243, has produced radiocarbon dates of circa 5400 and 5700 BP and Elko-eared style projectile points. The artifact assemblage and the radiocarbon results from the site also appear to indicate that it was repeatedly occupied over a period of nearly 6,000 years, with the last occupation occurring during the Late Prehistoric Period. Sites in the foothills along Santa Maria Creek, near Ramona, have produced an Elko-eared style projectile point and a radiocarbon date of circa 2000 BP, documenting an occupation during the Late Archaic Period, but with subsequent occupation occurring during the Late Prehistoric Period. East of the project area, in the upper foothills, near Alpine, radiocarbon dates of 2550 BP and 2900 BP from two sites also suggested a Late Archaic Period occupation of these sites with subsequent occupation occurring during the Late Prehistoric Period. Similar to the long and repeated occupation at site CA-SDI-9243, the Scripps Poway Parkway site (CA-SDI-4608), located along the Beeler Canyon drainage, and situated approximately 15.3 miles from the ocean, has been radiocarbon dated to as early as 5800 BP. This site is described as associated with the “transitional periods between the San Dieguito and La Jolla complexes and the later Archaic/Late Prehistoric transition.” La Jolla complex artifacts recovered from the site included doughnut stones; discoidals; and Pinto, Elko, and large side-notched points. Also, in the Poway area, archaeological investigations along Poway/Peñasquitos Creek, have produced both radiocarbon dates and projectile points (Elko, Gypsum Cave, large side-notched, and Pinto points) that indicate there was an Archaic occupation with subsequent occupation occurring during the Late Prehistoric Period.

As noted above, it has been previously observed in San Diego County that during the Late Prehistoric Period, sites attributable to the San Luis Rey or Cuyamaca complexes occur in greater frequency in inland areas of the County. McDonald, for example, has stated that “most sites in the Laguna Mountains can be expected to date from late prehistoric or ethnohistoric occupation of the region, and Archaic Period remains, while not unknown, are relatively rare,” and Gallegos states that “for San Diego County, there is temporal patterning, as the earliest sites are situated in coastal valleys and around coastal lagoons. Late Prehistoric Period sites are also found in coastal settings but are more common along river valleys and interior locations.” It is also possible to observe, however, that while a number of examples of Late Prehistoric Period sites that appear to be attributable exclusively to the San Luis Rey or Cuyamaca complexes have been identified for the near-coastal inland foothill areas of the County through diagnostic artifacts and/or radiocarbon dating, a number of sites containing evidence for both Late Prehistoric Period and

Archaic Period occupations have also been documented. It appears possible, therefore, that, as more archaeological data accumulates, this geographic dichotomy of site locations between the Archaic and Late prehistoric periods within the County, may be found to not be completely valid.

### **Late Prehistoric Period**

While there has been considerable debate about whether San Dieguito and La Jolla patterns might represent the same people using different environments and subsistence techniques, or whether they are separate cultural patterns, abrupt shifts in subsistence practices and the use of new tool technologies are documented in the archaeological record to have occurred at the onset of the Late Prehistoric Period (ca. 1500 to 1300 BP). The Late Prehistoric Period (ca. 1500 BP to A.D. 1769) is also characterized by higher population densities and intensification of social, political, and technological systems. The technological changes observed include a shift from the use of atlatl and dart to the bow and arrow; subsistence shifts that include a reduction in shellfish gathering in some areas (possibly due to silting of the coastal lagoons); and the storage of crops, such as acorns. New traits such as the production of pottery and cremation of the dead, were also introduced during the Late Prehistoric Period.

Movements of people during the last 2,000 years can account for at least some of these changes. Yuman-speaking people had occupied the Gila/Colorado River drainages of what is now western Arizona by 2,000 years ago and then continued to migrate westward. An analysis by Moriarty of materials recovered from the Spindrift site in La Jolla indicated a preceramic Yuman phase. Based on this analysis and a limited number of radiocarbon samples, Moriarty concluded that Yuman speakers, lacking ceramic technology, penetrated and occupied what is now the San Diego coastline circa 2000 BP. Subsequently, approximately 1200 to 1300 BP, ceramic technology diffused into the coastal area from the eastern deserts. Although these Yuman speakers may have shared cultural traits with the people occupying what is now eastern San Diego County before 2000 BP, their influence is better documented throughout present-day San Diego County after 1300 BP with the introduction of small points, ceramics, Obsidian Butte obsidian, and the practice of cremation of the dead.

Based on early research by Meighan and True, two distinct archaeological complexes have been proposed for the Late Prehistoric Period in what is now San Diego County. The Cuyamaca complex is based on analysis by True of archaeological excavations within Cuyamaca Rancho State Park and of San Diego Museum of Man (now Museum of Us) collections. Based on the results of this analysis, True defined a Late Prehistoric Period complex for southern San Diego County that was distinct from Meighan's San Luis Rey complex in the northern county area. The presence or absence, or differences in the relative occurrence, of certain diagnostic artifacts in site assemblages, provide the principal distinctions between these archaeological complexes. Cuyamaca complex sites, for example, generally contain both Cottonwood Triangular-style points and Desert Side-notched arrow points, while Desert Side-notched points are quite rare or absent in San Luis Rey complex sites. Other examples include Obsidian Butte obsidian, which is far more common in Cuyamaca complex sites than in San Luis Rey complex sites, and ceramics; while ceramics are present during the Late Prehistoric Period throughout what is now San Diego County, they are more common in the southern or Cuyamaca complex portions of San Diego County where they occur earlier in time and appear to be somewhat more specialized in form. Both complexes have produced a variety of ceramic vessel types, along with straight and bow-shaped ceramic pipes and effigies. Interment of the dead at Cuyamaca complex sites is almost exclusively by cremation, often in special burial urns for interment, while archaeological evidence from San Luis Rey complex sites indicates both inhumation and cremation. Based on ethnographic data, including the areas defined for the Hokan-based Yuman-speaking peoples

(Diegueño/Kumeyaay) and the Takic-speaking peoples (Luiseño) at the time of contact, it is generally accepted that the Cuyamaca complex is associated with the Diegueño/Kumeyaay people and the San Luis Rey complex with the Luiseño people.

The project area lies within the area currently defined for the Cuyamaca complex. A Cuyamaca complex artifact assemblage commonly contains Tizon Brown Ware pottery, various cobble-based tools (e.g., scrapers, choppers, and hammerstones), arrow shaft straighteners, pendants, manos and metates, and mortars and pestles. The arrow point assemblage often includes Desert Side-notched and Cottonwood Triangular points with the Dos Cabezas Serrated type also sometimes occurring.

Compared to Archaic Period sites, Late Prehistoric Period sites attributable to the Cuyamaca or San Luis Rey complexes are less common in the near-coastal areas of the County. Gallegos states that “for San Diego County, there is temporal patterning, as the earliest sites are situated in coastal valleys and around coastal lagoons. Late Prehistoric Period sites are also found in coastal settings but are more common along river valleys and interior locations.” In contrast, numerous Late Prehistoric Period sites, attributable to the San Luis Rey or Cuyamaca complexes have been identified for the near-coastal inland foothill areas of the County through diagnostic artifacts and/or radiocarbon dating, including some sites containing evidence for both Late Prehistoric Period and Archaic Period occupations.

#### 4.5.1.2 Ethnohistory

The project area is located within the traditional territory of the Kumeyaay people, also known as Ipai, Tipai, or Diegueño (named for Mission San Diego de Alcalá). At the time of Spanish contact, Yuman-speaking Kumeyaay bands occupied southern San Diego and southwestern Imperial counties and northern Baja California. The Kumeyaay are a group of exogamous, patrilineal territorial bands that lived in semi-sedentary, politically autonomous villages or rancherías. Most rancherías were the seat of a clan, although it is thought that, aboriginally, some clans had more than one ranchería, and some rancherías contained more than one clan. Several sources indicate that large Kumeyaay villages or rancherías were located in river valleys and along the shoreline of coastal estuaries. They subsisted on a hunting and foraging economy, exploiting San Diego’s diverse ecology throughout the year; coastal bands exploited marine resources, while inland bands might move from the desert, ripe with agave and small game, to the acorn and pine-nut-rich mountains in the fall.

At the time of Spanish colonization in the late 1700s, several major Kumeyaay villages were located in proximity to the study area. The closest of these settlements was the village of *Micheagua*, located along the San Diego River east of Mission Gorge and possibly within and immediately adjacent to the project area. Archaeological site CA-SDI-5669, located partially within the project area and extending to the east of the Town Center Specific Plan (TCSP) area, has been recently suggested as the possible location of this village. Other nearby villages include the village of *Nipaguay*, located along the north side of the San Diego River approximately eight miles southwest of the project area, at the second and final location of the Mission San Diego de Alcalá; the village of *Cosoy*, located approximately 13 miles to the southwest of the project area along the San Diego River near the location of the San Diego Presidio and the first location of the Mission San Diego de Alcalá; and the village of *Jamo* (Rinconada), located approximately 14 miles to the west of the study area, where the Rose Canyon drainage enters into Mission Bay. These latter two village locations (*Cosoy* and *Jamo*) were documented as inhabited at the inception of Spanish colonization when they were visited by the Spanish during the initial Portolá expedition in 1769.

Some native speakers referred to river valleys as *oon-ya*, meaning trail or road, describing one of the main routes linking the interior of San Diego with the coast; the floodplain from the Mission San Diego de Alcalá to the ocean was *hajir* or *qajir*. Inland travel in prehistoric times along major drainages, such as the San Diego River and its tributaries, may reflect coastal Kumeyaay bands accessing inland resources such as outcrops of metavolcanic and quartz toolstone, and/or vegetal resources such as seeds from grassland and sage scrub habitats adjacent to the river and acorns from riparian and oak woodland habitats along the river as well as the bedrock outcrops needed to process these vegetal foodstuffs. It is also likely that the Kumeyaay people used the San Diego River valley and some of its larger tributaries as travel corridors from interior coastal plain areas to and from villages located along, and at the mouth of, the San Diego River, such as *Nipaguay*, *Micheagua*, *Cosoy*, and *Jamo*, as well as other villages along the coast to the north of the river and the study area, such as *Ystagua* and *Onap*.

### 4.5.1.3 Historical Background

#### Spanish Period

While Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo visited San Diego briefly in 1542, the beginning of the historic period in the San Diego area is generally given as 1769. In the mid-eighteenth century, Spain had escalated its involvement in California from exploration to colonization, and in that year, a Spanish expedition headed by Gaspar de Portolá and Junípero Serra established the Royal Presidio of San Diego. Portolá then traveled north from San Diego seeking suitable locations to establish military presidios and religious missions to extend the Spanish Empire into Alta California.

Initially, both a mission and a military presidio were located on Presidio Hill overlooking the San Diego River and the Kumeyaay village of Cosoy. A small pueblo, now known as Old Town San Diego, developed below the presidio. Five years later, Father Junipero Serra moved the Mission six miles upriver, near the Kumeyaay village of Nipaguay. The missions and presidios stood, literally and figuratively, as symbols of Spanish colonialism, importing new systems of labor, demographics, settlement, and economies to the area. Cattle ranching, animal husbandry, and agriculture were the main pursuits of the missions. Much of the inland San Diego area was used by the mission as grazing lands.

The Mission needed a dependable water source after droughts in 1801 and 1803—one was found six miles to the east of the Mission, in what is now the Mission Trails Regional Park. Using labor from the local Kumeyaay Indians, construction of the dam along the San Diego River began in 1809 and was completed by 1815. Following the secularization of the missions in 1833, the dam and flume were not maintained; flume tiles were taken to be used for homes of pioneers; and floods, particularly the flood of 1916, washed away most of the flume.

#### Mexican Period

Although Mexico gained its independence from Spain in 1821, Spanish patterns of culture and influence remained for a time. The missions continued to operate as they had in the past, and laws governing the distribution of land were also retained in the 1820s. Following the secularization of the missions in 1834, large ranchos were granted to prominent and well-connected individuals, ushering in the Rancho Era, with the society making a transition from one dominated by the church and the military to a more civilian population, with people living on ranchos or in pueblos. With the numerous new ranchos in private hands, cattle ranching expanded and prevailed over agricultural activities.



These ranches put new pressures on California's native populations, as grants were made for inland areas still occupied by the Kumeyaay, forcing them to acculturate or relocate farther into the backcountry. In rare instances, former mission neophytes were able to organize pueblos and attempt to live within the new confines of Mexican governance and culture. The most successful of these was the Pueblo of San Pasqual, located inland along the San Dieguito River Valley, founded by Kumeyaay who were no longer able to live at the Mission San Diego de Alcalá.

The project area is located within the El Cajon Rancho. In 1845, most of the neighboring El Cajon Valley was granted to Dona Maria Antonia Estudillo de Pedorena by Governor Pio Pico at the insistence of Don Miguel Telesforo de Pedorena. The rancho, which was renamed Rancho El Cajon, totaled roughly 48,800 acres and encompassed present day El Cajon, Bostonia, Santee, Lakeside, Flinn Springs, and the eastern part of La Mesa. The Pedorenas used the area extensively for cattle grazing; the croplands and vineyards tended during the Spanish Period fell into neglect.

### **American Period**

American governance began in 1848, when Mexico signed the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, ceding California to the United States at the conclusion of the Mexican–American War. A great influx of settlers to California and the San Diego region occurred during the American Period, resulting from several factors, including the discovery of gold in the state in 1848, the end of the Civil War, the availability of free land through the passage of the Homestead Act, and later, the importance of San Diego County as an agricultural area supported by roads, irrigation systems, and connecting railways. The increase in American and European populations quickly overwhelmed many of the Spanish and Mexican cultural traditions, and greatly increased the rate of population decline among Native American communities.

While the American system required that the newly acquired land be surveyed prior to settlement, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo bound the United States to honor the land claims of Mexican citizens who were granted ownership of ranchos by the Mexican government. The Land Act of 1851 established a board of commissioners to review land grant claims, and land patents for the land grants were issued throughout the following years. The confirmation of ranchos' boundaries in the late 1860s and early 1870s drew additional settlers as land became officially conveyable.

Under the Homestead Act of 1862, settlers could claim up to 160 acres of public land for the cost of a filing fee of \$10, on condition that the land was occupied for at least five years and that certain improvements were made. The increase of land claims significantly reduced the remaining lands which sustained the Native American populations, as settlers marked, surveyed, and fenced property, which in turn changed the landscape of what is now San Diego County. The increase of land claims pushed for Native American reservations to be established in what were lands of poor subsistence, making indigenous people increasingly reliant on the Euro-American economic system as an alternative to the reservations.

A claim for Rancho El Cajon was filed in 1852 by Thomas Sutherland, the guardian of Pedorena's heirs. This claim was confirmed by the United States Supreme Court in 1856, and the grant was patented in 1876. Nearly destitute, Don Miguel Jr. sold approximately 10,000 acres of the El Cajon rancho to Elder Jacob Knapp for roughly \$9,000. Knapp then sold the land to Los Angeles land developer Isaac Lankershim, who would later purchase the rest of the rancho in 1868 for a total of \$64,000.

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Following the Civil War, a surge of settlers in search of new lands caused a population boom in California. Squatters and land-grabbers flooded the El Cajon Rancho. In response, Lankershim hired former Union Major Levi Chase as his agent and promptly launched a legal battle to evict the squatters. It was soon discovered that the U.S. Land Offices did not officially recognize the El Cajon Rancho. After seven years of litigation and close to \$60,000 in legal fees, President U.S. Grant signed the patents, confirming the ownership of the land to Isaac Lankershim. In return, Chase received close to 8,000 acres of land in the southern portion of the ranch, which he deemed Chase Ranch.

In San Diego County, the 1880s were characterized by “boom and bust” cycles that brought thousands of people to the area. By the end of the decade, many had left, although some remained to form the foundations of small communities based on dry farming, orchards, dairies, and livestock ranching. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, rural areas of San Diego County developed small agricultural communities, consisting of individuals and families tied together through geographical boundaries, a common schoolhouse, and a church.

The small town of Stowe was established in the 1880s in Sycamore Canyon, west of the project area. Stowe flourished as a small ranching and farming community. The local post office was established in 1889, and a one-room schoolhouse was established at the junction of Beeler and Sycamore Canyons in 1890. Unfortunately, the town of Stowe was short lived; the post office closed in 1905 and the schoolhouse closed in 1906.

#### **4.5.1.4 Project Vicinity**

In 1877, George A. Cowles purchased approximately 4,000 acres of land for a vineyard in what would later be known as the Santee area. Originally known as Cowleston, Santee gained its name in 1891 when Cowles’s widow Jennie married Milton Santee, a local realtor and surveyor (City 2024a). Agriculture remained the area’s primary focus through the late 1800s, with dairies and barns dotting the landscape. One such dairy farm was the Edgemoor Farm. Edgemoor Farm, established in 1908, was later purchased by the County of San Diego to be used as a geriatric hospital (Santee Historical Society 2024). As time went on, the County added new buildings to the property while still maintaining the original barn, though the dairy and farm had fallen into disuse by the 1950s.

Northwest of Santee lies Fanita Ranch, which was established in 1885 when Hosmer P. McKoon purchased 9,543 acres of land. Portions of the ranch were sold off in the ensuing years, and in 1898, the Scripps family purchased 7,000 acres of the Fanita Ranch to be used for cattle ranching and as a country resort (City 2020a). Portions of the ranch were later sold to the federal government and became Camp Elliot, which contains portions of today’s Marine Corps Air Station Miramar.

By the 1950s and 1960s, most of San Diego County experienced an increase in residential, commercial, and infrastructure development. The Rio San Diego Municipal Water District was established in 1955 to import water from the San Diego County Water Authority. In 1956, the Santee County Water District was formed, due to the County Water District Laws of the State of California (Padre Dam Municipal Water District [PDMWD] 2024). Due to the increased population in the area, the Santee County Water District realized that it needed a place to dump partially treated wastewater; in 1959, district manager Ray Stoyer visited Sycamore Canyon and discovered a series of excavated mining beds. These mining beds, owned by Bill Mast, would later be donated to the Water District and turned into the Santee Lakes in exchange for water rights to a portion of the treated water. The Santee Lakes would open for fishing and boating in

1961 and for swimming in 1965 (PDMWD 2024). The Padre Dam Municipal Water District was created when the Rio San Diego Water District and the Santee County Water District merged in 1976 (PDMWD 2024).

#### 4.5.1.5 Existing Resources

Cultural resources typically include prehistoric and historic archaeological sites, buildings, structures, features (including significant trees or other landscaping), places, or other objects of historical, archaeological, scientific, educational, cultural, architectural, aesthetic, or traditional significance to the citizens of Santee and the region. Prehistoric site examples would include habitation debris, temporary camps, lithic and ceramic scatters, quarries, and trails.

Historic archaeological sites typically consist of trash dumps/scatters but may also include structure remains. Historic structures may include houses, apartment buildings, commercial buildings, bridges, towers, and other standing structures. Although historic structures could potentially occur anywhere in the City, there is a greater potential for these resources to occur in the older neighborhoods of Santee. Generally, structures 50 years of age or older have the potential to be historic resources, based on National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) guidelines. Structures must have retained their original integrity and context to be considered a historic resource. Any project area that is presently developed has the potential, however, to contain a historical structure(s).

Undeveloped sites have the potential for the presence of unknown archaeological resources as the likelihood of encountering archaeological resources is greatest on sites that have been minimally excavated in the past (e.g., undeveloped parcels, vacant lots, and lots containing undeveloped areas). Previously excavated areas are generally considered to have a low potential for archaeological resources, since the soil containing the archaeological resources has been removed or previously disturbed; however, there is still a potential for buried archaeological resources as shown on Figure 4.5-1, *Archaeological Sensitivity*.

#### 4.5.1.6 Records Search Results

HELIX requested a records search from the South Coastal Information Center (SCIC) at the San Diego State University on May 3, 2022 with an updated records search conducted on August 23, 2023 to include the updated project area and slightly expanded radius. The records search covered a quarter-mile radius around the TCSP area and included the identification of previously recorded cultural resources and locations and citations for previous cultural resources studies. A review of the California Historical Resources and the state Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) historic properties directories, and Local Register, was also conducted.

The records search results identified 39 previous cultural resource studies which overlap with the project area (HELIX 2024b; Appendix D). Of these 39 studies, seven identified resources within the search radius.

The SCIC has a record of 9 previously recorded cultural resources, which are located within or immediately adjacent to the overall project area. The resources that have been documented within or immediately adjacent to the overall project area are described below. Of the nine resources recorded within the project area, four are located within the Arts and Entertainment Neighborhood (AEN), including a historic refuse scatter (P-37-009245/CA-SDI-9245), two prehistoric lithic isolates (P-37-025303 and P-37-028466), and a prehistoric lithic and ground stone scatter (P-37-030482/CA-SDI-19370). The resources are discussed in more detail below.



#### 4.5.1.7 Historic Resources

Table 4.5-1, *Previously Recorded Historical Resources*, summarizes previously recorded historical resources within one-quarter mile of the project area and within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites. Sites and resources are described in more detail below.

**Table 4.5-1  
PREVIOUSLY RECORDED HISTORICAL RESOURCES**

Primary Number (P-37-##)	Trinomial (CA-SDI-#)	Age	Description	Recorder, Date
<b>Search Radius</b>				
029009	--	Historic	Historic single-family residence dating to the 1950s	Hope, 2000
029011	--	Historic	Historic single-family residence dating to the 1930s	Hope, 2000
035505	--	Historic	Rectangular Modern Industrial warehouse structure	Loftus, 2013
039090	22955	Multi-component	Bedrock milling features with historic features associated with the Santee School	Strother and Smolik, 2019
<b>TCSP</b>				
*032655	20693	Historic	Historic refuse scatter generally dating to the 1930s	Robbins-Wade, Linton, Van Wormer, Giletti, Walter, and Koehen, 2012
*032878	20778	Multi-component	Ground stone, flaked stone tools, debitage, shell, two features, historic refuse, and probable human remains, found in subsurface context during monitoring	Davison and Giletti, 2012; Robbins Wade, 2015
<b>AEN</b>				
**009245	9245	Historic	Historic refuse scatter	Valois, 1982
<b>Housing Element Sites</b>				
***020175	--	Historic	Edgemoor Senior Center	Unknown, 1985
****N/A	N/A	Historic	The Edgemoor Farm Historic District (see description below)	Stiegler and Furlonger, 2008

\* Within the TCSP

\*\* Within the Arts and Entertainment Neighborhood

\*\*\* Within Site 20A

\*\*\*\* Within sites 20A and 20B; not included in the SCIC records search results

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## Search Radius

Four historic resources have been recorded outside of but within a quarter-mile radius of the TCSP.

- Site P-37-029009 (no trinomial) was recorded by Hope in 2000. It consists of a historic, single-story, T-shaped single-family residence constructed in 1951. It was noted as unaltered on its exterior, with the exception of new paint on its masonry walls.
- Site P-37-029011 (no trinomial) was recorded by Hope in 2000 and consists of a historic single-family residence dating to the 1930s comprised of two parallel single-story buildings connected by an additional wing. The additional wing was likely added at a later date.
- Site P-37-035505 (no trinomial) was recorded by Loftus in 2013 and consists of a rectangular historic Modern Industrial-style warehouse originally dating to the 1960s with multiple additions from subsequent decades. It appears to have been heavily modified over the years and does not retain historical integrity.
- P-37-039090 (CA-SDI-22955) recorded by Strother et al. in 2019 and is a multi-component site comprised of prehistoric bedrock milling features, a sparse artifact scatter, and historic features associated with the Santee School (1891-2009). The prehistoric component of the site consists of 11 bedrock milling features, with numerous slick and basin elements, and a low-density artifact scatter including flaked stone, ground stone, faunal bone, shell, sherds of Tizon brownware, and fire-affected rock. The historic portion of the site is comprised of seven features related to the historic schoolground including concrete pads and foundations, a brick-and-mortar chimney, ceramic drainage pipes, and a rock-and-mortar wall, as well as a scatter of historic and modern materials that were not temporally diagnostic. Subsurface testing indicated a high level of disturbance at the site with prehistoric, historic, and modern materials intermixed.

## TCSP

Two historic resources have been identified within or immediately adjacent to the TCSP.

- Site P-37-032655 (CA-SDI-20693) is a historic refuse scatter recorded by Robbins-Wade et al. in 2012. Located north of Las Colinas, it consists of glass and ceramics, along with butchered bone, dating to the 1930s. Ceramics were primarily comprised of hotel ware and Fiesta ware. It is likely associated with the Edgemoor Farm and the San Diego County Home for the Aged and Indigent.
- Site P-37-032878 (CA-SDI-20778) is a multi-component artifact scatter, originally recorded by Davison and Giletti in 2012, and updated by Robbins-Wade in 2015. All the cultural material was found in a subsurface context during construction monitoring. Located in the Las Colinas project area, it is comprised of two prehistoric features, scattered manos, metates, lithic flakes, and shellfish remains, along with ceramics, glass fragments, and metal fragments, all recovered between the surface and up to five feet below the surface. Prehistoric artifacts consist of 21 manos, 40 mano fragments, a metate, fragments of two additional metates, five lithic cores, one utilized flake, one hammerstone, and 40 lithic flakes. Historic artifacts consisted primarily of commercial-grade ceramic ware, which show a temporal range between the late 1800s to the mid-1900s. The prehistoric component is likely associated with the habitation site (CA-SDI-5669 and CA-



SDI-19370), while the historic component is likely associated with the Edgemoor site and the Edgemoor Farm and San Diego County Home for the Aged and Indigent. During additional monitoring in 2015, three mano fragments were identified in the southern portion of the site, as well as fragments of human bones in two distinct locations in the northern portion of the site. The human remains were fragments of foot and wrist bones and were situated within disturbed fill soils that included modern debris intermixed with sediment.

## **AEN**

One historic resource has been identified within or immediately adjacent to the AEN.

- Site P-37-009245 (CA-SDI-9245) is located within the AEN. It is a historic refuse scatter that was recorded by Valois in 1982. Located in an open pasture east of Cuyamaca Street and north of Mission Gorge Road, it is described as a dense concentration measuring 30 meters by 30 meters, comprised of ceramics, metal fragments and objects, glass bottles, and butchered bones. It is likely a multi-event dump site from the 1930s and 1940s.

## **Site 16A and 16B**

No historical resources were identified in Site 16A or Site 16B.

## **Site 20A and 20B – Edgemoor Farm**

The only historic resource identified within or immediately adjacent to any of the Housing Element sites is located adjacent to Site 20A:

- Resource P-37-020175 is the historic Edgemoor Senior Center, also known as the Heartland Senior Day Health Center. Originally constructed as a dairy barn in 1914, the building underwent several modifications, including the addition of two wings and an extensive remodeling to transform it into a geriatric hospital. It was informally evaluated for NRHP eligibility in 1985 and found then to be ineligible due to a lack of integrity (Sorlie 1985).

The Edgemoor Farm property is ~~also~~ located adjacent to Site 20A in the southeastern corner of the AEN of the proposed project. This historic complex is eligible for listing on the NRHP at the state level under Criteria A, for being “associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history or the cultural heritage of California or the United States;” B, for being “associated with the lives of persons important to local, California or national history;” and C, for embodying “the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region or method of construction or represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic values” (Office of Historic Preservation n.d.). It has also been determined eligible for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources and on the San Diego County Local Register of Historical Resources as a Historic District (Stiegler and Furlonger 2008).

Edgemoor Farm was originally owned by the millionaire-socialite Walter Hamlin Dupree from 1913 to 1921, who used it as a world-famous scientific dairy, tourist attraction, and polo pony farm. Edgemoor’s association with Walter Dupree made it eligible for NRHP-listing under Criterion B. The Edgemoor Dairy Farm Barn, commonly referred to as the Edgemoor Polo Barn, built in 1913, was the first part of the district to be listed on the NRHP in 1984 and is listed individually, not as a part of the historic district. In 1923, the property became the Edgemoor Farm and San Diego County Home for the Aged and Indigent, which was “one of the last and largest publicly-funded

indigent farm homes in the state and the nation” (Stiegler and Furlonger 2008: 1). For 80 years, it functioned as a nursing home for the poorest citizens of San Diego County and in this way made a significant contribution to the cultural heritage of California and the nation (NRHP Criterion A). Six of the buildings from the Home for the Aged and Indigent were constructed in the Transitional-Modern, Proto-International Style in the 1920s by the Quayle Brothers, Master Architects. This qualified the District for NRHP-listing under Criterion C.

Twenty-six of the structures within Edgemoor Farm and the San Diego County Home for the Aged and Indigent were demolished during the Edgemoor Facility Demolition Project (Dehoney 2008). The Edgemoor Polo Barn is the only remaining structure within the Edgemoor Farm District, which was converted into the headquarters for the Santee Historical Society and a museum commemorating the history of Edgemoor Farm. The Edgemoor Polo Barn is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

#### 4.5.1.8 Archaeological Resources

Table 4.5-2, *Previously Recorded Archaeological Resources*, summarizes previously recorded historical resources within one-quarter mile of the project area, within the TCSP, and within the AEN. Resources within the TCSP and AEN are described in more detail below.

**Table 4.5-2  
PREVIOUSLY RECORDED PREHISTORIC RESOURCES**

Primary Number (P-37-##)	Trinomial (CA-SDI-#)	Age	Description	Recorder, Date
<b>Search Radius</b>				
035815	21860	Prehistoric	Artifact scatter with ground stone, flaked stone, and fire-affected rock, found in monitoring	Robbins-Wade, Falvey, Kandybowicz, Villalobos, Figueroa, Arrowsmith, Curo, and Curo, 2015
039090	22955	Multi-component	Bedrock milling features with historic features associated with the Santee School	Strother and Smolik, 2019
<b>TCSP</b>				
*005669	5669	Prehistoric	Pre-contact village site with habitation debris, lithics, brown ware, milling, and possible human remains	Polan, 1978; Thesken, 1983; Duran, Campbell, and Haas, 2015; Campbell, Douglas, Duncan, Menchaca, Smolik, and Duran, 2017
*007603	7603	Prehistoric	Pre-contact village site with widely scattered artifacts	Norwood, 1979; Hector, 1981
*032878	20778	Multi-component	Ground stone, flaked stone tools, debitage, shell, two features, historic refuse, and probable human remains, found in subsurface context during monitoring	Davison and Giletti, 2012; Robbins Wade, 2015

Primary Number (P-37-##)	Trinomial (CA-SDI-#)	Age	Description	Recorder, Date
<b>AEN</b>				
**025303	--	Prehistoric	Isolated lithic tool	Kyle, 2001
**028466	--	Prehistoric	Three secondary metavolcanic flakes	Price, 2004
**030482	19370	Prehistoric	Light density lithic and ground stone artifact scatter encountered in a subsurface context in monitoring	Giletti, 2009

\* Within the TCSP

\*\* Within the Arts and Entertainment Neighborhood

### Search Radius

Two prehistoric resources have been identified outside of but within a quarter-mile radius of the TCSP.

- Site P-37-035815 (CA-SDI-21860) is a prehistoric artifact scatter recorded during monitoring efforts by Robbins-Wade and Falvey in 2015. Artifacts consisted of ground stone, flaked stone, Tizon brownware, faunal bone, shell, and fire-affected rock found out of context in spoils piles from grading west of the project site.
- P-37-039090 (CA-SDI-22955) is a multi-component site comprised of prehistoric bedrock milling features, a sparse artifact scatter, and historic features associated with the Santee School (1891-2009) recorded by Strother et al. in 2019. This resource is detailed in Section 4.5.1.7.

### TCSP

Three prehistoric resources have been identified within, or immediately adjacent to, the TCSP and outside of the AEN and Housing Element sites.

- Site P-37-005669 (CA-SDI-5669) is a large site recorded as consisting of three loci, one which is located within the TCSP, and two of which are just east of the project area. The site was originally recorded in 1978 (Polan) and has been described as a village. It has been the subject of several excavation projects, including extensive data recovery excavations, at various of the three recorded loci (Duran et al. 2015). Cultural material recovered included projectile points, flaked stone and ground stone tools, shell and stone beads, pottery, faunal material (animal bone and marine shell), and human remains (identified as “likely” or “possibly” human). Hearth features and a possible pit feature were identified at the site (Thesken 1983).
- Site P-37-007603 (CA-SDI-7603) is a prehistoric artifact scatter first recorded by Norwood in 1979. Located along the southern bank of the San Diego River, it was first described as a light density, widely disbursed artifact scatter of lithics, ground stone and thermally affected rocks in a 150-meter by 150-meter area. Hector described the site in 1981 as the widely scattered remains of a village, comprised of ground stone and lithics, with no distinct boundary. It had been heavily impacted by historic agriculture and development of the Santee area. It was noted by Hector to have been destroyed.

- Site P-37-032878 (CA-SDI-20778) is a multi-component artifact scatter, originally recorded by Davison and Giletti in 2012, and updated by Robbins-Wade in 2015. All the cultural material was found in a subsurface context during construction monitoring. Located in Las Colinas project area, it is comprised of two prehistoric features, scattered manos, metates, lithic flakes, and shellfish remains, along with ceramics, glass fragments, and metal fragments, all recovered between the surface and up to five feet below the surface. Prehistoric artifacts consist of 21 manos, 40 mano fragments, a metate, fragments of two additional metates, five lithic cores, one utilized flake, one hammerstone, and 40 lithic flakes. Historic artifacts consisted primarily of commercial-grade ceramic ware, which show a temporal range between the late 1800s to the mid-1900s. The prehistoric component is likely associated with the habitation site (CA-SDI-5669 and CA-SDI-19370), while the historic component is likely associated with the Edgemoor site and the Edgemoor Farm and San Diego County Home for the Aged and Indigent. During additional monitoring in 2015, three mano fragments were identified in the southern portion of the site, as well as fragments of human bones in two distinct locations in the northern portion of the site. The human remains were fragments of foot and wrist bones and were situated within disturbed fill soils that included modern debris intermixed with sediment.

## AEN

Three prehistoric resources have been identified within or immediately adjacent to the AEN and outside of the Housing Element sites.

- Cultural resource P-37-025303 consists of an isolated metavolcanic lithic tool located within the AEN. It was recorded by Kyle in 2001, located on a small knoll east of Cuyamaca Street and north of the San Diego River.
- Cultural resource P-37-028466 is a prehistoric lithic isolate located within the AEN. The isolate, recorded by Price in 2004, consists of three secondary metavolcanic flakes. One flake shows evidence of being retouched or modified, while the other two are unmodified secondary flakes.
- Site P-37-030482 (CA-SDI-19370) is a prehistoric artifact scatter recorded by Giletti in 2009. Located on an alluvial terrace on the south side of the San Diego River, south and west of the intersection of Magnolia Avenue and Chubb Lane, it is described as a light density lithic and ground stone artifact scatter over a large area. Components consist of metate fragments, manos, modified flake tools, metavolcanic flakes, and quartz debitage found at varying depths between two and 10 feet “in an obvious alluvial setting directly adjacent to the San Diego River”. The cultural material was all observed and recovered during construction monitoring.

## Housing Element Sites

No archaeological sites or resources were identified within any of Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, or 20B.

### 4.5.1.9 Other Archival Research

Various additional archival sources were also consulted for the entire project area, including historic topographic maps and aerial imagery. These include aerials from 1953, 1964, 1966, 1968, 1971, 1980, 1985, 1990, 1995, 2000, 2005, and 2010 (NETR Online 2022); and several historic

USGS topographic maps, including the 1893 El Cajon (1:62,500), 1903 Cuyamaca (1:125,000), the 1942 El Cajon (1:62,500) and the 1955, 1967, 1975, and 1996 El Cajon (1:24,000) topographic maps; and the 1928 and 1929 County Assessor Tax Factor aerial photographs. The purpose of this research was to identify historic structures and land use in the area.

No structures appear within the project area on the 1893 El Cajon (1:62,500) topographic map, though the San Diego River is recorded passing through the center of the area, and a single road is located to the south. Santee and the San Diego Cuyamaca and Eastern Railway are recorded to the southeast and east of the project area. The 1903 Cuyamaca (1:125,000) topographic map includes much the same information, though a trail and the community of Riverview are recorded to the east. Edgemoor Farm is recorded within the boundary of the project area on the El Cajon (1: 62,500) map – several structures are recorded in the eastern portion of the project site, and Mission Gorge Road is recorded along the southern boundary. Several structures are seen to the south and southeast of the project site, and Santee is recorded at the intersection of what appears to be Mission Gorge Road, Magnolia Avenue, and Woodside Avenue. The railroad seen on the previous maps is also recorded on this map, and Fanita Ranch is recorded to the west of the project site.

The expansion of the Santee south of the project site is visible on the 1955, 1967, and 1975 El Cajon (1:24,000) topographic maps. On the 1955 map, Edgemoor Farm, a windmill, two sand pits, a residential neighborhood, the San Diego River, and a few trails are visible within the project area. The Edgemoor Home for the Aged and Indigent, two sand pits, the Grossmont-Santee Adult School, a fire station, the San Diego River, and a water feature are all recorded within the 1967 topographic map. The 1975 map depicts the expansion of Santee to the north and the construction of the northern alignment of Cuyamaca Street through the project area. Finally, the 1996 El Cajon topographic map remains relatively unchanged, save for the presence of a transit line extending into the project site from the intersection of Mission Gorge Road and Cuyamaca Street and expanded residential and commercial development.

The earliest aerial photographs available are from the 1928 and 1929 County Assessor photograph series. These show Mission Gorge Road and Magnolia Avenue in their current alignments with a cluster of buildings at their intersection. Edgemoor Farm is shown including the Polo Barn and additional buildings associated with the Edgemoor Farm and San Diego County Home for the Aged and Indigent, as discussed in Section 4.5.1.7 above. The surrounding area attests to aerial photographs depict the agricultural nature of the region— several farm plots are visible within and around the project site. In the 1964 aerial photograph, several structures are seen within the southwest corner of the project area, and several structures associated with Edgemoor Farm are visible in the eastern portion of the project boundaries. The subsequent photographs show the urban development of the region, with neighborhoods appearing to the north and south of the project area. The project area remains relatively unchanged in the 1968 and 1971 aerial photographs. By the time the 1980 photograph was taken, the area now containing the Santee Town Center appears to have been cleared or graded. In fact, much of the area has been graded, likely for the further development of the area seen in the 1995 and 2000 aerial photographs. By the time, the 2005 and 2010 aerial photographs were taken, the current Santee Town Center and the modern alignment of State Route 52 had been completed.

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## 4.5.2 Regulatory Framework

### 4.5.2.1 Federal

#### National Register of Historic Places

Federal regulations that would be applicable to the project if there is a federal nexus (e.g., permitting or funding from a federal agency) include the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and its implementing regulations (16 United States Code 470 et seq., 36 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Part 800). Section 106 of the NHPA requires federal agencies to consider the effects of their undertakings on “historic properties”, that is, properties (either historic or archaeological) that are eligible for the NRHP. To be eligible for the NRHP, a historic property must be significant at the local, state, or national level under one or more of the following four criteria:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
- B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; and/or
- D. Has yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history

### 4.5.2.2 State

#### California Register of Historic Resources

Similar to the NRHP, the California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR) program established in 1992, encourages public recognition and protection of resources of architectural, historical, archaeological, and cultural significance; identifies resources for planning purposes; determines eligibility of state historic grant funding; and provides certain protections under CEQA. State criteria are those listed in CEQA and used to determine whether an historic resource qualifies for the CRHR.

A resource may be listed in the CRHR if it is significant at the federal, state, or local level under one or more of the four criteria listed below.

1. Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history and cultural heritage of California or the U.S.
2. Is associated with the lives of persons important to the nation or to California’s past.
3. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values.

- 
4. Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history of the state or nation.

CEQA Sections 15064.5 and 21083.2(g) define the criteria for determining the significance of historical resources. Archaeological resources are considered “historical resources” for the purposes of CEQA.

Since resources not listed or determined eligible for the state or local registers may still be historically significant, their significance shall be determined if they are affected by a project. The significance of a historical resource under criterion 4 rests on its ability to address important research questions.

#### **4.5.2.3 Local**

##### **Santee General Plan**

Section 65302 (d) of the California Planning and Zoning Laws requires the City’s General Plan to contain a Conservation Element to address the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources, including cultural resources. The City defines cultural resources as environmental components that are fragile and non-renewable evidence of human activity as reflected in districts, sites, structures, artifacts, works of art, and natural features that were of importance in human events. As contained within the Santee City limits, these primarily consist of archaeological sites, features, and structures ranging from early prehistoric to recent historic age.

To ensure their consideration and preservation where appropriate, the City has developed policies to address cultural resources within the City limits:

##### Community Enhancement Element

##### **Objective 12.0: Recognize historic structures for their ability to strengthen place identity.**

- **Policy 12.1:** The City should ensure that future development respects and enhances the Edgemoor “Polo Barn” setting.

##### Conservation Element

##### **Objective 8.0: Preserve significant cultural resources.**

- **Policy 8.1** The City shall require either the preservation of significant historic or prehistoric sites, or the professional retrieval of artifacts prior to the development of a site, consistent with the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act. Preservation may include various measures including avoidance, preservation in place, incorporation into open space, or covering or capping. The type of preservation would depend upon the nature and significance of the archaeological resource and the practical requirements of the proposed land use.
- **Policy 8.2** The City should require curation of any recovered artifacts as a condition of any cultural resources mitigation program.



### 4.5.3 Significance Determination Thresholds

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, impacts related to cultural resources would be significant if the project would:

- 1) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5.
- 2) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5.
- 3) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

### 4.5.4 Methodology

HELIX was contracted to conduct a cultural resources study for the project, including a records search of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS), a Sacred Lands File search, Native American outreach, a review of historic aerial photographs and maps, and a cultural resources sensitivity analysis. The following analysis is based on information discussed in the cultural resources report (Appendix D).

### 4.5.5 Issue 1: Historic Resources

*Would the project result in a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5?*

#### 4.5.5.1 Impact Analysis

##### TCSP Area

As shown in Table 4.5-1, the TCSP area contains previously recorded historic resources. While the TCSP does not specifically propose alteration of a known historic resource, it can be assumed that future development within the TCSP area could have the potential to impact resources directly or indirectly through such activities. The TCSP area has the potential to contain buildings or structures that may be 50 years of age or older at the time of future development and, therefore, may need to be evaluated for historical significance. Direct impacts to historical resources could potentially result from the physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of potential historic resources within the project areas. Policies 8.1 in the Conservation Element and 12.1 in the Community Enhancement Element of the City's General Plan (City 2003a; City 2003b) are aimed at the protection of historic buildings. As future projects are proposed, they must adhere to these policies and regulations through application of requirements for development review. However, because site-specific details of specific projects are not known at this program-level of analysis including project footprints, project designs, and timelines for development, impacts to historic resources within the TCSP would be considered significant. The implementation of the mitigation measures CUL-1, CUL-2, CUL-3, and CUL-4 will reduce these impacts to a level less than significant.

##### AEN

As shown in Table 4.5-1, the AEN contains previously recorded historic resources. While the AEN does not specifically propose alteration of a known historic resource, it can be assumed that future

development within the AEN could have the potential to impact resources directly or indirectly through such activities. The AEN has the potential to contain buildings or structures that may be 50 years of age or older at the time of future development and, therefore, may need to be evaluated for historical significance. Direct impacts to historical resources could potentially result from the physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of potential historic resources within the project areas. Policies 8.1 in the Conservation Element and 12.1 in the Community Enhancement Element of the City's General Plan (City 2003a; City 2003b) are aimed at the protection of historic buildings. As future projects are proposed, they must adhere to these policies and regulations through application of requirements for development review. However, because site-specific details of specific projects are not known at this program-level of analysis including project footprints, project designs, and timelines for development, impacts to historic resources within the AEN would be considered significant. The implementation of mitigation measures CUL-1, CUL-2, CUL-3, and CUL-4 will reduce these impacts to a level less than significant.

### **Housing Element Sites**

#### Site 16A

Although no specific historical resources have been identified in Site 16A, the presence of historical resources throughout the TCSP area suggests that there is a potential for encountering previously unidentified resources. Based on this, future development of Site 16A has the potential to cause substantial adverse changes to historical resources, which is a significant impact. The implementation of mitigation measures CUL-1, CUL-2, CUL-3, and CUL-4 will reduce these impacts to a level less than significant.

#### Site 16B

Although no specific historical resources have been identified in Site 16B, the presence of historical resources throughout the TCSP area suggests that there is a potential for encountering previously unidentified resources. Based on this, future development of Site 16B has the potential to cause substantial adverse changes to historical resources, which is a significant impact. The implementation of mitigation measures CUL-1, CUL-2, CUL-3, and CUL-4 will reduce impacts to a level less than significant.

#### Site 20A

Site 20A is located adjacent to the Edgemoor Polo Barn, a documented historic resource. The presence of additional historical resources throughout the TCSP area suggests that there is a potential for encountering previously unidentified resources. Future development of Site 20A has the potential to cause substantial adverse changes to historical resources, which is a significant impact. As described in the "Historic Site Adjacency" Objective Design Standards in Chapter 2, *Land Use*, of the TCSP, development proposals must respect and enhance the Edgemoor Polo Barn historic site and demonstrate how they would adhere to the Secretary of Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. Specific standards include:

- Pedestrian connectivity between proposed uses and Polo Barn historic site.
- Landscaping that enhances the Polo Barn historic site.
- Building design that incorporates transitions in bulk and scale on areas adjacent to the Polo Barn historic site.

- Development proposals within Site 20A shall demonstrate how they would adhere to the Secretary of Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and standards and guidelines prescribed by the State Office of Historic Preservation.

The implementation of mitigation measures CUL-1, CUL-2, CUL-3, CUL-4, and CUL-5 will reduce these impacts to a level less than significant.

### Site 20B

Although no specific historical resources have been identified in Site 20B, the presence of historical resources throughout the TCSP area and Site 20B's proximity to the Edgemoor Polo Barn to the north suggests that there is a potential for encountering previously unidentified resources. Based on this, future development of Site 20B has the potential to cause substantial adverse changes to historical resources, which is a significant impact. The implementation of mitigation measures CUL-1, CUL-2, CUL-3, and CUL-4 will reduce impacts to a level less than significant.

#### **4.5.5.2 Mitigation Measures**

Mitigation is proposed for the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites. The following mitigation measures would be required to reduce impacts to a less than significant level.

#### **TCSP, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

**MM-CUL-1** Prior to approval of an individual project (including the four Housing Element sites) under the TCSP area or AEN, a cultural resources survey shall be conducted for that project. If cultural resources are identified in conjunction with the cultural resources survey, they must be evaluated to assess their eligibility for the CRHR and, thus, whether the project would have an effect on historic properties (cultural resources) per CEQA. If significant effects to historic properties/cultural resources are identified, appropriate avoidance or mitigation measures must be developed as part of the cultural resources study and implemented prior to project development.

**MM-CUL-2** Prior to issuance of grading permits for any projects (including the Housing Element sites) within the TCSP area or AEN: The applicant/developer shall provide evidence to the City of Santee that a qualified professional archaeologist has been contracted to implement a Cultural Resources Management Plan (CRMP), the City must agree to the selected archaeologist and agree to the implementation prescribed in the CRMP. A CRMP shall be developed in coordination with the consulting tribe(s) that addresses the details of all activities and provides procedures that must be followed to reduce the impacts to cultural and historic resources to a level that is less than significant, as well as address potential impacts to undiscovered buried archaeological resources associated with this project.

For each construction project within the TCSP, AEN, or Housing Element sites, the CRMP shall contain, at a minimum, the following:

Archaeological Monitoring. An adequate number of qualified archaeological monitors shall be on site to ensure all earth-moving activities are observed in areas

being monitored. This includes all grubbing, grading, and trenching on-site and for all off-site improvements. Inspections will vary based on the rate of excavation, the materials excavated, and the presence and abundance of artifacts and features. The frequency and location of inspections will be determined and directed by the Project Archaeologist.

Cultural Resources Sensitivity Training. The Project Archaeologist and a representative designated by the consulting Tribe(s) shall attend the pre-grading meeting with the contractors to provide Cultural Resources Sensitivity Training for all construction personnel. Training will include a brief review of the cultural sensitivity of the project and the surrounding area; the areas to be avoided during grading activities; what resources could potentially be identified during earth-moving activities; the requirements of the monitoring program; the protocols that apply in the event unanticipated cultural resources are identified, including who to contact and appropriate avoidance measures until the find(s) can be properly evaluated; and any other appropriate protocols. This is a mandatory training, and all construction personnel must attend prior to beginning work on the project site.

Unanticipated Resources: If previously unidentified potentially significant cultural resources are discovered, the Archaeological and/or Tribal Monitor(s) shall have the authority to divert or temporarily halt ground disturbance operations in the area of discovery to allow evaluation of potentially significant cultural resources. The Project Archaeologist, in consultation with the Tribal monitor, shall determine the significance of the discovered prehistoric archaeological resources. The Project Archaeologist shall determine the significance of discovered historic-period archaeological resources. Further, before construction activities are allowed to resume in the affected area, the artifacts shall be recovered and features recorded using professional archaeological methods. The Project Archaeologist shall determine the amount of material to be recovered for an adequate artifact sample for analysis. Isolates and clearly non-significant deposits shall be minimally documented in the field, and the monitored grading can proceed.

Artifact Disposition: The landowner(s) shall relinquish ownership of all cultural resources that are unearthed on the project property during any ground-disturbing activities, including previous investigations and/or Phase III data recovery. Recovered cultural artifacts shall be curated with accompanying catalog to current professional repository standards or be returned to the appropriate Native American Tribe(s), as agreed upon by the Principal Investigator, Native American representative(s), and City staff.

**MM-CUL-3** Prior to the issuance of grading permits, the developer/permit applicant shall enter into an agreement(s) with the consulting tribe(s) for a Kumeyaay Native American Monitor(s).

In conjunction with the Archaeological monitor(s), the Kumeyaay Native American Monitor(s) shall attend the pre-grading meeting with the contractors to provide Cultural Resources Sensitivity Training for all construction personnel. In addition, an adequate number of Kumeyaay Native American Monitor(s) shall be on-site during all initial ground-disturbing activities and excavation of each portion of the project site, including clearing, grubbing, tree removals, grading, and trenching. In conjunction with the archaeological monitor(s), the Kumeyaay Native American

Monitor(s) shall have the authority to temporarily divert, redirect, or halt the ground disturbance activities to allow identification, evaluation, and potential recovery of cultural resources.

**MM-CUL-4** In the event that potential human remains are encountered, ground-disturbing activities within 100 feet of the discovery will be halted, and the requirements of California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 will be implemented. The archaeological monitor will immediately notify the Project Archaeologist, who will notify the County Medical Examiner's (ME's) Office. A representative of the ME's Office will determine whether the human remains appear to be Native American in origin. If so, the ME's Office will notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) who will designate the Most Likely Descendant (MLD). The MLD will make recommendations for the appropriate treatment of the remains and any associated grave goods. The County ME's office will make the determination of the origin of the remains within two working days and will notify the NAHC within 24 hours of their decision if the human remains are determined to be Native American. In the event human remains or burial items are discovered, all parties will refrain from publicly disclosing the reburial location unless otherwise required by law.

### **Housing Element Site 20A**

**MM-CUL-5** Avoidance is the preferred measure to mitigate adverse effects to the Edgemoor Polo Barn. Future plans must design around the Polo Barn consistent with the TCSP "Historic Site Adjacency" Objective Design Standard. If avoidance is not possible, the preferred alternative is to preserve the Polo Barn by moving it to another location in accordance with mitigation measures previously published by Bull and Price, as referenced in the Cultural Resources Report (HELIX 2024b; Appendix D).

#### **4.5.5.3 Significance After Mitigation**

#### **TCSP, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Significant impacts to historical resources would be reduced to a less than significant level in the TCSP, AEN, and Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, and 20B through the application of mitigation measures CUL-1 through CUL-4 and CUL-1 through CUL-5 for Housing Element Site 20A only.

### **4.5.6 Issues 2: Archaeological Resources**

*Would the project result in a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?*

#### **4.5.6.1 Impact Analysis**

#### **TCSP Area**

As shown in Table 4.5-2, the TCSP area contains previously recorded archaeological resources (P-37-005669, P-37-007603, and P-37-032878). Future proposed projects within the TCSP area have the potential to cause substantial adverse changes to archaeological resources, including previously unidentified resources. The implementation of mitigation measures CUL-1, CUL-2, CUL-3, and CUL-4 will reduce these impacts to a less than significant level.

**AEN**

As shown in Table 4.5-2, the AEN contains previously recorded archaeological resources (P-37-025303, P-37-028466, and P-37-030482). Future proposed projects within the AEN have the potential to cause substantial adverse changes to archaeological resources, including previously unidentified resources. The implementation of mitigation measures CUL-1, CUL-2, CUL-3, and CUL-4 will reduce these impacts to a less than significant level.

**Housing Element Sites**

Although no archaeological resources have been identified within Housing Elements 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B, the presence of archaeological resources throughout the TCSP area suggests that there is a potential for encountering previously unidentified resources. Based on this, future proposed projects within Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B have the potential to cause substantial adverse changes to archaeological resources. The implementation of mitigation measures CUL-1, CUL-2, CUL-3, and CUL-4 will reduce these impacts to a less than significant level.

**4.5.6.2 Mitigation Measures****TCSP, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Mitigation is proposed for the TCSP, AEN, and Housing Element sites. Mitigation measures CUL-1, CUL-2, CUL-3, and CUL-4, as described in Section 4.5.5.2 above, would be required to reduce archaeological resource impacts to a less than significant level.

**4.5.6.3 Significance After Mitigation****TCSP, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Significant impacts to archaeological resources within the TCSP, AEN, and Housing Element sites would be mitigated to a less than significant level through the application of mitigation measures CUL-1 through CUL-4.

**4.5.7 Issue 3: Human Remains**

*Would the project result in the disturbance of any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?*

**4.5.7.1 Impact Analysis****TCSP Area**

Two previously recorded resources within the TCSP area include the discovery of probable or identifiable human remains. While the proposed project does not specifically propose the disturbance of known human remains, it can be assumed that future development within the TCSP area could have the potential to impact resources directly or indirectly through such activities. Records searches have demonstrated the possible presence of human remains in the project area and potential direct and/or indirect impacts to human remains would be significant. Mitigation measure CUL-4 would be required to reduce impacts to human remains to a less than significant level within the TCSP area.

## **AEN**

The AEN is located entirely within the TCSP area, and it can therefore be assumed that future development within the AEN could have the potential to impact human remains directly or indirectly through such activities. Mitigation measure CUL-4 would be required to reduce impacts to human remains to a less than significant level within the AEN.

### **Housing Element Sites**

Housing sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B are located entirely within the TCSP, and it can therefore be assumed that future development within the Housing Element sites could have the potential to impact human remains directly or indirectly through such activities. Mitigation measure CUL-4 would be required to reduce impacts to human remains to a less than significant level within the Housing Element sites.

#### **4.5.7.2 Mitigation Measures**

##### **TCSP, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Mitigation is proposed for implementation of the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites. Future development of the proposed project would require implementation of mitigation measure CUL-4, as described in Section 4.5.5.2 above.

#### **4.5.7.3 Significance After Mitigation**

##### **TCSP, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Significant impacts to human remains within the TCSP, AEN, and Housing Element sites would be mitigated to a less than significant level through the application of mitigation measure CUL-4.



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## 4.6 Energy

The following section analyzes the potential environmental impacts that may occur as a result of implementation of the proposed project. Energy modeling data are contained in Appendix G of this Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

### 4.6.1 Existing Conditions

#### 4.6.1.1 Environmental Setting

##### Electricity

Electricity usage for different land use categories varies depending on the type of electricity uses in a building, the types of construction materials used in constructing the building, and the efficiency of the electricity-consuming devices used within the building. Electricity usage per capita in California has remained stable for more than thirty years because of the state's energy efficiency building standards and efficiency and conservation programs, even as the national average electricity usage per capita has steadily increased (California Energy Commission [CEC] 2014).

California's electricity system has been undergoing a considerable shift from non-renewable to renewable sources in recent years. The energy resource mix has substantially changed in the past decade as new renewable energy sources have come online, and the CEC anticipates that out-of-state coal energy sources will be eliminated from the mix entirely by 2025 (CEC 2020).

SDG&E serves approximately 3.7 million customers in a 4,100-square-mile service area that includes San Diego and southern Orange Counties (SDG&E 2024). SDG&E currently provides electricity to the Town Center Specific Plan (TCSP) area and would continue upon project implementation. According to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), SDG&E customers consumed approximately 19,169 million kilowatt-hours (kWh) of electricity in 2015 (CPUC 2016). By 2030, SDG&E anticipates that it will achieve its goal of 60 percent of energy from renewable sources, all of which will be from long-term contracts (SDG&E 2022).

In 2022, total utility-scale electricity generation in the state of California was 287,220 gigawatt-hours (GWh), which was an increase of approximately 3.4 percent from 2021 (CEC 2022). CEC forecasts of future electricity demand anticipate that consumption will grow by between 0.99 and 1.59 percent per year from 2017 to 2030, with peak demand forecasts growing by 0.30 to 1.52 percent annually from 2017 to 2030 (CEC 2018). In San Diego County, the CEC reported an annual electrical consumption of approximately 19 billion kWh total with 6.6 billion kWh for residential use and 12.4 billion kWh for non-residential use in 2019 (CEC 2020).

##### Natural Gas

Natural gas utility rates and services are regulated by the CPUC. In 2018, California gas utilities forecasted that they would deliver approximately 4,740 million cubic feet per day of gas to their customers, on average, under normal weather conditions. The majority of natural gas utility customers in California are residential and small commercial customers, although these customers consume only approximately 35 percent of natural gas used in the state. SDG&E provides natural gas services to San Diego County and the TCSP area and would continue to provide natural gas to the project site upon implementation of the project. SDG&E is a wholesale customer of Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas) and currently receives all its natural

gas supply from the SoCalGas System. SDG&E provides service to over 800,000 customers (CPUC 2023).

The majority of natural gas used in California is sourced from out-of-state natural gas basins. The state does not receive liquefied natural gas supplies. Biogas, including gas from wastewater treatment plants and dairy farms, has recently begun to be used, and the State has been encouraging its development and expansion. Natural gas from out-of-state production basins is delivered to California via the interstate natural gas pipeline system. This gas is then delivered via SoCalGas and Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E)'s statewide network to local transmission and distribution pipelines, or local storage fields (CPUC 2023).

Statewide natural gas demand is expected to decrease at an annual average rate of 1.0 percent through 2035. The decline in throughput demand is due to modest economic growth, CPUC-mandated energy efficiency standards and programs, and Senate Bill (SB) 350 goals. Other factors that contribute to the downward trend are tighter standards created by revised Title 24 Codes and Standards, renewable electricity goals, a decline in core commercial and industrial demand, and conservation savings linked to Advanced Metering Infrastructure (California Gas and Electric Utilities 2020).

## **Transportation Fuel**

Automobiles and trucks consume gasoline and diesel fuel, which are non-renewable energy products derived from petroleum. As of the end of 2023, California had approximately 35.7 million registered vehicles which consumed approximately 13.6 billion gallons of gasoline during the year (California Department of Motor Vehicles [DMV] 2024, California Department of Tax and Fee Administration 2024). Gasoline and other vehicle fuels are commercially provided commodities that would be available to the proposed project through commercial outlets.

The 2021 Integrated Energy Policy Report (IEPR) provides the CEC's assessment of energy issues facing the state of California. The IEPR includes a transportation energy and demand forecast that considers vehicles and associated fuels, consumer preferences, regulatory impacts, economic and demographic factors, and projected improvements in technology. The most recent forecast estimated that between 2021 and 2035, gasoline fuel demand for transportation in California will decline primarily due to increases in electrification and the use of zero emission vehicles. Petroleum-based fuels will continue to represent the largest shares of transportation energy demand. Under the high-demand case for light duty vehicles, gasoline consumption will drop from approximately 13.8 billion gross gasoline equivalents (GGE) in 2020 to approximately 11 billion GGE in 2035. Electricity consumption for transportation would increase from less than one billion GGE in 2020 to approximately four billion GGE, which includes raw energy used by the plug in-vehicles (PEV), but also the gasoline energy avoided by using more PEVs. Diesel energy forecast is less than one GGE in 2020 and will remain roughly the same in 2035 (CEC 2021).

### **4.6.2 Regulatory Framework**

#### **4.6.2.1 Federal**

At the federal level, the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) are three agencies with significant influence over energy policies and programs. Generally, federal agencies influence and regulate transportation energy consumption through the establishment and enforcement of

fuel economy standards for automobiles and light trucks, through funding of energy-related research and development projects, and through funding for transportation infrastructure improvements. Major relevant federal energy-related laws and plans are discussed below.

### **Federal Energy Policy and Conservation Act**

First enacted in 1975, the Federal Energy Policy and Conservation Act (EPCA) established fuel economy standards for on-road motor vehicles in the United States. The National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration (NHTSA), which is part of USDOT, is responsible for establishing additional vehicle standards and revising the existing standards under EPCA. Current standards require a combined passenger car and light duty truck average fuel economy of 49 miles per gallon by 2026 (NHTSA 2022). Heavy duty vehicles (i.e., vehicles and trucks over 8,500 pounds gross vehicle weight) are not currently subject to fuel economy standards. Fuel economy is determined based on each manufacturer's average fuel economy for their fleet of vehicles available for sale in the United States. Based on information gathered under the program, USDOT is authorized to assess penalties for noncompliance. Over its nearly 40-year history, this regulatory program has resulted in vastly improved fuel economy throughout the United States' vehicle fleet.

### **Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007**

The federal Energy Independence and Security Act (EISA) of 2007 set increased fuel economy standards for motor vehicles as well as a renewable fuel standard, building energy efficiency standards, and appliance and lighting efficiency standards. The lighting efficiency standards required increasing levels of energy efficiency, ultimately requiring light bulbs by 2020 to consume 60 percent less energy and effectively phasing out the incandescent lightbulb.

Under the EISA, the USEPA is responsible for developing and implementing regulations to ensure that transportation fuel sold in the United States contains a minimum volume of renewable fuel. Under the EISA, the renewable fuels program was expanded to include diesel fuel in addition to gasoline. The EISA also required the USEPA to apply lifecycle greenhouse gas (GHG) performance threshold standards to ensure that each category of renewable fuel emits fewer GHGs than the petroleum fuel it replaces. Additional provisions of the EISA address energy savings in government and public institutions, research for alternative energy, additional research in carbon capture, international energy programs, and the creation of "green" jobs.

### **Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991**

The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) promoted the development of inter-modal transportation systems to maximize mobility, as well as to address national and local interests in air quality and energy. The ISTEA contained factors that metropolitan planning organizations were required to address in developing transportation plans and programs, including some energy-related factors. To meet the new ISTEA requirements, metropolitan planning organizations adopted explicit policies defining the social, economic, energy, and environmental values that were to guide transportation decisions in that metropolitan area. The planning process for specific projects would then address these policies. Another requirement was to consider the consistency of transportation planning with federal, state, and local energy goals. Through this requirement, energy consumption was expected to become a decision criterion, along with cost and other values that determine the best transportation solution (USDOT 2020).

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## **The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century**

The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) builds upon the initiatives established in the ISTEA legislation discussed previously. TEA-21 authorizes highway, highway safety, transit, and other efficient surface transportation programs. TEA-21 continues the program structure established for highways and transit under ISTEA, such as flexibility in the use of funds, emphasis on measures to improve the environment, and focus on a strong planning process as the foundation of good transportation decisions. TEA-21 also provides for investment in research and its application to maximize the performance of the transportation system through, for example, deployment of Intelligent Transportation Systems, to help improve operations and management of transportation systems and vehicle safety (USDOT 2020)

### **4.6.2.2 State**

At the state level, the CEC, CPUC, and California Air Resources Board (CARB) all regulate different aspects of energy. The CPUC regulates privately-owned utilities in the energy, rail, telecommunications, and water sectors. The CEC collects and analyzes energy-related data, prepares statewide energy policy recommendations and plans, promotes and funds energy efficiency programs, and adopts and enforces appliance and building energy efficiency standards. California is exempt under federal law from setting state fuel economy standards for new on-road motor vehicles. CARB has responsibility for mobile source emissions in the state.

This section focuses primarily on policies, regulations, and laws in the state of California that directly pertain to the regulation of energy resources. Refer to Section 4.8 for a discussion of policies, regulations, and laws that target the reduction of GHG emissions and are expected to achieve co-benefits in the form of reduced demand for energy-related resources and enhanced efficiencies related to energy consumption.

### **State of California Energy Action Plan**

The CEC and CPUC approved the first State of California Energy Action Plan in 2003. The plan established shared goals and specific actions to ensure that adequate, reliable, and reasonably priced electrical power and natural gas supplies are provided, and identified policies, strategies, and actions that are cost-effective and environmentally sound for California's consumers and taxpayers. In 2005, a second Energy Action Plan was adopted by the CEC and CPUC to reflect various policy changes and actions of the prior two years. In 2008, the CEC and CPUC determined that it was not necessary or productive to prepare a new energy action plan. This determination was based in part on a finding that the state's energy policies have been significantly influenced by the passage of Assembly Bill (AB) 32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (discussed below). Rather than produce a new energy action plan, the CEC and CPUC prepared an "update" that examines the state's ongoing actions in the context of global climate change.

### **Renewable Portfolios Standard Program**

Established in 2002 under SB 1078, accelerated in 2006 under SB 107, in 2011 under SBX1-2, in 2015 under SB 350, and again in 2018 under SB 100, California's Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) required retail sellers of electric services to increase procurement from eligible renewable energy resources to 33 percent of total retail sales by 2020. Initially, the RPS provisions applied to investor-owned utilities, community choice aggregators, and electric service providers. SBX1-2 added, for the first time, publicly owned utilities to the entities subject to RPS.

SB 350, signed in 2015, increased the RPS from 33 percent in 2020 to 50 percent by 2030. This will increase the use of RPS eligible resources, including solar, wind, biomass, and geothermal. In addition, large utilities are required to develop and submit Integrated Resource Plans to detail how each entity will meet their customers resource needs, reduce GHG emissions, and increase the use of clean energy.

SB 100, subsequently signed in 2018, increased the standards set forth in SB 350 establishing that 44 percent of the total electricity sold to retail customers in California per year by December 31, 2024, 52 percent by December 31, 2027, and 60 percent by December 31, 2030, be secured from qualifying renewable energy sources. SB 100 states that it is the policy of the state that eligible renewable energy resources and zero-carbon resources supply 100 percent of the retail sales of electricity to California. This bill requires that the achievement of 100 percent zero-carbon electricity resources do not increase the carbon emissions elsewhere in the western grid and that the goal not be realized through resource shuffling.

SB 1020 (September 2022) revises the standards from SB 100, requiring the following percentage of retail sales of electricity to California end-use customers come from eligible renewable energy resources and zero-carbon resources:

- 90 percent by December 31, 2035;
- 95 percent by December 31, 2040; and
- 100 percent by December 31, 2045.

### **AB 32 (2006) and SB 32 (2016)**

The California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, widely known as AB 32, requires that CARB develop and enforce regulations for the reporting and verification of statewide GHG emissions. CARB is directed by AB 32 to set a GHG emission limit, based on 1990 levels, to be achieved by 2020.

SB 32 (Amendments to the California Global Warming Solutions Action of 2006) extends California's GHG reduction programs beyond 2020. SB 32 amended the H&SC to include Section 38566, which contains language to authorize CARB to achieve a statewide GHG emission reduction of at least 40 percent below 1990 levels by no later than December 31, 2030. SB 32 codified the targets established by Executive Order (EO) B-30-15 for 2030, which set the next interim step in the State's continuing efforts to pursue the long-term target expressed in EO S-3-05 of 80 percent below 1990 emissions levels by 2050. Additional details of AB 32 and SB 32 are provided in Section 4.8, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*.

### **California Building Standards**

#### Title 24, Part 6

California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 24 Part 6: California's Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings were first established in 1978 in response to a legislative mandate to reduce California's energy consumption. Energy-efficient buildings require less electricity, natural gas, and other fuels. Electricity production from fossil fuels and on-site fuel combustion (typically for space or water heating) results in GHG emissions.

The Title 24 standards are updated approximately every three years to allow consideration and possible incorporation of new energy efficiency technologies and methods. The 2022 Title 24 standards became effective on January 1, 2023. The 2022 update to the Building Energy Efficiency Standards focuses on several key areas to improve the energy efficiency of newly constructed buildings and additions and alterations to existing buildings. New for the 2022 Title 24 standards are non-residential on-site photovoltaic (solar panels) electricity generation and storage requirements and electrification requirements for appliances and heating technologies (California Energy Commission 2022).

The standards are divided into three basic sets. First, there is a basic set of mandatory requirements that apply to all buildings. Second, there is a set of performance standards—the energy budgets—that vary by climate zone (of which there are 16 in California) and building type; thus, the standards are tailored to local conditions. Finally, the third set constitutes an alternative to the performance standards, which is a set of prescriptive packages that are essentially a recipe or a checklist compliance approach.

### Title 24, Part 11

The California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen; CCR Title 24, Part 11) is a code with mandatory requirements for all nonresidential buildings (including industrial buildings) and residential buildings for which no other state agency has authority to adopt green building standards. The current 2022 Standards for new construction of, and additions and alterations to, residential and nonresidential buildings went into effect on January 1, 2023.

The development of CALGreen is intended to (1) cause a reduction in GHG emissions from buildings; (2) promote environmentally responsible, cost-effective, healthier places to live and work; (3) reduce energy and water consumption; and (4) respond to the directives by the Governor. In short, the code is established to reduce construction waste; make buildings more efficient in the use of materials and energy; and reduce environmental impact during and after construction. The 2022 CALGreen Code improves upon the 2019 CALGreen Code by updating standards for bicycle parking, electric vehicle charging, and water efficiency and conservation. The 2022 standards encourage efficient electric heat pumps, establish electric-ready requirements for new homes, expand solar photovoltaic and battery storage standards, strengthen ventilation standards, and more.

CALGreen contains requirements for storm water control during construction; construction waste reduction; indoor water use reduction; material selection; natural resource conservation; site irrigation conservation; and more. The code provides for design options allowing the designer to determine how best to achieve compliance for a given site or building condition. The code also requires building commissioning, which is a process for the verification that all building systems, like heating and cooling equipment and lighting systems, are functioning at their maximum efficiency.

### **AB 1493 and Fuel Efficiency Standards**

AB 1493 (Pavley) requires that CARB develop and adopt regulations that achieve “the maximum feasible reduction of GHGs emitted by passenger vehicles and light-duty truck and other vehicles determined by CARB to be vehicles whose primary use is noncommercial personal transportation in the State.” On September 24, 2009, CARB adopted amendments to the Pavley regulations that intend to reduce GHG emissions in new passenger vehicles from 2009 through 2016. The amendments bind California’s enforcement of AB 1493 (starting in 2009), while providing vehicle

manufacturers with new compliance flexibility. In January 2012, CARB approved a new emissions-control program for model years 2017 through 2025. The program combines the control of smog, soot, and global warming gases and requirements for greater numbers of zero-emission vehicles into a single packet of standards called Advanced Clean Cars (CARB 2024b)

### **California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines – Appendix F, Energy Conservation**

CEQA Guidelines Appendix F, Energy Conservation, provides guidance for environmental impact reports regarding potential energy impacts of proposed projects, with particular emphasis on avoiding or reducing the inefficient, wasteful, and unnecessary consumption of energy. In addition, though not described as thresholds for determining the significance of impacts, Appendix F seeks inclusion of information in the environmental impact report addressing the following topics:

- The project's energy requirements and its energy-use efficiencies by amount and fuel type for each stage of the project, including construction, operation, maintenance, and/or removal. If appropriate, the energy intensiveness of materials may be discussed.
- The effects of the project on local and regional energy supplies and on requirements for additional capacity.
- The effects of the project on peak and base period demands for electricity and other forms of energy.
- The degree to which the project complies with existing energy standards.
- The effects of the project on energy resources.
- The project's projected transportation energy use requirements and its overall use of efficient transportation alternatives.

#### **4.6.2.3 Local**

##### **City of Santee General Plan**

The Housing Element of the City's General Plan (City 2022) includes the following energy-related policies that are applicable to the Project.

- **Policy 3.2:** Implement the City's Climate Action Plan. Promote design concepts that utilize technological advances in the application of alternative energy sources which make the use of the natural climate to increase energy efficiency and reduce housing costs.

The Mobility Element of the City's General Plan (City 2017) includes the following energy-related policies that are applicable to the Project.

- **Policy 9.1:** The City shall encourage and provide for Ride Sharing, Park 'n Ride, and other similar commuter programs that eliminate vehicles from freeways and arterials.
- **Policy 9.2:** The City should encourage businesses to provide flexible work schedules for employees.



- **Policy 9.3:** The City should encourage employers to offer shared commute programs and/or incentives for employees to use transit.
- **Policy 9.4:** The City should encourage the use of alternative transportation modes, such as walking, cycling and public transit. The City should maintain and implement the policies and recommendations of the Bicycle Master Plan and Safe Routes to School Plan to improve safe bicycle and pedestrian access to major destinations.
- **Policy 9.5:** The City should improve safety of walking and biking environment around schools to reduce school-related vehicle trips.

### **Sustainable Santee Plan: The City's Roadmap to Greenhouse Gas Reductions**

In January 2020, the City adopted the Sustainable Santee Plan that, as a qualified GHG emissions reduction plan in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5, provides GHG emissions reduction goals and strategies focused on reducing resource consumption, improving alternative modes of transportation, and reducing overall emissions throughout the City (City 2019). The Sustainable Santee Plan presents the City's community-wide GHG inventories for the years 2005, 2008, 2012, and 2013 and municipal GHG inventories for the years 2005 and 2013. The Business as Usual (BAU) and adjusted BAU forecasts are presented for the years 2020, 2030, and 2035. An interim goal consistent with SB 32, which is to reduce emissions to 40 percent below 2005 levels, was created for 2030. A longer-term goal was established for 2035, which is to reduce emissions to 49 percent below 2005 levels. The interim and longer-term goals would put the City on a path toward the state's long-term goal to achieve net carbon neutrality statewide by 2045. The Sustainable Santee Plan also identifies GHG reduction strategies to help the City achieve its GHG reduction targets.

#### **4.6.3 Significance Determination Thresholds**

Thresholds used to evaluate potential impacts related to energy are based on applicable criteria in CEQA Guidelines Appendix G. A significant impact associated with could occur if implementation of the proposed project would:

- 1) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation, or
- 2) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

#### **4.6.4 Methodology**

##### **4.6.4.1 TCSP Area and Arts and Entertainment Neighborhood (AEN)**

The evaluation of potential impacts related to energy usage that may result from construction and operation of the TCSP Area and AEN has been conducted as described below. This analysis of impacts to energy resources qualitatively discusses the proposed project's temporary (i.e., construction) and permanent (i.e., operational) effects-based significance criteria/threshold's application, outlined above. The impact conclusions consider the potential for changes in environmental conditions, as well as compliance with the regulatory framework enacted to protect the environment.

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#### 4.6.4.2 Housing Element Sites

##### Units of Measure

The units of energy used in this section are the British thermal units (Btu), kWh, therms, and gallons. A Btu is the quantity of heat required to raise the temperature of one pound of water one °F at sea level. Because the other units of energy can all be converted into equivalent Btu, the Btu is used as the basis for comparing energy consumption associated with different resources and is often expressed in millions of Btus (MMBTU). A kWh is a unit of electrical energy, and one kWh is equivalent to approximately 3,413 Btus, taking into account initial conversion losses (i.e., from one type of energy, such as chemical, to another type of energy, such as mechanical) and transmission losses. Natural gas consumption is described typically in terms of cubic feet or therms; one cubic foot of natural gas is equivalent to approximately 1.05 MMBtu, and one therm represents 0.1 MMBtu. One gallon of gasoline/diesel is equivalent to approximately 0.125/0.139 MMBtu, respectively, taking into account energy consumed in the refining process.

##### Modeling and Calculations

The Housing Element sites' direct electricity and natural gas consumption as well as the indirect electricity consumption from water/wastewater sourcing, transport, and treatment were estimated from the air quality and GHG emissions project modeling completed using the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod), Version 2022.1, as described Section 4.3, Air Quality, and Section 4.8, Greenhouse Gas Emissions. Fuel consumption factors in terms of gallons per hour of diesel for off-road equipment were calculated using data from the CARB Mobile Source Emissions Inventory online database—OFFROAD2021 version 1.0.5 (CARB 2024). Fuel consumption factors, in terms of gallon of diesel and gasoline per mile travel, were calculated from the CARB Mobile Source Emissions Inventory online database—EMFAC2021 version 1.0.2 (CARB 2024). The energy calculation sheets are included as Appendix G.

Energy usage from transportation sources is associated with project-related vehicle trip generation and trip length. Based on the project trip generation rate from the Local Transportation Study, the four strategic Housing Element sites would generate 8,520 new average daily trips (ADT) (Intersecting Metrics 2024). Default trip distances from CalEEMod were applied to these trips.

Building energy consumption was estimated assuming default natural gas and electricity demand quantities from CalEEMod.

Indirect energy consumption from water/wastewater sourcing and treatment was estimated based on the CalEEMod indoor and outdoor water use estimates, and from CalEEMod default values for water/wastewater electricity use intensity factors for San Diego County (CAPCOA 2022).

#### **4.6.5 Issue 1: Energy Consumption**

*Would the project result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during Project construction or operation?*

##### **4.6.5.1 Impact Analysis**

#### **TCSP Area and Arts and Entertainment Neighborhood (AEN)**

##### Construction

Construction grading and construction activities consume energy through the operation of heavy off-road equipment, trucks, and worker traffic. At the program-level, it is too speculative to quantify total construction-related energy consumption of future development in the TCSP area and AEN, either in total or by fuel type. Energy used during future construction of the project areas is not considered significant given typical energy use associated with the type of development proposed and short-term nature of the energy consumption. There are no conditions in the project areas that would require non-standard equipment or construction practices that would increase fuel-energy consumption above typical rates. Consistent with state requirements, all construction equipment would meet CARB Tier 3 In-Use Off-Road Diesel Engine Standards. Engines are required to meet certain emission standards, and groups of standards are referred to as Tiers. A Tier 0 engine is unregulated with no emission controls, and each progression of standard level (i.e., Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 3, etc.) generate lower emissions, use less energy, and are more advanced technologically than the previous tier. CARB's Tier 3 In-Use Off-Road Diesel Engine Standards requires that construction equipment fleets become cleaner and use less energy over time. Therefore, the project would not result in a wasteful and inefficient use of energy resources during the construction of future development, and impacts would be less than significant.

##### Operation

Long-term operational energy use associated with buildout of the TCSP area and AEN includes fuel consumption of vehicles; electricity and natural gas consumption by residents and commercial operations, and energy consumption related to obtaining water. Anticipated housing will be multi-family housing, which is a more efficient way to provide housing than lower density single-family development. Although the project would provide capacity for future housing and non-residential development that could increase energy use, energy demand of future development within urbanized infill areas would be consistent with energy demand for development within other cities in the region and would not be associated with inefficient or wasteful energy use. Implementation of the project would not result in any unusual characteristics that would result in excessive long-term operational building energy demand. Future development associated with implementation of development in the TCSP area and AEN would be subject to compliance with the California Building Code Title 24 which aims to reduce excessive and inefficient energy use. The California Building Code is regularly updated and includes higher energy-efficiency standards in comparison to other states. Individual development projects in the City would be required to comply with applicable federal, state, and local energy and building regulations, including the requirements of the Sustainable Santee Plan.

## Housing Element Sites

### Construction

Energy consumed for construction of the Housing Element sites would primarily consist of fuels in the form of diesel and gasoline. Fuel consumption would result from: the use of on-road trucks for the transportation of construction materials and water; construction worker vehicles traveling to and from the project site; and from the use of off-road construction equipment. A complete description of the project construction equipment use and vehicle trips is included in Appendix G. The estimated fuel and total energy consumed during project construction is shown in Table 1, *Construction Energy Use*. The full construction energy consumption calculation sheets are included as Attachment A to Appendix G.

**Table 4.6-1  
CONSTRUCTION ENERGY USE**

Source	Gallons Diesel	Gallons Gasoline	Gallons Natural Gas	kWh	MMBtu
Off-Road Construction Equipment	68,124	-	-	-	9,469
On-Road Construction Traffic	62,709	191,133	2,582	121,101	33,189
<b>Total<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>130,834</b>	<b>191,133</b>	<b>2,582</b>	<b>121,101</b>	<b>42,659</b>

Source: CalEEMod; CARB 2024

<sup>1</sup> Totals may not sum due to rounding.

MMBtu = million British thermal units

While construction activities would consume petroleum-based fuels, consumption of such resources would be temporary and would cease upon the completion of construction. The petroleum consumed during project construction would be typical of similar residential projects and would not require the use of new petroleum resources beyond those typically consumed in California annually for construction activities. The proposed project would be required to comply with CARB's Airborne Toxics Control Measure, which restricts heavy-duty diesel vehicle idling time to no more than five minutes. Furthermore, the project's construction practices would be typical, and would not require specialized construction equipment or otherwise present unusual circumstances in which substantial amounts of fuel would be required. Based on these considerations, construction of the Housing Element sites would not result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources and the impact would be less than significant.

### Operation

During long-term operation of the Housing Element sites, energy would be consumed in the form of diesel and gasoline used by vehicles traveling to and from the project site; electricity required to source and treat water used by the project; and electricity and natural gas used directly by the project. The project's estimated annual operational energy use in gallons of fuel, electricity, natural gas, and equivalent MMBtu is shown in Table 4.6-2, *Operational Energy Use*. The energy calculation sheets are included in Appendix G.

**Table 4.6-2  
OPERATIONAL ENERGY USE**

Source	Diesel (gallons)	Gasoline (gallons)	Natural Gas (MMBtu)	Electricity (kWh)	Total Energy (MMBtu)
Mobile	69,365	512,609	705	298,673	74,930
Water/Wastewater	-	-	-	706,882	2,412
Direct Electricity Use	-	-	-	5,189,080	17,705,877
Direct Natural Gas Use	-	-	14,991	-	14,991
<b>Total<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>69,365</b>	<b>512,609</b>	<b>15,696</b>	<b>6,194,635</b>	<b>110,038</b>

Source: CalEEMod; CARB 2024

<sup>1</sup> Totals may not sum due to rounding.

kWhr = kilowatt-hours; MMBtu = million British thermal units

As shown in Table 4.6-2, the project would result in a net increase in annual energy consumption of approximately 110,038 MMBtu. While the proposed project would result in the consumption of energy, the increase would consistent overall with the energy projections for the state and the region to meet the demands of anticipated future residential growth in the state and region. Implementation of the project would not require the construction of new regional facilities and sources of energy.

#### *Electricity and Natural Gas*

The project does not involve any unusual characteristics that would result in excessive long-term operational demand for electricity or natural gas. The applicable state plans that address renewable energy and energy efficiency are CALGreen, the California Energy Code, and RPS, and the applicable local plan is the General Plan and Sustainable Santee Plan. All future development projects would be required to meet the mandatory energy requirements of 2022 CALGreen and the 2022 California Energy Code, at a minimum. The project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of CALGreen and the California Energy Code, or with SDG&E's implementation of RPS. Project adherence with state and federal regulations and the Sustainable Santee Plan goals will guide reductions in the City's collective long-term operational energy use. Impacts relative to the inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary consumption of energy would be less than significant.

#### *Transportation*

Buildout of the Housing Element sites would consume energy associated with transportation uses. Trips by individuals traveling to and from the project area would largely rely on passenger vehicles or public transit. Passenger vehicles would be powered by gasoline, diesel and electricity. Public transit would be powered by diesel or natural gas, and could potentially be fueled by electricity, as is the case with the ~~Green-Copper~~ Line Trolley that terminates within one-half mile of sites 16A and 16B. As discussed in Section 4.16, the project would result in a less than significant transportation impact. The TCSP prioritizes pedestrian-oriented development through the provisions of a mixed-use design, multi-use pathways, trail connectivity, bike lanes, and access to public transit. These measures would reduce reliance on passenger vehicles for travel within the Housing Element sites, further minimizing VMT and energy consumption. Impacts would be less than significant.

#### **4.6.5.2 Mitigation Measures**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

No mitigation is required.

#### **4.6.5.3 Significance After Mitigation**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

#### **4.6.6 Issue 2: State or Local Plans**

*Would the project conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?*

#### **4.6.6.1 Impact Analysis**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

The proposed TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would comply with applicable energy standards and regulations during construction and would be built and operated in accordance with existing, applicable building regulations at the time of construction, as mandated by Title 24 energy efficiency standards. The project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of CALGreen or with SDG&E's implementation of RPS. Therefore, the project would not conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency, and impacts would be less than significant.

#### **4.6.6.2 Mitigation Measures**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

No mitigation is required.

#### **4.6.6.3 Significance After Mitigation**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

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## 4.7 Geology and Soils

The following sections analyzes the potential environmental impacts that may occur to geology and soils as a result of implementation of the proposed project.

### 4.7.1 Existing Conditions

#### 4.7.1.1 Regional Geology

San Diego is located within the western (coastal) portion of the Peninsular Ranges Geomorphic Province of California. The Peninsular Ranges encompass an area that roughly extends from the Transverse Ranges and the Los Angeles Basin, south to the Mexican border, and beyond another approximately 800 miles to the tip of Baja California. The geomorphic province varies in width from approximately 30 to 100 miles, most of which is characterized by northwest-trending mountain ranges separated by subparallel fault zones. In general, the Peninsular Ranges are underlain by Jurassic-age metavolcanic and metasedimentary rocks and by Cretaceous-age igneous rocks of the southern California batholith. Geologic cover over the basement rocks in the westernmost portion of the province in San Diego County generally consists of Upper Cretaceous-, Tertiary-, and Quaternary-age sedimentary rocks.

The City lies near the junction of a relatively narrow coastal plain and the Peninsular Mountain Ranges of southwestern California and Baja California. The coastal plain is made up of a series of marine terraces, which are deeply incised by canyons and tributaries, including the channel of the San Diego River, which bisects the City. Much of the City is located within the San Diego River valley; however, the northern part of the City is located on the highest of these old marine terraces. In the southeastern part of the City, the marine terrace and valley province ends abruptly in the foothills of the Peninsular Ranges (City 2003d).

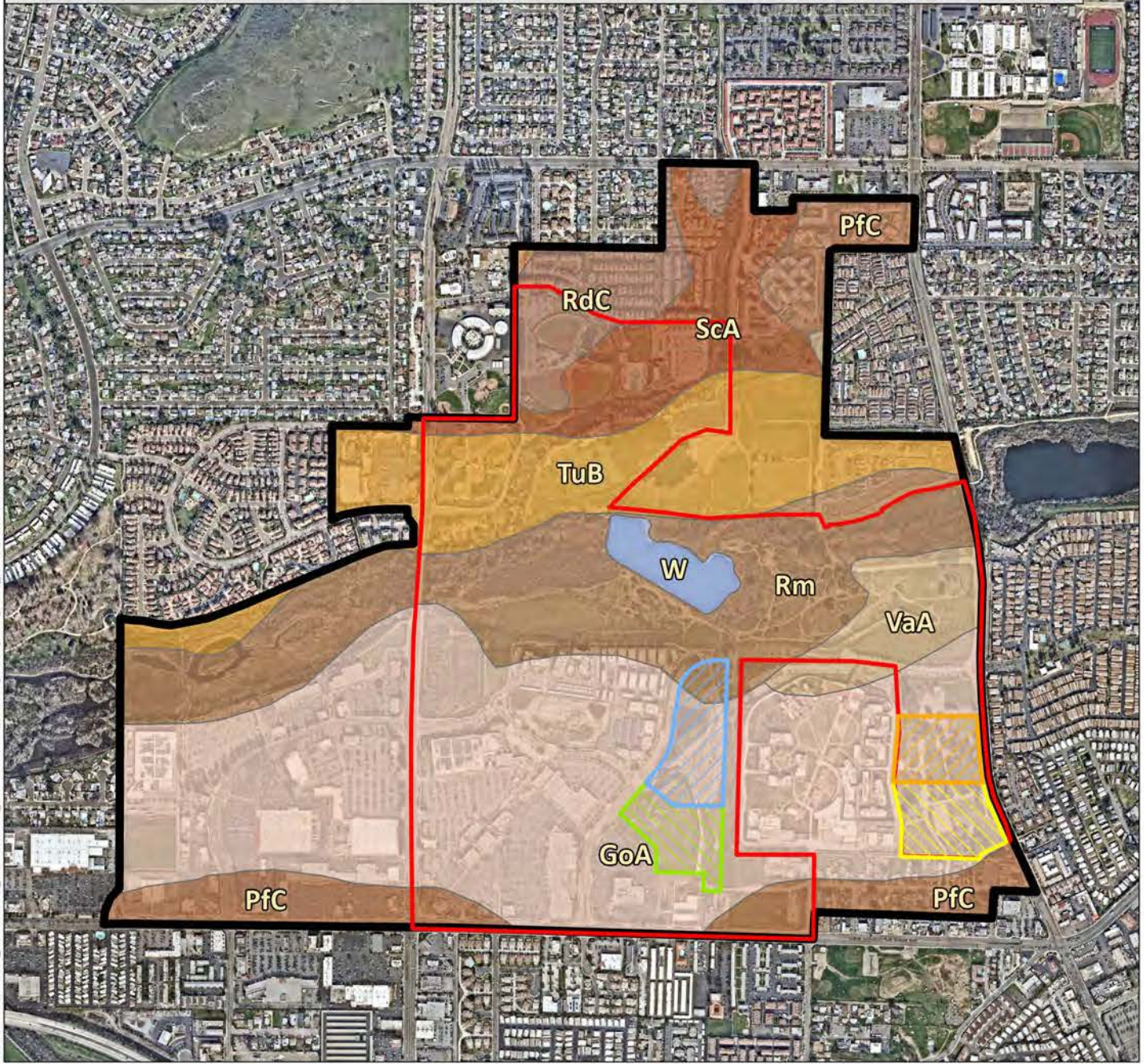
#### 4.7.1.2 Soils

Ten soil types occur within the City boundaries: clay, loam, sand, sandy loam, igneous rock land, stony land, terrace escarpments, riverwash, water, and urban land complex. As shown in Figure 4.7-1, *TCSP Soil Types*, the Town Center Specific Plan (TCSP) area including the five neighborhoods and Arts and Entertainment Neighborhood (AEN) are underlain by sandy loam, riverwash, water, clay and loam, and sandy loam underlies the Housing Element sites.

Expansive soils are characterized by significant volume changes (shrink or swell) due to variations in moisture content. Expansion of the soil may result in unacceptable settlement or heave of structures or concrete slabs supported on grade. Changes in soil moisture content can result from precipitation, landscape irrigation, utility leakage, roof drainage, perched groundwater, drought, or other factors. Soils with relatively high fines content (clays dominantly) are generally considered expansive or potentially expansive. These soils may be found in areas underlain by the Friars Formation and in areas underlain by young colluvial or undocumented fill soils (Figure 4.7-2, *TCSP Geologic Formations*). Compressible and expansive soils (primarily in Friars Formation slopes) and shallow groundwater are in the Sycamore Canyon Creek drainage (City 2020a).



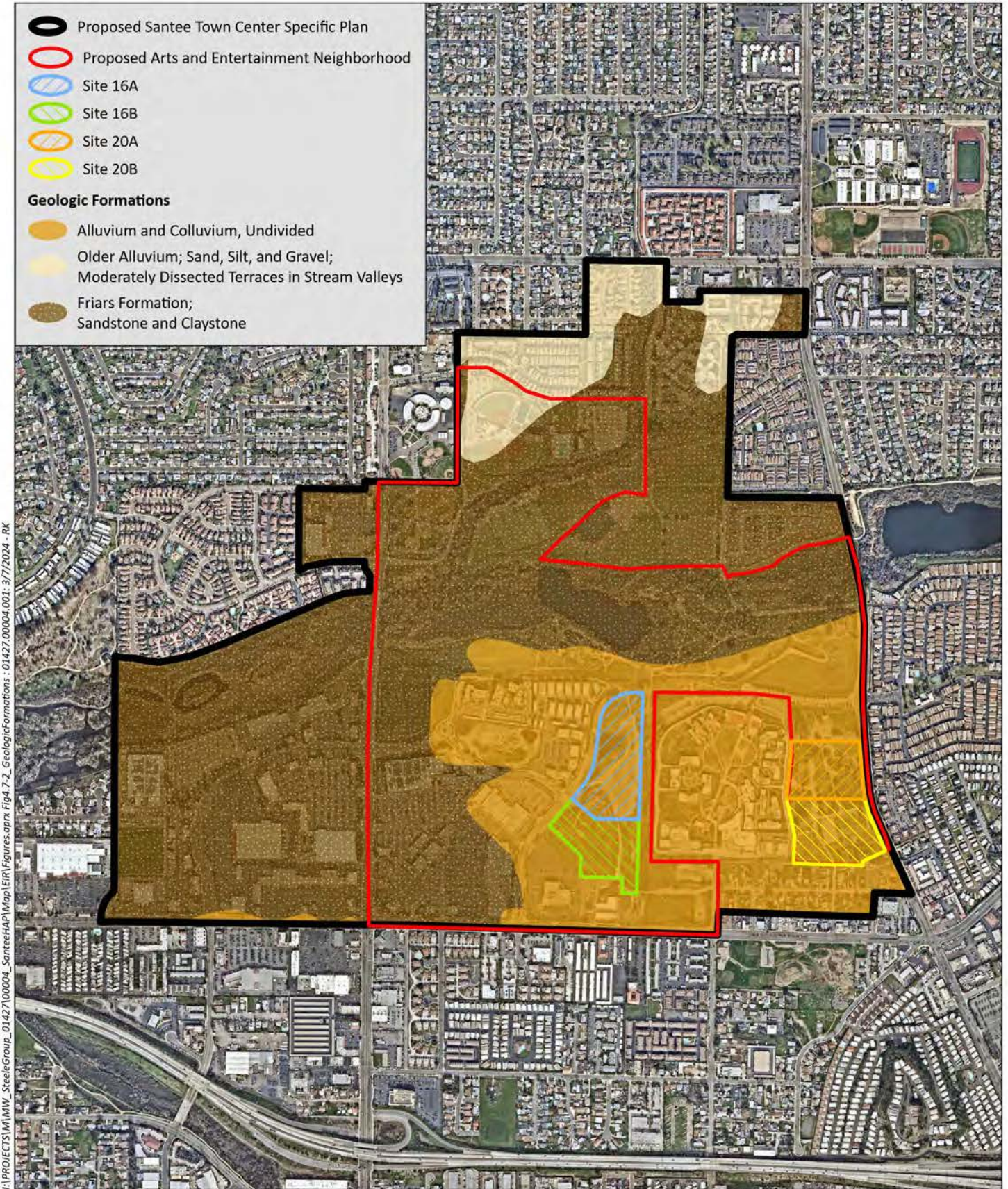
-  Proposed Santee Town Center Specific Plan
  -  Proposed Arts and Entertainment Neighborhood
  -  Site 16A
  -  Site 16B
  -  Site 20A
  -  Site 20B
- Soils**
-  Diablo clay, 2 to 9 percent slopes (DaC)
  -  Grangeville fine sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes (GoA)
  -  Placentia sandy loam, thick surface, 2 to 9 percent slopes (PfC)
  -  Ramona sandy loam, 2 to 5 percent slopes (RaB)
  -  Redding gravelly loam, 2 to 9 percent slopes (RdC)
  -  Riverwash (Rm)
  -  Salinas clay, 0 to 2 percent slopes (ScA)
  -  Tujunga sand, 0 to 5 percent slopes (TuB)
  -  Visalia sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes (VaA)
  -  Water (W)



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Source: Aerial (SanGIS, 2023)





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### 4.7.1.3 Geologic Hazards

#### Faulting and Seismicity

There are no active or potentially active faults within or adjacent to the City. The Rose Canyon Fault Zone, located approximately 10 miles west of the City, is the closest known active fault; however, the City, like all other areas in California, is subject to periodic seismic shaking due to the earthquakes along remote or regional active faults. Table 4.7-1, *Faults in the Vicinity of the City*, lists all known active faults within a 50-mile radius of the City and their associated maximum earthquake moment magnitude.

**Table 4.7-1  
FAULTS IN THE VICINITY OF THE CITY**

Fault Name	Maximum Distance from City (miles)	Maximum Earthquake Moment Magnitude (Mw)
Rose Canyon	10	6.9
Newport-Inglewood	15	7.5
Elsinore	26	7.9
Coronado Bank	28	7.4
Palos Verdes Connected	28	7.7
Earthquake Valley	31	6.8
San Jacinto	47	7.9

Source: Geotechnical Investigation for Fanita Commons, Orchard Village, and Vineyard Village, May 2020 (included as appendix G1 in the Fanita Ranch Final EIR [Santee 2020]).

#### Liquefaction

Liquefaction typically occurs within areas with seismic activity where on-site soils are cohesionless, groundwater is encountered within 50 feet of the surface, and soil relative density is less than approximately 70 percent. The potential for liquefaction during a strong earthquake is limited to those soils which are in a relatively loose, unconsolidated condition and located below the water table. Within the City, the soil deposits that may be susceptible to liquefaction are the alluvial soils found in the San Diego River and its deeper tributary channels. The TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites are all in areas susceptible to liquefaction, except for a small portion of the TCSP area west of Magnolia Avenue and north of Mission Gorge Road.

#### Landslides and Debris Flow Deposits

Areas having the potential for earthquake-induced landslides generally occur within areas of previous landslide movement, or where local topographic, geological, geotechnical, and subsurface water conditions indicate a potential for permanent ground displacement. Debris flows are caused by high rainfall, steep slopes, loss of vegetation cover, and thick overburden. The primary difference between ancient landslides and debris flows is that, by definition, debris flows do not possess a basal slip surface. Therefore, debris flows are less likely to become reactivated by grading than ancient landslides.

Landslides, or landslide prone material, exist predominantly in the northern portion of the City, generally below the 600-foot elevation. Some of this area has been previously altered to remediate the potential effects of slope instability. Compressible and expansive soils (primarily in Friars Formation slopes) and shallow groundwater are in the Sycamore Canyon Creek drainage (City 2020). Areas of potential landslide and liquefaction are shown in Figure 4.7-3. The TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites are not located within a landslide susceptible area.

### **Groundwater/Seepage**

Groundwater and seepage conditions are significant factors in assessing engineering and geologic hazards. Groundwater is typically found in the deep alluvial drainage areas such as the San Diego River channel but may also be found in shallower drainages as a result of storm water infiltration. Seepage is typically the result of a groundwater table or perched water, either seasonal or permanent, being exposed at the ground surface. Groundwater and seepage are major contributing factors to landslides in San Diego County, especially in the reactivation of old landslides.

Perched groundwater or seepage has been encountered during previous investigations in the City within alluvial drainages and hillside areas. The groundwater/seepage in drainage courses is presumed to be associated with surface runoff of rainwater along the natural watershed (City 2003d).

#### **4.7.1.4 Paleontological Resources**

Paleontological resources are the remains or indications of ancient non-human organisms. They are scarce non-renewable natural resources. Fossil remains such as bones, teeth, shells, and leaves are found in geologic deposits (rock formations) where they were originally buried. As a result, the potential for fossils in each area can be predicted based on known relationships between geologic formations and fossil occurrences.

The Eocene-age Stadium Conglomerate and Friars Formation underlie the City. Friars Formation deposits are found overlying the granitic rocks in the southern and north-central parts of the City, while the Stadium Conglomerate occurs throughout the southwestern and northern parts of the City underlying the high terrace and overlying both the granitic rocks and the Friars Formation. While both the Friars Formation and the Stadium Conglomerate are considered to have a high paleontological resource potential (Deméré and Walsh 1993), as shown in Figure 4.7-2, the TCSP area, including the AEN, and Housing Element sites are not located within either of these geologic formations. However, while the project area is not located on formations with high sensitivity (Friars and Stadium Conglomerate), alluvial deposits of mountain valley and older Quaternary alluvial fans in the project area could contain formations with moderate sensitivity (County 2009).

## **4.7.2 Regulatory Framework**

### **4.7.2.1 Federal**

#### **National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act**

The National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act was passed to reduce the risks to life and property resulting from earthquakes. The act established the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program (NEHRP). The mission of NEHRP includes improved understanding, characterization, and prediction of hazards and vulnerabilities; improved building codes and land

use practices; risk reduction through post-earthquake investigations and education; development and improvement of design and construction techniques; improved mitigation capacity; and accelerated application of research results. NEHRP designates the Federal Emergency Management Agency as the lead agency of the program and assigns several planning, coordinating, and reporting responsibilities. Other NEHRP agencies include the National Institute of Standards and Technology, National Science Foundation, and the U.S. Geological Survey.

### **Uniform Building Code**

The Uniform Building Code is a model building code that provides the basis for the California Building Code (CBC). The Uniform Building Code defines different regions of the United States and ranks them according to their seismic hazard potential. There are four types of these regions, which include Seismic Zones 1 through 4, with Zone 1 having the least seismic potential and Zone 4 having the highest seismic potential. The City, and therefore the proposed project area, is located in Seismic Zone 4.

#### **4.7.2.2 State**

##### **Earthquake Fault Zoning Act (Alquist-Priolo Act)**

The State of California Earthquake Fault Zoning Act (Alquist-Priolo Act) (1972) was established to mitigate the hazard of surface faulting to structures for human occupancy. Pursuant to the act, the State Geologist has established regulatory zones (known as earthquake fault zones) around surface traces of active faults. These have been mapped for affected cities, including San Diego, and are called the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map. Application for a development permit for any project within a delineated earthquake fault zone shall be accompanied by a geologic report, prepared by a geologist registered in the State of California, that is directed to the problem of potential surface fault displacement through a project site.

##### **California Building Code (CBC)**

The CBC, also known as the California Building Standards Code, is included in Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations. The CBC incorporates the International Building Code, a model building code adopted across the United States. Through the CBC, the state provides a minimum standard for building design and construction. The CBC contains specific requirements for seismic safety, foundations, retaining walls, and site demolition. The CBC also includes provisions for grading, including drainage and erosion control. The CBC provides minimum standards to protect property and public safety by regulating the design and construction of excavations, foundations, building frames, retaining walls, and other building elements to mitigate the effects of seismic shaking and adverse soil conditions. The CBC has provisions for earthquake safety based on factors including occupancy type, the types of soil and rock on-site, and the strength of ground shaking with specified probability of occurring at a site.

##### **California Seismic Hazards Mapping Act**

The Seismic Hazards Mapping Act, passed in 1990, addresses non-surface fault rupture earthquake hazards, including liquefaction and seismically induced landslides. Under this act, seismic hazard zones are to be mapped by the State Geologist to assist local governments in land use planning. The act states that it is a necessity to identify and map seismic hazards so that cities and counties can adequately prepare the safety element of their general plan as well as encourage land use management policies and regulations to reduce and mitigate those hazards

to protect public health and safety. According to Section 2697(a) of the act, cities and counties shall require a geotechnical report defining and delineating any seismic hazard related to a project, prior to the approval.

### **California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 3, Chapter 1**

Title 14, Division 3, Chapter 1 of the California Code of Regulations prohibits any person from destroying, disturbing, or mutilating geological features including paleontological resources. This applies to all future excavation and grading activities that would be performed within the project sites.

#### **4.7.2.3 Local**

##### **General Plan**

The City's General Plan includes various goals, objectives, and policies relating to geological conditions, the application of which would help to avoid geological hazards, including the following:

##### *Safety Element*

Objective 2.0: Minimize the loss of life and destruction of property in Santee caused by seismic and geologic hazards.

- **Policy 2.1:** The City should utilize existing and evolving geologic, geophysical, and engineering knowledge to distinguish and delineate those areas that are particularly susceptible to damage from seismic and other geologic conditions.
- **Policy 2.2:** The City should ensure that if a project is proposed in an area identified herein as seismically and/or geologically hazardous, the proposal shall demonstrate through appropriate geologic studies and investigations that either the unfavorable conditions do not exist in the specific area in question or that they may be avoided or mitigated through proper site planning, design, and construction.
- **Policy 2.3:** The City shall require that all potential geotechnical and soil hazards be fully investigated at the environmental review stage prior to project approval. Such investigations shall include those identified by Table 8.1, *Determination of Geotechnical Studies Required*, in the Safety Element, and such soil studies as may be warranted by results of the Initial Environmental Study. Group descriptions and requirements are described below:
  1. Group I: Occupancy Category 1, Essential and Critical facilities (hospitals, fire and police, power generation, communications, and dams. In addition, Occupancy Category 2, hazardous facilities including structures housing or supporting toxic or explosive chemicals or substances.
  2. Group II: Occupancy Category 3, Special Occupancy structures including schools, churches, main roads, large commercial and industrial structures, high-rises, and other high occupancy structures.



3. Group III: Occupancy Category 4, Residential, single-family homes, small apartments, motels, small commercial and industrial structures, and warehouses.
4. Group IV: Relatively insensitive to geologic or seismic risk including golf courses, open spaces, parks, and landfill areas. Landfill areas may require detailed geologic studies for environmental considerations.

Geotechnical investigation requirements that would apply to new projects within the project area are described in Table 4.7-2, *Geotechnical Studies Required*, below.

**Table 4.7-2  
GEOTECHNICAL STUDIES REQUIRED**

<b>Stability Category</b>	<b>Group I</b>	<b>Group II</b>	<b>Group III</b>	<b>Group IV</b>
Generally Stable Areas: Underlain by granitic rock or gentle slopes	Geotechnical Investigation; Geologic Investigation; Seismic Hazard Study	Geotechnical Investigation; Reconnaissance Seismic Hazard Study	Geotechnical Investigation; Geologic Reconnaissance	Geologic Reconnaissance
Moderately Stable Areas: Underlain by Stadium Conglomerate	Geotechnical Investigation; Geologic Investigation; Seismic Hazard Study	Geotechnical Investigation; Geologic Investigation; Seismic Hazard Study	Geotechnical Investigation; Geologic Reconnaissance	Geologic Reconnaissance
Moderately Unstable Areas: Underlain by Friars Formation, Landslides, or debris flow	Geotechnical Investigation; Geologic Investigation; Seismic Hazard Study	Geotechnical Investigation; Geologic Investigation; Seismic Hazard Study	Geotechnical Investigation; Geologic Investigation; Seismic Hazard Study	Geologic Reconnaissance
Potentially Liquefiable Areas: Possibly underlain by alluvium and a high water table	Geotechnical Investigation; Geologic Investigation; Seismic Hazard Study	Geotechnical Investigation; Geologic Investigation; Seismic Hazard Study	Geotechnical Investigation; Geologic Investigation; Seismic Hazard Study	Geologic Reconnaissance

Source: City 2003d

## **Municipal Code**

### Title 11 - Grading Ordinance

The Grading Ordinance establishes minimum requirements for grading, excavating, and filling of land (Santee Municipal Code [SMC] Section 11.40.020(A)) to ensure that future development of land occurs in the manner most compatible with surrounding natural areas to have the least adverse effect upon other persons, land, or the public (SMC Section 11.40.030(A)).

All grading consistent with the Grading Ordinance are required to prepare preliminary soil engineering and geology reports. Any recommendations contained in the approved reports become part of and are incorporated into the grading plans and specifications and become conditions of the grading permit (SMC Section 11.40.300(A)).

Preliminary geological investigations and reports are required for all land development projects designated as Group I or Group II, except those Group II projects located in Zone “A” as shown on Safety Element Figure 8-3, *Seismic Hazards and Study Areas Map* (for which a geological reconnaissance will be required), as outlined in Table 8.1 of the City’s General Plan (SMC Section 11.40.130(D)). The TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites are not located in Zone “A”.

A seismicity study and report is required for all land development projects designated as Group I and for those designated as Group II and located in Zone “C” shown on Figure 8-3, of the Safety Element of the City’s General Plan. The TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites are all located in Zone “C,” meaning a seismic study is required. The report must be prepared by an engineering geologist or a soil engineer with expertise in earthquake technology and its application to buildings and other civil engineering works. The seismic report may be combined with the soil and geologic investigation reports (SMC Section 11.40.130(F)).

### 4.7.3 Significance Determination Thresholds

Consistent with Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines, impacts related to geology and soils would be significant if the project would:

- 1) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:
  - i. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map, issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault (Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42);
  - ii. Strong seismic ground shaking;
  - iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction; and
  - iv. Landslides
- 2) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil.
- 3) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse.
- 4) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property.
- 5) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater.
- 6) Directly or indirectly destroy, disturb, or remove a unique paleontological resource, site, or geologic feature.

#### 4.7.4 Methodology

The potential for significant impacts associated with the project is based upon review of secondary sources, policies, and regulations relevant to geological and soil related issues. This review included soils data from the California Geological Survey and United States Geological Survey (USGS) fault and geologic mapping. Materials were reviewed to determine the possibility of on-site geologic hazards based on potential seismic activity, and characteristics of onsite soils. The methods for analyzing paleontological resources include a review of secondary source materials including USGS geologic mapping and resources regarding paleontological sensitivity of geologic formations in the San Diego region. Sources referenced include the City of Santee General Plan EIR and the County of San Diego Guidelines for Determining Significance for Paleontological Resources (County 2009).

#### 4.7.5 Issues 1 and 3: Seismic Hazards and Unstable Geology

*Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving: (i) rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map, issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault (refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42); (ii) strong seismic ground shaking? (iii) seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction; or (iv) landslides?*

*Would the project be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?*

##### 4.7.5.1 Impact Analysis

#### TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites

##### Fault Rupture

Geologic conditions are similar across the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites. As a result, this analysis addresses the three project elements together. The City is not located within an earthquake fault zone as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Fault Zoning Map, and no active or potentially active faults are known to occur within or adjacent to the City; however, like all other areas in California, the City is subject to periodic seismic shaking due to earthquakes along remote or regional active faults. Thus, all development within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would be susceptible to damage due to the seismically active nature of the region. However, future development, whether discretionary or by-right, would be required to comply with the City's General Plan Safety Element policies identified in Section 4.7.2.3.

The above policies are implemented through Section 11.40.130 of the SMC which specifies that a preliminary soils engineering report must be submitted with the application for a grading permit. A preliminary geological investigation and report is required for all land development projects designated as Group II or III as defined in the Safety Element. Additionally, as shown in Figure 4.7-3, the project area is in an area with liquefaction potential. As a result, a geotechnical investigation, geologic investigation, and seismic hazard study would be required for future projects in the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites. In addition, conformance to building construction standards for seismic safety within the CBC would ensure that new structures would be able to withstand seismic events within the City. Specifically, the CBC provides minimum

standards relating to building design and construction to protect structural damage and hazards that could occur from seismic shaking. Therefore, adherence to General Plan Safety Element policies, the SMC, and the CBC would ensure that future development within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would not cause substantial adverse effects associated with fault rupture, and impacts would be less than significant.

### Ground Shaking

As described in Section 4.7.4.1 above, no active or potentially active faults are known to occur within or adjacent to the City, however, like all other areas in California, the City is subject to periodic seismic shaking due to the earthquakes along remote or regional active faults. Thus, all development within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would be susceptible to damage due to the seismically active nature of the region. The project would increase the allowable number of people and structures that could be exposed to ground shaking during a seismic event. However, future development, whether discretionary or by right, would be required to comply with General Plan Safety Element policies and the SMC requirements described in Section 4.7.4.1 above. In addition, conformance to building construction standards for seismic safety within the CBC would ensure that new structures would be able to withstand seismic events within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites. Therefore, adherence to General Plan Safety Element policies, the SMC, and the CBC would ensure that future development within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would not cause substantial adverse effects associated with ground shaking, and impacts would be less than significant.

### Liquefaction and Landslide

Areas having the potential for earthquake-induced landslides generally occur within areas of previous landslide movement, or where local topographic, geological, geotechnical, and subsurface water conditions indicate a potential for permanent ground displacement. Debris flows are caused by high rainfall, steep slopes, loss of vegetation cover, and thick overburden. Within the City, the soil deposits that may be susceptible to liquefaction are the alluvial soils found in the San Diego River and its deeper tributary channels. The general extent of the areas identified for liquefaction potential are shown on Figure 4.7-3. Because of their proximity to the San Diego River, the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites are all within an area identified as having liquefaction potential.

Landslides, or landslide prone material, exist predominantly in the northern portion of the City, generally below the 600-foot elevation. Some of this area has been previously altered to remediate the potential effects of slope instability. Compressible and expansive soils (primarily in Friars Formation slopes) and shallow groundwater are in the Sycamore Canyon Creek drainage (City 2020a). Areas of potential landslide are shown in Figure 4.7-3. The TCSP, AEN, and Housing Element sites are in the southern portion of the City and not located within a landslide susceptible area.

All future development, whether discretionary or by-right, would be required to comply with the General Plan Safety Element policies and the SMC requirements described in Section 4.5.5.1.a above. In addition, conformance to building construction standards for seismic safety within the CBC would ensure that new structures would be able to withstand seismic events within the City. Therefore, adherence to Safety Element policies, the SMC, and the CBC would ensure that future development within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would not cause substantial adverse effects associated with liquefaction or landslide, and impacts would be less than significant.

**4.7.5.2 Mitigation Measures****TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

No mitigation is required.

**4.7.5.3 Significance After Mitigation****TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

**4.7.6 Issue 2: Soil Erosion**

*Would the project result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?*

**4.7.6.1 Impact Analysis****TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Geologic conditions are similar across the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites. As a result, this analysis addresses the three project elements together. Grading, excavation, demolition, and construction activities associated with the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would increase the potential to expose topsoil to erosion. While graded or excavated areas and fill materials would be stabilized through efforts such as compaction and installation of hardscape and landscaping, erosion potential would be higher during construction activities as individual project sites are built out. Erosion and sedimentation would primarily be a concern during construction phases as future developed areas would be stabilized through the installation of hardscape, landscaping, or native revegetation as appropriate. Future development would also incorporate long-term water quality controls pursuant to the most current storm water standards including the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Municipal Permit requirements. Measures implemented to avoid or reduce erosion and sedimentation effects are discussed in Section 4.10. Short-term erosion and sedimentation impacts would be addressed through conformance with the NPDES and associated SMC requirements (Title 9, Chapter 9.06 Stormwater Management and Discharge Control). These regulations require erosion and sedimentation control during construction and implementation of best management practices to avoid erosion and off-site drainage. Therefore, adherence to applicable SMC requirements would ensure that future development would not result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil, and impacts would be less than significant for the TCSP, AEN, and Housing Element sites.

**4.7.6.2 Mitigation Measures****TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

No mitigation is required.

**4.7.6.3 Significance After Mitigation****TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

#### **4.7.7 Issue 4: Expansive Soils**

*Would the project be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?*

##### **4.7.7.1 Impact Analysis**

###### **TCSP Area**

The TCSP area is underlain by sandy loam south of the San Diego River and riverwash, water, clay, loam, and sandy loam north of the San Diego River. Soils with relatively high fines content (clays dominantly) are generally considered expansive or potentially expansive. Development within these soils could result in a significant impact due to the soil's inability to support the proposed structures, especially during major rain events and/or flash floods. The presence of clay would require future development within the northern section of the TCSP area to adhere to SMC requirements for project-specific geotechnical reports that would ensure site-specific measures are implemented to ensure safe building construction in areas with expansive soils. These reports would provide guidance for the inclusion of proper site planning, design, and construction measures to avoid unfavorable conditions. Adherence to SMC requirements would ensure that future development would not create substantial direct or indirect risks associated with expansive soils, and impacts would be less than significant.

###### **AEN**

The AEN is underlain by sandy loam south of the San Diego River and riverwash, water, clay, loam, and sandy loam north of the San Diego River. Adherence to SMC requirements described above would ensure that future development would not create substantial direct or indirect risks associated with expansive soils, and impacts would be less than significant.

###### **Housing Element Sites**

The Housing Element sites are underlain by sandy loam and riverwash, which are not generally considered expansive or potentially expansive. Impacts would be less than significant.

##### **4.7.7.2 Mitigation Measures**

###### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

No mitigation is required.

##### **4.7.7.3 Significance After Mitigation**

###### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

#### **4.7.8 Issue 5: Septic Tanks or Alternative Wastewater Disposal**

*Would the project have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?*

##### **4.7.8.1 Impact Analysis**

###### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Due to the urban and built out nature surrounding the TCSP area, AEN, and the Housing Element sites, there is no expectation that septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems would be part of any future development proposal. All sites would be served by Padre Dam Municipal Water District for wastewater service. No impacts would occur.

##### **4.7.8.2 Mitigation Measures**

###### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

No mitigation is required.

##### **4.7.8.3 Significance After Mitigation**

###### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

No impacts would occur.

#### **4.7.9 Issue 6: Paleontological Resources and Unique Geology**

*Would the project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?*

##### **4.7.9.1 Impact Analysis**

###### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

The TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites are all located within the City either within existing developed sites or vacant sites with some history of disturbance. Unique geologic features have not been identified in the project area. The project area contains young and old alluvium and colluvium, which is not typically considered to have a high paleontological resource potential (County 2009). However, alluvial deposits of mountain valleys and older Quaternary alluvial fan deposits may have a moderate potential to contain paleontological resources (County 2009). If grading associated with future projects within the TCSP area, AEN, or Housing Element sites were to occur at depths sufficient to disturb a moderate sensitivity geologic formation, significant impacts could occur. Since it cannot be said with certainty that the project area does not contain formations with moderate paleontological resource sensitivity or that paleontological resources will not be inadvertently encountered during construction activities, potential impacts to paleontological resources would be significant. Mitigation Measures GEO-1 and GEO-2 are required.



#### 4.7.9.2 Mitigation Measures

Mitigation is proposed for the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites. The following mitigation measures would be required to reduce impacts to a less than significant level.

##### TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites

**GEO-1** To address potential impacts to paleontological resources, the City shall review the project application materials including the geotechnical report to determine if project grading has the potential to disturb geologic formations with the potential to contain paleontological resources. As part of the grading application process, the City may request information from the applicant such as the depth of grading, geologic formations, and paleontological sensitivity in order to determine the potential for impacts. In the event grading may disturb geologic formations with a moderate or high potential to contain paleontological resources, the following monitoring program shall be implemented prior to and during grading operations:

1. **Preconstruction Personnel and Repository:** Prior to the commencement of construction, a qualified project paleontologist shall be retained to oversee the mitigation program. A qualified project paleontologist is a person with a doctorate or master's degree in paleontology or related field and who has knowledge of the County of San Diego paleontology and documented experience in professional paleontological procedures and techniques. In addition, a regional fossil repository, such as the San Diego Natural History Museum, shall be designated by the City of Santee to receive any discovered fossils.
2. **Preconstruction Meeting:** The project paleontologist shall attend the preconstruction meeting to consult with the grading and excavation contractors concerning excavation schedules, paleontological field techniques, and safety issues.
3. **Preconstruction Training:** The project paleontologist shall conduct a paleontological resource training workshop to be attended by earth excavation personnel.
4. **During-Construction Monitoring:** A project paleontologist or paleontological monitor shall be present during all earthwork in formations with moderate to high paleontological sensitivity. A paleontological monitor (working under the direction of the project paleontologist) shall be on site on a full-time basis during all original cutting of previously undisturbed deposits.
5. **During-Construction Fossil Recovery:** If fossils are discovered, the project paleontologist (or paleontological monitor) shall recover them. In most cases, fossil salvage can be completed in a short period of time. However, some fossil specimens (e.g., a bone bed or a complete large mammal skeleton) may require an extended salvage period. In these instances, the project paleontologist (or paleontological monitor) has the authority to temporarily direct, divert, or halt grading to allow recovery of fossil remains in a timely manner.
6. **Post-Construction Treatment:** Fossil remains collected during monitoring and salvage shall be cleaned, repaired, sorted, and cataloged.

7. Post-Construction Curation: Prepared fossils, along with copies of all pertinent field notes, photos, and maps, shall be deposited in the designated fossil repository.
8. Post-Construction Final Report: A final summary paleontological mitigation report that outlines the results of the mitigation program shall be completed and submitted to the City of Santee within two weeks of the completion of each construction phase of the proposed project. This report shall include discussions of the methods used, stratigraphic section(s) exposed, fossils collected, inventory lists of cataloged fossils, and significance of recovered fossils.

**GEO-2** If fossils are inadvertently discovered anywhere in the TCSP area, the construction contractor shall immediately stop all activities within 100 feet of the fossil and notify the City within 24 hours of the find. Before work can proceed within 100 feet of the find, a project paleontologist (or paleontological monitor) shall be hired to monitor construction activities and recover the fossils. In most cases, fossil salvage can be completed in a short period of time. However, some fossil specimens (e.g., a bone bed or a complete large mammal skeleton) may require an extended salvage period. In these instances, the project paleontologist (or paleontological monitor) has the authority to temporarily direct, divert, or halt grading to allow recovery of fossil remains in a timely manner.

1. Post-Construction Treatment: Fossil remains collected during monitoring and salvage shall be cleaned, repaired, sorted, and cataloged.
2. Post-Construction Curation: Prepared fossils, along with copies of all pertinent field notes, photos, and maps, shall be deposited in the designated fossil repository.
3. Post-Construction Final Report: A final summary paleontological mitigation report that outlines the results of the mitigation program shall be completed and submitted to the City of Santee within two weeks of the completion of each construction phase of the proposed project. This report shall include discussions of the methods used, stratigraphic section(s) exposed, fossils collected, inventory lists of cataloged fossils, and significance of recovered fossils.

#### **4.7.9.3 Significance After Mitigation**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Within implementation of mitigation measures GEO-1 and GEO-2, impacts associated with paleontological resources would be reduced to less than significant in the TCSP area, AEN, and the Housing Element sites.

## 4.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The following section analyzes the potential greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions impacts that may occur as a result of implementation of the proposed project. For the purposes of this GHG analysis, buildout of the Town Center Specific Plan (TCSP) area is anticipated to conservatively occur through a 2035 horizon year, and buildout of the Housing Element sites is anticipated to occur by the end of 2026 as part of the 2021-2029 Sixth Cycle Housing Element. In accordance with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), this section evaluates the significance of project impacts in terms of (1) contribution of GHG emissions to cumulative statewide emissions; and (2) consistency with local and state regulations, plans and policies aimed at reducing GHG emissions. GHG modeling data is contained in Appendix E of this Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

### 4.8.1 Existing Conditions

#### 4.8.1.1 Climate Change Overview

Global climate change refers to changes in average climatic conditions on Earth as a whole, including temperature, wind patterns, precipitation, and storms. Global temperatures are moderated by naturally occurring atmospheric gases. These gases are commonly referred to as GHGs because they function like a greenhouse by letting light in but preventing heat from escaping, thus warming the Earth's atmosphere. These gases allow solar radiation (sunlight) into the Earth's atmosphere but prevent radiative heat from escaping, thus warming the Earth's atmosphere. GHGs are emitted by natural processes and human (anthropogenic) activities. Anthropogenic GHG emissions are primarily associated with (1) the burning of fossil fuels during motorized transport, electricity generation, natural gas consumption, industrial activity, manufacturing, and other activities; (2) deforestation; (3) agricultural activity; and (4) solid waste decomposition.

The temperature record shows a decades-long trend of warming, with the most recent ten-year period marking the warmest years on record since 1880 (National Aeronautics and Space Administration [NASA] 2024). The newest release in long-term warming trends announced 2023 ranked as the warmest year on record with an increase of 2.11 degrees Fahrenheit (°F) compared to the late 19th-century (1850-1900) preindustrial average (NASA 2024). GHG emissions from human activities are the most significant driver of observed climate change since the mid-20th century (United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [IPCC] 2013). The IPCC constructed several emission trajectories of GHGs needed to stabilize global temperatures and climate change impacts. The statistical models show a "high confidence" that temperature increase caused by anthropogenic GHG emissions could be kept to less than two degrees Celsius relative to pre-industrial levels if atmospheric concentrations are stabilized at about 450 parts per million (ppm) carbon dioxide equivalent (CO<sub>2</sub>e) by the year 2100 (IPCC 2014).

#### 4.8.1.2 GHGs of Primary Concern

The GHGs, as defined under California's Assembly Bill (AB) 32, include carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), and sulfur hexafluoride (SF<sub>6</sub>). Although water vapor is the most abundant and variable GHG in the atmosphere, it is not considered a pollutant; it maintains a climate necessary for life.

GHGs have long atmospheric lifetimes that range from one year to several thousand years. Long atmospheric lifetimes allow for GHG emissions to disperse around the globe. Because GHG

emissions vary widely in the power of their climatic effects, climate scientists have established a unit called global warming potential (GWP). The GWP of a gas is a measure of both potency and lifespan in the atmosphere as compared to CO<sub>2</sub>. For example, a gas with a GWP of 10 is 10 times more potent than CO<sub>2</sub> over 100 years. CO<sub>2e</sub> is a quantity that enables all GHG emissions to be considered as a group despite their varying GWP. The GWP of each GHG is multiplied by the prevalence of that gas to produce CO<sub>2e</sub>.

Historically, GHG emission inventories have been calculated using the GWPs from the IPCC's Second Assessment Report (SAR). In 2007, IPCC updated the GWP values based on the latest science at the time in its Fourth Assessment Report (AR4). The updated GWPs in the IPCC AR4 have begun to be used in recent GHG emissions inventories. In 2013, IPCC again updated the GWP values based on the latest science in its Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) (IPCC 2013). However, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) reporting guidelines for national inventories require the use of GWP values from the AR4. To comply with international reporting standards under the UNFCCC, official emission estimates for California and the U.S. are reported using AR4 GWP values, and statewide and national GHG inventories have not yet updated their GWP values to the AR5 values. GHG emissions in this analysis are reported using the AR4 GWP values.

By applying the GWP ratios, CO<sub>2e</sub> emissions can be tabulated in metric tons per year. Typically, the GWP ratio corresponding to the warming potential of CO<sub>2</sub> over a 100-year period is used as a baseline. The atmospheric lifetime and GWP of selected GHGs are summarized in Table 4.8-1, *Global Warming Potentials and Atmospheric Lifetimes*.

**Table 4.8-1  
GLOBAL WARMING POTENTIALS AND ATMOSPHERIC LIFETIMES**

Greenhouse Gas	Atmospheric Lifetime (years)	Global Warming Potential (100-year time horizon)
Carbon Dioxide (CO <sub>2</sub> )	50-200	1
Methane (CH <sub>4</sub> )	12	25
Nitrous Oxide (N <sub>2</sub> O)	114	298
HFC-134a	14	1,430
PFC: Tetrafluoromethane (CF <sub>4</sub> )	50,000	7,390
PFC: Hexafluoroethane (C <sub>2</sub> F <sub>6</sub> )	10,000	12,200
Sulfur Hexafluoride (SF <sub>6</sub> )	3,200	22,800

Source: IPCC 2007

HFC = hydrofluorocarbon; PFC = perfluorocarbon

#### 4.8.1.3 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

In an effort to evaluate and reduce the potential adverse impact of global climate change, international, state, and local organizations have conducted GHG inventories to estimate their levels of GHG emissions and removals. The following summarizes the results of these global, national, state, and local GHG inventories.

#### Worldwide and National Greenhouse Gas Inventory

In 2022, total anthropogenic GHG emissions worldwide were estimated at 49,400 million metric tons (MMT) of CO<sub>2e</sub> emissions (Climate Watch 2024). The five largest emitting countries and the European Union (EU-27), together account for about 63 percent of total global GHG emissions:

China (29%), the United States (13%), the European Union (about 7%), India (7%), the Russian Federation (4.1%) and Japan (2.4%). These countries also have the highest CO<sub>2</sub> emission levels (Climate Watch 2024).

Per USEPA Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks: 1990–2022, total United States GHG emissions were approximately 6,341 MMT CO<sub>2</sub>e in 2022 (USEPA 2024b). The primary GHG emitted by human activities in the United States was CO<sub>2</sub>, which represented approximately 79.8% of total GHG emissions (5,057 MMT CO<sub>2</sub>e). The largest source of CO<sub>2</sub>, and of overall GHG emissions, was fossil-fuel combustion, which accounted for approximately 92.7% of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in 2022 (4,690 MMT CO<sub>2</sub>e). Relative to 1990, gross United States GHG emissions in 2022 were lower by 3.1%, down from a high of 15.2% above 1990 levels in 2007. Gross emissions increased from 2021 to 2022 by 0.3 percent (16.4 MMT CO<sub>2</sub>e). Net emissions (i.e., including sinks) were 5,487 MMT CO<sub>2</sub>e in 2022. Overall, net emissions increased by 1.3 percent from 2021 to 2022 and decreased by 16.6 percent from 2005 levels. Between 2021 and 2022, the increase in total greenhouse gas emissions was driven largely by an increase in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from fossil fuel combustion across most end-use sectors due in part to increased energy use from the continued rebound of economic activity after the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. (USEPA 2024b).

### State Greenhouse Gas Inventory

CARB performed statewide inventories for the years 2000 to 2020, as shown in Table 4.8-2, *California Greenhouse Gas Emissions by Sector*. The inventory is divided into five broad sectors of economic activity: agriculture, commercial and residential, electricity generation, industrial, and transportation. Emissions are quantified in MMT CO<sub>2</sub>e.

**Table 4.8-2  
CALIFORNIA GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS BY SECTOR**

Sector	Emissions (MMT CO <sub>2</sub> e)			
	1990	2000	2010	2020
Agriculture and Forestry	18.9 (4%)	30.8 (7%)	33.6 (8%)	31.6 (8%)
Commercial and Residential	44.1 (10%)	44.2 (10%)	46.0 (10%)	38.7 (11%)
Electricity Generation	110.5 (26%)	104.7 (23%)	90.3 (20%)	59.5 (16%)
Industrial	105.3 (24%)	93.0 (20%)	87.8 (20%)	73.3 (20%)
Transportation	150.6 (35%)	175.7 (38%)	162.9 (37%)	135.8 (37%)
Unspecified Remaining	1.3 (<1%)	13.4 (3%)	21.6 (5%)	30.2 (8%)
Total	430.7	461.8	442.2	369.1

Source: CARB 2007 and CARB 2024c  
MMT = million metric tons; CO<sub>2</sub>e = carbon dioxide equivalent

As shown in Table 4.8-2, statewide GHG source emissions totaled 430.7 MMT CO<sub>2</sub>e in 1990, 461.8 MMT CO<sub>2</sub>e in 2000, 442.2 MMT CO<sub>2</sub>e in 2010, and 369.1 MMT CO<sub>2</sub>e in 2020. Transportation-related emissions consistently contribute the most GHG emissions, followed by electricity generation and industrial emissions (CARB 2007 and CARB 2024b).

### Local GHG Inventory

As part of their Sustainable Santee Plan, the City compiled a GHG inventory. The inventory is presented in Table 4.8-3, *2013 City of Santee Greenhouse Gas Inventory*. As shown in Table 4.8-3, the on-road transportation sector contributed the most to GHG emissions in the City in 2013.

**Table 4.8-3  
2013 CITY OF SANTEE GREENHOUSE GAS INVENTORY**

Sector	Emissions (MT CO <sub>2</sub> e)
On-Road Transportation	242,499 (60%)
Residential Energy	78,651 (20%)
Commercial Energy	48,025 (12%)
Solid Waste	11,151 (3%)
Water	6,578 (2%)
Off-Road Sources	14,699 (4%)
Wastewater	971 (<1%)
Total	402,574

Source: City 2019b  
MT = metric tons; CO<sub>2</sub>e = carbon dioxide equivalent

## 4.8.2 Regulatory Framework

### 4.8.2.1 Federal

#### Federal Clean Air Act

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled on April 2, 2007, in *Massachusetts v. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency* (USEPA) that CO<sub>2</sub> is an air pollutant, as defined under the Clean Air Act (CAA), and that the USEPA has the authority to regulate emissions of GHGs. The USEPA announced that GHGs (including CO<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub>, N<sub>2</sub>O, HFC, PFC, and SF<sub>6</sub>) threaten the public health and welfare of the American people (USEPA 2024b). This action was a prerequisite to finalizing the USEPA's GHG emissions standards for light-duty vehicles, which were jointly proposed by the USEPA and the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

On June 30, 2022, the U.S. Supreme Court decision published in *West Virginia v. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency* overturned the USEPA's Clean Power Plan rule, which cited Section 111(d) of the CAA for authority to set limits on CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from existing coal- and natural-gas-fired power plants. The June 30, 2022 decision does not overturn the April 2, 2007 decision; however, it may limit the USEPA's authority to develop rules limiting GHG emissions without clear congressional authorization.

#### Environmental Protection Agency

The USEPA has many federal level programs and projects to reduce GHG emissions. The USEPA provides technical expertise and encourages voluntary reductions from the private sector. One of the voluntary programs applicable to the project is the Energy Star program. Energy Star products such as appliances, building products, heating and cooling equipment, and other energy-efficient equipment may be utilized by the project.

Energy Star is a joint program of USEPA and the U.S. Department of Energy, which promotes energy-efficient products and practices. Tools and initiatives include the Energy Star Portfolio Manager, which helps track and assess energy and water consumption across an entire portfolio of buildings, and the Energy Star Most Efficient 2020, which provides information on exceptional products which represent the leading edge in energy-efficient products in the year 2020 (USEPA 2021a).

The USEPA also collaborates with the public sector, including states, tribes, localities, and resource managers, to encourage smart growth, sustainability preparation, and renewable energy and climate change preparation. These initiatives include the Clean Energy – Environment State Partnership Program, the Climate Ready Water Utilities Initiative, the Climate Ready Estuaries Program, and the Sustainable Communities Partnership.

### **Light-Duty Vehicle GHG Emissions Standards and Corporate Average Fuel Economy Standards**

The USEPA and the NHTSA worked together on developing a national program of regulations to reduce GHG emissions and improve fuel economy of light-duty vehicles. The USEPA established the first-ever national GHG emissions standards under the CAA, and the NHTSA established Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards under the Energy Policy and Conservation Act. On April 1, 2010, the USEPA and NHTSA announced a joint Final Rulemaking that established standards for 2012 through 2016 model year vehicles. This was followed up on October 15, 2012, when the agencies issued a Final Rulemaking with standards for model years 2017 through 2025.

In December 2021, USEPA issued a new rule formally adopting standards previously proposed in August 2021 for model years 2023 and 2024 and finalizing more stringent standards than previously proposed for model years 2025 and 2026. The rule assumes a 17 percent electric vehicle (EV) market penetration by 2026. Although this is a departure from the NHTSA CAFE standards, USEPA did coordinate with NHTSA during development of the new standards. On April 12, 2023, USEPA announced new, more ambitious proposed standards to further reduce harmful air pollutant emissions from light-duty and medium-duty vehicles starting with model year 2027. The proposal builds upon USEPA's final standards for federal GHG emissions standards for passenger cars and light trucks for model years 2023 through 2026 and leverages advances in clean car technology to result in benefits to Americans ranging from reducing climate pollution, to improving public health, to saving drivers money through reduced fuel and maintenance costs. The proposed standards would phase in over model years 2027 through 2032.

#### **4.8.2.2 State**

The statewide GHG emissions regulatory framework is summarized below by category: state climate change targets, renewable energy and energy procurement, building energy, mobile sources, solid waste, water, and other state regulations and goals. The following text describes executive orders (EOs), legislation, regulations, and other plans and policies that would directly or indirectly reduce GHG emissions and/or address climate change issues.

#### **State Climate Change Targets**

##### Executive Order S-3-05

On June 1, 2005, EO S-3-05 proclaimed that California is vulnerable to climate change impacts. It declared that increased temperatures could reduce snowpack in the Sierra Nevada, further exacerbate California's air quality problems, and potentially cause a rise in sea levels. To avoid or reduce climate change impacts, EO S-3-05 calls for a reduction in GHG emissions to the year 2000 level by 2010, to year 1990 levels by 2020, and to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. EOs are not laws and can only provide the governor's direction to state agencies to act within their authority. Legislation is required to enact the goals of EO S-3-05 and establish a framework for statewide implementation. AB 32, described below, mandates the 2020 GHG emissions



reduction goals of EO S-3-05. The 2050 GHG emissions reduction goal of EO S-3-05 has not been enacted by any legislation and remains only a goal of the EO.

#### Assembly Bill 32 – Global Warming Solution Act of 2006

The California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (Assembly Bill 32 and Health and Safety Code Sections 38500, 38501, 28510, 38530, 38550, 38560, 38561–38565, 38570, 38571, 38574, 38580, 38590, 38592–38599), widely known as AB 32, requires that the California Air Resources Board (CARB) develop and enforce regulations for the reporting and verification of statewide GHG emissions. CARB is directed to set a GHG emission limit, based on 1990 levels, to be achieved by 2020. The bill requires CARB to adopt rules and regulations in an open public process to achieve the maximum technologically feasible and cost-effective GHG emission reductions. AB 32 enacts the goals of EO S-3-05.

#### Executive Order B-30-15

On April 29, 2015, EO B-30-15 established a California GHG emission reduction target of 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. The EO aligns California's GHG emission reduction targets with those of leading international governments, including the 28-nation European Union. The emission reduction target of 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 will make it possible to reach the goal established by EO S-3-05 of reducing emissions 80 percent under 1990 levels by 2050. Senate Bill (SB) 32, described below, mandates the 2030 GHG emission reduction goals of EO B-30-15.

#### Senate Bill 32

SB 32 (Amendments to the California Global Warming Solutions Action of 2006) extends California's GHG reduction programs beyond 2020. SB 32 amended the Health and Safety Code to include Section 38566, which contains language to authorize CARB to achieve a statewide GHG emission reduction of at least 40 percent below 1990 levels by no later than December 31, 2030. SB 32 codified the targets established by EO B-30-15 for 2030, which set the next interim step in the state's continuing efforts to pursue the long-term target expressed in EO B-30-15 of 80 percent below 1990 emissions levels by 2050.

#### Assembly Bill 1279

Approved by Governor Newsom on September 16, 2022, AB 1279, The California Climate Crisis Act, declares the policy of the state to achieve net zero GHG emissions as soon as possible, but no later than 2045, and achieve and maintain net negative GHG emissions thereafter, and to ensure that by 2045, statewide anthropogenic GHG emissions are reduced to at least 85 percent below the 1990 levels. AB 1279 anticipates achieving these policies through direct GHG emissions reductions, removal of CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere (carbon capture), and almost complete transition away from fossil fuels.

#### Senate Bill 905

Approved by Governor Newsom on September 16, 2022, SB 905, Carbon sequestration: Carbon Capture, Removal, Utilization, and Storage Program, requires CARB to establish a Carbon Capture, Removal, Utilization, and Storage Program to evaluate the efficacy, safety, and viability of carbon capture, utilization, or storage technologies and CO<sub>2</sub> removal technologies and facilitate

the capture and sequestration of CO<sub>2</sub> from those technologies, where appropriate. SB 905 is an integral part of achieving the state policies mandated in AB 1279.

#### California Air Resources Board Scoping Plan

The Scoping Plan is a strategy CARB develops and updates at least once every five years, as required by AB 32. It lays out the transformations needed across our society and economy to reduce emissions and reach our climate targets. The current 2022 Scoping Plan is the third update to the original plan that was adopted in 2008. The initial 2008 Scoping Plan laid out a path to achieve the AB 32 mandate of returning to 1990 levels of GHG emissions by 2020, a reduction of approximately 15 percent below business as usual. The 2008 Scoping Plan included a mix of incentives, regulations, and carbon pricing, laying out the portfolio approach to addressing climate change and clearly making the case for using multiple tools to meet California's GHG emissions targets. The 2013 Scoping Plan assessed progress toward achieving the 2020 mandate and made the case for addressing short-lived climate pollutants. The 2017 Scoping Plan also assessed the progress toward achieving the 2020 limit and provided a technologically feasible and cost-effective path to achieving the SB 32 mandate of reducing GHGs by at least 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030.

On December 15, 2022, CARB approved the 2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality (2022 Scoping Plan). The 2022 Scoping Plan lays out a path to achieve targets for carbon neutrality and reduce anthropogenic GHG emissions by 85 percent below 1990 levels no later than 2045, as directed by AB 1279. The actions and outcomes in the plan will achieve significant reductions in fossil fuel combustion by deploying clean technologies and fuels; further reductions in short-lived climate pollutants; support for sustainable development; increased action on natural and working lands to reduce emissions and sequester carbon; and the capture and storage of carbon (CARB 2022).

### **Renewable Energy and Energy Procurement**

#### Senate Bill 1078

SB 1078 (Sher) (September 2002) established the Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) program, which required an annual increase in renewable generation by the utilities equivalent to at least 1 percent of sales, with an aggregate goal of 20 percent by 2017. This goal was subsequently revised as described below.

#### Senate Bill 1368

SB 1368 (September 2006) required the California Energy Commission (CEC) to develop and adopt regulations for GHG emission performance standards for the long-term procurement of electricity by local publicly owned utilities. These standards must be consistent with the standards adopted by the California Public Utilities Commission.

#### Assembly Bill 1109

Enacted in 2007, AB 1109 required the CEC to adopt minimum energy efficiency standards for general purpose lighting, to reduce electricity consumption 50 percent for indoor residential lighting and 25 percent for indoor commercial lighting.

### Executive Order S-14-08

EO S-14-08 (November 2008) focused on the contribution of renewable energy sources to meet the electrical needs of California while reducing the GHG emissions from the electrical sector. This EO required that all retail suppliers of electricity in California serve 33 percent of their load with renewable energy by 2020. Furthermore, the EO directed state agencies to take appropriate actions to facilitate reaching this target. The California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA), through collaboration with the CEC and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (formerly the California Department of Fish and Game), was directed to lead this effort.

### Executive Order S-21-09 and Senate Bill X1-2

EO S-21-09 (September 2009) directed CARB to adopt a regulation consistent with the goal of EO S-14-08 by July 31, 2010. CARB was further directed to work with the California Public Utilities Commission and CEC to ensure that the regulation builds upon the RPS program and was applicable to investor-owned utilities, publicly owned utilities, direct access providers, and community choice providers. Under this order, CARB was to give the highest priority to those renewable resources that provide the greatest environmental benefits with the least environmental costs and impacts on public health and can be developed the most quickly in support of reliable, efficient, cost-effective electricity system operations. On September 23, 2010, CARB initially approved regulations to implement a Renewable Electricity Standard. However, this regulation was not finalized because of subsequent legislation (SB X1-2, Simitian, statutes of 2011) signed by Governor Brown in April 2011.

SB X1-2 expanded the RPS by establishing a renewable energy target of 20 percent of the total electricity sold to retail customers in California per year by December 31, 2013, and 33 percent by December 31, 2020, and in subsequent years. Under the bill, a renewable electrical generation facility is one that uses biomass, solar thermal, photovoltaic, wind, geothermal, fuel cells using renewable fuels, small hydroelectric generation (30 megawatts or less), digester gas, municipal solid waste conversion, landfill gas, ocean wave, ocean thermal, or tidal current, and that meets other specified requirements with respect to its location.

SB X1-2 applies to all electricity retailers in the state including publicly owned utilities, investor-owned utilities, electricity service providers, and community choice aggregators. All of these entities must meet the renewable energy goals previously listed.

### Senate Bill 350

SB 350 (October 2015), Clean Energy and Pollution Reduction Act, further expanded the RPS by establishing a goal of 50 percent of the total electricity sold to retail customers in California per year by December 31, 2030. In addition, SB 350 included the goal to double the energy efficiency savings in electricity and natural gas final end uses (e.g., heating, cooling, lighting, or class of energy uses on which an energy-efficiency program is focused) of retail customers through energy conservation and efficiency. The bill also requires the California Public Utilities Commission, in consultation with the CEC, to establish efficiency targets for electrical and gas corporations consistent with this goal. Regarding mobile sources, as one of its elements, SB 350 establishes a statewide policy for widespread electrification of the transportation sector, recognizing that such electrification is required for achievement of the state's 2030 and 2050 reduction targets (see California Public Utilities Code Section 740.12).

### Senate Bill 100

SB 100 (2018) increased the standards set forth in SB 350 establishing that 44 percent of the total electricity sold to retail customers in California per year by December 31, 2024, 52 percent by December 31, 2027, and 60 percent by December 31, 2030, be secured from qualifying renewable energy sources. SB 100 states that it is the policy of the state that eligible renewable energy resources and zero-carbon resources supply 100 percent of the retail sales of electricity to California. This bill requires that the achievement of 100 percent zero-carbon electricity resources do not increase the carbon emissions elsewhere in the western grid and that the achievement not be achieved through resource shuffling.

### Senate Bill 1020

SB 1020 (September 2022) revises the standards from SB 100, requiring the following percentage of retail sales of electricity to California end-use customers come from eligible renewable energy resources and zero-carbon resources:

- 90 percent by December 31, 2035;
- 95 percent by December 31, 2040; and
- 100 percent by December 31, 2045.

## **Building Energy**

### California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 6

California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 24 Part 6: California's Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings were first established in 1978 in response to a legislative mandate to reduce California's energy consumption. Energy-efficient buildings require less electricity, natural gas, and other fuels. Electricity production from fossil fuels and on-site fuel combustion (typically for water heating) results in GHG emissions.

The Title 24 standards are updated approximately every three years to allow consideration and possible incorporation of new energy efficiency technologies and methods. The latest update to the Title 24 standards occurred in 2022 and went into effect on January 1, 2023. The Building Energy Efficiency Standards focus on several key areas to improve the energy efficiency of newly constructed buildings and additions and alterations to existing buildings. While all energy codes are moving toward a goal of net zero energy consumption buildings, California is aiming for the more aggressive target date of 2030 for commercial projects. Specifically, the Title 24 code's goal is for all new commercial construction, and 50 percent of commercial buildings retrofits, to achieve net zero energy consumption by 2030 (the state building target is 2025). To achieve incremental movement toward this goal, changes in the 2022 code are numerous and aggressive. For example, new buildings must comply with the new Solar Access Roof Area (SARA) requirements and all buildings required to have a photovoltaic system must also have a properly sized battery system. The standards are divided into three basic sets. First, there is a basic set of mandatory requirements that apply to all buildings. Second, there is a set of performance standards—the energy budgets—that vary by climate zone (of which there are 16 in California) and building type; thus, the standards are tailored to local conditions. Finally, the third set constitutes an alternative to the performance standards, which is a set of prescriptive packages that are basically a recipe or a checklist compliance approach (CEC 2022).

### California Green Building Standards Code

The California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen; CCR Title 24, Part 11) is a code with mandatory requirements for new residential and nonresidential buildings (including industrial buildings) throughout California. The code is Part 11 of the California Building Standards Code in Title 24 of the CCR. The current 2022 Standards for new construction of, and additions and alterations to, residential and nonresidential buildings went into effect on January 1, 2023 (California Building Standards Commission [CBSC] 2022).

The development of CALGreen is intended to (1) cause a reduction in GHG emissions from buildings; (2) promote environmentally responsible, cost-effective, healthier places to live and work; (3) reduce energy and water consumption; and (4) respond to the directives by the Governor. In short, the code is established to reduce construction waste; make buildings more efficient in the use of materials and energy; and reduce environmental impact during and after construction.

CALGreen contains requirements for storm water control during construction; construction waste reduction; indoor water use reduction; material selection; natural resource conservation; site irrigation conservation; and more. The code provides for design options allowing the designer to determine how best to achieve compliance for a given site or building condition. The code also requires building commissioning, which is a process for the verification that all building systems, like heating and cooling equipment and lighting systems, are functioning at their maximum efficiency.

### **Mobile Sources**

#### Assembly Bill 1493 and Advanced Clean Cars

AB 1493 (Pavley) requires that CARB develop and adopt regulations that achieve “the maximum feasible reduction of GHGs emitted by passenger vehicles and light-duty truck and other vehicles determined by CARB to be vehicles whose primary use is noncommercial personal transportation in the State.” On September 24, 2009, CARB adopted amendments to the Pavley regulations that intend to reduce GHG emissions in new passenger vehicles from 2009 through 2016. The amendments bind California’s enforcement of AB 1493 (starting in 2009), while providing vehicle manufacturers with new compliance flexibility. The amendments also prepared California to merge its rules with the federal CAFE rules for passenger vehicles (CARB 2024b).

In January 2012, CARB approved Advanced Clean Cars I, a new emissions-control program for model years 2017 through 2025 including low emissions vehicle and zero-emissions vehicle criteria. The Advanced Clean Cars II regulations were adopted in 2022, imposing the next level of low-emission and zero-emission vehicle standards for model years 2026 through 2035 that contribute to meeting federal ambient air quality ozone standards and California’s carbon neutrality targets.

By 2035 all new passenger cars, trucks, and SUVs sold in California will be zero emissions. The Advanced Clean Cars II regulations take the state’s already growing zero-emission vehicle market and robust motor vehicle emission control rules and augments them to meet more aggressive tailpipe emissions standards and ramp up to 100 percent zero-emission vehicles.

### Executive Order S-01-07

This EO, signed by Governor Schwarzenegger on January 18, 2007, directs that a statewide goal be established to reduce the carbon intensity of California's transportation fuels by at least 10 percent by the year 2020. It orders that a Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS) for transportation fuels be established for California and directs the CARB to determine whether a LCFS can be adopted as a discrete early action measure pursuant to AB 32. CARB approved the LCFS as a discrete early action item with a regulation adopted and implemented in April 2010. Although challenged in 2011, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals reversed the District Court's opinion and rejected arguments that implementing LCFS violates the interstate commerce clause in September 2013. CARB, therefore, is continuing to implement the LCFS statewide.

### Senate Bill 375

SB 375 aligns regional transportation planning efforts, regional GHG reduction targets, and affordable housing allocations. Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) are required to adopt a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), which allocates land uses in the MPOs' Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Qualified projects consistent with an approved SCS or Alternative Planning Strategy categorized as "transit priority projects" would receive incentives to streamline CEQA processing.

### Executive Order N-79-20

EO N-79-20, signed by Governor Newsom on September 23, 2020, establishes three goals for implementation of zero emissions vehicles in California: first, 100 percent of in-state sales of new passenger cars and trucks will be zero-emissions by 2035; second, 100 percent of medium- and heavy-duty vehicles in the state will be zero-emissions vehicles by 2045 for all operations where feasible, and by 2035 for drayage trucks; and third, 100 percent of off-road vehicles and equipment will be zero emissions by 2035 where feasible.

## **Solid Waste**

### Assembly Bill 939

In 1989, AB 939, known as the Integrated Waste Management Act (California Public Resources Code, Sections 40000 et seq.), was passed because of the increase in waste stream and the decrease in landfill capacity. The statute established the California Integrated Waste Management Board to oversee a disposal reporting system. AB 939 mandated a reduction of waste being disposed where jurisdictions were required to meet diversion goals of all solid waste through source reduction, recycling, and composting activities of 25 percent by 1995 and 50 percent by the year 2000.

### Assembly Bill 341

The state legislature enacted AB 341 (California Public Resource Code Section 42649.2), amending the Integrated Waste Management Act to include a provision declaring that it is the policy goal of the state that not less than 75 percent of solid waste generated be source-reduced, recycled, or composted by the year 2020, and annually thereafter. In addition, AB 341 required the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle) to develop strategies to achieve the state's policy goal. CalRecycle conducted several general stakeholder workshops and several focused workshops and in August 2015 published a discussion document

titled AB 341 Report to the Legislature, which identifies five priority strategies that CalRecycle believes would assist the state in reaching the 75 percent goal by 2020, legislative and regulatory recommendations, and an evaluation of program effectiveness (CalRecycle 2019).

#### Assembly Bill 1826

AB 1826 (Chapter 727, Statutes of 2014, effective 2016) requires businesses to recycle their organic waste (i.e., food waste, green waste, landscape and pruning waste, nonhazardous wood waste, and food-soiled paper waste that is mixed in with food waste) depending on the amount of waste they generate per week. This law also requires local jurisdictions across the state to implement an organic waste recycling program to divert organic waste generated by businesses, including multifamily residential dwellings that consist of five or more units. The minimum threshold of organic waste generation by businesses decreases over time, which means an increasingly greater proportion of the commercial sector will be required to comply.

#### Senate Bill 1383

SB 1383 (Chapter 395, Statutes of 2016) establishes targets to achieve a 50 percent reduction in the level of the statewide disposal of organic waste from the 2014 level by 2020 and a 75 percent reduction by 2025. CalRecycle was granted the regulatory authority required to achieve the organic waste disposal reduction targets and establishes an additional target that not less than 20 percent of currently disposed edible food is recovered for human consumption by 2025 (CalRecycle 2019).

### **Water**

#### Executive Order B-29-15

In response to the ongoing drought in California, EO B-29-15 (April 2015) set a goal of achieving a statewide reduction in potable urban water usage of 25 percent relative to water use in 2013. The term of the EO extended through February 28, 2016, although many of the directives have become permanent water-efficiency standards and requirements. The EO includes specific directives that set strict limits on water usage in the state. In response to EO B-29-15, the California Department of Water Resources modified and adopted a revised version of the Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance that, among other changes, significantly increases the requirements for landscape water use efficiency and broadens its applicability to include new development projects with smaller landscape areas.

#### Executive Order B-37-16

Issued May 2016, EO B-37-16 directed the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) to adjust emergency water conservation regulations through the end of January 2017 to reflect differing water supply conditions across the state. The SWRCB also developed a proposal to achieve a mandatory reduction of potable urban water usage that builds off the mandatory 25 percent reduction called for in EO B-29-15. The SWRCB and Department of Water Resources were required to develop new, permanent water use targets that build upon the existing state law requirements that the state achieve 20 percent reduction in urban water usage by 2020. EO B-37-16 also specifies that the SWRCB permanently prohibit water-wasting practices such as hosing off sidewalks, driveways, and other hardscapes; washing automobiles with hoses not equipped with a shut-off nozzle; using non-recirculated water in a fountain or other decorative



water feature; watering lawns in a manner that causes runoff, or within 48 hours after measurable precipitation; and irrigating ornamental turf on public street medians.

#### Executive Order N-10-21

In response to a state of emergency due to severe drought conditions, EO N-10-21 (July 2021) called on all Californians to voluntarily reduce their water use by 15 percent from their 2020 levels. Actions suggested in EO N-10-21 include reducing landscape irrigation, running dishwashers and washing machines only when full, finding and fixing leaks, installing water-efficient showerheads, taking shorter showers, using a shut-off nozzle on hoses, and taking cars to commercial car washes that use recycled water.

#### **Other State Actions**

##### Senate Bill 97

SB 97 (Dutton) (August 2007) directed the Governor's Office of Planning and Research to develop guidelines under CEQA for the mitigation of GHG emissions. In 2008, the Governor's Office of Planning and Research issued a technical advisory as interim guidance regarding the analysis of GHG emissions in CEQA analysis. The advisory indicated that the lead agency should identify and estimate a project's GHG emissions, including those associated with vehicular traffic, energy consumption, water usage, and construction activities (Governor's Office of Planning and Research 2008). The advisory further recommended that the lead agency determine significance of the impacts and impose all mitigation measures necessary to reduce GHG emissions to a level that is less than significant. The CNRA adopted the CEQA Guidelines amendments in December 2009, which became effective in March 2010.

Under the amended Guidelines, a lead agency has the discretion to determine whether to use a quantitative or qualitative analysis or apply performance standards to determine the significance of GHG emissions resulting from a particular project (14 CCR 15064.4(a)). The Guidelines require a lead agency to consider the extent to which the Project complies with regulations or requirements adopted to implement a statewide, regional, or local plan for the reduction or mitigation of GHG emissions (14 CCR 15064.4(b)). The Guidelines also allow a lead agency to consider feasible means of mitigating the significant effects of GHG emissions, including reductions in emissions through the implementation of project features or off-site measures. The adopted amendments do not establish a GHG emission threshold, instead allowing a lead agency to develop, adopt, and apply its own thresholds of significance or those developed by other agencies or experts. The CNRA also acknowledges that a lead agency may consider compliance with regulations or requirements implementing AB 32 in determining the significance of a project's GHG emissions (CNRA 2009).

With respect to GHG emissions, the CEQA Guidelines state in Section 15064.4(a) that lead agencies should "make a good faith effort, to the extent possible on scientific and factual data, to describe, calculate or estimate" GHG emissions. The CEQA Guidelines note that an agency may identify emissions by either selecting a "model or methodology" to quantify the emissions or by relying on "qualitative analysis or other performance-based standards" (14 CCR 15064.4(a)). Section 15064.4(b) states that the lead agency should consider the following when assessing the significance of impacts from GHG emissions on the environment: (1) the extent a project may increase or reduce GHG emissions as compared to the existing environmental setting; (2) whether the project emissions exceed a threshold of significance that the lead agency determines applies to the project; and (3) the extent to which the project complies with regulations

or requirements adopted to implement a statewide, regional, or local plan for the reduction or mitigation of GHG emissions (14 CCR 15064.4(b)).

#### Executive Order S-13-08

EO S-13-08 (November 2008) is intended to hasten California’s response to the impacts of global climate change, particularly sea-level rise. Therefore, the EO directs state agencies to take specified actions to assess and plan for such impacts. The final 2009 California Climate Adaptation Strategy report was issued in December 2009, and an update, Safeguarding California: Reducing Climate Risk, followed in July 2014. To assess the state’s vulnerability, the report summarizes key climate change impacts to the state for the following areas: Agriculture, Biodiversity and Habitat, Emergency Management, Energy, Forestry, Ocean and Coastal Ecosystems and Resources, Public Health, Transportation, and Water. Issuance of the Safeguarding California: Implementation Action Plans followed in March 2016. In January 2018, the CNRA released the Safeguarding California Plan: 2018 Update, which communicates current and needed actions that state government should take to build climate change resiliency.

#### **4.8.2.3 Local**

##### **SANDAG Regional Plan**

Every four years, SANDAG prepares and updates San Diego Forward: The Regional Plan that provides a blueprint for sustainable growth in the region. The most recent version 2021 Regional Plan (SANDAG 2021a). In accordance with SB 375, the 2021 Regional Plan includes a SCS that coordinates transportation and land use planning that exceeds the state’s target for reducing per capita GHG emissions set by CARB. As discussed, the state-mandate target for the region is a 19 percent per capita GHG emissions reduction from cars and light duty trucks, compared with 2005, by 2035. The 2021 Regional Plan would achieve a 20 percent reduction by 2035. The 2021 Regional Plan also puts forth a forecasted development pattern that is driven by regional goals for sustainability, mobility, housing affordability, and economic prosperity. SB 375 requires the SCS to include a pattern for forecasted growth and development that accomplishes the following:

- When combined with the transportation network, the SCS will achieve the regional GHG emission–reduction targets;
- The SCS accommodates the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) Determination; and
- The SCS utilizes the most recent planning assumptions.

##### **Santee General Plan**

The City’s General Plan includes various goals, objectives, and policies related to GHG emissions, including the following:

**Land Use Element Objective 3.0:** Provide and maintain the highest level of service possible for all community public services and facilities.

- **Policy 3.2:** The City should encourage the development and use of recycled water for appropriate land uses to encourage the conservation of, and reduce demand for, potable water.

- **Policy 4.3:** The City should locate new neighborhood commercial uses along major roadways in consolidated centers that utilize common access and parking for commercial uses, discourage the introduction of strip commercial uses and require adequate pedestrian links to residential areas.
- **Mobility Element:** The Mobility Element includes policies that enhance smart growth development, improve traffic flow, increase the use of public transit, encourage bicycling and walking, and increase use of alternative modes of travel, which would help to reduce GHG emissions from on-road transportation.

### **Sustainable Santee Plan: The City's Roadmap to Greenhouse Gas Reductions**

In January 2020, the City adopted the Sustainable Santee Plan that, as a qualified GHG emissions reduction plan in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5, provides GHG emissions reduction goals and strategies focused on reducing resource consumption, improving alternative modes of transportation, and reducing overall emissions throughout the City (City 2019b). The Sustainable Santee Plan presents the City's community-wide GHG inventories for the years 2005, 2008, 2012, and 2013 and municipal GHG inventories for the years 2005 and 2013. The BAU and adjusted BAU forecasts are presented for the years 2020, 2030, and 2035. An interim goal consistent with SB 32, which is to reduce emissions to 40 percent below 2005 levels, was created for 2030. A longer-term goal was established for 2035, which is to reduce emissions to 49 percent below 2005 levels. The interim and longer-term goals would put the City on a path toward the state's long-term goal to achieve net carbon neutrality statewide by 2045. The Sustainable Santee Plan also identifies GHG reduction strategies to help the City achieve its GHG reduction targets.

#### **4.8.3 Significance Determination Thresholds**

Given the relatively small levels of emissions generated by a typical development in relationship to the total amount of GHG emissions generated on a national or global basis, individual development projects are not expected to result in significant, direct impacts with respect to climate change. However, given the magnitude of the impact of GHG emissions on the global climate, GHG emissions from new development could result in significant, cumulative impacts with respect to climate change. Therefore, the potential for a significant GHG impact is limited to cumulative impacts.

Consistent with Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, impacts related to GHG emissions would be significant if the project would:

1. Generate GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment.
2. Conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHG.

As described in Section 4.8.2.3, the Sustainable Santee Plan is a qualified GHG reduction plan consistent with CEQA guidelines Section 15183.5. Development projects consistent with an applicable local qualified GHG reduction plan are eligible for streamlined GHG analysis. Development projects within the City which are consistent with the Sustainable Santee Plan would be consistent with statewide GHG reduction goals for 2030 (per SB 32), thereby demonstrating progress towards the 2045 GHG reduction goal established by AB 1279 (City 2019b).

#### **4.8.4 Modeling Methodology**

GHG emissions were calculated using the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod), version 2022.1. CalEEMod is a computer model used to estimate emissions resulting from land development projects throughout the state of California. CalEEMod was developed by the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA) in collaboration with the California air quality management and pollution control districts (CAPCOA 2022).

In brief, CalEEMod is a computer model that estimates criteria air pollutant and GHG emissions from mobile (i.e., vehicular) sources, area sources (fireplaces, woodstoves, and landscape maintenance equipment), energy use (electricity and natural gas used in space heating, ventilation, and cooling; lighting; and plug-in appliances), water use and wastewater generation, solid waste disposal, and refrigerant leaks. Emissions are estimated based on land use information input to the model by the user. In various places the user can input additional information and/or override the default assumptions to account for project- or location-specific parameters. For this assessment, the default parameters were adjusted as described below. The CalEEMod output files are included In Appendix E of this EIR.

##### **4.8.4.1 Construction Emissions**

The quantity, duration, and intensity of construction activity influence the amount of construction emissions and related emissions that occur at any one time. As such, the emission forecasts provided herein reflect a specific set of conservative assumptions based on the expected construction scenario wherein a relatively large amount of construction activity is occurring in a relatively intensive manner. Because of this conservative assumption, actual emissions could be less than those forecasted. If construction is delayed or occurs over a longer period, emissions could be reduced because of (1) a more modern and cleaner-burning construction equipment fleet mix than assumed in CalEEMod, and/or (2) a less intensive buildout schedule (i.e., fewer daily emissions occurring over a longer time interval).

#### **TCSP Area and Arts and Entertainment Neighborhood (AEN)**

Construction-related activities are temporary, short-term sources of emissions. Sources of construction-related emissions include construction equipment exhaust and construction-related trips by workers, delivery, and hauling trucks. The quantity of emissions generated by the construction of projects within the proposed TCSP would vary depending upon the number of projects occurring simultaneously and the size of each individual project. Since the proposed TCSP is a land use plan that guides physical development through 2035, specific construction details such as the exact number and timing of all development projects are unknown. The intensity of construction activity associated with the proposed TCSP could be the same during each year. It is more likely, however, that some periods of construction (and associated emissions) would be more intense than other periods due to market conditions and population and housing demands.

While neither San Diego Air Pollution Control District (SDAPCD) nor the City of Santee provides additional guidance on construction assumptions for plan-level analyses, some air districts such as the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (SMAQMD) suggest that lead agencies conservatively assume that construction-generated emissions associated with the build-out of a plan should be evaluated assuming 25 percent of the total land uses would be constructed in a single year (SMAQMD 2020). This conservative assumption was used to evaluate the potential construction-related air quality impacts from projects that could occur under the

proposed TCSP Amendment. The land uses modeled in the 25 percent scenario are listed in Table 4.8-4, *Land Use Profile – First Year of Construction*. Modeling relied upon CalEEMod default activities, fleet mixes, and vehicle trips based on land use type and size.

**Table 4.8-4  
LAND USE PROFILE – FIRST YEAR OF CONSTRUCTION**

Land Use	Acres	Building Size
Retail	132.89	592,258 square feet
Regional Shopping	8.81	24,625 square feet
Civic/Institutional	45.74	187,223 square feet
Office Commercial	24.76	240,206 square feet
Park	59.36	59.36 acres
Residential (TC-R-14)	42.31	793 dwelling units
Residential (TC-R-22)	23.58	867 dwelling units

Note: Housing Element sites excluded, as they are provided in the analysis described in Section 4.1.1.1.

Given that exhaust emissions from the construction equipment fleet are expected to decrease over time as stricter standards take effect, 25 percent of the construction emissions were conservatively modeled to occur in 2027, following delivery of the Housing Element sites. Additional details are available in Appendix E of this EIR. As construction occurs in later years, advancements in engine technology, retrofits, and turnover in the equipment fleet are anticipated to result in lower levels of emissions.

### Housing Element Sites

Construction emissions for Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B were estimated assuming construction would begin in January 2025 and last approximately 18 months. Construction activities would include site preparation, grading, building construction, architectural coatings, and paving. Construction is assumed to occur six days per week with equipment operating up to eight hours per day. Architectural coatings are assumed to occur concurrently with the last five months of building construction. The construction schedule assumed in the modeling is shown in Table 4.8-5, *Housing Element Sites Anticipated Construction Schedule*.

**Table 4.8-5  
HOUSING ELEMENT SITES ANTICIPATED CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE**

Construction Activity	Construction Period Start	Construction Period End	Number of Working Days
Site Preparation	1/1/2025	1/23/2025	20
Grading	1/24/2025	3/17/2025	45
Building Construction	3/18/2025	5/28/2026	375
Architectural Coatings	1/1/2026	7/8/2026	162
Paving	5/29/2026	7/8/2026	35

Construction would require the use of heavy off-road equipment. Construction equipment estimates are based on default values in CalEEMod, Version 2022.1. Table 4.8-6, *Housing Element Sites Construction Equipment Assumptions*, presents a summary of the assumed equipment that would be involved in each stage of construction.

**Table 4.8-6  
HOUSING ELEMENT SITES CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT ASSUMPTIONS**

<b>Equipment</b>	<b>Horsepower</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Hours/Day</b>
<b>Site Preparation</b>			
Rubber Tired Dozers	367	3	8
Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes	84	4	8
<b>Grading</b>			
Excavators	36	2	8
Graders	148	1	8
Rubber Tired Dozers	367	1	8
Scrapers	426	2	8
Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes	84	2	8
<b>Building Construction</b>			
Cranes	367	2	4.4
Forklifts	82	4	7.5
Generator Sets	14	2	5
Tractors/Loaders/Backhoes	84	4	6.6
Welders	46	2	5
<b>Architectural Coating</b>			
Air Compressors	37	1	6
<b>Paving</b>			
Pavers	81	2	8
Paving Equipment	89	2	8
Rollers	36	2	8

Source: CalEEMod

Worker commute trips and vendor delivery trips were modeled based on CalEEMod defaults. Worker trips are anticipated to vary between 18 and 1,279 trips per day, depending on construction phase. The CalEEMod default worker, vendor and haul trip distances were used in the model.

#### **4.8.4.2 Operational Emissions**

Operational emissions were estimated using CalEEMod. Operational sources of emissions include area, energy, mobile (on-road vehicles), water and wastewater, solid waste, and refrigerants.

#### **Area Source Emissions**

Area sources typically include emissions from landscaping equipment, the use of consumer products, the reapplication of architectural coatings for maintenance, and hearths. Project emissions associated with area sources were estimated using the CalEEMod default values except for hearths, as the project would not include wood burning stoves or fireplaces, or natural gas fireplaces.

#### **Energy Emissions**

Development within the project would use electricity for lighting, heating, and cooling. Natural gas and electricity would be supplied by San Diego Gas and Electric (SDG&E). Direct emissions from the burning of natural gas typically results from furnaces, hot water heaters, and kitchen appliances. Electricity generation typically entails the off-site generation of electricity, such as

through combustion of fossil fuels, including natural gas and coal, which is then transmitted to end users. A building's electricity use is thus associated with the off-site or indirect emission of GHGs at the source of electricity generation (power plant). CalEEMod conservatively assumes the use of natural gas appliances based on historical data while newer construction typically includes more electric appliances. Default natural gas and electricity demand quantities from CalEEMod were used in this analysis and the emissions factors for SDG&E provided in CalEEMod were applied to these energy demand values to calculate the resulting emissions.

### **Vehicular (Mobile) Sources**

Operational emissions from mobile source emissions are associated with vehicle trip generation and trip length. Based on the project trip generation rate from the Local Transportation Study, the Housing Element sites would generate 8,520 new average daily trips (ADT) while the remaining TCSP land uses would generate an additional 51,511 ADT (Intersecting Metrics 2024). Default vehicle speeds, trip purpose, and trip distances from CalEEMod were applied to these trips.

### **Water and Wastewater Sources**

Water-related GHG emissions are from the energy use for the conveyance and treatment of water and wastewater. CalEEMod uses the Maximum Applied Water Allowance method established under the California Department of Water Resources' 2015 Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance, and indoor residential water consumption based on per capita daily water use rates from the *Residential End Uses of Water* published by the Water Research Foundation to establish default water use (CAPCOA 2022). Modeling was conducted using these defaults.

### **Solid Waste Sources**

The disposal of solid waste produces GHG emissions from anaerobic decomposition in landfills, incineration, and transportation of waste. Portions of these emissions are biogenic. CalEEMod methods for quantifying GHG emissions from solid waste are based on the IPCC method using the degradable organic content of waste. The default waste generation rate for by land use type was used in modeling.

### **Refrigerants**

CalEEMod calculates GHG emissions associated with refrigerants (typically HFCs or blends of gases containing HFCs) which are emitted through leakage or maintenance from project refrigeration systems, freezers, and air conditioning systems. Refrigerant emissions were calculated using CalEEMod defaults.

## **4.8.5 Issue 1: Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

*Would the project result in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions that may have a significant impact on the environment?*

### **4.8.5.1 Impact Analysis**

The project would generate GHG emissions during construction and operation. CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.4(a) states that a lead agency shall make a good-faith effort, based to the extent possible on scientific and factual data, to describe, calculate, or estimate the amount of GHG emissions resulting from a project. Therefore, GHG emissions are estimated using the methods



described above, and are provided below for informational purposes. However, as described below, for the purposes of determining significance of GHG emissions, the project is analyzed for consistency with the Sustainable Santee Plan.

### Construction Emissions

Project construction GHG emissions were estimated using the CalEEMod model as described in Section 4.8.4.1 with emissions estimated separately for the Housing Element sites and the rest of the TCSP. Emissions of GHGs related to the construction of the project would be temporary. As shown in Table 4.8-7, *Construction GHG Emissions*, peak annual GHG emissions associated with construction of the project are estimated at 3,130 MT CO<sub>2</sub>e.

**Table 4.8-7  
CONSTRUCTION GHG EMISSIONS**

Year/Activity	Emissions (MT CO <sub>2</sub> e)
2025 Housing Element Sites	2,090
2026 Housing Element Sites	1,135
2027 Town Center Specific Plan – Year 1	3,130

Source: CalEEMod (output data is provided in Appendix C)

Note: Construction emissions are amortized over 30 years in accordance with SCAQMD guidance.

MT = metric tons; CO<sub>2</sub>e = carbon dioxide equivalent

### Operation Emissions

Project operational GHG emissions were estimated using the CalEEMod model as described in Section 4.8.4.2 with emissions estimated separately for the Housing Element sites and the rest of the TCSP. The calculated Housing Element operational emissions for the first anticipated full year of operation (2027) and the TCSP for the horizon year (2035) are shown in Table 4.8-8, *Operational GHG Emissions*.

**Table 4.8-8  
OPERATIONAL GHG EMISSIONS**

Emission Sources	MT CO <sub>2</sub> e
<b>Housing Element Sites</b>	
Vehicular (Mobile)	8,466
Area	18
Energy	909
Water/Wastewater	79
Solid Waste	342
Refrigerants	2
Total Annual Housing Element Site Emissions <sup>1</sup>	9,815
<b>Town Center Specific Plan</b>	
Vehicular (Mobile)	52,808
Area	54
Energy	5,032
Water/Wastewater	449

Emission Sources	MT CO <sub>2</sub> e
Solid Waste	1,332
Refrigerants	5
Total Annual TCSP Emissions <sup>1</sup>	59,680

Source: CalEEMod (output data is provided in Appendix C).

<sup>1</sup> Totals may not sum due to rounding.

MT = metric tons; CO<sub>2</sub>e = carbon dioxide equivalent

## GHG Emissions Impact

The Sustainable Santee Plan, a qualified GHG emissions reduction plan in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5, provides policy direction and identifies actions the City and community will take to reduce GHG emissions consistent with State goals and targets including achieving 1990 emission levels by 2020 (which the state has achieved); 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030; and 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. The Sustainable Santee Plan would also work to achieve a per-capita GHG emission level by 2030 in conformance with SB 32 and the CARB Scoping Plan. Development projects within the City which are consistent with the Sustainable Santee Plan would be consistent with statewide GHG reduction goals for 2030 (per SB 32), thereby demonstrating progress towards the 2045 GHG reduction goal established by AB 1279 (City 2019b). For the purposes of determining significance of GHG emissions, the project is analyzed for consistency with the Sustainable Santee Plan.

### TCSP and AEN

The project would result in a comprehensive update to the existing TCSP involving expanding the TCSP area by 42 acres, updating the boundaries of the TCSP districts to create five neighborhoods within the TCSP, and identifying potential future residential and non-residential development potential within the TCSP area. Future development allowed throughout the TCSP area would not be increased by the project; however, development regulations and criteria in the proposed TCSP would replace the current TCSP. As a result, the project would not increase the amount of vehicle traffic expected to be generated in the City. Similarly, the project would not increase the amount of traffic in the City and would not result in an increase in the average VMT per capita. As buildout of the project would not result in an increase in anticipated development or traffic generation over what would occur under buildout of the adopted zoning and land use designations, the project would not result in an increase in emissions that are not already accounted for in the Sustainable Santee Plan.

The Sustainable Santee Plan includes 10 goals across 5 categories. The proposed project consists of a comprehensive update to the TCSP to modify or establish new land use designations, land uses, development standards, and conceptual guidelines that would apply to future development within the TCSP area. The project is not proposing specific development that could be demonstrated as incorporating measures related to building space, energy use, or utilities; however, the project would not inhibit the City from implementing these measures or achieving these goals. The project includes several transportation projects which would be consistent with Goals 6 and 8 within the Transportation category, as detailed in Table 4.8-9, *Project Consistency with Sustainable Santee Plan Measures*.

**Table 4.8-9  
PROJECT CONSISTENCY WITH SUSTAINABLE SANTEE PLAN MEASURES**

Measure	Project Compliance
<b>Goal 6 – Reduction in VMT</b>	
Measure 6.1 – Multimodal Infrastructure	The proposed TCSP includes multi-use paths and pedestrian connections as shown on Figure 3 5, TCSP Multi-Use Pathways. Multi-use pathways provide safe, convenient, and comfortable pedestrian access between the different land uses and neighborhoods and form the backbone of first mile and last mile connections between the transit center and proposed uses. Existing and planned multi-use pathways to be constructed are identified throughout the southern part of the TCSP, south of the San Diego River. One planned multi-use pathway, the River Bridge, is identified spanning the San Diego River along the east side of Cuyamaca Street.
Measure 6.1 – Bike Paths/Transit	The proposed TCSP updates the 1986 bicycle network to account for changes to existing and proposed development in the project area. The proposed TCSP specifies three types of bike facilities and their locations throughout the TCSP on Figure 3-6, TCSP Bicycle Network. The bicycle network would consist of the following types of facilities: Class I bike paths adjacent to but physically separated from motorists by a median; Class II bike lanes along a street or highway separated by striped lanes; and Class III bike routes, which are shared lanes for bikes and motorists indicated by road markings (i.e., sharrows).
<b>Goal 8 – Traffic Flow</b>	
Measure 8.1 – Traffic Flow Improvement Program	The TCSP identifies improvements along portions of existing Cuyamaca Street and Riverview Parkway, and identifies new roadway connections including Riverview Parkway, Cottonwood Avenue, Main Street, and Park Center Drive. the proposed roadway connections along Riverview Parkway, Cottonwood Avenue, Main Street, and Park Center Drive would provide direct connections through the TCSP area and AEN, as well as onto major arterial roadways and would improve traffic congestion in the area.

Source: City 2019b

The transportation projects identified in the TCSP meet the City's VMT Analysis Guidelines screening criteria of "closing gaps in the transportation network" and/or "adding new or enhanced bicycle or pedestrian facilities on existing streets" and are presumed not to increase vehicle travel. The transportation projects identified in the TCSP are intended to increase pedestrian and bicycle safety and connection within the TCSP area to aid in the reduction of VMT and mobile source emissions. The majority of the TCSP area, including the AEN, is located within a designated Transit Priority Area (TPA). By placing these uses within a TPA, the project would implement the Sustainable Santee Plan strategies by focusing projected future growth into mixed-use and multiple-use activity centers that are pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly and linked to transit. Increasing residential and commercial density in transit corridors and within a TPA would support the City in achieving the GHG emissions reduction targets of the Sustainable Santee Plan, and thus, impacts associated with GHG emissions would be less than significant.

### Housing Element Sites

The Sustainable Santee Plan Project Consistency Checklist (Checklist) is intended to be a tool for development projects to demonstrate consistency with the Sustainable Santee Plan. The Checklist has been developed as part of the Sustainable Santee Plan implementation and monitoring process and supports the achievement of individual GHG reduction measures as well

as the City's overall GHG reduction goals. Additionally, the Checklist supports the City's sustainability goals and policies that encourage sustainable development and aim to conserve and reduce the consumption of resources, such as energy and water, among others. Projects that meet the requirements of the Checklist are considered consistent with the Sustainable Santee Plan and would have a less than significant contribution to cumulative GHG impacts (i.e., the project's incremental contribution to cumulative GHG effects is not cumulatively considerable), pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15064(h)(3), 15130(d), and 15183(b).

The Checklist includes a two-step process to determine if a project would result in a GHG impact. Step 1 consists of an evaluation to determine the project's consistency with existing General Plan land use and zoning designations for the site. Step 2 consists of an evaluation of the project's design features compliance with the Sustainable Santee Plan's GHG emission reduction measures.

Because the Housing Element sites are being evaluated at the project level for this EIR, consistency with the Checklist is the appropriate method for determining significance of GHG emissions. A Checklist was completed for the development of Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B (See Appendix B to Appendix E). These sites are designated for residential land uses in the existing TCSP and zoned for residential development in the City's Housing Element. When compared to the existing zoning and land use designations, the project would not increase the development potential allowed at the Housing Element sites. Therefore, under Step 1 of the Checklist, the project is consistent with the land use assumptions used in the Sustainable Santee Plan.

Consistency with Step 2 of the Checklist would require showing how the project is implementing applicable strategies and actions for reducing GHG emissions. This includes strategies related to energy efficiency, tree planting, electric vehicle charging, solid waste reduction, and clean energy. Specifically, Checklist Step 2, measures 2.1 (Increase Energy Efficiency in New Residential Units); 5.1 (Shade Trees); 7.1 (Increase Use of Electric Vehicles); 9.1 (Reduce Waste at Landfills); and 10.1 (Increased Clean Energy Use) are applicable to the Housing Element sites. Because there are no specific project proposals to confirm the strategies are being implemented on these sites, the impact would be potentially significant.

#### **4.8.5.2 Mitigation Measures**

##### **TCSP Area and AEN**

No mitigation is required.

##### **Housing Element Sites**

The following mitigation measures would be required to demonstrate consistency of the Housing Element sites with the Sustainable Santee Plan, and reduce impacts to less than significant:

**GHG-1 Increase Energy Efficiency in New Residential Units.** New residential construction shall meet or exceed California Green Building Standards Tier 2 Voluntary Measures, such as obtaining green building ratings including LEED, Build it Green, or Energy Star Certified building certification in scoring development and explain the measures implemented.

- GHG-2 Shade Trees.** The project shall utilize tree planting for shade and energy efficiency such as tree planting in parking lots and streetscapes.
- GHG-3 Increased Use of Electric Vehicles.** The project shall install electric vehicle chargers for 13 percent of total parking provided.
- GHG-4 Reducing Solid Waste Generation.** The project shall provide exterior recycling storage space in accordance with California Green Building Standards and the Santee Municipal Code.
- GHG-5 Increased Clean Energy Use.** The project shall install at least 1 kilowatt per unit of photovoltaic solar systems, unless the installation is infeasible due to poor solar resources established in a solar feasibility study prepared by a qualified consultant submitted with an applicant's formal project submittal to City.

#### 4.8.5.3 Significance After Mitigation

##### TCSP Area and AEN

Less than significant without mitigation.

##### Housing Element Sites

With implementation of mitigation measures GHG-1 through GHG-5 the development of the Housing Element sites would be consistent with the Sustainable Santee Plan, and the project would not generate GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment. The impact would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

#### 4.8.6 Issue 2: Policies, Plans, and Regulations Intended to Reduce GHG Emissions

*Would the project conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs?*

##### 4.8.6.1 Impact Analysis

##### TCSP Area and AEN

There are numerous State plans, policies, and regulations adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions. The principal overall State plan and policy is AB 32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006. The quantitative goal of AB 32 is to reduce GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020, which the State achieved. SB 32 and AB 1279 require further reductions of 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 and 85 percent below 1990 levels by 2045, respectively. Statewide plans and regulations such as GHG emissions standards for vehicles (AB 1493), the LCFS, and regulations requiring an increasing fraction of electricity to be generated from renewable sources are being implemented at the statewide level; as such, compliance at the project level is not addressed. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with those plans and regulations.

Future projects within the TCSP area and AEN must also be constructed in accordance with the energy-efficiency standards, water reduction goals, and other standards contained in the

applicable Title 24 Part 6 Building Energy Efficiency Standards and Part 11 CALGreen Building Standards. The Sustainable Santee Plan was developed to ensure community-wide GHG emissions in Santee would meet the state's 2030 GHG reduction goal mandated by SB 32, thereby demonstrating progress towards achieving the 2045 reduction goal established by AB 1279. Therefore, because the project would be consistent with the Sustainable Santee Plan, as discussed in Section 4.8.5.1, the project would not conflict with state GHG reduction plans developed to achieve the goals, including the CARB Scoping Plan.

### **Housing Element Sites**

Because it cannot be confirmed that the project-level CAP Checklist requirements are being implemented on the Housing Element sites, development of the Housing Element sites may not be consistent with the plan and the impact would be potentially significant. As discussed in Section 4.8.5, the project would be consistent with the Sustainable Santee Plan with implementation of mitigation measures GHG-1 through GHG-5.

#### **4.8.6.2 Mitigation Measures**

##### **TCSP Area and AEN**

No mitigation is required.

##### **Housing Element Sites**

Mitigation measures GHG-1 through GHG-5, described above, would ensure the four Housing Element sites would be consistent with the Sustainable Santee Plan.

#### **4.8.6.3 Significance After Mitigation**

##### **TCSP Area and AEN**

Less than significant without mitigation.

##### **Housing Element Sites**

The impact would be less than significant with mitigation measures GHG-1 through GHG-5 incorporated.

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## **4.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials**

The following section analyzes the potential impacts associated with hazards and hazardous materials that may occur as a result of implementation of the proposed project.

### **4.9.1 Existing Conditions**

#### **4.9.1.1 Hazardous Materials, Transportation, Storage, Use, and Disposal**

Land uses designated within the Town Center Specific Plan (TCSP) area, Arts and Entertainment Neighborhood (AEN), and Housing Element sites that may handle hazardous materials, or have handled or generated hazardous wastes, are typically commercial, general commercial, and residential. Specific commercial uses on the sites include surface parking lots, professional offices, and shopping centers; however, the potential for contamination resulting from these commercial uses is unlikely. Household hazardous waste includes the disposal of any product labeled: toxic, poison, corrosive, flammable, combustible, or irritant. Hazardous materials, used in many household products (such as drain cleaners, waste oil, cleaning fluids, insecticides, and car batteries), are often improperly disposed of as part of normal household trash, resulting in these hazardous materials interacting with other chemicals to create risks to people or cause soil and groundwater contamination. Insecticides and herbicides are also applied in parks, open space, and landscaped areas throughout the project area.

#### **4.9.1.2 Known Hazardous Materials Sites**

##### **Hazardous Waste and Substances Sites (EnviroStor Database)**

The State of California Hazardous Waste and Substances Site List (also known as the Cortese List) is a planning document used by state and local agencies to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements by providing information about the location of known hazardous materials sites. The California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) is responsible for preparing a portion of the information that comprises the Cortese List, through its EnviroStor database of sites listed, pursuant to Section 25256 of the California Health and Safety Code (H&SC) (DTSC 2024). This includes a listing of hazardous substance release sites selected for, and subject to, a response action. EnviroStor must update the list of sites at least annually to reflect new information regarding previously listed sites or the addition of new sites requiring a response action.

##### **Underground Storage Tanks (GeoTracker Database)**

The GeoTracker database is the State Water Resources Control Board ([SWRCB] 2024) data management system for managing sites that impact groundwater, especially those that require groundwater cleanup (leaking underground storage tanks [LUSTs], Department of Defense, Site Cleanup Program) as well as permitted facilities such as operating underground storage tanks (USTs) and land disposal sites.

LUSTs are a significant source of petroleum impacts to groundwater and can also result in potential threats to health and safety. The SWRCB records soil and/or groundwater contamination caused by LUSTs in its GeoTracker database.

## Database Search Results

An environmental database record search was completed for the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites. Using the EnviroStor and GeoTracker databases, a total of two GeoTracker cleanup sites were identified within 1,000 feet of the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites. (Figure 4.9-1, *Hazardous Waste Sites*). No active EnviroStor sites were identified within 1,000 feet of the project footprints.

1. SoCal Trucks (T10000017399) is located at 10460 Mission Gorge Road and is listed as “Open – Assessment & Interim Remedial Action” for an undisclosed discharge discovered on 5/4/2021.
2. Chevron Products (T0607303021) is located at 8888 Magnolia Avenue. This is an “Open – Eligible for Closure” site established in 1983 when a pump island was discovered to be leaking unleaded gasoline. Cleanup has been completed at the site and the State Water Board has determined that the site satisfies the case closure requirements of H&SC Code Section 25296.10.

As shown in Figure 4.9-1, neither of the listed GeoTracker clean-up sites are within or adjacent to the TCSP area, AEN, or Housing Element sites. While the sites are located in the vicinity of the project area, they do not represent a risk of off-site exposure or hazard based on a review of the GeoTracker case details. Additionally, no federal Superfund Sites, Voluntary Cleanup Sites, School Cleanup Sites, Permitted – Operating Sites, Post-Closure Permitted Sites, or Historical Non-Operating Sites are located within the TCSP area, AEN, or Housing Element sites based on a review of publicly available records.

## Older Structures

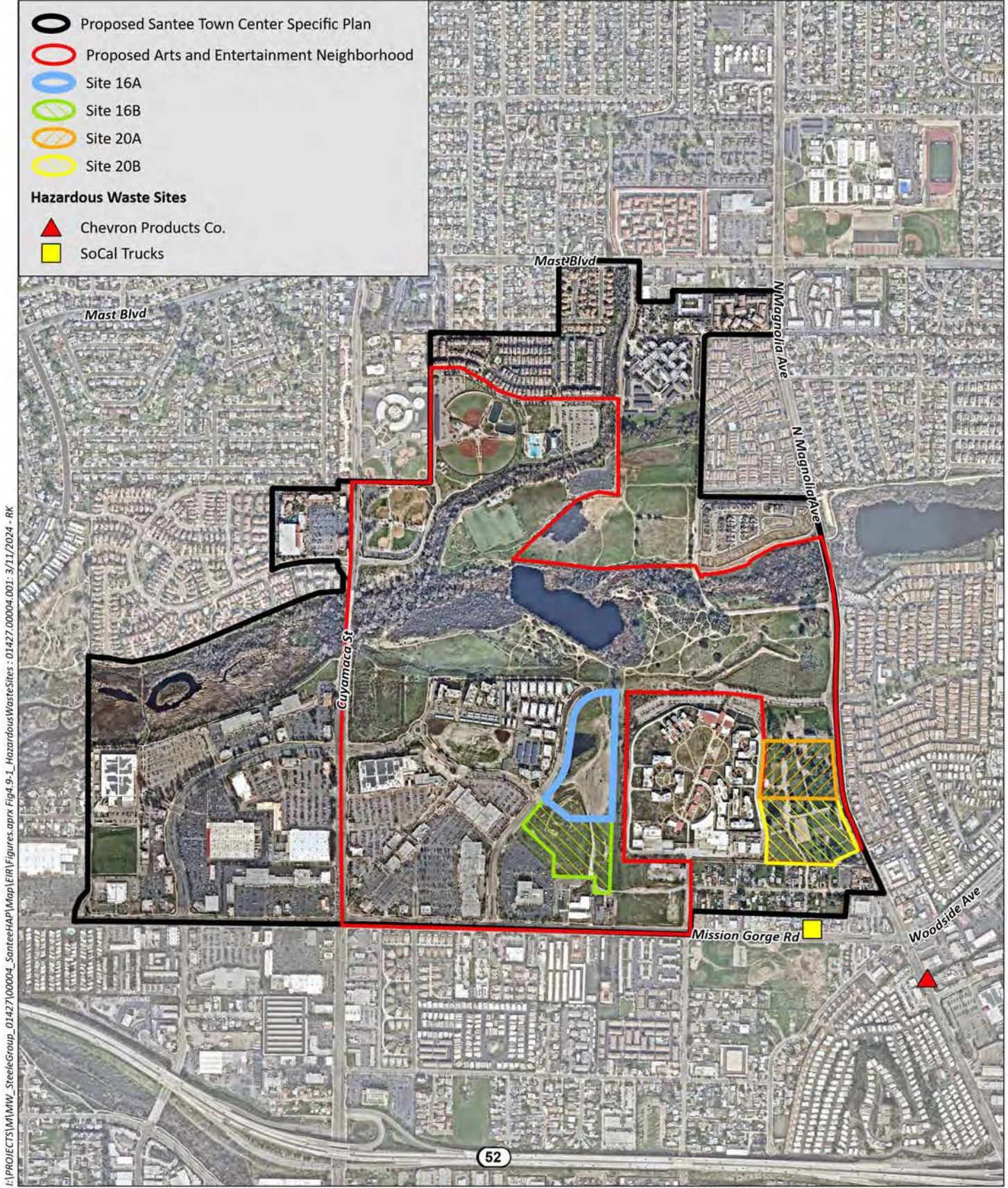
Hazardous materials are commonly found in the building materials of structures, including residential structures, built prior to approximately 1978. Buildings constructed prior to 1978 potentially contain hazardous building materials such as asbestos-containing materials (ACMs), lead containing surfaces, including lead-based paint (LBP), and other toxic materials such as mercury, polychlorinated biphenyls and freon.

### 4.9.1.3 Airport and Wildland Fire Hazards

#### Airports

Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Miramar is located west of the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites at 6200 Miramar Way. MCAS Miramar is not a public airport and is restricted to military use providing facilities and services to various Marine Corps and Navy operating units. Airfield operations run 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and consist of three runways, one helicopter landing deck, and six helipads. Flight patterns run primarily in a west to east direction. The northern portions of the TCSP area, AEN, and Site 16A are located within MCAS Miramar’s Review Area 2 as shown in Figures 4.9-2a and 4.9-2b, *Airport Compatibility Zones* (Airport Land Use Commission [ALUC] 2024).

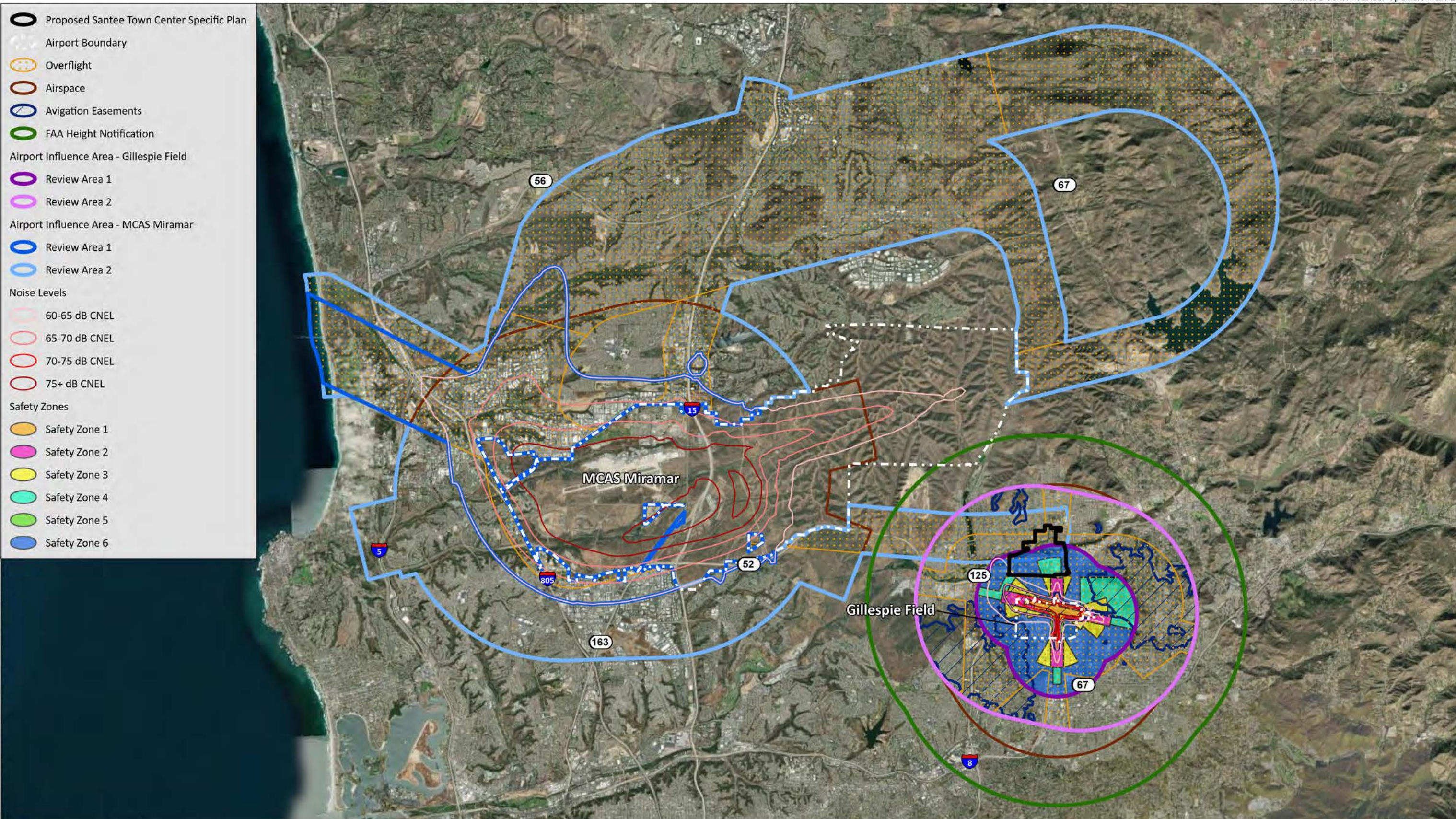




I:\PROJECTS\IM\WW\_SteelGroup\_01427\00004\_SanteeHAP\Map\EIR\Figures.aprx Fig 4.9-1\_HazardousWasteSites : 01427.00004.001: 3/11/2024 - RK

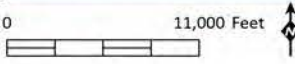
Source: Aerial (SanGIS, 2023); Hazardous Waste Sites (EnviroStor Database ca.gov)





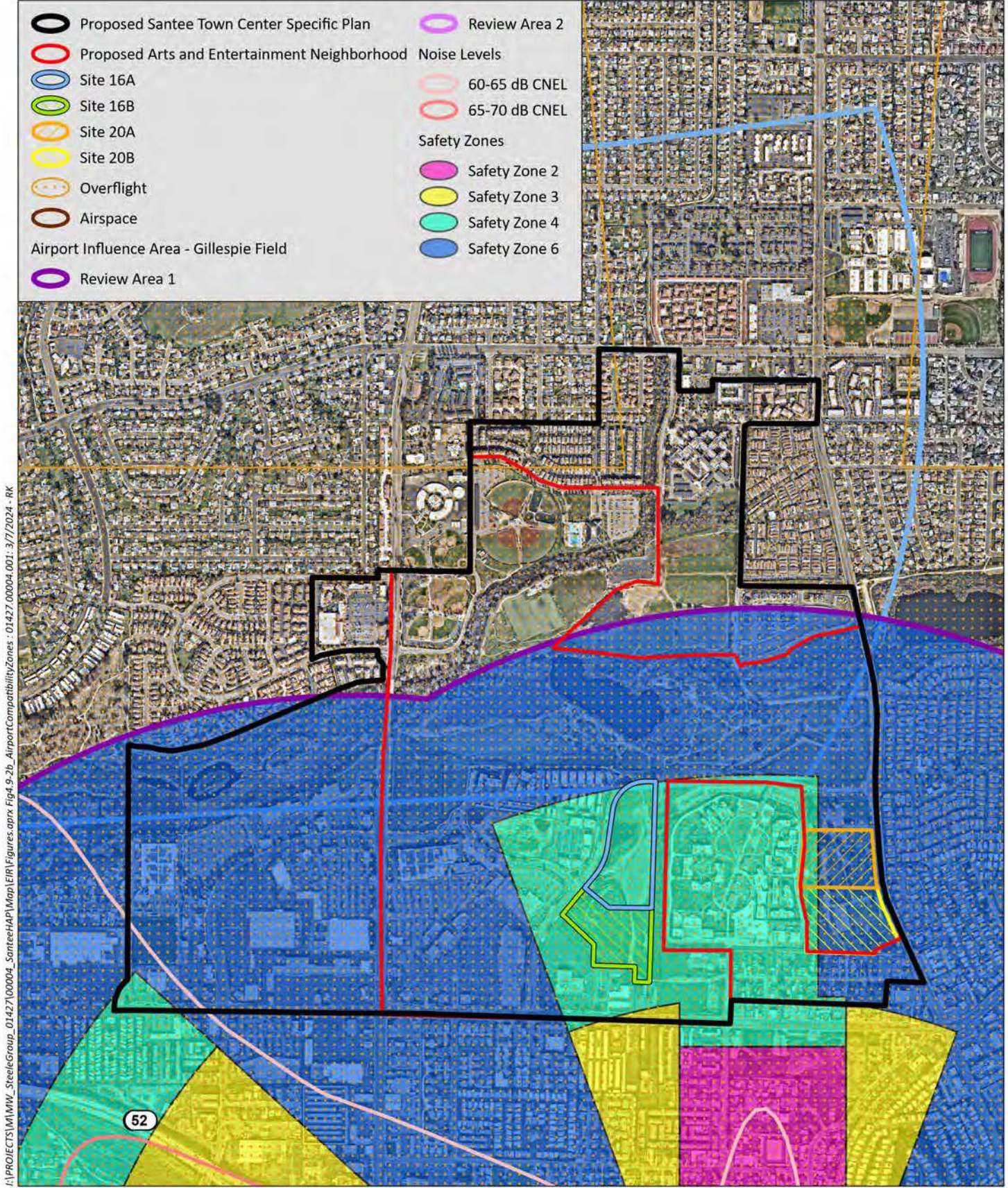
- Proposed Santee Town Center Specific Plan
- Airport Boundary
- Overflight
- Airspace
- Avigation Easements
- FAA Height Notification
- Airport Influence Area - Gillespie Field**
- Review Area 1
- Review Area 2
- Airport Influence Area - MCAS Miramar**
- Review Area 1
- Review Area 2
- Noise Levels**
- 60-65 dB CNEL
- 65-70 dB CNEL
- 70-75 dB CNEL
- 75+ dB CNEL
- Safety Zones**
- Safety Zone 1
- Safety Zone 2
- Safety Zone 3
- Safety Zone 4
- Safety Zone 5
- Safety Zone 6

I:\PROJECTS\MW\_MW\_SteelGroup\_01427\00004\_SanteeHAP\Map\EIR\Figures.aprx Fig. 4.9-2a\_AirportCompatibilityZones : 01427\_00004\_001 : 3/7/2024 - RK



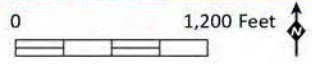
Source: Aerial (Esri, 2022); Airport Information (San Diego County Regional Airport Authority)





I:\PROJECTS\MMW\_SteelGroup\_01427\000004\_SanteeHAP\Map\EIR\Figures.aprx Fig 4.9-2b\_AirportCompatibilityZones : 01427.00004.001 : 3/7/2024 - RK

Source: Aerial (SanGIS, 2023); Airport Information (San Diego County Regional Airport Authority)





Gillespie Field is a general aviation reliever primarily located in the City of El Cajon with a small portion located in the City of Santee. It includes three runways owned and operated by the County of San Diego, Department of Public Works. The runway and flight patterns are generally oriented east-west. Two-thirds of the operations are performed by single engine piston aircrafts with helicopters accounting for approximately 25 percent of total annual operations (San Diego County Public Works 2005). As shown in Figure 4.9-2b, the ~~northern-southern~~ portion of the TCSP area and AEN are in Review Area 1, while the ~~southern-northern~~ portion of the TCSP area and AEN and the Housing Element sites are within Review Area 2. Portions of the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites are also located in Safety Zones 4 and 6 for Gillespie Field. A small portion of the TCSP area and AEN south of the Las Colinas Detention Facility (Las Colinas) is in Safety Zone 3.

### Review Areas

Within Review Area 1, all land use actions are subject to ALUC review, ~~except if the project:~~

~~Is “compatible” with both noise and safety compatibility policies;~~

~~Has received a final notice of determination from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) that the project would not constitute a hazard or obstruction to air navigation, to the extent applicable; and~~

~~Has been conditioned by the local agency to require an overflight notification.~~

Within Review Area 2, only the following land use actions require ALUC review:

- Any object which has received a final notice of determination from the FAA that the project would constitute a hazard or obstruction to air navigation, to the extent applicable.
- Any proposed object in an area of terrain penetration to airspace surfaces which has a height greater than 35 feet above ground level.
- Any project having the potential to create electrical or visual hazards to aircraft in flight, including electrical interference with radio communications or navigational signals; lighting which could be mistaken for airport lighting; glare or bright lights (including laser lights) in the eyes of pilots or aircraft using the Airport; certain colors of neon lights— especially red and white—that can interfere with night vision goggles; and impaired visibility near the Airport. The local agency should coordinate with the airport operator in making this determination.
- Any project having the potential to cause an increase in the attraction of birds or other wildlife that can be hazardous to aircraft operations in the vicinity of the Airport. The local agency should coordinate with the airport operator in making this decision.

### *Gillespie Field Safety Zone 3*

1. New residential development at a density greater than 16 dwelling units per gross acre (du/ac) is “incompatible.”
2. New residential development at a density of 4 du/ac or less is “compatible.”

3. New residential development at a density of more than 4 du/ac but not more than 13 du/ac is “conditionally compatible” provided that the development complies with the clustering requirements indicated in Paragraph 5 below. The clustering of residential development must not result in the density within any single 1-acre area exceeding 20 dwelling units per net acre.
4. New residential development at a density of more than 13 du/ac but not more than 16 du/ac is “conditionally compatible” provided that the development meets the following conditions:
  - Fifteen percent of the site meets the “open land” criteria (see Policy 3.4.9 of Gillespie Field Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan [ALUCP] [ALUC 2010]).
  - One of the following exists within 1,650 feet of the geographic center of the site: a four-lane divided highway; a golf course; or other public land qualifying as “open land” in accordance with Policy 3.4.9 of the Gillespie Field ALUCP.
  - Utility lines on and along the perimeter of the site are underground or would be placed underground in conjunction with the proposed project.
  - Development is clustered if required in accordance with Paragraph 5 below. The clustering of residential development must not result in the density within any single 1-acre area exceeding 20 du/ac.
5. Where indicated in Paragraphs 3 and 4 above, residential building sites are to be clustered in a manner that maximizes the “open land” on which an aircraft could execute an emergency landing. The criteria for minimum contiguous “open land” area are listed in Policy 3.4.9 of the Gillespie Field ALUCP.
  - Clustering is mandatory for projects of 10 or more acres with one “open land” area to be dedicated per each 10 acres of the site.
  - For projects of less than 10 acres, compliance with the clustering conditions is desirable, but not required as a condition for project approval.

#### *Gillespie Field Safety Zone 4*

##### In Safety Zone 4:

1. New residential development at a density greater than 20 du/ac is “incompatible.”
2. New residential development at a density of 4 du/ac or less is “compatible.”
3. New residential development at a density of more than 4 du/ac but not more than 13 du/ac is “conditionally compatible” based upon compliance with the clustering requirements indicated in Paragraph 5 below. The clustering of residential development must not result in the density within any single 1-acre area exceeding 25 dwelling units per net acre.
4. New residential development at a density of more than 13 du/ac but not more than 16 du/ac is “conditionally compatible” only if:











- Fifteen percent of the site meets the “open land” criteria (see Policy 3.4.9 of Gillespie Field ALUCP).
  - One of the following exists within 1,650 feet of the geographic center of the site: a four-lane divided highway; a golf course; or other public land qualifying as “open land” in accordance with Policy 3.4.9.
  - Utility lines on and along the perimeter of the site are underground or would be placed underground in conjunction with the proposed project.
  - Development is clustered, if required in accordance with Paragraph 5 below. The clustering of residential development must not result in the density within any single 1-acre area exceeding 25 dwelling units per net acre.
5. Where indicated in Paragraphs 3 and 4 above, residential building sites are to be clustered in a manner that maximizes the “open land” on which an aircraft could execute an emergency landing. The criteria for minimum contiguous “open land” area are listed in Policy 3.4.9 of the Gillespie Field ALUCP.
- Clustering is mandatory for projects of 10 or more acres with one “open land” area to be dedicated per each 10 acres of the site.
  - For projects of less than 10 acres, compliance with the clustering conditions is desirable, but not required as a condition for project approval.

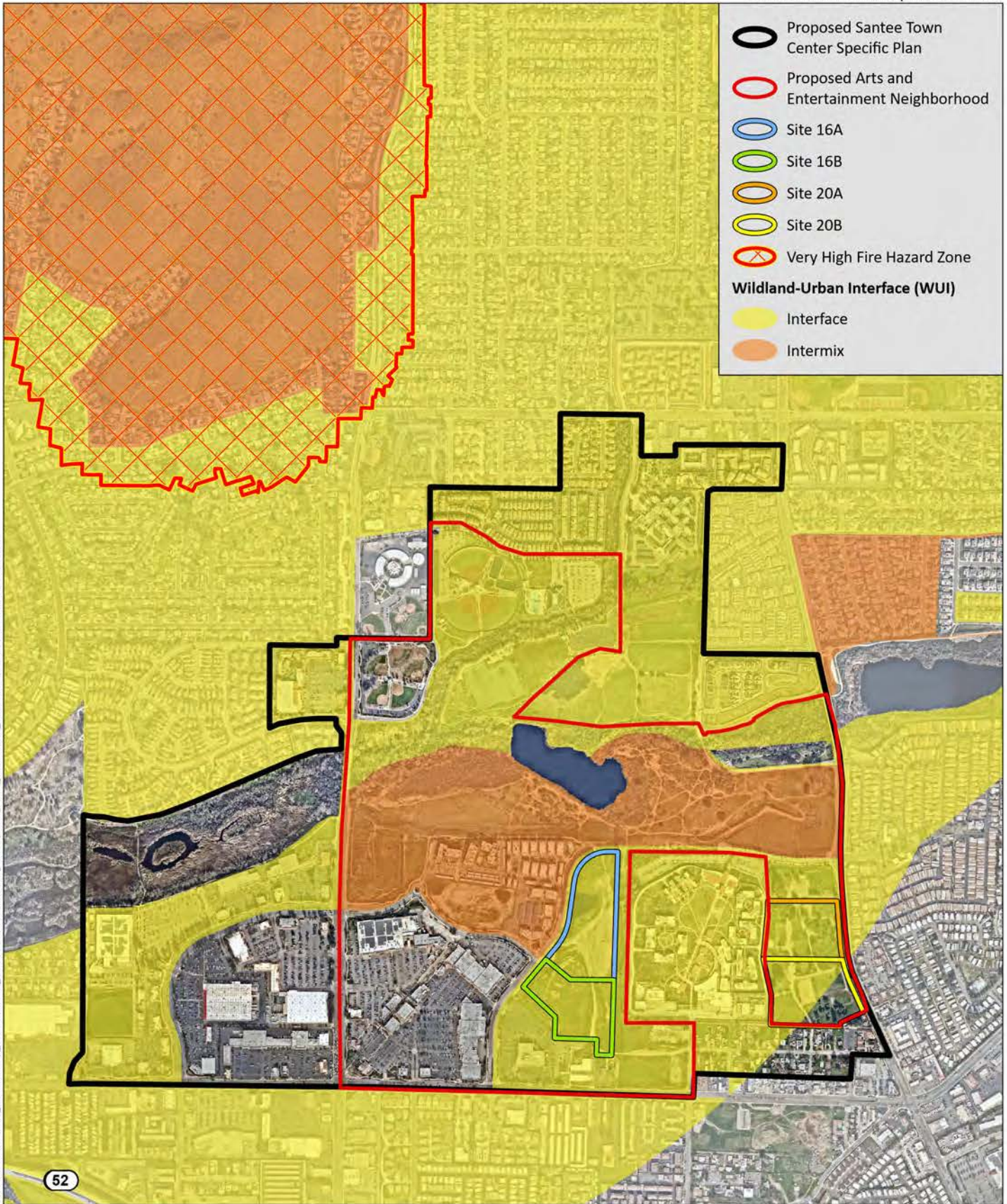
#### *Gillespie Field Safety Zone 6*

In Safety Zone 6, new residential development is “compatible.”

#### **Wildland Fires**

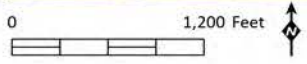
The potential for wildland fires represents a hazard where development is adjacent to open space or within close proximity to wildland fuels. Steep hillsides and varied topography within portions of the City also contribute to the risk of wildland fires. The City has adopted a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) Map for its Local Responsibility Area (LRA) as illustrated on Figure 4.9-3, *Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone and Wildland-Urban Interface*. Properties within this zone and other smaller areas are susceptible to wildfire because they are situated near open space and canyons containing heavy fuel loads. As shown on Figure 4.9-3, the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites are not located in a VHFHSZ. However, as shown in Figure 4.9-3, the majority of the TCSP area is in a wildland urban interface (WUI) zone, which includes areas close to vacant sites with vegetation susceptible to fire.

-  Proposed Santee Town Center Specific Plan
  -  Proposed Arts and Entertainment Neighborhood
  -  Site 16A
  -  Site 16B
  -  Site 20A
  -  Site 20B
  -  Very High Fire Hazard Zone
- Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI)**
-  Interface
  -  Intermix



I:\PROJECTS\I\MW\_SteelGroup\_01427\00004\_SanteeHAP\Map\EIR\Figures.aprx\Fig4.9-3\_FireHazard\_WUI - 01427.00004.001: 3/11/2024 - RK

Source: Aerial (SanGIS, 2023); Fire Severity Zone (SanGIS); WUI (U.S. Forest Service)



# Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone and Wildland-Urban Interface



## **4.9.2 Regulatory Framework**

Numerous federal, state, and local laws and regulations regarding hazardous materials have been developed with the intent of protecting public health, the environment, surface water, and groundwater resources. Over the years, the laws and regulations have evolved to deal with different aspects of the handling, treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous substances. Applicable regulatory agencies have also kept records on hazardous materials storage, use, and disposal, and make these lists publicly available. The most relevant federal, state, and local regulations are described below.

### **4.9.2.1 Federal**

#### **Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act**

The Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) of 1980 is also known as “Superfund,” and the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA) of 1986 (amended CERCLA, SARA Title III). CERCLA, SARA Title III provides a federal framework for setting priorities for cleanup of hazardous substances releases to air, water, and land. This framework provides for the regulation of the cleanup process, cost recovery, response planning, and communication standards. SARA Title III authorized the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA). EPCRA is intended to reduce disaster through the reporting of hazardous and toxic chemicals, or the “community right-to-know.” The community right-to-know enables public knowledge by providing information about facilities’ use of chemicals and any release into the environment.

#### **Resource Conservation and Recovery Act**

The federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) of 1976 established the authority of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) to develop regulations to track and control hazardous substances from their production, through their use, to their disposal. The USEPA has the authority under RCRA to authorize states to implement RCRA, and California is an RCRA authorized state. Title 40 California Code of Regulations (CCR), Part 290 establishes technical standards and corrective action requirements for owners and operators of USTs under RCRA.

#### **Federal Aviation Administration**

Federal Regulation Title 14, Part 77 establishes standards and notification requirements for objects that may affect navigable airspace. The notification would evaluate construction impacts, determine potential hazards, identify safety mitigation measures, and record new objects as it relates to airport and airspace operations. The Part 77 notification process allows the FAA to identify any potential aeronautical hazards in advance to prevent/minimize adverse impacts to navigable airspace.

### **4.9.2.2 State**

#### **California Environmental Protection Agency**

The California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) and the SWRCB establish rules governing the use of hazardous materials and the management of hazardous waste. There are

many plans and policies that govern hazards and hazardous substances. Many are highlighted in the following paragraphs.

### **State Water Resources Control Board**

The SWRCB maintains the GeoTracker database; a data management system used for managing sites that impact groundwater, especially those that require groundwater cleanup from LUSTs as well as permitted facilities such as operating USTs and land disposal sites. LUSTs are a significant source of petroleum impacts to groundwater and can also result in potential threats to health and safety. The LUST Information System has been integrated into the GeoTracker database and can be accessed through the SWRCB website as well.

The Underground Storage of Hazardous Substances Act, implemented by the SWRCB (California H&SC, Section 25280-25299.8) regulates underground tanks containing hazardous substances and outlines the management and cleanup of hazardous substances when public health, domestic livestock, wildlife, and environment are threatened.

### **California Department of Toxic Substances Control**

Within CalEPA, the DTSC has primary regulatory responsibility, with delegation of enforcement to local jurisdictions that enter into agreements with the state agency, for the management of hazardous materials and the generation, transport, and disposal of hazardous waste under the authority of the Hazardous Waste Control Law.

The DTSC regulates hazardous waste primarily under the authority of the federal RCRA and Title 22 of the California Public H&SC. The DTSC regulates hazardous waste, maintains a public database (EnviroStor) of potentially contaminated properties, cleans up existing contamination, and participates in research focusing on ways to reduce the hazardous waste produced in California.

The State of California Hazardous Waste and Substances Site List (also known as the Cortese List) is a planning document used by state and local agencies to comply with CEQA requirements in providing information about the location of hazardous materials sites. The DTSC is responsible for preparing a portion of the information that comprises the Cortese List, through its EnviroStor database of sites listed pursuant to Section 25256 of the H&SC. This includes a listing of hazardous substance release sites selected for, and subject to, a response action. EnviroStor must update the list of sites at least annually to reflect new information regarding previously listed sites or the addition of new sites requiring a response action.

The California Hazardous Waste Control Law (California H&SC, Section 25100 et seq.) is intended to protect the public health and the environment and to regulate hazardous waste generation and hazardous waste management practices. The DTSC is responsible for the enforcement of this act and lists chemicals and materials that may be hazardous. It also establishes criteria for identification for packaging and labeling of hazardous waste, management controls, and permit requirements for treatment, storage, disposal, and transportation.

### **Health and Safety Code and Occupational Safety and Health Administration**

The California H&SC is the collection of state laws that govern the handling of hazardous waste, corrective action (remediation), and permitted facilities. Chapter 6.7 of the H&SC outlines the requirements for USTs, identifies requirements for corrective actions, cleanup funds, liability, and

the responsibilities of owners and operators of USTs. The LUST Information System maintained by the SWRCB is available to determine if LUSTs have been reported within or near a specified property.

The California Occupational Safety and Health Administration, or Cal-OSHA, defines and enforces worker safety standards and requires proper handling and disposal of hazardous materials including asbestos containing materials and lead containing surfaces according to Occupational Safety and Health Act and USEPA regulations. The OSHA/EPA Occupational Chemical Database compiles information from several government agencies and organizations. This database provides reports on physical properties, exposure guidelines, and emergency response information, including the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) emergency response guide.

### **California Code of Regulations, Part 9, Title 24 (2022 California Fire Code)**

The 2022 California Fire Code (CFC) establishes the minimum requirements consistent with nationally recognized good practices to safeguard public health, ~~safety~~safety, and general welfare from the hazards of fire and explosion or dangerous conditions in new and existing buildings, structures, and premises, and to provide safety and assistance to fire fighters and emergency responders during emergency operations. Jurisdictions may choose to adopt the 2022 CFC as an enforceable set of regulations for safeguarding life and property from fire and explosion hazards arising from the storage, handling, and use of hazardous substances, materials, and devices, and from conditions hazardous to life or property in the occupancy of buildings and premises. Chapter 11.18.010 of the Santee Municipal Code (SMC) adopts the 2022 CFC.

### **Landscape/Brush Management Regulations**

The CCR Title 19 Public Safety, Division 1 State Fire Marshal (Chapter and Subchapter 1, Article 3) Section 3.07(b) requires that a distance of not less than 30 feet be kept clear of all flammable vegetation or combustible growth around all buildings and structures. If conditions are considered a high fire danger, a distance of 30 feet to 100 feet should be kept clear of all bush, flammable vegetation, or combustible growth around all buildings and structures.

### **Fire Hazard Severity Zones**

To assist each fire agency in addressing its responsibility area, California Department of Forestry and Fire (CAL FIRE) uses a severity classification system to identify areas or zones of severity for fire hazards within the state. CAL FIRE is required to map these zones for State Responsibility Areas and identify VHFHSZ for LRAs. In January 2008, CAL FIRE updated these Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ) maps to reflect revised VHFHSZ for LRAs throughout the state (CAL FIRE 2008; see Figure 4.7-3).

FHSZ maps identify moderate, high, and very high hazard severity zones using a science-based and field-tested computer model that assigns a hazard score based on the factors that influence fire likelihood and fire behavior. Factors considered include fire history, existing and potential fuel (natural vegetation), flame length, blowing embers, terrain, and typical weather for the area.

Government Code Section 51179 states, "A local agency shall designate, by ordinance, very high fire hazard severity zones in its jurisdiction." Chapter 15.56 of the SMC provides regulations regarding fire prevention in the City and adopts the CFC. The FHSZ is designated through City Code Chapter 15.86.010.

### **4.9.2.3 Regional**

#### **County of San Diego Department of Environmental Health and Quality**

The County of San Diego's Department of Environmental Health and Quality (DEHQ), Hazardous Materials Division (HMD) is one of the four divisions of the DEHQ. HMD is the Certified Unified Program Agency for San Diego County, responsible for regulating facilities that handle or store hazardous materials, are a part of the California Accidental Release Prevention Program, generates or treats hazardous waste, stores at least 1,320 gallons of aboveground petroleum, and owns or operates underground storage tanks.

In 1989, the California state legislature passed a law called Assembly Bill (AB) 3205 and was incorporated into Section 65850.2 of the California Government Code. The bill prohibits the Building Department from issuing a final Certificate of Occupancy until a specific plan check review process has been completed.

1. Hazardous Materials Business Plan (HMBP) – The HMBP provides detailed information regarding the storage of any hazardous materials to prevent or minimize the potential or threatened release of hazardous materials into the environment that may impact public health and safety.
2. California Accidental Release Prevention (CalARP) – The DEHQ is the local agency responsible for implementing the CalARP, a state-mandated program. The CalARP focuses on prevention through awareness by reducing the potential of the release of extremely poisonous gases such as chlorine, ammonia, sulfur dioxide, and/or other toxic materials. Facilities that handle such materials are required to have a Risk Management Program (RMP) in place.
3. Certify and submit a RMP – The RMP outlines and analyzes worst-case scenarios as it relates to the community, provides an emergency response plan, equipment procedures and training, mitigation or accidental release plan, prevention programs, and hazard and location assessments.

#### **County of San Diego Office of Emergency Services**

The County of San Diego Office of Emergency Services (OES) coordinates the overall County response to disasters. OES is responsible for notifying appropriate agencies when a disaster occurs; coordinating all responding agencies; ensuring resources are available and mobilized; developing plans and procedures for response to and recovery from disasters; and developing and providing preparedness materials for the public.

OES staffs the Operational Area Emergency Operations Center, a central facility that provides regional coordinated emergency response, and acts as staff to the Unified Disaster Council (UDC), its governing body. The UDC, established through a joint powers agreement among all 18 incorporated cities and the County of San Diego, provides for coordination of plans and programs countywide to ensure protection of life and property.

#### **Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan**

The purpose of the County's Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (County of San Diego 2023b) is to identify the County's hazards, review and assess past disaster occurrences, estimate

the probability of future occurrences, and set goals to mitigate potential risks to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people and property from natural and human-made hazards. The City is a participant in the Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan. An important San Diego County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan component is the Community Emergency Response Team, which educates community members about disaster preparedness and trains them in basic response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, and disaster medical operations. The 2010 Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan was incorporated into the City of Santee's General Plan by resolution 08-2011 on February 9, 2011.

### **San Diego County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans**

The San Diego County Regional Airport Authority (Authority) is committed to protecting the safety and welfare of the public and the ability of airports to operate now and in the future. One of the Authority's responsibilities is to serve as the ALUC for the County.

The ALUC is responsible for adopting ALUCPs for the 16 public use and military airports in the County. ALUCPs provide guidance on appropriate land uses surrounding airports to protect the health and safety of people and property within the vicinity of an airport, as well as the public in general. ALUCPs focus on a defined area around each airport known as the Airport Influence Area (AIA). The AIA is composed of noise, safety, airspace protection and overflight factors, in accordance with guidance from the *California Airport Land Use Planning Handbook* published by the California Department of Transportation, Division of Aeronautics. The project site is located in the vicinity of two airports: MCAS Miramar and Gillespie Field (see Figure 4.9- 2). The ALUC has adopted ALUCPs for each airport. The project site is subject to the land use compatibility policies and development criteria within the ALUCPs.

#### **4.9.2.4 Local**

##### **City of Santee General Plan**

The City's General Plan contains policies focused on the minimization of potential risks associated with hazards and hazardous materials. Pertinent goals and policies related to are listed below.

##### Safety Element

Objective 3.0: Minimize the risk of damage to persons, property and the environment caused by hazardous materials.

- **Policy 3.1:** The City shall continue to implement the County's Hazardous Waste Management Plan or develop and implement an equivalent plan.
- **Policy 3.2:** The City shall continue to participate in the Hazardous Materials Incident Response Team in dealing with hazardous materials incidents.
- **Policy 3.3:** The City shall require that any potential hazardous materials issues be fully investigated at the environmental review stage prior to project approval.
- **Policy 3.4:** The City shall review any proposed uses involving the use, transport, storage, or handling of hazardous waste to ensure that such uses would not represent a significant risk to surrounding uses or the environment.



- **Policy 3.5:** The City shall continue to provide for a household hazardous waste collection program for City residents as part of the contract with the City trash franchisee.

Objective 7.0: Minimize injuries, loss of life, and property damage resulting from airport hazards.

- **Policy 7.1:** The City should review all development proposed within the Gillespie Field Airport Influence Area to ensure that design features are incorporated into the site plan to address identified aircraft safety and noise hazards.

### **Municipal Code**

The SMC has been amended through December 2023 and includes the adopted 2022 California Building Codes. Ordinance 605 amends the SMC to formally adopt the 2022 CFC as the City Fire Code (SMC Chapter 11.18). Other relevant SMC sections include the following.

#### Title 2 – Administration and Personnel

Chapter 2.32.090 - Emergency Operational Plan states the Director of Fire and Life Safety is responsible for the development of the City emergency operational plan, which must provide for the effective response to various categories of emergencies, including, but not limited to, apparatus type, personnel, and communications.

### **4.9.3 Significance Determination Thresholds**

Consistent with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials would be significant if the project would:

- 1) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials.
- 2) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment.
- 3) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school.
- 4) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would create a significant hazard to the public or environment.
- 5) For a project located within an ALUCP or, where such plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area.
- 6) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.
- 7) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas, within brush fire management zones, or where residences are intermixed with wildlands.

#### 4.9.4 Methodology

A review of secondary sources, including published hazardous materials databases, was conducted to determine potential hazards and hazardous materials present within the project area. The review included: (1) the EnviroStor database; (2) the GeoTracker database; (3) the City's adopted VHFHSZ Map; (4); the MCAS Miramar ALUCP and (5) the Gillespie Field ALUCP. No site-specific surveys were conducted; instead, analysis relied on the use of publicly available information.

#### 4.9.5 Issues 1, 2, and 3: Hazardous Materials—Use, Transport, Disposal; Accidental Release; and Emissions Near a School

*Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?*

*Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?*

*Would the project emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?*

##### 4.9.5.1 Impact Analysis

###### Routine Use, Transport, and Disposal

###### TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites

Future grading or construction has the potential to impact directly or indirectly the public or environment through such activities. Figure 4.9-1 identifies GeoTracker cleanup sites throughout the City. As described in Section 4.9.1.2, none of the existing cleanup sites are located within or adjacent to the TCSP area, AEN, or Housing Element sites; however, future development in these areas may result in the transport of hazardous materials during construction (e.g., ACMs, LBPs, and/or contaminated soils). This transport would be limited in duration and would be required to comply with all applicable State and local regulatory measures associated with handling and transport of contaminated or potentially contaminated materials. Additionally, City implementation of General Plan Safety Element Policies (refer to Section 4.9.2.4) supports implementation of Citywide safety measures associated with hazardous materials handling. Future development within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would be required to adhere to extensive regulations related to hazardous materials handling and transport. Additionally, implementation of the City's development review process would ensure site specific consideration and regulation of the potential for storage, handling, and use of hazardous materials.

Future residential development would not involve the ongoing or routine use of substantial quantities of hazardous materials during operations. Only small quantities of hazardous materials associated with household hazards would be anticipated to occur. Mixed-use development and commercial development would likewise be associated with common hazardous materials such as cleaning solvents, fertilizers, pesticides, and other materials used in the regular maintenance and upkeep of the proposed land uses.

Potentially applicable to future development in the TCSP area, AEN, and mixed-use portions of the Housing Element sites, Hazardous Material Business Plans (HMBPs) are required of businesses that handle hazardous substances in amounts greater than or equal to specified thresholds. The purpose of an HMBP is to minimize hazards to human health and the environment from unplanned, accidental releases of hazardous substances into the air, soil, or surface water. An HMBP must include an emergency response program that serves to manage emergencies at the given facility and prepare response personnel for a variety of conditions. HMBPs are submitted to County of San Diego's DEHQ Hazardous Materials Division and are reviewed and updated as necessary every three years, or in the event of an accidental release, change in materials storage location or use, or change in business name, address, or ownership. Additionally, future development associated with the project would have the benefit of City provided household hazardous waste collection programs and City programs that encourage safe and proper disposal of household hazardous waste consistent with General Plan Policies 3.5 and 3.7.

With proper use and disposal of hazardous materials as required by state, regional, and local regulations, the project would not result in hazardous or unhealthful conditions within or in proximity to the project area. Compliance with all applicable regulations would ensure impacts associated with use, transport and disposal of hazardous materials associated with the TCSP area, AEN and Housing Element sites would be less than significant.

### **Accidental Release**

#### TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites

An accidental release of hazardous materials could occur during (1) the routine use, transport, and disposal of materials during project operation (as discussed above); or (2) through the accidental upset of hazardous materials—either known or unknown—during excavation and construction of future development. Exposure to hazardous materials could occur through contact with contaminated soil or groundwater, skin contact, or the inhalation of vapors or dust.

Future redevelopment or construction activities within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites may pose hazards to the public or the environment through the disturbance of existing contaminated soils, groundwater, or hazardous building materials. Grading and excavation activities could disturb soils and cause contaminants below ground to become airborne. Excavation below the groundwater table or dewatering could also bring construction workers in contact with contaminants through skin contact, ingestion, or inhalation.

During construction, workers also could be exposed to hazardous materials during demolition of buildings. Numerous structures within the project area were constructed prior to 1978. Demolition of buildings built prior to 1978 may expose workers to ACMs or LBPs. Inhalation of asbestos containing dust may cause acute or chronic toxicity. Exposure to persons other than construction workers would be reduced by the exclusion of non-authorized personnel in construction areas determined to contain potentially hazardous materials. Exposure to construction workers would be controlled through conformance with Cal-OSHA worker safety standards. Additionally, California law requires a licensed company to perform asbestos testing and abatement. These requirements ensure that all asbestos removal is completed with all required safety precautions to avoid the release of hazardous materials into the environment. CCR Section 1532.1 requires construction workers to establish and implement a compliance program to ensure property handling and monitoring of lead-based paint exposure.

Although there are regulations and standards in place to protect against the accidental release of asbestos and lead-based paints and other hazardous materials during demolition, there could be potentially unknown sources of surface or subsurface hazardous materials on development sites that may be subject to a release during development. Impacts would be significant. Mitigation measure MM-HAZ-1 would be required.

In the unlikely event of upset or accidental release, mandated protocols for reporting the release, notifying the public, and remediating the event (if determined necessary by regulatory agencies) are intended to reduce public risks. Specifically, the risks associated with the accidental release of hazardous materials would be managed through the implementation of AB 3205, California Hazardous Waste Control Law, California H&SC, CFC, and RCRA regulations.

### **Emissions Near a School**

#### TCSP Area

While facilities that emit hazardous air emissions or handle hazardous waste are not proposed by the project, specific future projects are not currently known. Therefore, accidental releases of hazardous materials could occur with demolition and construction activities within 0.25 mile of Rio Seco School and Santana High School as future projects are proposed. Impacts would be significant. Mitigation measure MM-HAZ-1 would be required.

#### AEN

While facilities that emit hazardous air emissions or handle hazardous waste are not specifically proposed in the AEN, specific projects are not currently known. Accidental releases of hazardous materials could also occur with demolition and construction activities within 0.25 mile of Rio Seco School. Impacts would be significant and mitigation measure MM-HAZ-1 would be required.

#### Housing Element Sites

There are no schools within 0.25 mile of the Housing Element sites. Therefore, no impacts to hazards within 0.25 mile of a school would occur associated with the Housing Element sites.

### **4.9.5.2 Mitigation Measures**

#### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Impacts associated with the accidental release of hazardous materials during future buildout of the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would be potentially significant and require MM-HAZ-1:

- HAZ-1** Applications for future development in the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites, wherein the City has determined a potential for impacts to known and unknown hazardous materials sites shall be required to identify potential conditions which require further regulatory oversight and demonstrate compliance consistent with the following prior to issuance of any permits.
- A. Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) shall be completed in accordance with American Society of Testing and Materials Standards. If hazardous materials are identified requiring remediation, a Phase II ESA and

remediation effort shall be conducted in conformance with federal, state, and local regulations.

- B. If the Phase II ESA identifies the need for remediation, then the following shall occur prior to the issuance of grading permits.
1. The applicant shall retain a qualified environmental engineer to develop a soil and/or groundwater management plan to address the notification, monitoring, sampling, testing, handling, storage, and disposal of contaminated media or substances (soil, groundwater). The qualified environmental consultant shall monitor excavations and grading activities in accordance with the plan. The plans shall be approved by the City prior to development of the site.
  2. The applicant shall submit documentation showing that contaminated soil and/or groundwater on proposed development parcels have been avoided or remediated to meet cleanup requirements established by appropriate local regulatory agencies (Regional Water Quality Control Board [RWQCB]/DTSC/DEHQ) based on the future planned land use of the specific area within the boundaries of the site (i.e., commercial, residential), and that the risk to human health of future occupants of these areas therefore has been reduced to below a level of significance.
  3. The applicant shall obtain written authorization from the appropriate regulatory agency (RWQCB/DTSC/DEHQ) confirming the completion of remediation. A copy of the authorization shall be submitted to the City to confirm that all appropriate remediation has been completed and that the proposed development parcel has been cleaned up to the satisfaction of the regulatory agency. In the situation where previous contamination has occurred on a site that has a previously closed case or on a site included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5, the DEHQ shall be notified of the proposed land use.
  4. All cleanup activities shall be performed in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations, and required permits shall be secured prior to commencement of construction to the satisfaction of the City and compliance with applicable regulatory agencies such as but not limited to the SMC.

#### **4.9.5.3 Significance After Mitigation**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Potentially significant impacts associated with the accidental release of unknown hazardous materials during future construction and hazards within 0.25 miles of a school (for TCSP and AEN areas outside of the Housing Element sites) would be reduced to a less than significant level through the application of mitigation measure MM-HAZ-1.

#### **4.9.6 Issue 4: Hazardous Materials — Sites**

*Would the project be located on a site, which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would create a significant hazard to the public or environment?*

##### **4.9.6.1 Impact Analysis**

###### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

No areas of the TCSP area, AEN, or Housing Element sites are listed as hazardous materials sites pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 (Cortese List). Therefore, it is not expected that grading, excavation, or construction activities would result in the release of hazardous materials associated with contaminated soils or underground tanks. Therefore, the project would not result in conditions leading to any reasonably foreseeable upset or accident involving the release of hazardous materials. No impact would occur.

##### **4.9.6.2 Mitigation Measures**

###### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

No mitigation is required.

##### **4.9.6.3 Significance After Mitigation**

###### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

#### **4.9.7 Issue 5: Airport Hazards**

*For a project located within an ALUCP or, where such plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, or a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?*

##### **4.9.7.1 Impact Analysis**

###### **TCSP Area**

As shown on Figure 4.9-2b, the northern half of the TCSP area is located in Review Area 2 for both Gillespie Field and MCAS Miramar. South of the San Diego River, the TCSP area is located in the Review Area 1 for Gillespie Field. The southwestern tip of the TCSP area is in the 60 to 65 decibel (dB) noise contour for Gillespie Field. Portions of the TCSP area south of the San Diego River are also within Safety Zone 3, 4, and 6 for Gillespie Field.

In Safety Zone 3 for Gillespie Field, new residential development at a density greater than 16 du/ac is “incompatible,” and new residential development between 4 and 16 du/ac is “conditionally compatible” and subject to the requirements stated in the ALUCP. In Safety Zone 4 for Gillespie Field, new residential development at a density greater than 20 du/ac is “incompatible,” and new residential development between 4 and ~~16~~20 du/ac is “conditionally compatible” and subject to



the requirements stated in the ALUCP. New residential development in general is considered compatible in Safety Zone 6.

The ALUCP addresses four types of compatibility factors including noise, safety, airspace protection, and overflight. Impacts related to consistency with airport land use plans are discussed in Section 4.11 of this EIR and noise compatibility issues related to operations at Gillespie Field are discussed in Section 4.12 of this EIR.

With specific respect to air safety issues, according to the Gillespie Field and MCAS Miramar ALUCPs (SDCRAA 2010 and 2011),

- Review Area 1 consists of locations where noise and safety concerns may necessitate limitations on the types of land uses actions. Specifically, Review Area 1 encompasses locations exposed to aircraft noise levels of 60 dB CNEL or greater and areas subject to the safety zones depicted on Figure 4.9-2b.
- Review Area 2 consists of locations beyond Review Area 1 but within the airspace and/or overflight notification areas depicted on the maps in the respective ALUCPs. Limits on the heights of structures, particularly in areas of high terrain, are the only restriction on land uses within Review Area 2. For projects within Review Area 2, the recordation of overflight notification documents is also required.

All future development within the Gillespie Field Review Areas 1 and 2 would be reviewed to ensure that design features are incorporated into the site plan to address identified aircraft safety and noise hazards, consistent with General Plan Policy 7.1. Residential development proposed in the TCSP area would be considered compatible with Safety Zone 6.

Objective Design Standard GJ, ~~Aircraft Safety~~ Aviation Land Use Compatibility, in the proposed TCSP states that development proposals within ~~Safety Zone 4~~ Review Area 1 shall be routed to the Federal Aviation Administration for a determination of no hazard to air navigation and to the ALUC for consultation as part of the site-specific development review. The proposed TCSP designates Office Commercial in Safety Zone 3, which is conditionally compatible and must comply with the conditions specified in Table III-2 of the ALUCP. The proposed TCSP designates Residential (TC-R-14, TC-R-22, and TC-R-30), Entertainment Commercial, Office Commercial, Open Space, and Institutional land uses in Safety Zone 4, consistent with the densities, intensities, and heights allowed by existing zoning, the 2021-2029 Housing Element, and state density bonus law. Residential uses with densities higher than 20 du/ac (TC-R-22, TC-R-30, and potentially TC-R-14, depending on final buildout) are incompatible in Safety Zone 4, and residential uses within Safety Zone 4 could allow heights up to 55 feet, or to a maximum of 85 feet, with density bonus, consistent with existing zoning and with state density bonus law. Indoor and outdoor assembly uses characteristic of the Entertainment Commercial designation are conditionally compatible in Safety Zone 4 if the capacity involves 50 to 999 people and incompatible with a capacity of more than 1,000 people. Office Commercial is conditionally compatible in Safety Zone 4. Open space is compatible in Safety Zone 4. Institutional land uses are conditionally compatible in Safety Zone 4. Safety Zone 6 includes Office Commercial, Commercial, Entertainment Commercial, Floodway/Open Space, Open Space, and Residential (TC-R-22 and TC-R-30) land uses, all of which are compatible except indoor and outdoor assembly uses of over 1,000 people, which is conditionally compatible and subject to the requirements stated in Table III-2.

Since no development is proposed at this time, it is unknown whether the development of the TCSP would create an inconsistency with the ALUCP. As such, on January 9, 2025, ALUC found the TCSP project conditionally consistent with the ALUCP and imposed project conditions that future proposed development within the project area must comply with the residential dwelling units or people per acre as specified by the applicable safety zone. Future projects found to be conditionally compatible or potentially incompatible with the Gillespie Field ALUCP would require consultation with the ALUC. As discussed in Section 4.11 of this EIR, it is possible that during this consultation process individual projects could be found incompatible with the Gillespie Field ALUCP due to allowable densities exceeding ALUCP standards. Further, after this ALUC consultation process is performed, the City Council could choose to ~~override~~ override the ALUCP density limitations in favor of a specific development proposal.

Even if the City were to ~~override~~ override the ALUCP density limitations, individual projects, as applicable would be required to obtain a FAA determination of No Hazard to Air Navigation and/or implement FAA conditions that would allow the FAA determination of No Hazard to Air Navigation consistent with TCSP Objective Design Standard G J and the requirements for ministerial projects described in Section 3.4.2 of this EIR. While conformance with applicable City policies, consideration of ALUCP design considerations for development within airport safety zones, and compliance with any applicable FAA conditions would address aircraft hazards within the TCSP area to a degree, inconsistencies with the development densities allowed by the TCSP in Gillespie Field ALUCP Safety Zones 3 and 4 could be considered “incompatible” by the ALUC and a safety hazard associated with these densities would occur. Therefore, impacts associated with development in Gillespie Field ALUCP Safety Zones 3 and 4 would result in significant and unavoidable impacts associated with the TCSP.

## **AEN**

The northern half of the AEN is located in the Review Area 2 for both Gillespie Field and MCAS Miramar. South of the San Diego River, the AEN is located in the Review Area 1 for Gillespie Field. The central portion of the AEN is within Safety Zone 4 and 6 for Gillespie Field, and a small portion south of Las Colinas is in Safety Zone 3. The AEN includes Office Commercial land use in Safety Zone 3, which is conditionally compatible and must comply with the conditions specified in Table III-2 of the ALUCP. The AEN includes Residential (TC-R-14, TC-R-22, and TC-R-30), Entertainment Commercial, Office Commercial, Open Space, and Institutional land uses in Safety Zone 4. Residential uses with densities higher than 20 du/ac (TC-R-22, TC-R-30, and potentially TC-R-14, depending on final buildout) are incompatible in Safety Zone 4. Indoor and outdoor assembly uses characteristic of the Entertainment Commercial designation are conditionally compatible in Safety Zone 4 if the capacity involves 50 to 999 people and incompatible with a capacity of more than 1,000 people. Office Commercial is conditionally compatible in Safety Zone 4. Open space is compatible in Safety Zone 4. Institutional land uses are conditionally compatible in Safety Zone 4. Safety Zone 6 includes Office Commercial, Entertainment Commercial, Floodway/Open Space, Open Space, and Residential (TC-R-22 and TC-R-30) land uses, all of which are compatible except indoor and outdoor assembly uses of over 1,000 people, which are conditionally compatible and subject to the requirements stated in Table III-2.

Since no development is proposed at this time, it is unknown whether the development of the AEN would create an inconsistency with the ALUCP. As such, on January 9, 2025, ALUC found the AEN project conditionally consistent with the ALUCP and imposed project conditions that future proposed development within the project area must comply with the residential dwelling units or people per acre as specified by the applicable safety zone. While conformance with applicable City policies, consideration of ALUCP design considerations for development within

airport safety zones, and compliance with any applicable FAA conditions would address aircraft hazards within the AEN area to a degree, inconsistencies with the development densities allowed by the TCSP in Gillespie Field ALUCP Safety Zones 3 and 4 could be considered “incompatible” by the ALUC and a safety hazard associated with these densities would occur. Therefore, impacts associated with development in Gillespie Field ALUCP Safety Zones 3 and 4 would result in significant and unavoidable impacts.

### **Housing Element Sites**

Since no development is proposed at this time in the Housing Element sites, it is unknown whether the development of the Project would create an inconsistency with the ALUCP. However, since the project could allow development at densities exceeding ALUCP Safety Zone limitations, impacts under CEQA would be significant and unavoidable as discussed below.

#### Site 16A

Site 16A is located in Review Area 1 for the Gillespie Field and Review Area 2 for MCAS Miramar. Site 16A is also located partially within Safety Zones 4 and 6 for Gillespie Field. Site 16A proposes a density of 30 to 36 du/ac, which is incompatible with Safety Zone 4. Site 16A would be compatible with Safety Zone 6. Conformance with applicable City policies, ALUCP design considerations applicable to development with airport safety zones, and compliance with applicable FAA conditions would be required; however, future development within the Gillespie Field Safety Zone 4 would result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area. Impacts associated with airport hazards would be significant and unavoidable.

#### Site 16B

Site 16B is located in Review Area 1 and Safety Zone 4 for the Gillespie Field. Site 16B proposes a density of 14 to 22 du/ac. If the final buildout of Site 16B has a density higher than 20 du/ac, Site 16B would be incompatible with Safety Zone 4; otherwise, it would be conditionally compatible. Conformance with applicable City policies, ALUCP design considerations applicable to development with airport safety zones, and compliance with applicable FAA conditions would be required; however, future development within the AEN within Gillespie Field Safety Zone 4 would result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area. Impacts associated with airport hazards would be significant and unavoidable.

#### Site 20A

Site 20A is located in Review Area 1 and partially within Safety Zones 4 and 6 for the Gillespie Field. Site 20A proposes a density of 22 to 30 du/ac, which is incompatible with Safety Zone 4. Site 20A would be compatible with Safety Zone 6. Conformance with applicable City policies, ALUCP design considerations applicable to development with airport safety zones, and compliance with applicable FAA conditions would be required; however, future development within the AEN within Gillespie Field Safety Zone 4 would result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area. Impacts associated with airport hazards would be significant and unavoidable.

#### Site 20B

Site 20B is located in Review Area 1 and partially within Safety Zones 4 and 6 for the Gillespie Field. Site 20B proposes a density of 30 to 36 du/ac, which is incompatible with Safety Zone 4.

Site 20B would be compatible with Safety Zone 6. Conformance with applicable City policies, ALUCP design considerations applicable to development with airport safety zones, and compliance with any applicable FAA conditions would be required; however, future development within the AEN within Gillespie Field Safety Zone 4 would result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area. Impacts associated with airport hazards would be significant and unavoidable.

#### **4.9.7.2 Mitigation Measures**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

No feasible mitigation is available to reduce the potential conflict between allowable development density and the density restrictions within the Gillespie Field Safety Zones 3 and 4.

#### **4.9.7.3 Significance After Mitigation**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

If densities proposed exceed density restriction and are determined not to be compatible, impacts would be significant and unavoidable.

#### **4.9.8 Issue 6: Emergency Response**

*Would the project impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?*

##### **4.9.8.1 Impact Analysis**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Buildout of the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would create opportunities for residential and non-residential development in the TCSP area, resulting in greater population concentrations within neighborhoods. This could result in an increase in demand for emergency evacuation.

While the project does propose changes to the City's existing circulation network, such as plans for roadways and updated roadway facility guidelines and pedestrian, bicycle, transit, auto, and parking standards, these changes would facilitate improved connectivity throughout the TCSP area. No land uses are proposed that would impair implementation of or physically interfere with the City's emergency response plan, evacuation routes; or conflict with any of the Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan's specific hazard mitigation goals, objectives, and related potential actions. Specifically, the Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan requires each jurisdiction to develop and publish evacuation procedures that are published and available to the public. The City provides educational materials related to emergency preparedness. All residents of the City have access to the materials as well as included in all Community Emergency response Team training and information. Furthermore, applications for all future projects within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would be reviewed and approved by the Santee Fire Department prior to issuance of building permit. Therefore, buildout of the proposed project would not conflict with emergency response, and impacts would be less than significant.

#### **4.9.8.2 Mitigation Measures**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

No mitigation is required.

#### **4.9.8.3 Significance After Mitigation**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

#### **4.9.9 Issue 7: Wildland Fires**

*Would the project expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas, within brush fire management zones, or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?*

#### **4.9.9.1 Impact Analysis**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, Housing Element Sites**

The TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites are not located within the CAL FIRE VHFHSZ, as shown on Figure 4.9-3. However, as shown in Figure 4.9-3, the majority of the TCSP area is in a WUI zone, which includes areas close to vacant sites with vegetation susceptible to fire. The City's General Plan policies 4.2 through 4.13 provide guidance for the minimization of fire hazards including ensuring adequate response times, setting standards for emergency access, structural standards, other planning design measures required to be considered in all new development. Additionally, future discretionary projects would require review by the Building Official/Fire Marshal. A less than significant impact would occur.

#### **4.9.9.2 Mitigation Measures**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

No mitigation is required.

#### **4.9.9.3 Significance After Mitigation**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

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## 4.10 Hydrology and Water Quality

The following section analyzes the potential impacts to hydrology and water quality that may occur as a result of implementation of the proposed project.

### 4.10.1 Existing Conditions

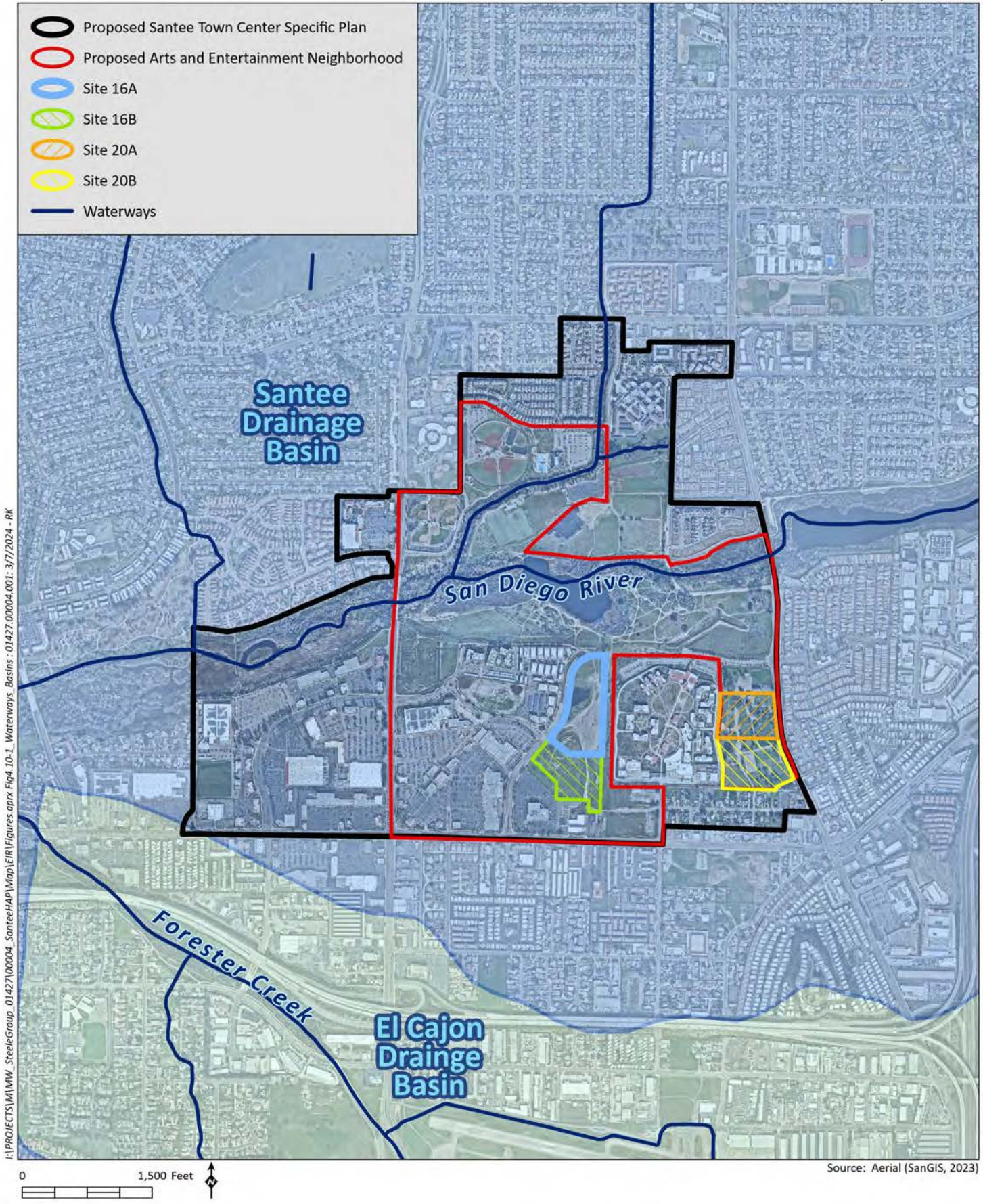
#### 4.10.1.1 Hydrologic and Watershed Characteristics

The City of Santee (City) is predominantly developed but has numerous undeveloped or underdeveloped parcels interspersed throughout, as well as open space that is largely confined to dedicated parks and trails. The City is within the San Diego Hydrologic Unit (907) in the lower San Diego Hydrologic Area (907.10), and in the Santee Hydrologic Subarea (907.12) of the San Diego Basin Plan (Basin Plan) (see Section 4.10.2.3.). The San Diego Hydrologic Unit is a long, triangular-shaped area of about 440 square miles drained by the San Diego River that extends from El Capitan Reservoir to the Pacific Ocean. This watershed includes the Cleveland National Forest and Mission Trails Regional Park. It has the highest population of the County of San Diego's (County's) watersheds and includes portions of the cities of San Diego, El Cajon, La Mesa, Poway, Santee, and several unincorporated areas. The watershed is drained by the San Diego River and contains five water storage reservoirs: El Capitan, San Vicente, Cuyamaca, Jennings, and Murray. The lower San Diego Hydrologic Area occurs downstream of the El Capitan, San Vicente, and Cuyamaca Reservoirs and extends from the El Monte Valley through the City and into Mission Trails Regional Park and the City of San Diego (RWQCB 2021).

The City has three major drainage courses and three secondary drainage courses shown on Figure 4.10-1, *Waterways and Basins*. The three primary waterbodies include the San Diego River and its tributaries, Forrester Creek and Sycamore Canyon Creek. Secondary drainages, which are tributaries to the San Diego River, include Woodglen Vista Creek, Fanita Creek, and Big Rock Creek, which parallels Big Rock Road. All the City's creeks have their own watersheds in addition to lying within the larger San Diego River watershed. Forrester Creek drains the runoff from the north facing slopes of hills within the City of El Cajon, Sycamore Creek drains the runoff from Sycamore Canyon and from Carlton Hills, and the creeks running parallel to Fanita Drive and Big Rock Road drain the runoff from Cowles Mountain and Fanita Hills located within the City of El Cajon. All these watersheds empty into the San Diego River, which flows westward into the Pacific Ocean (RWQCB 2021). Although none of these waterways have been fully improved, portions of the San Diego River and Forrester Creek have been partially improved to mitigate potential flood hazards or prevent localized erosion. Even with these flood control measures, portions of the Town Center Specific Plan (TCSP) area, Arts and Entertainment Neighborhood (AEN), and Site 16A would be inundated by a 100-year flood event as shown on Figure 4.9-5 (City 2003d).

Portions of the TCSP area and AEN are located along the course of Woodglen Vista Creek and Housing Element sites 16A and 20A are proximate to the San Diego River.





I:\PROJECTS\I\MMW\_SteelGroup\_01427\00004\_SanteeHAP\Map\EIR\Figures.aprx Fig4.10-1\_Waterways\_Basins : 01427.00004.001 : 3/7/2024 - RK

### 4.10.1.2 Water Quality

#### Surface Waters

Runoff is a term used to describe any water that runs off a defined area. Runoff can be the result of rain; in which case it is also sometimes referred to as stormwater. Runoff can also result from various other activities such as irrigation, washing, leaks in pipes, air conditioner condensation, and numerous other activities. The City regulates stormwater runoff into local receiving waters through local plans and programs, including the Jurisdictional Urban Runoff Management Plan (see Section 4.10.2), which addresses water quality goals to reduce or eliminate pollutants transported in stormwater and non-stormwater.

Receiving waters is a general term typically used to describe any water body, such as a creek, river, lake, bay, or ocean, which receives runoff. In the context of the project, it refers to those water bodies that would receive runoff from the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites. Primary receiving waters for the project include the Woodglen Vista Creek, the San Diego River, and the Pacific Ocean. Section 303(d) of the federal Clean Water Act (CWA) defines water quality standards for the uses of surface waters (beneficial uses) as well as identifies impaired water bodies.

#### San Diego River

The City is located within the San Diego Hydrologic Unit (907), in the lower San Diego Hydrologic Area (907.10), and in the Santee Hydrologic Subarea (907.12) of the Basin Plan (Basin Plan). Runoff from the City drains to the San Diego River and ultimately the Pacific Ocean. The San Diego River's headwaters are in the Cuyamaca Mountains. The 52-mile river parallels Interstate 8 as the river flows through Mission Valley to the Pacific Ocean at Ocean Beach. The upper reaches of the river flow through undeveloped areas, while the land surrounding the lower reaches is highly urbanized. The San Diego River is identified as an inland surface water in the Basin Plan.

Beneficial uses of the San Diego River include agricultural supply, industrial services supply, contact water recreation, non-contact water recreation, preservation of biological habitats of special significance, warm freshwater habitat, wildlife habitat, and rare, threatened, or endangered species. In addition, the lower 16 miles of the San Diego River is listed as a CWA Section 303(d) impaired water body for benthic community effects, cadmium, indicator bacteria, nitrogen, dissolved oxygen, phosphorus, total dissolved solids, and toxicity. The City's 2022 to 2026 Capital Improvement Program identifies funding for the San Diego River Bacteria Reduction project which will study and quantify various potential bacteria sources, such as on-site wastewater treatment systems (septic), sewer exfiltration, persons experiencing homelessness, recreational vehicles, and illicit discharges to reduce the risk of human illness through water contact, and comply with the State of California's Investigative Order issued by the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board (SDRWQCB) to study and reduce wet-weather fecal contamination loading (City 2021). Following the research and investigation, subsequent implementation programs will be evaluated and implemented to lessen human-sourced bacteria inputs into the river. The City is additionally preparing and implementing a strategic plan to reduce pollutants to achieve compliance with the SDRWQCB adopted total maximum daily load (TMDL) and associated regulatory actions for bacteria in the San Diego River and its tributaries.



### Pacific Ocean

Beneficial uses of the Pacific Ocean include industrial supply, navigation, contact water recreation, non-contact water recreation, commercial and sport fishing, preservation of biological habitats of special significance, wildlife habitat, rare, threatened, or endangered species, marine habitat, aquaculture, migration of aquatic organisms, spawning, reproduction, and/or early development, and shellfish harvesting.

### **Groundwater**

Groundwater basins within the City are generally limited to areas along the San Diego River, Sycamore Canyon Creek, and Forrester Creek. The Basin Plan identifies beneficial uses for groundwater resources that include municipal and domestic supply, agricultural supply, and industrial service supply. Groundwater quality is low for this area as indicated by the totally dissolved solids goal as tabulated for this area by the Basin Plan. The goal for the area is 1,200 milligrams per liter (mg/l) which is generally considered not suitable as a source for potable water. (RWQCB 2021).

#### **4.10.1.3 Flood Hazards**

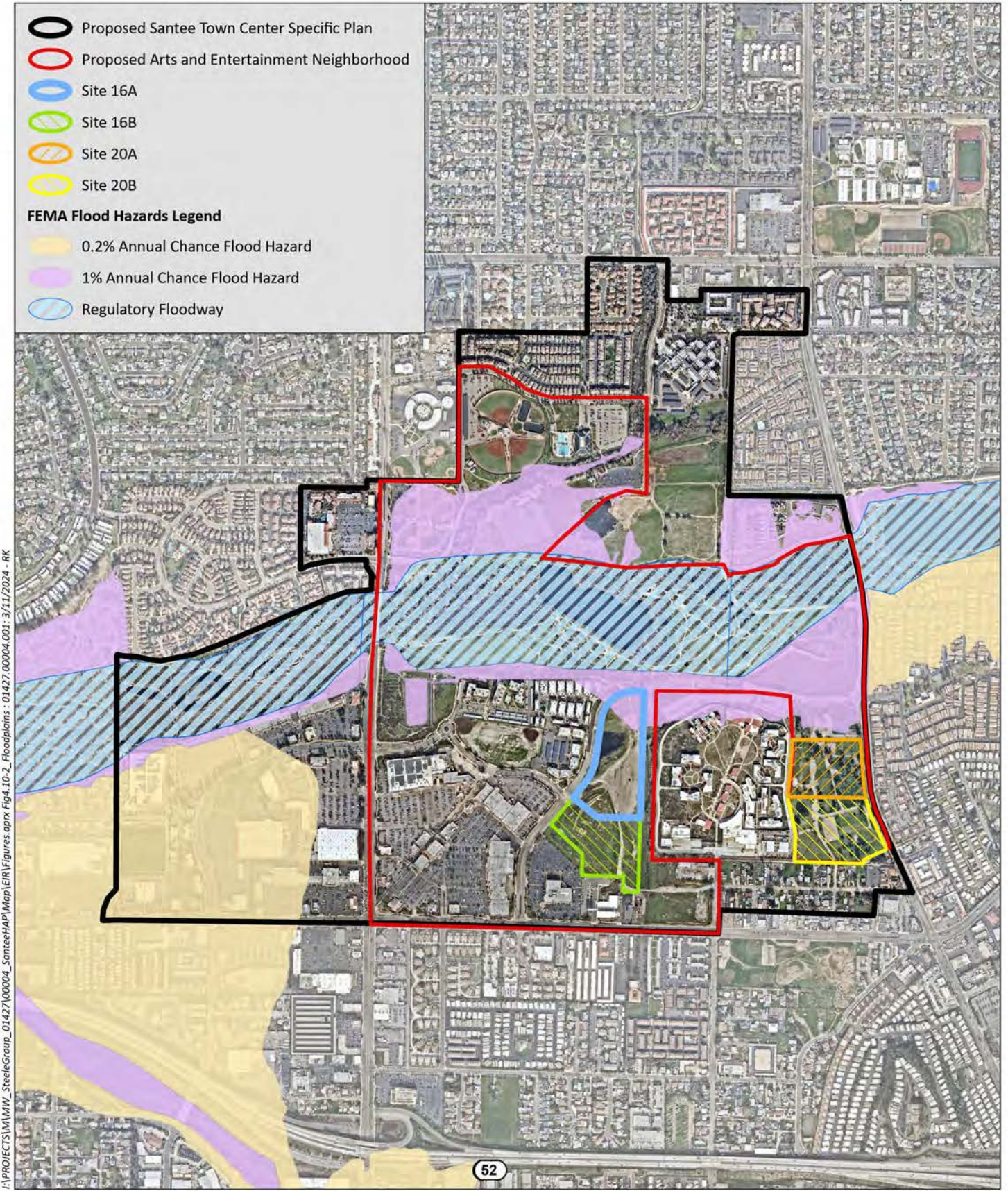
The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has conducted floodplain mapping within the City. The San Diego River bisects the project site; therefore, portions of the TCSP area and AEN are mapped as floodway or subject to a 1 percent annual chance of flood hazard (100-year flood), and Site 16A is partially within the 100-year floodway, as shown on Figure 4.10-2, *FEMA Floodplains/Floodways*.

#### **4.10.1.4 Drainage Features**

The City's municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) consists of nearly 50 miles of storm drainpipes, and 5 miles of open channel, which drain to 10 miles of creeks and rivers. The largest receiving water in the City is the San Diego River, which enters the City in the east and flows westward toward the Pacific Ocean. Additionally, Forrester Creek enters from the southeast and enters the San Diego River at a location west of Carlton Hills Boulevard. Sycamore Creek enters the City from the north, flows southward, and enters the San Diego River just past Santee Lakes Regional Park.

As the City has developed, drainage infrastructure has been constructed to reduce the potential for flooding and divert stormwater from properties and roadways. Most of the infrastructure has been designed to accommodate the stormwaters of a 100-year flood. The City's Capital Improvement Program for Fiscal Years 2022–2026 (City 2021) identifies funding for a number of citywide drainage improvements including the Corrugated Metal Pipe (CMP) Storm Drain Replacement Program, a Master Drainage Study Update to update the City's 25-year-old study, Mission Gorge Road Drainage Improvements, Santee Lakes CMP Replacement, Shadow Hill Road/Woodside Avenue Drainage Improvements, and Storm Drain Trash Diversion project. In addition, new development is conditioned to construct master drainage facilities or pay development fees, as needed, to address drainage deficiencies.





I:\PROJECTS\I\MW\_SteelGroup\_01427\00004\_SanteeHAP\Map\EIR\Figures.aprx Fig. 4.10-2\_Floodplains : 01427.00004.001: 3/11/2024 - RK

Source: Aerial (SanGIS, 2023)



#### 4.10.1.5 Dam Inundations Areas

There are three lakes located upstream from the City which are used for water storage. These include the San Vicente Dam, the El Capitan Dam, and the Chet Harrit Dam (Lake Jennings). Areas of inundation in the event the dams containing these reservoirs fail are identified in Figure 4.10-3a-c, *Dam Inundation Areas*. The inundation maps for the El Capitan Dam and the San Vicente Dam were prepared in 1974; the Chet Harrit Dam inundation map was prepared in approximately 1975. Based on current knowledge, no hazardous conditions exist at any of the dams; however, it is noted that the project site is located within the mapped inundation areas. The California Department of Water Resources, Division of Dam Safety, reviews the safety of dams annually.

### 4.10.2 Regulatory Framework

#### 4.10.2.1 Federal

##### Clean Water Act

The federal Water Pollution Control Act establishes a broad national program for protecting water quality and regulating discharges of waste and pollutants into waters of the United States (Title 33, United States Code, Section 1251 et seq.). It provides authority for the establishment of water quality standards and waste discharge limits for point source discharges (such as those from industrial facilities, sewage treatment plants, and stormwater). The key sections pertaining to water quality regulation are Sections 303, 401, 402, and 404. The act also prohibits discharges of pollutants without a permit or other authorization and allows authorized states to implement provisions of the act in lieu of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA).

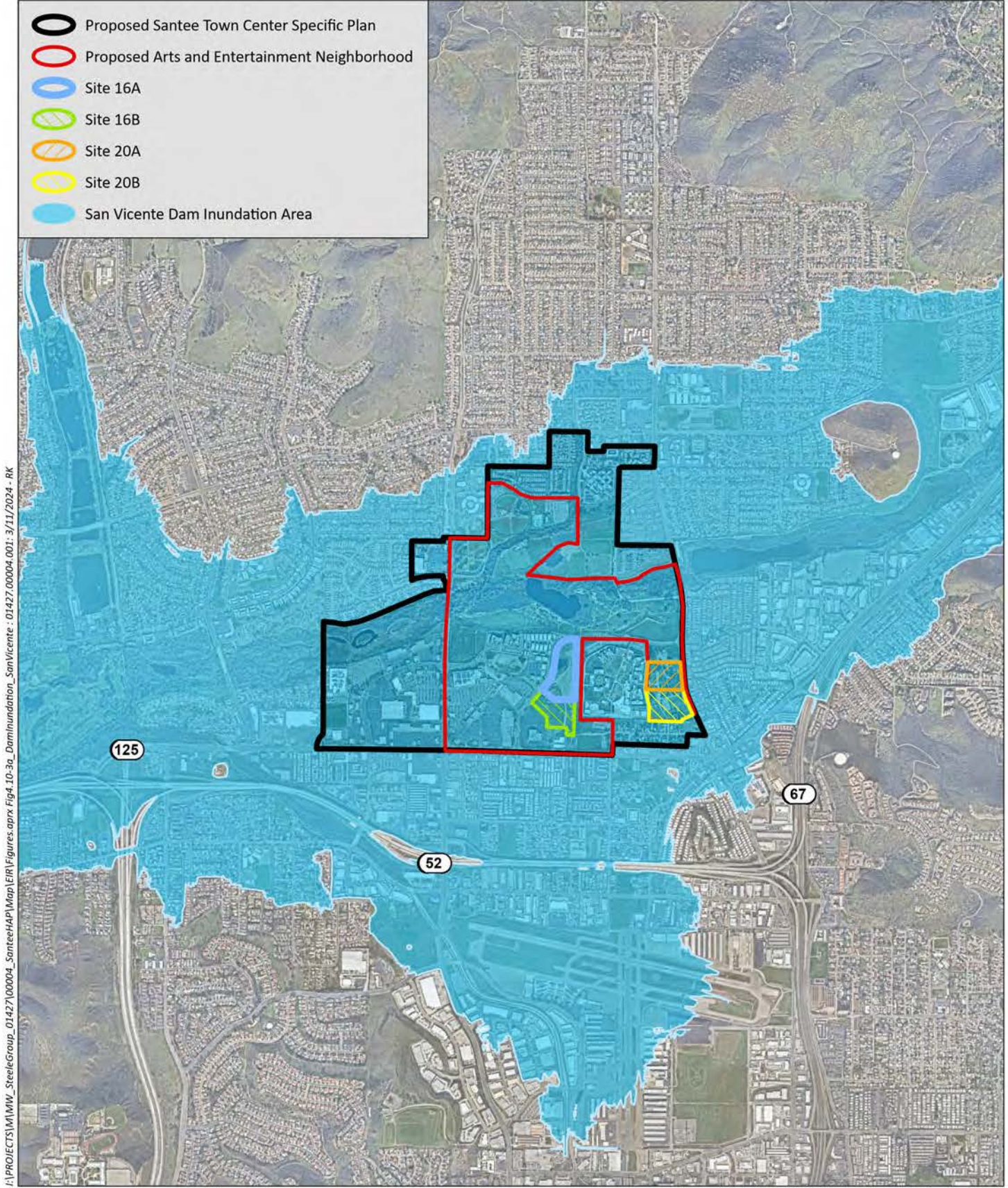
##### Section 303(d)

Under CWA Section 303(d), states are required to identify “impaired water bodies” (those not meeting established water quality standards), identify the pollutants causing the impairment, establish priority rankings for waters on the list, and develop a schedule for development of control plans to improve water quality. The USEPA then approves the state’s recommended list of impaired waters, or adds to or removes water bodies from the list. Each RWQCB must update the CWA Section 303(d) list every 2 years, with the most recent update including the 2018 reporting cycle, dated November 2019. The CWA Section 303(d) list identifies priorities for development of pollution control plans for each listed water body and pollutant. The pollution control plans triggered by the CWA Section 303(d) list are called TMDLs. The TMDL is a “pollution budget” designed to restore the health of a polluted body of water and ensure the protection of beneficial uses. The TMDL also contains the target reductions needed to meet water quality standards and allocates those reductions among the pollutant sources in the watershed (point sources, nonpoint sources, and natural sources) (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 130.2).

##### Section 401 Water Quality Certification

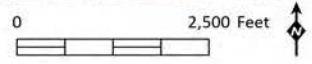
Section 401 of the CWA requires that any applicant for a federal permit to conduct any activity, including the construction or operation of a facility, which may result in the discharge of any pollutant, must obtain certification from the state. This process is known as the Water Quality Certification.



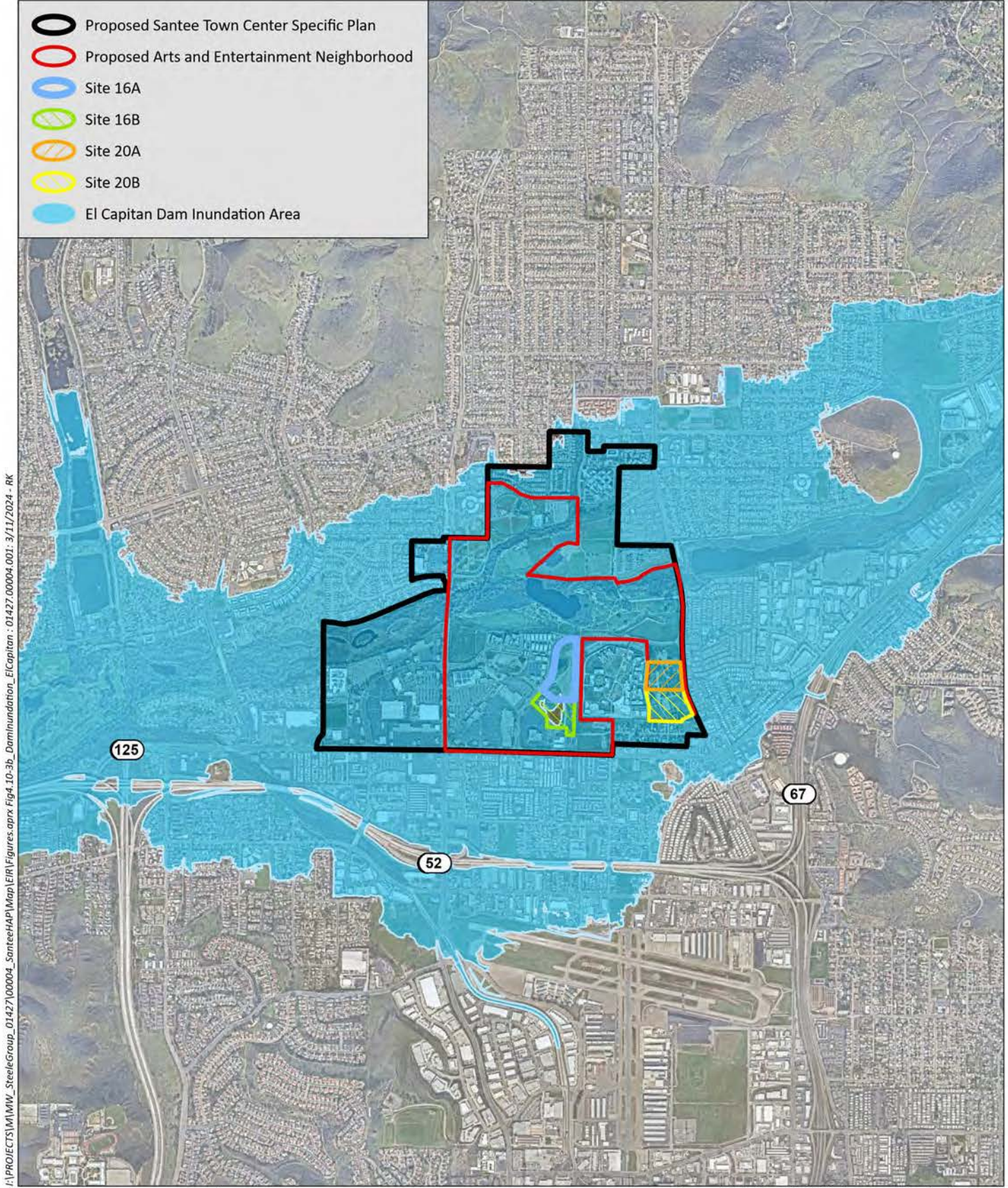


I:\PROJECTS\I\MMW\_SteelGroup\_01427\00004\_SanteeHAP\Map\EIR\Figures.aprx Fig4.10-3a\_DamInundation\_SanVicente : 01427.00004.001: 3/11/2024 - RK

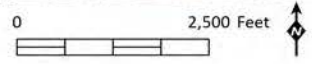
Source: Aerial (SanGIS, 2023); Dam Inundation (water.ca.gov)





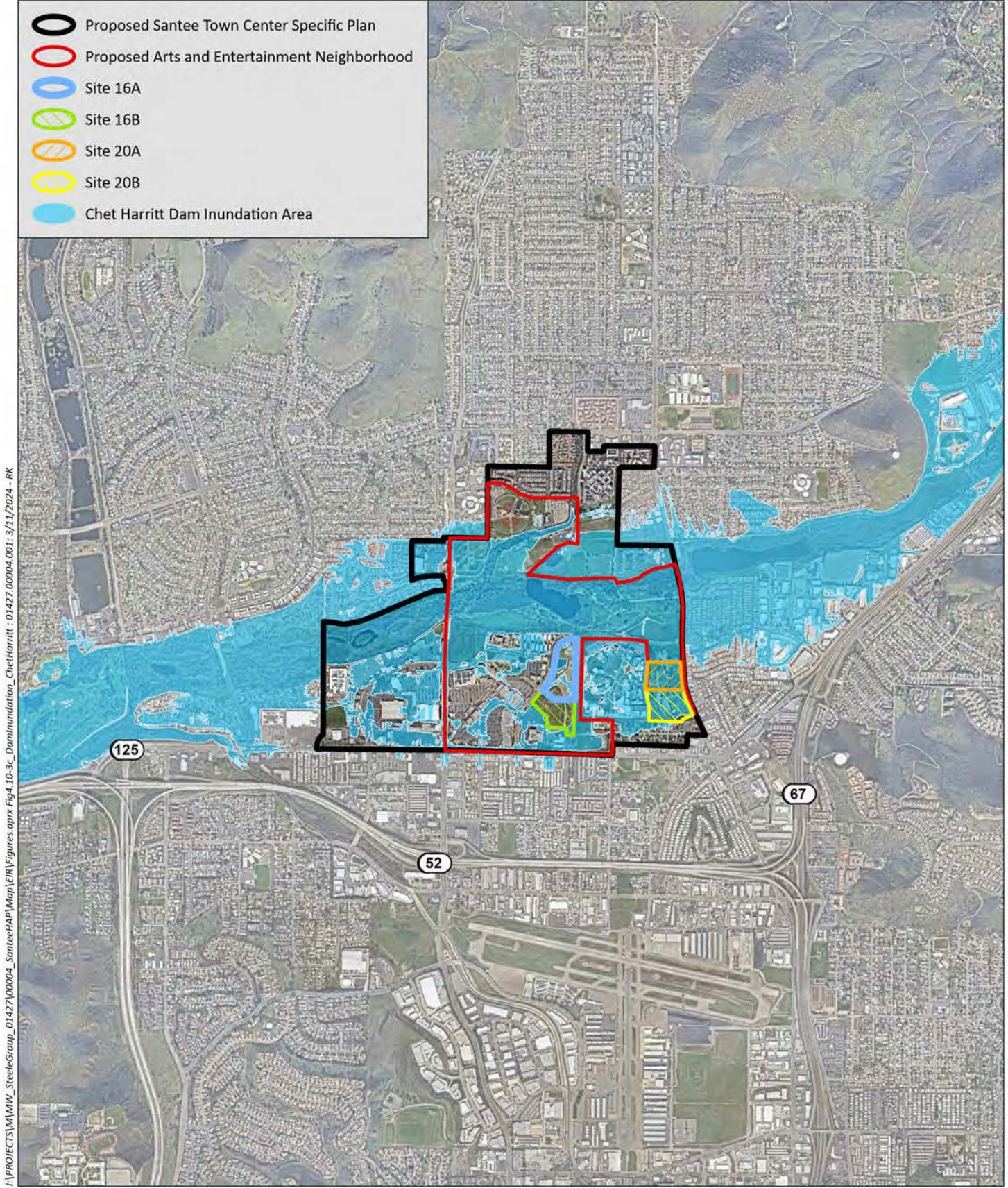


I:\PROJECTS\MMW\_SteelGroup\_01427\00004\_SanteeHAP\Map\EIR\Figures.aprx Fig4.10-3b\_DamInundation\_ElCapitan : 01427.00004.001: 3/11/2024 - RK

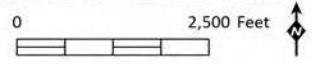


Source: Aerial (SanGIS, 2023); Dam Inundation (water.ca.gov)





I:\PROJECTS\I\MMW\_SteelGroup\_01427\00004\_SanteeHAPI\Map\EIR\Figures.aprx Fig4.10-3c\_DamInundation\_Chetharritt : 01427.00004.001: 3/11/2024 - RK



Source: Aerial (SanGIS, 2023); Dam Inundation (water.ca.gov)



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### Section 402 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System

Section 402 of the CWA establishes the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program to regulate the discharge of pollutants from point sources and discharge pollutants into waters of the United States. In the state of California, the USEPA has authorized the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and its nine RWQCBs to implement the NPDES program and issue permits, develop waste discharge requirements, administer 401 certifications and provide enforcement. CWA regulation calls for the implementation of best management practices (BMPs) to reduce or prevent the discharge of pollutants from MS4s to the Maximum Extent Practicable and meeting the Best Available Technology Economically Achievable and Best Conventional Pollutant Control Technology standards for construction stormwater. Regulations and permits have been implemented at the federal, state, and local level to form a comprehensive regulatory framework to serve and protect the quality of the nation's surface water resources.

### Section 404

Section 404 of the CWA regulates the discharge of dredged and fill materials into waters of the United States, which include all navigable waters, their tributaries, as well as some wetlands adjacent to the aforementioned waters (33 CFR Part 328.3).

Areas meeting the regulatory definition of waters of the United States are subject to the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) under provisions of Section 404. Construction activities involving placement of fill into jurisdictional waters of the United States are regulated by the USACE through permit requirements. No USACE permit is effective in the absence of the state water quality certification pursuant to Section 401.

### **National Flood Insurance Act**

The National Flood Insurance Act (1968) established the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), which is based on the minimal requirements for floodplain management and is designed to minimize flood damage within Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs). FEMA administers the NFIP. SFHAs are defined as areas that have a one percent chance of flooding within a given year. This is also referred to as the 100-year flood. Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) were developed to identify areas of flood hazards within a community.

### **National Flood Insurance Program**

The NFIP is a federal program enabling property owners in participating communities to purchase insurance protection against losses from flooding. This insurance is designed to provide an insurance alternative to disaster assistance to meet the escalating costs of repairing damage to buildings and their contents caused by floods. Participation in the NFIP is based on an agreement between local communities and the federal government that states if a community will adopt and enforce a floodplain management ordinance to reduce future flood risks to new construction in SFHA, the federal government will make flood insurance available within the community as a financial protection against flood losses.

In support of the NFIP, FEMA identifies flood hazard areas throughout the United States and its territories by producing Flood Hazard Boundary Maps, FIRMs, and Flood Boundary and Floodway Maps. Several areas of flood hazards are commonly identified on these maps. One of these areas is the SFHA or high risk area defined as any land that would be inundated by the 100-year flood;

the flood having a one percent chance of occurring in any given year (also referred to as the base flood).

#### **4.10.2.2 State**

##### **Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, as amended**

The Porter–Cologne Water Quality Control Act was established to protect the water quality and beneficial uses of waters of the state (California Water Code, Division 7, Section 13000 et seq.) The law gives broad authority to the SWRCB and nine RWQCBs to establish water quality standards and discharge prohibitions, issue waste discharge requirements, and implement provisions of the federal CWA. Under the Porter-Cologne Act, “waters of the State” include both surface and groundwater. Any entity or person proposing to discharge waste within any region of the state must file a Report of Waste Discharge with the appropriate regional board.

##### **National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit Program (NPDES)**

In California, the SWRCB and local RWQCBs have assumed the responsibility of implementing the USEPA’s NPDES program. In addition to its permitting programs, the SWRCB, through its nine RWQCBs, developed Regional Water Quality Control Plans (or Basin Plans) that designate beneficial uses and water quality objectives for California’s surface waters and groundwater basins, as mandated by both the CWA and the state’s Porter-Cologne Act. Water quality standards are thus established in these Basin Plans and provide the foundation for the regulatory programs implemented by the state.

Additionally, municipalities are required to develop and implement a Jurisdictional Runoff Management Plan (JRMP) to address activities to reduce pollutants in urban runoff and stormwater discharges that were contributing a substantial pollutant load to their systems.

##### **State General Construction Stormwater Permit**

Stormwater runoff from construction activity that results in soil disturbances of at least 1 acre of total land area (and projects that meet other specific criteria) is governed by the SWRCB under Water Quality Order 2009-0009-DWQ (as amended by 2010-0014-DWQ and 2012-0006-DWQ), NPDES Permit No. CAS000002. This permit regulates discharges of stormwater and non-stormwater from construction projects. The nine individual RWQCBs enforce the General Construction Stormwater Permit for projects within their region.

It is the responsibility of the construction site owner or landowner to obtain coverage under this General Permit prior to commencement of construction activities. To obtain coverage, the operator or owner must file a Notice of Intent with a vicinity map and the appropriate fee with the SWRCB. The General Permit outlines the requirements for preparation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). The SWPPP is a temporary document that is created to define and control the handling of stormwater runoff from a construction site. The SWPPP identifies construction BMPs, which are implemented during the construction phase of development. All future projects that would be disturbed by development exceeding 1 acre would be required to comply with the General Construction Stormwater Permit.

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## **Sustainable Groundwater Management Act**

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) provides a framework to regulate groundwater. The intent of the law is to strengthen local groundwater management of basins most critical to the state's water needs with an understanding that groundwater is most effectively managed at the local level. SGMA requires basins to be sustainably managed by local public agencies (e.g., counties, cities, and water agencies) who become groundwater sustainability agencies, or GSAs. The primary purpose of the GSAs is to develop and implement a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) to achieve long-term groundwater sustainability. The act requires GSPs to be developed for high and medium priority basins. The City's groundwater basins are not required to implement GSPs (State of California Department of Water Resources 2021).

### **4.10.2.3 Regional**

#### **San Diego Basin Plan**

The Basin Plan created by the California RWQCB sets forth water quality objectives for constituents that could potentially cause an adverse effect or impact on the beneficial uses of water (RWQCB 2021). Specifically, the Basin Plan is designed to accomplish the following:

- 1) Designate beneficial uses for surface and groundwater;
- 2) Set the narrative and numerical objectives that must be attained or maintained to protect the designated beneficial uses and conform to the state's antidegradation policy;
- 3) Describe implementation programs to protect the beneficial uses of all waters within the region; and
- 4) Describe surveillance and monitoring activities to evaluate the effectiveness of the Basin Plan.

The Basin Plan also identifies specific narrative and numeric water quality objectives for several physical properties (e.g., temperature, turbidity, and suspended solids), biological constituents (e.g., coliform bacteria), and chemical conditions of concern, including inorganic parameters, trace metals, and organic compounds. Water quality objectives for toxic priority pollutants (i.e., select trace metals and synthetic organic compounds) also are identified in the Basin Plan.

#### **Water Quality Improvement Plan for the San Diego River Watershed Management Area**

The Water Quality Improvement Plan (WQIP) for the San Diego River watershed is a comprehensive watershed-based program designed to improve surface water quality in the San Diego River Watershed Management Area (WMA). The San Diego River watershed encompasses a land area of 434 square miles, making it the second largest WMA in the County. It lies in the central portion of the County and neighbors Los Peñasquitos and San Dieguito River watersheds to the north and San Diego Bay WMA to the south and includes four hydrologic areas including the Lower San Diego River (907.1). The WQIP is a requirement of updated stormwater regulations adopted by the RWQCB in the Regional MS4 Permit. Agencies involved in the development of the San Diego River WQIP include the cities of El Cajon, La Mesa, Santee, and San Diego, the County, and the California Department of Transportation. The WQIP for the San Diego River WMA identifies highest priority water quality conditions, strategies to address them, and monitoring plans. The ultimate goal of the WQIP is to protect, preserve, enhance, and restore

water quality of receiving water bodies. These improvements in water quality would be accomplished through an adaptive planning and management process that identifies the highest priority water quality conditions within the watershed and implements strategies to address them.

### **Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Permits**

The San Diego RWQCB regulates discharges from MS4s in the San Diego region under the Regional MS4 Permit. The Regional MS4 Permit covers 39 municipal, county government, and special district entities (referred to jointly as “copermittees”) in the County of San Diego, southern County of Orange, and southwestern County of Riverside who own and operate large MS4s that discharge stormwater (wet weather) runoff and non-stormwater (dry weather) runoff to surface waters throughout the San Diego region. The Regional MS4 Permit, Order No. R9-2013-0001, was adopted on May 8, 2013, and initially covered the County of San Diego copermittees. Order No. R9-2015-0001 was adopted on February 11, 2015, amending the Regional MS4 Permit to extend coverage to the County of Orange copermittees. Finally, Order No. R9-2015-0100 was adopted on November 18, 2015, amending the Regional MS4 Permit to extend coverage to the County of Riverside copermittees. The City is 1 of 18 municipalities in the County of San Diego that is a copermittee.

#### **4.10.2.4 Local**

### **Best Management Practices Design Manual**

The City’s BMP Design Manual provides guidelines for compliance with on-site post-construction stormwater requirements in the Regional MS4 Permit and assists the land development community by streamlining project reviews and maximizing cost-effective environmental benefits, meeting performance standards specified in the Regional MS4 Permit. By following the process outlined in the BMP Design Manual, proponents (for both private and public developments) can develop a single integrated design that complies with the Regional MS4 Permit source control and site design requirements, stormwater pollutant control requirements (i.e., water quality), and hydromodification management (flow control and sediment supply) requirements.

### **Guidelines for Surface Water Pollution Prevention**

The City’s Guidelines for Surface Water Pollution Prevention (Manual) supports the City’s Stormwater Management and Discharge Control Ordinance (Stormwater Ordinance), codified as Santee Municipal Code (SMC), Chapter 9.06. The Manual also supports the water quality protection provisions of SMC, Chapter 11.40, Excavation and Grading. In general, the Manual establishes what dischargers must do to comply with the ordinances and to receive permits for projects and activities that are subject to them. The Manual and the ordinances have been prepared to provide the City with the respective legal authority and administrative actions necessary to comply with the requirements of Regional MS4 Permit.

### **Jurisdictional Runoff Management Program**

The Regional MS4 Permit regulates discharges to MS4s within 18 municipalities in the County, the County of San Diego, the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority, and the San Diego Unified Port District (collectively referred to as “copermittees” or “municipalities”). The Regional MS4 Permit requires each copermittee, including the City, to develop a comprehensive JRMP. The JRMP is the City’s approach to improving water quality in rivers, bays, lakes, and the Pacific Ocean through reducing discharges of pollutants to the stormwater conveyance system. The

City's stormwater conveyance system, like that of most other jurisdictions across the United States, conveys runoff from rain, irrigation runoff, natural groundwater seepage, and other water sources. To reduce pollutants in these discharges to water bodies, the City implements or requires its residents, businesses, municipal facilities, and landowners to implement a variety of measures commonly referred to as BMPs. Major components of the JRMP include the implementation of BMP requirements, water quality monitoring, educational outreach efforts, municipal maintenance procedures, inspection and enforcement programs, and water quality monitoring procedures.

### **San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board Hydromodification Management Plan Requirements**

Hydromodification management plans (HMPs) are requirements of the San Diego RWQCB to manage increases in runoff discharge rates and durations from all priority development projects, where such increased rates and durations are likely to cause increased erosion of channel beds and banks, sediment pollutant generation, or other impacts to beneficial uses and stream habitat due to increased erosive force.

#### **General Plan**

The City's General Plan includes various goals, objectives, and policies related to water quality and drainage and protections against flooding hazards, including the following:

#### Conservation Element

The Conservation Element articulates the City's objectives to preserve and enhance water quality and protect designated beneficial uses of all local waters, while accomplishing economic growth and land use objectives.

Objective 9.0: Reduce pollutants in urban runoff and stormwater discharges.

- **Policy 9.1:** The City shall use careful planning and review to identify and eliminate urban runoff problems before development is approved.
- **Policy 9.2:** The City shall enforce the implementation of appropriate best management practices (BMPs) during construction projects.
- **Policy 9.3:** Reduce the discharge of pollutants into the storm drain system from existing municipal, industrial, and commercial facilities, and residential areas to the maximum extent practicable.

#### Safety Element

Objective 1.0: Minimize injuries, loss of life and property damage resulting from flood hazards.

- **Policy 1.1:** The City should encourage the use of innovative site design strategies within the floodplain which ensure minimizing of flood hazards, maintaining the natural character of waterways and maximize the use of water as a design feature.
- **Policy 1.2:** All development proposed within a floodplain area shall be required by the City to utilize design and site planning techniques to ensure that structures are elevated at least one foot above the 100-year flood level.



- **Policy 1.3:** All proposed projects which would modify the configuration of any of the three main waterways in Santee (San Diego River and Sycamore and Forrester Creeks) shall be required to submit a report prepared by a registered hydrologist that analyzes potential effects of the project downstream as well as in the local vicinity.
- **Policy 1.6:** The City should require a hydrologic study, including the analysis of effects on downstream and upstream properties and on the flood-carrying characteristics of the stream, for development proposed in the floodplain.
- **Policy 1.8:** Development within the 100-year floodway shall be prohibited, subject to the provisions of the City's Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance.

## **Municipal Code**

### Title 9 – Stormwater Ordinance

Chapter 9.06 – Intended to protect and enhance the water quality of local watercourses, water bodies, and wetlands in a manner pursuant to and consistent with the CWA, Porter-Cologne Act, and Regional MS4 Permit through the following means:

- Effectively prohibiting non-stormwater discharges to the stormwater conveyance system.
- Eliminating illicit discharges and illicit connections to the stormwater conveyance system.
- Reducing the discharge of pollutants from the stormwater conveyance system, to the maximum extent practicable to achieve applicable water quality objectives for surface waters in San Diego County.
- Achieving compliance with TMDL regulations.

### Title 11 – Flood Damage Prevention

Chapter 11.36, et seq. - Establishes regulatory standards to minimize the public and private losses due to flood conditions. The standards apply to all areas of special flood hazards as designated in SMC Section 11.36.070. Specifically, Section 11.36.150 provides detailed standards of construction applicable to all areas of special flood hazard including types of construction materials, elevation requirements, and flood proofing design measures.

### Title 11 – Grading Ordinance

Chapter 11.40 - Establishes minimum requirements for grading, excavating, and filling of land and provides water quality protection provisions. It also provides for the issuance of permits and provides for the enforcement of the chapter provisions.

### Title 12 – Development Impact Fees and Dedication Ordinance

There are several development impact fees in the SMC. These fees impose on new development the costs of constructing public facilities, which are reasonably related to the impacts of the new development. The drainage fee, in particular, provides funds for the installation of needed drainage improvements identified in the City of Santee Citywide Drainage Study prepared by BSI Consultants dated February 1990 (BSI Consultants 1990).

Chapter 12.30.160 - Includes how fees are calculated depending on land use types. Future projects would be required to pay the appropriate land development impact fees determined by the City during the entitlement review process and prior to any issuance of building permits.

#### **4.10.3 Significance Determination Thresholds**

Consistent with Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Guidelines, impacts related to hydrology and water quality would be significant if the project would:

- 1) Threshold 1: Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality.
- 2) Threshold 2: Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin.
- 3) Threshold 3: Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:
  - a. Result in substantial erosion or siltation on or off site;
  - b. Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off site;
  - c. Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or
  - d. Impede or redirect flood flows.
- 4) Threshold 4: In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation.
- 5) Threshold 5: Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan.

#### **4.10.4 Methodology**

The potential for significant impacts associated with the project is based upon review of existing secondary source information and data relative to the available hydrology and water quality data, plans, and policies applicable to the City.

**4.10.5 Issues 1 and 5: Water Quality**

*Would the project violate any water quality standards, or waste discharge requirements, or otherwise substantially degrade surface and groundwater quality?*

*Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or substantial groundwater management plan?*

**4.10.5.1 Impact Analysis****TCSP Area and AEN**

While specific projects within the TCSP area are not currently known, the TCSP would allow for new development and associated infrastructure to occur within the TCSP area, including the AEN. Future development of the TCSP area and AEN would have the potential to result in water quality impacts both during construction and from postconstruction operation. During construction, development would entail grading and other earthmoving activities. Exposed soils could be eroded and deposited into the surrounding water bodies, increasing the amount of sediment and turbidity in these water bodies. Additionally, chemicals or fuels could accidentally spill and be released into receiving waters, which could adversely alter water chemistry.

As part of long-term operation of projects, water quality impacts could result from use of common household materials used in landscaping and residential uses that may result in the generation of runoff pollutants such as sediments, oils and grease, heavy metals, pesticides, fertilizers, trash and debris, oxygen-demanding substances, and bacteria and viruses, which are typical for residential and mixed uses. In addition, new development would result in greater vehicular use of roadways, which could potentially increase contaminants that would be carried in runoff and discharged into receiving waters. Therefore, nonpoint source pollutants would be the primary contributors to potential water quality degradation as a result of project buildout. Nonpoint source pollutants could be washed by rainwater from rooftops, landscaped areas, parking areas, and other impervious surfaces into the on-site drainage system.

In addition, the TCSP area is already highly impervious and was developed largely at a time prior to the regulation of stormwater quality. New development within the TCSP area would have to come into conformance with current water quality regulatory standards. Thus, overall water quality in the post-buildout condition would be similar (if not improved) to existing conditions, except at undeveloped sites where an increase in impervious surfaces would result, thereby potentially increasing stormwater pollutants into the drainage systems.

Future development, whether discretionary or by right, would be required to adhere to all applicable water quality standards as provided in various water quality regulations and plans including all pertinent requirements of the City's JRMP (including WQIP and MS4 Permit), BMP Design Manual, NPDES General Construction Permit, as well as all regulations related to water quality. The General Construction Permit requires preparation and implementation of a SWPPP, which must include erosion and sediment control BMPs that would meet or exceed measures required by the NPDES General Permit, as well as BMPs that control hydrocarbons, trash and debris, and other potential construction-related pollutants. Future projects within the TCSP area would comply with the City's General Plan policies requiring the incorporation of construction BMPs for the protection of water quality. Additionally, new development would be required to adhere to the City's Stormwater Ordinance applying source control and site design BMPs as project design features to reduce the discharge of pollutants into the stormwater conveyance

system. Therefore, through regulatory compliance impacts related to water quality standards and waste discharge requirements would be less than significant. Likewise, future development within the TCSP area would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan.

### **Housing Element Sites**

Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B are totally or mostly vacant. As a result, implementation of the proposed project would increase impervious surfaces, thereby potentially increasing the amount of stormwater pollutants and waste discharge into the drainage systems. However, impacts to water quality standards and waste discharge requirements would be less than significant through regulatory compliance. Likewise, future development within the Housing Element sites would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan. Impacts associated with the Housing Element sites would be less than significant.

#### **4.10.5.2 Mitigation Measures**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, Housing Element Sites**

No mitigation is required.

#### **4.10.5.3 Significance After Mitigation**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, Housing Element Sites**

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

### **4.10.6 Issue 2: Groundwater**

*Would the project substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede substantial groundwater management of the basin?*

#### **4.10.6.1 Impact Analysis**

##### **TCSP Area and AEN**

The TCSP would allow for new development and associated infrastructure projects to occur within the TCSP area, including the AEN. Both redevelopment and new development on vacant sites would be required to comply with applicable stormwater management requirements which focus on retention and infiltration of waters on-site, which would provide for ongoing groundwater recharge. Temporary dewatering could be required in areas with high ground water levels. Such dewatering requires a dewatering permit and is typically designed to only move water away from such sites temporarily through sloping or pumping the water to other areas during construction of deep foundation work, thereby not having long term effects on groundwater. Although permanent dewatering systems could also occur if uses such as underground parking is required, these dewatering systems would be required to comply with typical geotechnical and engineering standards addressing geotechnical safety and water quality. Redevelopment of sites in the TCSP area, including the AEN, would not result in a substantial change in impervious surfaces as these sites already support some level of development. Additionally, future projects would be required to comply with the City's General Plan policies and regulations that prioritize infiltration and treatment of stormwater and generally require increased on-site infiltration and higher standards

of water quality protection compared to water quality standards that would have been implemented on existing developed sites. Therefore, although development/redevelopment within the TCSP area, including the AEN, would increase impervious surfaces, prioritization of on-site infiltration would ensure on groundwater recharge, impacts to groundwater quality would be less than significant.

While the City does not have a groundwater management plan as one is not required for the City's groundwater basins under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, the TCSP area would not obstruct implementation of ongoing sustainable use of the City's groundwater resources as the City is not dependent on groundwater (RWQCB 2021). Therefore, future development of the TCSP area, including the AEN, would not substantially interfere with groundwater recharge such that the project would impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin.

### **Housing Element Sites**

Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B are totally or mostly vacant. As a result, implementation of the proposed project would increase impervious surfaces; however, compliance with General Plan policies and regulations would ensure that impacts to ground water quality associated with the Housing Element sites would be less than significant.

#### **4.10.6.2 Mitigation Measures**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, Housing Element Sites**

No mitigation is required.

#### **4.10.6.3 Significance After Mitigation**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, Housing Element Sites**

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

#### **4.10.7 Issue 3: Drainage Patterns/Stormwater Runoff**

*Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river through the addition of impervious surfaces in a manner which would: (i) result in a substantial erosion or siltation on or off-site; (ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site; (iii) create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or (iv) impede or redirect flood flows?*

##### **4.10.7.1 Impact Analysis**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

The TCPS area, AEN and Housing Element sites are located within urbanized areas throughout the City with existing stormwater facilities. Buildout of the proposed project would not result in substantial changes to the overall drainage patterns within the City because stormwater runoff from the project areas would still be collected within the existing stormwater conveyance system, and runoff would ultimately be discharged into the Forrester and Sycamore Canyon creeks, which

are tributary to the San Diego River and then the Pacific Ocean. Additionally, as existing developed sites are redeveloped, they would be required to demonstrate compliance with the most current water quality standards that required increasingly stringent measures to detain and treat runoff to improve water quality. Impacts related to erosion/siltation, increased rate of stormwater runoff, drainage patterns, and impeding or redirecting flood flows are evaluated below.

**a. Erosion or Siltation**

Development within the TCSP area, including the AEN and Housing Element sites, has the potential to alter drainage patterns by increasing impervious surfaces (additional structures, walkways, and parking areas), which have a lower absorption rate for rainfall than that of vacant natural lands. All future development, whether discretionary or by right, would be required to conform with the City's General Plan policies and new regulatory standards. Specifically, adherence to the City's Stormwater and Grading Ordinances include requirements which focus on retention and infiltration of waters on-site and avoidance of changes to drainage velocities during both construction and post-construction/operational phases of development. These regulations would ensure avoidance of increases in erosion and siltation.

With respect to construction-related measures, consistent with the SMC Chapters 9.06 and 11.40, all future development proposing one acre or greater of grading would be required to prepare a construction SWPPP describing specific construction BMPs that address pollutant source reduction and provide erosion control measures necessary to reduce potential pollutant sources. Additionally, post construction, individual projects would be required to ensure the maintenance of post-construction BMPs designed to retain volume and velocity of stormwater. The ongoing erosion control measures would ensure that surface water runoff flows leaving future development sites during both construction and operation of future projects would not carry substantial amounts of sediment to downstream waters. Therefore, through regulatory compliance, impacts related to erosion and siltation associated with development of the proposed project would be less than significant.

**b. Increase Surface Runoff/Impede or Redirect Flood Flows**

Future development could result in increased surface runoff due to the construction of additional structures, walkways, and parking areas within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites. Consistent with the City's General Plan Conservation Element policies and SMC (Chapters 9.06 and 11.40), all future development, whether discretionary or by right, would be required to ensure the maintenance of stormwater flows to ensure the project would not result in increased surface runoff or redirect existing flood flows. Implementation of applicable stormwater BMPs and erosion control measures would be required to retain flows on-site and minimize the velocity of stormwater runoff. Such BMPs could include on-site drainage swales, bioretention features, use of permeable pavers in parking areas and streets, or infiltration basins which also serve as a means for pollutant removal. Additionally, applicable projects would be required to include low impact development (LID) BMPs as discussed in the JRMP to treat potentially polluted runoff prior to entering the public storm drain system. Project-specific studies would be required to ensure that volume-based treatment LID BMPs are properly sized to infiltrate, filter, or treat the remaining portion of the runoff volume that was not retained or treated by other BMPs to maintain flows and ensure future projects would not redirect flood flows or alter the course of a stream or river. Through these project-specific measures, impacts related to increased or redirected surface runoff associated with development of the proposed project would be less than significant.



### c. Exceed Capacity of Stormwater System

Future development of the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would contribute runoff to the existing stormwater drainage system. However, future development, whether discretionary or by right, would be required to adhere to state and local regulation and policies including preparation of project specific Stormwater Quality Management Plans, BMP Plan Sheets, drainage plans, and pollution control plans. Specifically, SMC Section 9.06.250(B) requires priority development projects to include hydromodification management BMPs that are sized and designed to ensure that post-project runoff conditions (flow rates and durations) would not exceed the pre-development runoff conditions by more than 10 percent. This, along with City wide storm water improvements described in the EIR Project Description assists in ensuring that stormwater flows would not overwhelm the City's stormwater system. Additionally, the Development Impact Fee (DIF) and Dedication Ordinance requires new development to provide funds for the installation of needed drainage improvements. Through currently planned stormwater improvements in the City, regulatory compliance and payment of the DIF, impacts related to exceeding the capacity of the stormwater system associated with development of the proposed project would be less than significant.

#### 4.10.7.2 Mitigation Measures

##### TCSP Area, AEN, Housing Element Sites

No mitigation is required.

#### 4.10.7.3 Significance After Mitigation

##### TCSP Area, AEN, Housing Element Sites

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

### 4.10.8 Issue 4: Flood Hazard/Tsunami Inundation

*In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, would the project risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?*

#### 4.10.8.1 Impact Analysis

##### Flood Hazards

##### TCSP Area and AEN

As shown in Figure 4.10-2, the TCSP area encompasses land north and south of the San Diego River and its associated flood hazard zones. Riverine flooding impacts could occur from increases in the amount of runoff delivered to the creeks or river, causing an increase to the total flow and pollutant release in the creeks or river. In general, the potential for riverine flooding impacts is addressed through management of local surface runoff. Additionally, the potential for flooding impacts from direct alterations to the creeks or river is managed through the adoption of development regulations for SFHAs or areas mapped as 100-year flood hazard areas on federal FIRMs, where the NFIP's management regulations must be enforced. These regulations address placement of fill, housing, and structures in areas mapped as SFHAs. The City's General Plan Safety Element specifically prohibits development within a mapped 100-year flood zone

(Policy 1.8). The TCSP area is within the dam inundation area for the San Vicente and El Capitan Dams and partially within the dam inundation area for the Chet Harritt Dam. The California Department of Water Resources, Division of Dam Safety, reviews the safety of dams annually. The TCSP area is at least four miles away from all nearby dams and development within the TCSP area would not increase the risk of a dam failure. Buildout of future identified project areas would be required to adhere to all state and local development regulations including the City's General Plan and SMC (Chapter 11.36), which establishes Flood Damage Prevention standards and development prohibitions.

Development within the TCSP area would not be expected to exacerbate flooding issues, considering the emphasis on stormwater retention and on-site infiltration. Overall, through regulatory compliance, impacts related to flood hazards associated with development of the TCSP area would be less than significant.

### **Housing Element Sites**

#### Site 16A

Site 16A is adjacent to the San Diego River and the northern portion of the site is partially within the 100-year inundation zone. Development of Site 16A would be required to adhere to all state and local development regulations including the City's General Plan and SMC, which could require development in this area to be elevated above the floodplain and/or process a letter of map revision (LOMR) through FEMA showing the proposed project would meet NFIP standards. Development within Site 16A would not be expected to exacerbate flooding issues, considering the emphasis on stormwater retention and on-site filtration. Overall, through regulatory compliance, impacts related to flood hazards associated with development of Site 16A would be less than significant.

#### Site 16B

Site 16B is not within a flood hazard zone. Impacts would be less than significant.

#### Site 20A

Site 20A is not within a flood hazard zone. Impacts would be less than significant.

#### Site 20B

Site 20B is not within a flood hazard zone. Impacts would be less than significant.

### **Tsunami**

#### TCSP Area, AEN, Housing Element Sites

The TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites are not in a tsunami zone and, therefore, the project would not be affected in the event of a tsunami. Thus, buildout of the proposed project would not result in impacts associated with a tsunami inundation.

#### **4.10.8.2 Mitigation Measures**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, Housing Element Sites**

No mitigation is required.

#### **4.10.8.3 Significance After Mitigation**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, Housing Element Sites**

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

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## 4.11 Land Use and Planning

The following section analyzes the potential land use and planning impacts that may occur as a result of the implementation of the proposed project. This section contains an evaluation of the project's consistency with local and regional plans and policies as well as state planning initiatives. It also evaluates compatibility in the context of existing and planned land uses in the surrounding area.

### 4.11.1 Existing Conditions

#### Existing City-wide Land Uses and Development Patterns

Residential uses make up nearly half of the developed land uses in the City of Santee (City). The remaining land uses include Commercial/Office Professional, Industrial, Public, and Preserved/Open Space. Approximately 2,638 acres in the northern portion of the City (designated Planned Development) is mostly part of the Fanita Ranch project. The Town Center Specific Plan (TCSP) area is within the central portion of the City and the Arts and Entertainment Neighborhood (AEN) is within the southern part of the TCSP area. Parcels that comprise the Housing Element sites consist of mostly vacant, underutilized sites in the southeastern part of the AEN.

##### Residential

Residential uses in the City are primarily composed of single-family detached units on standard subdivision lots. This type of residential development is found in all portions of the City, but it is particularly dominant north of the San Diego River. Multi-family housing, including apartments and condominiums, together with mobile homes, provide the balance of housing in the City. Multi-family development, including both apartments and condominiums, is typically located along the City's major roads, including Fanita Drive, Mission Gorge Road, Carlton Hills Boulevard, Halberns Boulevard, and Magnolia Avenue. Most of the mobile parks are located near the City's highly traveled roads including Mission Gorge Road, Magnolia Avenue, and Prospect Avenue.

##### Commercial

Commercial uses are primarily concentrated along Mission Gorge Road and within the TCSP area, with small neighborhood centers dispersed throughout the City.

##### Office Professional

Office professional development is located primarily south of Mission Gorge Road and along Cuyamaca Street.

##### Industrial

Industrial development in the City is comprised of light industrial use concentrated north of State Route (SR) 67 in the east and along SR 52 in the south.

##### Public/Semi-Public

Public/semi-public land uses are composed of schools, public and private parks, and churches. The City's developed park sites – Mast Park, Woodglen Vista Park, Big Rock Park, West Hills Park, Shadow Hill Park, Santee Mini Park, Weston Park, and the Town Center Community Park,

together with Mission Trails Regional Park, Santee Lakes Regional Park and Campground, and the Carlton Oaks Golf Club, provide many areas for recreation. The City's nine elementary and two high schools also provide recreational opportunities.

### **Existing Project Area Land Uses**

Existing land uses within the TCSP area include a mix of residential and commercial uses and vacant or undeveloped areas in a central part of the City. Since 1986, development in the majority of the proposed TCSP area has been subject to the adopted TCSP land use and development regulations to provide a mix of conservation and development areas around the San Diego River. The adopted TCSP area is bounded to the south by Mission Gorge Road, on the west by Mast Park and adjacent residential development, on the north by Mast Boulevard, and on the east by Magnolia Avenue. Property ownership within the TCSP area includes private, City, and County lands.

The adopted TCSP Design Manual (Design Manual) establishes design concepts and guidelines for development. The Design Manual provides both design concepts which guide the overall development of the Town Center and design standards applicable to individual project developments. Specifically, residential areas within the TCSP are required to consider the adjacent land use and provide appropriate buffers as well as open views (City 1986).

### **Surrounding Areas and Land Uses**

Land uses surrounding the City are varied. The City is bordered on the south by Gillespie Field, a general aviation airport, and the residential community of Fletcher Hills, both of which are within the City of El Cajon. To the southwest, is the community of San Carlos, a residential community, and Mission Trails Regional Park, both in the City of San Diego. To the west is the undeveloped East Elliott area of the City of San Diego and the Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Miramar. Also to the east is the primarily low-density residential unincorporated communities of Lakeside and Eucalyptus Hills and to the northeast vacant land and active mining operations in Slaughterhouse Canyon. To the north, the City is bordered by vacant, privately-owned land in the County of San Diego (County) as well as the County's Sycamore Canyon Open Space Preserve.

#### Airports

Two airports are located near the City, including MCAS Miramar and Gillespie Field. Lands adjacent to the western boundary of the northern portion of the City are part of MCAS Miramar and are under the jurisdiction of the Department of the Navy. MCAS Miramar is not a public airport and is restricted to military use providing facilities and services to various Marine Corps and Navy operating units. Airfield operations run 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and consist of three runways, one helicopter landing deck, and six helipads. Flight patterns run primarily in a west to east direction. The northern part of the TCSP area, generally north of the San Diego River, the AEN, and Housing Element Site 16A is within MCAS Miramar Review Area 2.

Gillespie Field is a general aviation reliever airport located at the southern City limits, in the City of El Cajon. Gillespie Field encompasses approximately 757 acres and is owned and operated by the County's Department of Public Works. The airport has three runways and several helipads with two of the runways running parallel in an east-west alignment and one crosswind runway oriented in a north-south alignment. The Gillespie Field Airport Influence Area (AIA)/Safety Zones extends onto the southern portion of City, including parts of the project site. The northern portion of the TCSP area and AEN are in Gillespie Field Review Area 4<sub>2</sub>, while the southern portion of



the TCSP area and AEN and the Housing Element sites are within Gillespie Field Review Area 2 1 and Safety Zones 3, 4 and 6 (Airport Land Use Commission [ALUC] 2024).

### City of San Diego

Lands adjacent to the western boundary of the City are within the East Elliott area of the City of San Diego. The area is primarily uninhabited and included in the Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) Multiple Habitat Planning Area (MHPA) to be preserved as natural habitat. Outside of the MHPA boundaries, there are areas within the community plan designated for Low Density Residential development with 45 maximum single-family residential units. These areas are currently undeveloped.

### Mission Trails Regional Park

The Mission Trails Regional Park is operated by the City of San Diego but is partially located within the City. The park includes over 5,800 acres with over 40 miles of biking, hiking, and equestrian trail; 191 acres of the park are located within the City. None of the project elements would encroach into the park area.

## **4.11.2 Regulatory Framework**

### **4.11.2.1 State**

#### **State Housing Element Law**

State Housing Element law requires cities to regularly update their housing elements to identify and analyze housing needs; establish reasonable goals based on those needs; and set forth a comprehensive list of actions to achieve those goals. In the face of mounting housing costs and the lack of affordable housing throughout the state, the legislature has prioritized the provision of a decent home and suitable living environment to each Californian, with particular focus on housing affordable to low and very low-income households. As a result, state Housing Element law (Government Code Section 65583 et seq.) now requires all incorporated cities and unincorporated counties to regularly update their General Plan Housing Element to ensure each city and county in the state provides its fair share of housing at all economic levels. The City has completed its 6th Cycle Housing Element and it has been certified by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD).

It is further required that jurisdictions demonstrate in their Housing Element that the land inventory is adequately zoned to accommodate that jurisdiction's share of the regional growth. In accordance with state law, a zoning density of 30 residential units per acre is deemed appropriate to accommodate housing for lower income households within suburban jurisdictions such as the City. In accordance with state law, the City's current Housing Element includes a new R-30 zone throughout the City to allow a density range of 30 to 36 dwelling unit per acre (du/ac).

#### **California Density Bonus Law**

California Government Code Section 65915 was enacted in 1979 granting developers an increase in density beyond the maximum allowed by the local jurisdiction's General Plan land use plan. Developers are required to include some affordable dwelling units at below market rates. The amount or percentage of required affordable dwelling units depends on the level of affordability and the type of housing. For general residential development (e.g., not including housing for

specific populations), housing developments that include five or more units and 5% “very low income” or 10% “low income” rental units or 10% “moderate” income for sale units are eligible for a density bonus. The law also requires local governments to offer incentives or concessions that provide reduction costs, waivers of development standards in certain cases, and reductions in parking requirements (SCAG 2024).

### **Senate Bill 375**

The Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008, also known as Senate Bill (SB) 375 (2008) requires the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) to adopt a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) or Alternative Planning Strategy (APS) to address greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction targets from cars and light-duty trucks in the context of its Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

SB 375 requires the SCS to show how GHG reduction targets could be achieved; and recommended the integration of transportation and residential land use as one of the most impactful strategies for reducing GHG emissions from vehicles. Higher-density infill development located near transit that emphasizes proximity and connectivity to public transit, employment and service centers, walkable areas, and amenities, can reduce vehicle GHG emissions by reducing vehicle trip number and length (assuming travelers are using some other form of non-vehicle mobility).

#### **4.11.2.2 Regional**

##### SANDAG

SANDAG is the Council of Governments or Metropolitan Planning Organization for the San Diego region. SANDAG is comprised of elected representatives of the 18 cities in San Diego County and the County itself, and serves as the forum for regional decision-making, regional housing needs assessment allocations, and long-term regional transportation planning, to meet future growth and community needs.

##### San Diego Forward: The 2021 Regional Plan

San Diego Forward was adopted by the SANDAG Board of Directors on December 10, 2021. The 2021 Regional Plan focuses on forecasted growth in the region to the year 2050. One of the major goals of the 2021 Regional Plan is to develop an assessable transportation system guided by three primary goals: the efficient movement of people and goods; access to affordable, reliable, and safe mobility options; and healthier air and reduced GHG emissions. and the plan combines and updates the region’s two big picture planning documents: the Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) and the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)/SCS. San Diego Forward is intended to provide a plan for future growth through the year 2050 based on principles of sustainability and smart growth. It is intended to result in more compact development patterns with greater emphasis on use of transit and less need to rely on private vehicle travel; it is to be updated every four years to monitor its progress. The San Diego Forward plan contains the following required elements: Policy Element; Sustainable Communities Strategy; Financial Element; and Action Element.

Relevant objectives of San Diego Forward include the following: Healthy and Complete Communities

- Create great places for everyone to live, work, and play.

- Connect communities through a variety of transportation choices that promote healthy lifestyles, including walking and biking.
- Increase the supply and variety of housing types -- affordable for people of all ages and income levels in areas with frequent transit service and with access to a variety of services.

### Sustainable Communities Strategy

Developed in accordance with SB 375 for the 2050 RTP and incorporated into the 2021 San Diego Forward plan as Chapter 2, the SCS identifies ways to achieve SANDAG's regional share of statewide GHG reduction targets from cars and light-duty trucks. The targets for the SANDAG region call for a 19 percent reduction in GHG emissions per capita from automobiles and light-duty trucks compared to 2005 levels by 2020, and a 13 percent reduction by 2035.

Similar to the GHG reduction strategies described previously for SB 743 and SB 375, the SCS focuses on: housing and job growth in the urbanized areas where there is existing and planned infrastructure; protection of sensitive habitat and open space; investment in a network that gives residents and workers transportation options; the promotion of equity for all; and the implementation of the plan through incentives and collaboration.

Smart Growth Opportunity Area locations within the City are identified as Town Center and Community Center and coincide with housing and employment density targets proposed by the City. Specifically, Town Centers are defined as suburban downtowns which support low- and mid-rise residential, office, and commercial buildings. The TCSP area is generally served by corridor/regional transit lines and local services. Community Center areas are defined as areas with housing within walking/biking distance of transit stations supporting low- to mid-rise residential, office, and commercial buildings. A Community Center draws people from nearby communities and neighborhoods and is generally served by local high-frequency transit (SANDAG 2016).

#### **4.11.2.3 Local**

### **Multiple Species Conservation Program**

The MSCP is a comprehensive habitat conservation planning program that addresses multiple species habitat needs and the preservation of native vegetation communities for a 900-square-mile (582,243 acres) area in southwestern San Diego County. The MSCP includes 11 city jurisdictions, portions of the unincorporated County, and several special districts. It is one of three subregional habitat planning efforts in the County which contribute to the preservation of regional biodiversity through coordination with other habitat conservation planning efforts throughout southern California. The MSCP is intended to allow local jurisdictions, including the City, to maintain land use control and development flexibility by planning a regional preserve system that can meet future public and private project mitigation needs.

Local jurisdictions and special districts will implement their respective portions of the MSCP Plan through subarea plans, which will describe specific implementing mechanisms for the MSCP. The City's Draft MSCP Subarea Plan is in progress although not yet approved. A majority of the most sensitive biological resources are located within the northern portion of the City, with other sensitive areas generally associated with the San Diego River and steeper hillsides in the northern portions of the City.

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## San Diego County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans

The San Diego County Regional Airport Authority (Authority) is committed to protecting the safety and welfare of the public and the ability of airports to operate now and in the future. One of the Authority's responsibilities is to serve as the ALUC for the County. The ALUC is responsible for adopting Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans (ALUCPs) for 16 public use and military airports in the County. ALUCPs provide guidance on appropriate land uses surrounding airports to protect the health and safety of people and property within the vicinity of an airport, as well as the public in general. ALUCPs focus on a defined area around each airport known as the AIA. The AIA is composed of noise, safety, airspace protection and overflight factors, in accordance with guidance from the California Airport Land Use Planning Handbook published by the California Department of Transportation, Division of Aeronautics. The City is in the vicinity of two airports: MCAS Miramar and Gillespie Field. The San Diego County ALUC has adopted ALUCPs for each airport and future development would be subject to the land use compatibility policies and development criteria within AIAs. The northern portion of the TCSP area is located within MCAS Miramar's Review Area 2 and Gillespie Field's Review Area 1, while the southern portion of the TCSP area is within Gillespie Field's Review Area 2 and Safety Zones 3, 4, and 6.

### General Plan

The General Plan serves as a long-term policy guide for physical, economic, and environmental growth. It is a statement of the community's vision for ultimate growth. State law requires that every city prepare and adopt a comprehensive long-range plan to serve as a guide for the development of the community. City actions, such as those relating to land use allocations, annexations, zoning, subdivision and design review, redevelopment and capital improvements must be consistent with the General Plan. The General Plan designates land use categories for the entire City. Each land use category is identified and defined within the General Plan and includes information on the general uses, development, intensity, siting, and compatibility uses (City 2003e). The current General Plan Elements were adopted by the City Council on August 27, 2003, except for the Mobility Element and Housing Element, which were formally amended in 2017 and 2022, respectively. The 2021-2029 Housing Element and associated Rezone Program establish the maximum development potential for residential properties within the City.

### Municipal Code

The City Zoning Ordinance is consistent with the City's General Plan and is the primary implementation tool for the Land Use Element. Zoning regulations for the City are adopted and established to serve the public health, safety, and general welfare and to protect the physical, social, and economic stability for residential, commercial, industrial, and other land uses in the City to ensure its orderly and beneficial development. The Zoning Ordinance and Map identify specific types of land uses, intensity of uses, and development performance standards applicable to specific areas and parcels of land within the City. The City Zoning Ordinance was last updated as a result of the 2022 Housing Element and rezone.

### Measure N

At the November 2020 election, City voters adopted Measure N, an initiative measure which establishes a voter approval requirement for certain local legislative actions that would increase residential density or otherwise intensify land use over that currently permitted by the General Plan and zoning. Measure N limits the ability to increase residential density on or intensify the use of a property without a citywide vote.

### 4.11.3 Significance Determination Thresholds

Consistent with Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines, impacts related to land use would be significant if the project would:

- 1) Physically divide an established community.
- 2) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

### 4.11.4 Methodology

The land use analysis in this section evaluates the potential for the project to physically divide a community or to cause an inconsistency with applicable plans and policies or to introduce incompatible land uses relative to existing surrounding land uses, which could result in environmental impacts. The land use analysis relies upon land use and technical data developed by the City, and secondary source information including the adopted General Plan, TCSP, Santee Municipal Code (SMC) regulations, and data from SANDAG, SanGIS, and the U.S. Census Bureau.

### 4.11.5 Issue 1: Physically Divide an Established Community

*Would the project physically divide an established community?*

#### 4.11.5.1 Impact Analysis

##### TCSP Area and AEN

The TCSP area is in an urbanized part of the City and the proposed TCSP would include updated development standards that would guide planned development throughout the TCSP area and AEN. The proposed TCSP identifies roadway improvements including bike lanes and multi-use pathways as well as new roadway connections to provide direct connections through the TCSP area and AEN. These improvements are not of a size or scale that would divide an established community. Future development in the TCSP area and AEN would be integrated into the existing area and would be developed pursuant to the TCSP and the City's General Plan and SMC. Development pursuant to the TCSP would be subject to objective design standards and would not physically divide an established community. Further, the project proposes a River Bridge over the San Diego River that would improve connectivity in the TCSP area and AEN as the San Diego River currently separates much of the TCSP area from north to south. Significant impacts related to physically dividing an established community would not occur.

##### Housing Element Sites

The Housing Element sites are in the southeastern part of the AEN on vacant generally flat sites along existing roadways and near existing developed areas. Development of these Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B would occur in areas that have been either developed in the past or have been identified for development. Significant impacts related to dividing an established community would not occur.

#### 4.11.5.2 Mitigation Measures

##### TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites

No mitigation is required.

#### 4.11.5.3 Significance After Mitigation

##### TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

#### 4.11.6 Issue 2: Conflicts with Plans and Policies

*Would the project cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental impact?*

##### 4.11.6.1 Impact Analysis

###### TCSP Area and AEN

The project involves updates to the TCSP, including an expansion of the overall boundaries and updated development standards to facilitate planned development throughout the TCSP area and AEN and does not propose any specific development. The guiding land use document for the TCSP area and AEN is the TCSP, which implements the City's General Plan by establishing a long-term vision for the TCSP area and providing tailored land use and development standards applicable to future development and improvements within the TCSP area and AEN.

The proposed TCSP is a specific plan and would comply with California Government Code Sections 65450 through 65457 which require that a specific plan be consistent with the adopted General Plan for the jurisdiction in which the specific plan area is located. Specific plans adopted by ordinance become the applicable zoning that provide specific direction to the type and intensity of uses permitted and may also define design expectations and standards. The proposed update to the TCSP is a regulatory document that would be adopted by ordinance. The TCSP notes that in any instance where the TCSP conflicts with the requirements of the SMC, the TCSP provisions shall take precedence. Where the TCSP is silent on a topic, the requirements of Title 13 of the SMC (Zoning Ordinance) would remain in effect. The City's 2021-2029 Housing Element and current Zoning Ordinance allow up to 36 du/ac, and none of the residential densities established by the TCSP would exceed 36 du/ac. The proposed modifications to the TCSP would become part of the City's General Plan and Zoning Ordinance and would not conflict with applicable state and local land use requirements. Further, the project would not conflict with Measure N because there are no local legislative actions required for the project that would result in increased densities.

Regional planning documents maintained by SANDAG are related to GHG reduction through greater emphasis on use of transit and less need to rely on private vehicle travel. The Regional Plan: San Diego Forward, adopted in 2021, further identified GHG reduction strategies through transportation and land use planning as follows: connect communities through multi-modal transportation choices; and increase a variety of housing options in proximity to existing and planned transit. The TCSP area includes the eastern terminus of the ~~Green-Copper~~ Line trolley



line at the Santee Trolley Station in the AEN and identifies this area and surrounding uses for Trolley Commercial uses as part of a transit hub to serve residents and workers in the community and adjacent communities, including visitors that arrive to the TCSP area via the trolley. Also, one of the key elements of the TCSP is to incorporate roadway facilities that provide multimodal connectivity throughout the AEN, to allow the movement of people walking, bicycling, and riding transit in the area. The proposed TCSP is consistent with existing adopted land uses, promotes multimodal activity, and would not conflict with regional planning efforts aimed at reducing GHGs or mitigating other environmental effects.

Other local planning documents that pertain to the TCSP area and AEN include the County MSCP and MCAS Miramar and Gillespie Field ALUCPs. The County MSCP was adopted to support local conservation efforts of native habitat and wildlife. As detailed in EIR Section 4.4, the TCSP area and AEN have adequate species coverage and suitable habitats would continue to be protected under the MSCP and the project would not result in conflicts with the MSCP. The MCAS Miramar and Gillespie Field ALUCPs were adopted to address airspace safety and noise issues as they relate to surrounding areas. As stated above, the northern portion of the TCSP area is located within MCAS Miramar's Review Area 2 and Gillespie Field's Review Area 1, while the southern portion of the TCSP area is within Review Gillespie Field's Review Area 2 and Safety Zones 3, 4, and 6. As detailed in EIR Section 4.9, future development within the TSCP area and AEN would be subject to notification and consultation with the ALUC at the time specific development proposals are submitted for City review. Conflicts with local planning documents are not anticipated and future development proposals within the TCSP area and AEN would still be subject to review for consistency with the City's General Plan and SMC; however, it is possible that future development plans within the TCSP area and AEN within Gillespie Field Safety Zones 3 and 4 would not be entirely compatible with the ALUCPs due to residential density limitations. While no development is proposed at this time, ALUC found the TCSP project conditionally consistent on January 9, 2025. When development proposals do come forth, they would be required to complete consultation with the ALUC and depending on the ultimate density of the proposal, future development within could be found incompatible with the ALUCP. Therefore, at this level of program review, a significant impact would occur with respect to consistency with ALUCPs.

### **Housing Element Sites**

The Housing Element sites are within areas identified for residential and non-residential development. The project includes the development of Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B with their maximum development potential identified in the City's current Housing Element and with the state density bonus law for affordable housing and includes some non-residential development. Development within these sites would be consistent with existing zoning and state density bonus law, which could allow eights up to 55 feet, or to a maximum of 85 feet with density bonus. Housing Element sites 16A and 16B are near the Santee Trolley Station and Housing Element site 20A and 20B are along Magnolia Avenue, which does include bus services.

City General Plan Land Use Element Policy 2.2 states that the City should encourage the development of higher density residential developments in areas close to the multi-modal transit station and along major road corridors where transit and other convenience services are available.

The Housing Element sites are located within the center of the City in proximity to existing major roads and transit and provide greater opportunity for residential use of multi-modal and transit options. Regional planning efforts by SANDAG to reduce GHG emissions would also be supported by the proposed development at the Housing Element sites.

As discussed in EIR Section 4.9, the Housing Element sites are within Gillespie Field's Review Area 2 and Safety Zones 3, 4 and 6 and Housing Element Site 16A is also within MCAS Miramar's Review Area 2. Aircraft safety is addressed in the TCSP for the Housing Element sites and indicates that future projects at the Housing Element sites shall incorporate design features to address identified aircraft safety and noise hazards, consistent with General Plan Safety Element Policy 7.1. Airport noise for Housing Element sites 20A and 20B are required to prepare a noise technical analysis by a qualified professional that demonstrates either noise levels would not exceed the City's General Plan Noise Element compatibility guidelines, or that noise levels which already exceed the levels considered compatible for that use are not increased by 3 dB or more.

The City is responsible for submitting the Application for a Consistency Determination to the Airport Authority. Airport staff would review and make recommendations to the ALUC as to the appropriate determination. The ALUC must act upon an application for a determination of consistency with an ALUCP within 60 days of the ALUC deeming such application complete. The City may ~~override-override~~ an ALUC determination of inconsistency by a two-thirds vote of the City Council if it can make certain findings and provide a 45-day notice of the same to the ALUC and the California Department of Transportation per Public Utilities Code Section 21676.5(a). Where possible conflict between the residential density provisions mandated by state law and Airport Safety Zones are identified with a specific land use proposal, the ALUCP density limitations shall apply unless overridden by the City Council. Since this process is not unique to the City, it does not constitute a distinct or unusual constraint. Notwithstanding the potential ~~override-override~~ of ALUCP density limitations, all future individual projects, including ministerial projects, would be required to obtain an FAA determination of No Hazard to Air Navigation and/or implement FAA conditions that would allow the FAA determination of No Hazard to Air Navigation consistent with TCSP Objective Design Standard G and the requirements for ministerial projects described in Section 3.4.2 of this EIR. Impacts associated with conflicts with local land use plans for future development at the Housing Element sites would be less than significant, except with respect to compatible density within Gillespie Field Safety Zones 3 and 4. While no development is proposed at this time and ALUC found the TCSP project conditionally compatible on January 9, 2025, the potential for future development within the Housing Element sites to exceed the density limits for the corresponding airport safety zone remains, resulting in a significant and unavoidable impact under CEQA. ~~The potential for future development within the Housing Element sites to exceed the density limits for the corresponding airport safety zone could result in a significant and unavoidable impact after consultation with the ALUC.~~

#### **4.11.6.2 Mitigation Measures**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

No feasible mitigation is available to reduce the potential conflict between the future development density and the density restrictions within the Gillespie Field Safety Zones 3 and 4. Significance After Mitigation

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

As the potential for future development exceeds the density restrictions within Gillespie Field Safety Zones 3 and 4, impacts would be significant and unavoidable.

## 4.12 Noise

This section analyzes potential noise impacts that may occur as a result of implementation of the proposed project. Specifically, this section addresses potential noise impacts related to compliance with applicable noise ordinance standards, generation of groundborne noise and vibration, temporary and permanent increases in ambient noise levels, and airport noise. Noise modeling data are contained in Appendix F of this Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Impacts are assessed in accordance with standards established in the City's General Plan Noise Element and the Santee Municipal Code (SMC).

### 4.12.1 Existing Conditions

#### 4.12.1.1 Fundamentals of Noise and Vibration

##### Definition and Measurement of Noise

The unit of measurement used to describe a noise level is the decibel (dB). However, the human ear is not equally sensitive to all frequencies within the sound spectrum. Therefore, a method called "A-weighting" is used to filter noise frequencies not audible to the human ear. A-weighting approximates the frequency response of the average young ear when listening to most ordinary everyday sounds. When people make relative judgments of the loudness or annoyance of a sound, their judgments correlate well with the "A-weighted" levels of those sounds. Therefore, the A-weighted noise scale is used for measurements and standards involving the human perception of noise. In this analysis, all noise levels are A-weighted and "dBA" is understood to identify the A-weighted decibel.

Decibels are measured on a logarithmic scale that quantifies sound intensity in a manner similar to the Richter scale used for earthquake magnitudes. A 10 dB increase represents a 10-fold increase in sound intensity, a 20 dB change is a 100-fold difference, 30 dB is a 1,000-fold increase, etc. Thus, a doubling of the energy of a noise source, such as doubling of traffic volume, would increase the noise level by 3 dB; a halving of the energy would result in a 3 dB decrease.

Human perception of noise has no simple correlation with acoustical energy. The perception of noise is not linear in terms of dBA or in terms of acoustical energy. Two equivalent noise sources do not sound twice as loud as one source. It is widely accepted that the average healthy ear can barely perceive changes of 3 dBA, increase or decrease; that a change of 5 dBA is readily perceptible; and that an increase (decrease) of 10 dBA sounds twice (half) as loud (California Department of Transportation [Caltrans] 2013).

##### Descriptors

The impact of noise is not a function of loudness alone. The time of day when noise occurs and the duration of the noise are also important. In addition, most noise that lasts for more than a few seconds is variable in its intensity. Consequently, a variety of noise descriptors has been developed. The noise descriptors used for this analysis are the one-hour equivalent noise level ( $L_{EQ}$ ) and the community noise equivalent level (CNEL), and the day-night equivalent level ( $L_{DN}$ ).

- The  $L_{EQ}$  is the level of a steady sound that, in a stated time period and at a stated location, has the same A-weighted sound energy as the time-varying sound. For example,  $L_{EQ(1H)}$  is the equivalent noise level over a 1-hour period and  $L_{EQ(8H)}$  is the equivalent noise level

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over an 8-hour period.  $L_{EQ(1H)}$  is a common metric for limiting nuisance noise whereas  $L_{EQ(8H)}$  is a common metric for evaluating construction noise.

- The CNEL is a 24-hour equivalent sound level. The CNEL calculation applies an additional 5 dBA penalty to noise occurring during evening hours, between 7:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m., and an additional 10 dBA penalty is added to noise occurring during the night, between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. These increases for certain times are intended to account for the added sensitivity of humans to noise during the evening and night.
- The  $L_{DN}$  is also a 24-hour equivalent sound level that applies an additional 10 dBA to the sound levels occurring between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. By definition,  $L_{DN}$  is always less than or equal to CNEL, and the two descriptors usually agree within one decibel. In the context of noise sources discussed in this analysis,  $L_{DN}$  and CNEL can be considered synonymous and functionally interchangeable.

### Propagation

Sound from a small, localized source (approximating a “point” source) radiates uniformly outward as it travels away from the source in a spherical pattern, known as geometric spreading. The sound level decreases or drops off at a rate of 6 dBA for each doubling of the distance.

Traffic noise is not a single, stationary point source of sound. Over some time interval, the movement of vehicles makes the source of the sound appear to emanate from a line (line source) rather than a point. The drop-off rate for a line source is 3 dBA for each doubling of distance.

### **Definition and Measurement of Noise**

Vibration consists of energy waves transmitted through solid material (Federal Transit Administration [FTA] 2006). Groundborne vibration propagates from the source through the ground to adjacent buildings by surface waves. Vibration may be composed of a single pulse, a series of pulses, or a continuous oscillatory motion. The frequency of a vibrating object describes how rapidly it is oscillating, measured in hertz (Hz). The normal frequency range of most groundborne vibration that can be felt generally starts from a low frequency of less than 1 Hz to a high of about 200 Hz (FTA 2006).

Vibration energy spreads out as it travels through the ground, causing the vibration amplitude to decrease with distance away from the source. Instantaneous groundborne vibration is measured by its peak particle velocity (PPV). The PPV is normally described in inches per second (inch/sec). Excessive groundborne vibration has the potential to result in structural damage.

Continued vibration of building components can also take the form of an audible low-frequency rumbling noise, which is referred to as groundborne noise. Groundborne noise is usually only a problem when the originating vibration spectrum is dominated by frequencies in the upper end of the range (60 to 200 Hz), or when foundations or utilities, such as sewer and water pipes, connect the structure and the vibration source.

### **Noise-Sensitive Land Uses**

Noise-sensitive land uses (NSLUs) are associated with land uses wherein indoor and/or outdoor human activities may be subject to stress and/or significant interference from noise. They include residential (single- and multi-family dwellings, mobile home parks, dormitories and similar uses);

transient lodging (including hotels, motels and similar uses); hospitals, nursing homes, convalescent hospitals, and other facilities for long-term medical care; and public or private educational facilities, libraries, churches and other places of public gathering. In addition to buildings, exterior use areas may also be considered NSLUs. Exterior use areas are areas where frequent human use for prolonged periods (at least an hour) may reasonably occur. Common examples of exterior use areas include residential backyards, multi-family communal areas, patios, picnic areas, recreation areas, playgrounds, active sports areas, and parks. NSLUs occur throughout the City.

### **Vibration-Sensitive Land Uses**

The FTA has identified the following three categories of vibration-sensitive land uses (VSLUs):

#### Category 1 – High Sensitivity Uses

Buildings where ambient vibration well below levels associated with human annoyance is essential for equipment or operations within the building. Typically uses covered in Category 1 include vibration-sensitive research and manufacturing facilities, hospitals, and university research operations.

#### Category 2 – Residential Uses

Buildings where people sleep. Typical uses covered in Category 2 include residential, hotels, and hospitals.

#### Category 3 – Institutional Uses

Buildings that do not have vibration-sensitive equipment, but still have the potential for activity interference. Typical uses covered in Category 3 include schools, churches, other institutions, and quiet offices.

VSLUs occur throughout the Town Center Specific Plan (TCSP) area and Arts and Entertainment Neighborhood (AEN). Residential uses are located adjacent to sites 20A and 20B.

#### **4.12.1.2 Existing Noise**

A community noise survey was conducted to document noise levels throughout the TCSP area. Short-term daytime measurements at nine locations were selected to represent typical conditions in the planning area. The short-term measurements show the average sound level over roughly 15-minute periods on a weekday in July 2023. The locations were chosen based on land uses and proximity to nearby roadways.

The community noise survey represents a range of the existing conditions and provides a representation of baseline conditions in the study area. The sources of noise varied between sites, but the primary noise generator in most locations is vehicular traffic.

The measured average noise levels ranged from 49.6 to 68.9 dBA  $L_{EQ}$ . The loudest average noise level was 68.9 dBA  $L_{EQ}$ . This measurement (M8) was located adjacent to Mission Gorge Road. Though these measurements provide a snapshot observation of the noise environment, noise can fluctuate widely throughout the day and over time. Noise measurement locations and results are shown in Table 4-12.1, *Noise Monitoring Results*.

**Table 4-12.1  
NOISE MONITORING RESULTS**

Site	Location	Time	Measured Noise Level (dBA L <sub>EQ</sub> )
M1	Town Center Park East	2:58 p.m. - 3:13 p.m.	50.2
M2	Cuyamaca Street, 790 feet south of River Park Drive	9:03 a.m. - 9:18 a.m.	69.2
M3	Chubb Lane south of San Diego River crossing	2:21 p.m. - 2:36 p.m.	49.6
M4	Riverview Parkway, 80 feet south of San Diego Christian College driveway	10:45 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.	54.0
M5	Santee Historical Society Historic Barn	1:38 p.m. - 1:53 p.m.	54.5
M6	Trolley Square, 80 feet west of tracks	9:43 a.m. - 9:58 a.m.	60.9
M7	Riverview Parkway, 250 feet south of Town Center Parkway	11:18 a.m. - 11:33 p.m.	60.7
M8	Mission Gorge Road, 530 feet east of Riverview Parkway	1:07 p.m. - 1:22 p.m.	68.9
M9	Mast Boulevard, 120 feet west of Bilteer Court	3:40 pm. - 3:55 p.m.	66.9

Note: All site measurements were taken on July 20, 2023.

### **Vehicular Traffic Noise**

Vehicles traveling along major roadways generate noise levels which affect adjacent land uses. Traffic noise generated on a roadway is dependent on vehicle speed, volume, flow, percentage of vehicle types, properly functioning muffler systems, and pavement type and conditions. Traffic noise is also dependent on the presence of barriers and the distance between the noise source and receptor. In general, as traffic volumes increase, noise levels increase. This condition exists until there is so much traffic that flow degrades, and speeds decrease which reduces noise levels. Furthermore, a heavy truck generates more noise than a car when travelling at the same speed and distance. Roads with the same amount of traffic can have higher or lower sound levels depending on the mixture of vehicles.

### **Aircraft Noise**

The TCSP area is subject to some aircraft noise associated with Gillespie Field, located approximately 0.5 miles to the south. The TCSP area is mostly located in locations that would be exposed to aircraft related noise levels below 60 CNEL. Portions of the commercial areas north of Mission Gorge Road and west of Town Center Parkway are located within an area that would be exposed to 60 CNEL.

### **Trolley Noise**

Existing rail traffic on existing tracks would continue to generate elevated noise levels within the TCSP area. These tracks are associated with the San Diego Trolley ~~Green~~ Copper Line and terminate at the Santee Town Center station.

The San Diego Trolley's light rail vehicles generate high, relatively brief, intermittent noise events. At-grade crossings with warning bells are currently located at two locations within the Trolley Square shopping center and at the intersection of Mission Gorge Road and Cuyamaca Street. Light rail vehicles are equipped with horns for use in emergency situations and as a general



audible warning to alert people in the vicinity of the tracks. Noise levels associated with the San Diego Trolley would not increase or decrease as a result of project implementation.

## **Stationary Noise**

The TCSP area includes various stationary noise sources including industrial and commercial activities. Noise levels from stationary sources are highly localized and may vary during the day based on the specific activity being performed, atmospheric conditions, and other factors. These noise sources can be continuous and may contain tonal components that may be annoying to people who live in the nearby vicinity. Stationary noise levels throughout the TCSP area may also vary due to different periods of activity depending on the time of day or day of the week.

### **4.12.2 Regulatory Framework**

#### **4.12.2.1 State**

##### **California Code of Regulations Title 24 Interior Noise Building Standards**

Interior noise levels for habitable rooms are regulated also by Title 24 of the CCR California Noise Insulation Standards. Title 24, Chapter 12, Section 1206.4, of the 2022 California Building Code requires that interior noise levels attributable to exterior sources not exceed 45 CNEL in any habitable room (CCR 2022). A habitable room is a room used for living, sleeping, eating, or cooking. Bathrooms, closets, hallways, utility spaces, and similar areas are not considered habitable rooms for this regulation (24 CCR, Chapter 12, Section 1206.4 2022)

##### **Assembly Bill 1307**

Assembly Bill 1307, approved on September 7, 2023, specifies that the effects of noise generated by project occupants and their guests on human beings is not a significant effect on the environment for residential projects for purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

#### **4.12.2.2 Local**

##### **General Plan**

The City's General Plan includes various goals, objectives, and policies related to noise standards and protections against excessive noise exposure, including the following:

##### Noise Element

Objective 1.0. Control noise from sources adjacent to residential, institutional, and other noise sensitive receptors.

- **Policy 1.1:** The City shall support a coordinated program to protect and improve the acoustical environment of the City including development review for new public and private development and code compliance for existing development.
- **Policy 1.2:** The City shall utilize noise studies and noise contour maps when evaluating development proposals during the discretionary review process.

- **Policy 1.4:** The City shall promote alternative sound attenuation measures rather than traditional wall barrier wherever feasible; these may include glass or polycarbonate walls, berms, landscaping, and the siting of noise-sensitive uses on a parcel away from the roadway or other noise source.
- **Policy 1.5:** The City shall review future projects with particular scrutiny regarding the reduction of unnecessary noise near noise-sensitive areas such as hospitals, schools, parks, etc.

Objective 2.0: Ensure that future developments will be constructed to minimize interior and exterior noise levels.

- **Policy 2.1:** The City shall adhere to planning guidelines and building codes which include noise control for the exterior and interior living space of all new residential developments within noise impacted areas.
- **Policy 2.2:** The City should require new development to mitigate noise impacts to existing uses resulting from new development when (1) such development adds traffic to existing City streets that necessitates the widening of the street; and (2) the additional traffic generated by new development causes the noise standard or significance thresholds to be exceeded.
- **Policy 2.3:** The City should not require new development to mitigate noise impacts to existing uses when new development only adds traffic already anticipated by the City's General Plan to an existing street but does not necessitate widening of that street.

The Noise Element also provides guidelines for determining acceptable and unacceptable community noise exposure limits for various land use categories (Table 4.12-2, *Exterior Land Use/Noise Compatibility Guidelines*). Normally acceptable noise levels are defined as satisfactory, based on the assumption that any buildings involved are of normal conventional construction, without any special noise insulation requirements. Conditionally acceptable noise levels indicate that new construction or development should be undertaken only after a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements is made and required noise insulation features have been included in the design. Conventional construction with closed windows and fresh air supply systems or air conditioning will normally suffice. The General Plan states that these compatibility guidelines are not prohibitive but should be used as a guide and a resource (City 2003f).

**Table 4.12-2  
EXTERIOR LAND USE/NOISE COMPATIBILITY GUIDELINES**

Land Use Category	Community Noise Exposure (dBA CNEL)					
	55	60	65	70	75	80
Residential – Low-Density Singel Family Duplex, Mobile Homes						
Residential – Multiple Family						
Transient Lodging – Motels, and Hotels						
Schools, Libraries, Churches, Hospitals, and Nursing Homes <sup>1</sup>						
Auditoriums, Concert Halls, Amphitheaters						
Sports Arena, Outdoor Spectator Sports						
Playgrounds, Neighborhood Parks						
Golf Courses, Riding Stables, Water Recreation, Cemeteries						
Offices Buildings, Business Commercial, and Professional						
Industrial, Manufacturing, Utilities, Agriculture						
	Normally Acceptable – Specified land use is satisfactory, based upon the assumption that buildings involved are of normal conventional construction, without any special noise insulation requirements.					
	Conditionally Acceptable – New construction or development should be undertaken only after a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements is made and needed noise insulation features included in the design. Conventional construction, but with closed windows and fresh air supply systems or air conditioning will usually suffice.					
	Normally Unacceptable – New construction or development should be discouraged. If new construction or development does proceed, a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements must be made with noise insulation features included in the design.					
	Clearly Unacceptable - New construction or development clearly should not be undertaken.					

<sup>1</sup> Applies to noise sensitive areas which serve a significant function for the use which could be adversely affected by noise; such as, outside areas used primarily for instruction, meditation areas, rest and relaxation areas, and other areas where general peace and quiet are important.

The Noise Element further states that when new development may result in the exposure of existing or future noise-sensitive uses to noise levels in excess of 65 dBA  $L_{DN}$ , an acoustical study will be required. If the acoustical study shows that the noise levels at any noise-sensitive area will exceed 65 dBA  $L_{DN}$ , the development should not be approved unless the following findings are made:

1. Modifications to the development have been, or will be made, which will reduce the exterior noise levels in noise-sensitive areas to 65 dBA  $L_{DN}$  or less, or
2. If, with current noise abatement technology, it is not feasible to reduce the exterior noise levels to 65 dBA  $L_{DN}$  or less, then modifications to the development have been, or will be made, which reduce the exterior noise level to the maximum extent feasible and the interior noise level to 45 dBA  $L_{DN}$  or less. Particular attention shall be given to noise-sensitive spaces such as bedrooms.
3. For rooms in noise-sensitive areas which are occupied only for a part of the day (schools, libraries, or similar), the interior 1-hour average sound level during occupation, due to noise outside, should not exceed 45 dBA  $L_{EQ}$ .

Further, noise impacts shall be considered significant if any of the following occur as a result of the project:

1. If, as a direct result of the project, noise levels for any existing or planned development will exceed the noise levels considered compatible for that use as identified in Table 4.12-2.
2. If, as a direct result of the proposed development, noise levels which already exceed the levels considered compatible for that use are increased by 3 dB or more.

Section 8.0 of the Noise Element lists the following measures that may be incorporated into a proposed project as mitigation measures. The following measures are not always required, and mitigation is not limited to this list:

1. The use of site design techniques, such as the provision of buffers to increase distances between the noise source and receiver, siting of buildings and parking areas, and the careful siting of noise-sensitive outdoor features to minimize noise impacts.
2. Provision of berms, landscaping, and other sound barriers, without the exclusive use of walls (e.g., a combination of a small wall and a berm in concert with the overall streetscape in the area could be appropriate).
3. Insulation of buildings against noise, including thicker-than-standard glazing and mechanical ventilation.
4. Improvement of traffic circulation to “smooth” flow by such measures as interconnecting traffic signals.
5. Consideration of the use of innovative construction technologies and materials in constructing or reconstructing streets.
6. Setting of time limits on certain noisy activities.
7. Purchasing of demonstrably quiet equipment for City use.

## **Municipal Code**

### Title 5 – Health and Safety

#### *Chapter 5.04 Noise Abatement and Control Ordinance*

On-site generated noise is regulated by the SMC, Title 5 Health and Safety, Chapter 5.04 Noise Abatement and Control. The sections applicable to the project are as follows:

#### Section 5.04.040 General Noise Regulations

- A. **General Prohibitions.** It is unlawful for any person to make, continue, or cause to be made or continued, within the limits of the City, any disturbing, excessive or offensive noise which causes discomfort or annoyance to reasonable persons of normal sensitivity residing in the area. The characteristics and conditions which should be considered in determining whether a violation of the provisions of this section exists, include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. The level of the noise;
  2. Whether the nature of the noise is usual or unusual;
  3. Whether the origin of the noise is natural or unnatural;
  4. The level of the background noise;
  5. The proximity of the noise to sleeping facilities;
  6. The nature and zoning of the area within which the noise emanates;
  7. The density of the inhabitation of the area within which the noise emanates;
  8. The time of day or night the noise occurs;
  9. The duration of the noise;
  10. Whether the noise is recurrent, intermittent, or constant; and
  11. Whether the noise is produced by a commercial or noncommercial activity
- B. Disturbing, Excessive or Offensive Noises. The following acts, among others, are declared to be disturbing, excessive and offensive noises in violation of this section:
- a. It is unlawful for any person to operate or allow the operation of any generator, air conditioning, refrigeration or heating equipment in such manner as to create a noise disturbance on the premises of any other occupied property, or if a condominium, apartment house, duplex, or attached business, within any adjoining unit.
  - b. All generators, heating, air conditioning, or refrigeration equipment are subject to the setback and screening requirements in this code.

#### Section 5.04.070 Motorized Equipment

It is unlawful to operate any lawn mower, backpack blower, lawn edger, leaf blower, riding tractor, or any other machinery, equipment, or other device, or any hand tool which creates a loud, raucous or impulsive sound, within or adjacent to any residential zone between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. of the following day.

#### Section 5.04.090 Construction Equipment

Prohibitions. Except for emergency work or work that has been expressly approved by the City, it is unlawful for any person to operate any single or combination of powered construction equipment at any construction site, as follows:

1. It is unlawful for any person to operate any single or combination of powered construction equipment at any construction site on Mondays through Saturdays except between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m., unless expressly approved by the Director of Planning and Building or the Director of Engineering, as applicable.
2. It is unlawful for any person to operate any single or combination of powered construction equipment at any construction site on Sundays or City recognized holidays unless expressly approved by the Director of Planning and Building or the Director of Engineering, as applicable.

3. No construction equipment is permitted to be started, idled, moved or operated at any location before 7:00 a.m. or after 7:00 p.m. on Mondays through Saturdays and all times on Sundays and holidays, described in subsection (A)(2) of this section. Specific exemptions may be authorized by the Director of Planning and Building or the Director of Engineering, as applicable.
4. Construction equipment with a manufacturer's noise rating of 85 dBA  $L_{MAX}$  or greater, may only operate at a specific location for 10 consecutive workdays. If work involving such equipment will involve more than 10 consecutive workdays, a notice must be provided to all property owners and residents within 300 feet of the site no later than 10 days before the start of construction. The notice must be approved by the City and describe the project, the expected duration, and provide a point of contact to resolve noise complaints.

#### Section 5.04.130 Loading and Unloading Operations

It is unlawful for any person to engage in loading, unloading, opening, idling of trucks, closing or other handling of boxes, crates, containers, building materials, garbage cans, dumpsters or similar objects between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. in such a manner as to cause a noise disturbance within or adjacent to a residential district.

#### Section 5.04.160 Limitations on sources of noise not otherwise addressed

- A. Between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., it is unlawful for any person to generate any noise on the public way that is louder than average conversational level at a distance of 50 feet or more, vertically or horizontally, from the source.
- B. Between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., no person is permitted to generate any noise on any private open space that is louder than average conversational level at a distance of 50 feet or more, measured from the property line of the property from which the noise is being generated.

The Noise Abatement and Control Ordinance establishes the City's noise regulation, generally prohibits nuisance noise and states that it is unlawful for any person to make, continue, or cause to be made or continued within the City limits any disturbing, excessive, or offensive noise that causes discomfort or annoyance to reasonable persons of normal sensitivity residing in the area (SMC Section 5.04.040(A)).

SMC Section 5.04.090, which specifically pertains to construction equipment, makes operation of any construction equipment outside the hours of 7:00 a.m. through 7:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday, except holidays, unlawful unless the operation is expressly approved by the Planning & Building Director. Construction equipment with a manufacturer's noise rating of 85 dBA  $L_{MAX}$  or greater may only operate at a specific location for 10 consecutive workdays. If work involving such equipment would involve more than 10 consecutive workdays, a notice must be provided to all property owners and residents within 300 feet of the site, no later than 10 days before the start of construction. The notice must be approved by the City and describe the proposed project, the expected duration of work and provide a point of contact to resolve noise complaints.



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## Title 13 – Zoning

### Chapter 13.30 General Development and Performance Standards

The intent of this section is to protect properties in all districts and the health and safety of persons from environmental nuisances and hazards and to provide a pleasing environment in keeping with the nature of the district character. Section 13.30.030 applies to operation of land uses and states that no operation or activity is permitted which will create vibration noticeable without instruments at the perimeter of the subject property.

#### **4.12.3 Significance Determination Thresholds**

Consistent with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, impacts related to noise would be significant if the project would:

- 1) Generate a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the proposed project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies.
- 2) Generate excessive groundborne vibration of groundborne noise levels.
- 3) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels.\
- 4) Would the project conflict with the General Plan Noise Element standards for proposed uses?

Significant operational noise impacts would occur if implementation of the project would result in traffic noise exceeding the applicable land use compatibility level for a given use. For residential uses, this would be 65 CNEL. If noise levels exceed this threshold, a permanent increase in noise greater than a perceptible change (3 CNEL) over existing conditions would be considered significant.

The City requires that noise levels generated during nighttime hours (10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.) do not exceed the average conversational level at a distance of 50 feet. Normal conversation is approximately 60 dBA (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2022), therefore operational noise levels, including from HVAC units, would be considered significant if they exceed 60 dBA at nearby property lines.

Significant construction noise impacts would occur if implementation of the project would generate construction noise outside of the allowed construction hours specified in the SMC, which are between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday, except holidays. In addition, construction equipment to assess potential noise impacts, construction noise measured at off-site NSLUs would be significant if it resulted in readily perceptible increase in noise above existing ambient conditions. As described in Section 4.12.1.1, this would be an increase of 5 dBA above exterior ambient noise levels.

Ground-borne vibration would be potentially significant if implementation of the project would result in ground-borne vibration which exceeds the “strongly perceptible” vibration annoyance potential criteria for human receptors of 0.1 inch per second peak particle velocity (PPV) for

nearby residences, or exceed the threshold for architectural damage potential criteria for buildings of 0.4 inch per second PPV, for continuous/frequent intermittent construction sources (such as impact pile drivers, vibratory pile drivers, and vibratory compaction equipment; Caltrans 2020).

A significant impact would occur if airport activity would expose the project land use to noise levels that exceed the City's noise compatibility standard provided in Table 4.12-2 for that use.

Projects shall not expose new development to noise levels at exterior use areas or interior areas in excess of the noise compatibility guidelines established in the City's General Plan Noise Element. The conditionally acceptable noise levels for project land uses are up to 70 CNEL for single-family and multi-family residential, 70 for playgrounds and neighborhood parks, and 75 CNEL for offices, and business commercial. For outdoor uses at a conditionally compatible land use, feasible noise mitigation techniques should be analyzed and incorporated to make the outdoor activities acceptable. For indoor uses at a conditionally compatible land use, exterior noise must be attenuated to 45 CNEL for single- and multi-family residential.

#### **4.12.4 Methodology**

##### **4.12.4.1 Operational Noise Sources**

The TCSP area includes various stationary noise sources such as industrial and commercial activities. Noise levels from stationary sources are highly localized and may vary during the day based on the specific activity being performed, atmospheric conditions, and other factors. These noise sources can be continuous and may contain tonal components that may be annoying to people who live in the nearby vicinity. Stationary noise levels throughout the TCSP area may also vary due to different periods of activity depending on the time of day or day of the week.

For the Housing Element sites, specific HVAC systems and locations have not been identified at this stage of project design. This analysis assumes that future residential buildings would use a typical to larger-sized residential condenser mounted on ground level or rooftop pads.

Outdoor performance uses may be located within the Commercial Entertainment areas of the TCSP area, north of the Town Center Transit Station, and may include gatherings of people for artistic, cinematic, theatrical, musical, sporting events, cultural, education or civic purposes. Exact locations of outdoor venues, designs, and associated events are not known at this stage. Noise levels associated with gathering areas may therefore vary substantially depending on the type of event, use of amplified equipment, and size of crowds.

##### **4.12.4.2 Vehicular Traffic Noise**

Future traffic volumes with and without implementation of the project for TCSP-area streets were provided by the traffic consultant for the project (Intersecting Metrics 2023). Modeling of the outdoor noise environment for this report used the Traffic Noise Model (TNM) 2.5 software. The TNM was released in February 2004, by the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), and calculates the daytime average Hourly  $L_{EQ}$  from three-dimensional model inputs and traffic data (USDOT 2004).

Peak-hour traffic volumes are estimated based on the assumption that approximately 10 percent of average daily trips (ADT) would occur during a peak hour. The one-hour  $L_{EQ}$  noise level is calculated utilizing peak-hour traffic. Peak hour  $L_{EQ}$  can be converted to CNEL using the following equation, where  $L_{EQ}(h)pk$  is the peak hour  $L_{EQ}$ ,  $P$  is the peak hour volume percentage of the ADT,

$d$  and  $e$  are divisions of the daytime fraction of ADT to account for daytime and evening hours, and  $N$  is the nighttime fraction of ADT:

$$CNEL = L_{EQ}(h)pk + 10\log_{10} 4.17/P + 10\log_{10}(d + 4.77e + 10N)$$

The model-calculated one-hour  $L_{EQ}$  noise output is therefore approximately equal to the CNEL (Caltrans 2013).

#### 4.12.4.3 Construction Noise

Project construction noise was analyzed using the Roadway Construction Noise Model (RCNM; USDOT 2008), which utilizes estimates of sound levels from standard construction equipment.

#### 4.12.5 Issue 1: Noise Standards

*Would the project result in generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?*

#### 4.12.5.1 Impact Analysis

##### Construction Noise

Although typically short-term, construction can be a substantial source of noise. Implementation of the TCSP would generate construction noise as individual projects, such as the Housing Element sites, are approved and constructed. As shown in Table 4.12-3, *Typical Construction Equipment Noise Levels*, operation of typical construction equipment would have the potential to generate elevated noise levels for construction activities, depending on the type, duration, and location of the activity. These noise levels are presented at distances of 50 feet for reference.

**Table 4.12-3  
TYPICAL CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT  
NOISE LEVELS**

Equipment	Typical Noise Level (dBA at 50 feet from source)
Air Compressor	73.7
Backhoe	73.6
Ground Compactor	76.2
Concrete Mixer Truck	74.8
Crane	72.6
Dozer	77.7
Grader	81.0
Jack Hammer	81.9
Front End Loader	75.1
Paver	74.2
Pumps	77.9
Roller	73.0

Equipment	Typical Noise Level (dBA at 50 feet from source)
Scraper	79.6
Dump Truck	72.5

Source: U.S. Department of Transportation Roadway Construction Noise Model, 2008.

### TCSP Area and AEN

Construction activities related to implementation of the proposed TCSP would likely not take place all at once; however, future development and infrastructure activities associated with the proposed TCSP would have the potential to temporarily generate construction noise resulting in a short-term annoyance to nearby NSLUs. More specifically, construction noise levels would have the potential to increase ambient noise levels by 5 dBA, depending on the location and construction equipment used. This is a significant construction noise impact in the TCSP area and AEN. Implementation of mitigation measure NOI-1 would reduce this impact to a less than significant level.

### Housing Element Sites

For the Housing Element sites, NSLUs would be located at varying distances from future construction noise. Ambient noise levels vary at NSLUs depending on their proximity to existing noise sources (e.g., Magnolia Avenue). Two measurements were taken at locations to approximate existing noise levels at NSLUs, including near Housing Element Site 16A at 54.0 dBA and near Housing Element Site 20B at 54.5 dBA. Construction equipment would be traversing the entirety of each project site; construction noise may be closer or further from nearby NSLUs throughout a given construction day. For this analysis, the closest construction equipment to nearby NSLUs would be used at Housing Element Site 20B. Due to the size of the site and proximity to nearby residences, the average distance from the approximate center of the construction site to nearby residences to the south would be an average distance of 250 feet. Noise levels modeled at 250 feet are shown in Table 4.12-4, *Typical Construction Equipment Noise Levels – 250 Feet*.

**Table 4.12-4  
TYPICAL CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT  
NOISE LEVELS – 250 FEET**

Equipment	Typical Noise Level (dBA at 250 feet from source)
Air Compressor	59.7
Backhoe	59.6
Ground Compactor	62.3
Concrete Mixer Truck	60.8
Crane	58.6
Dozer	63.7
Grader	67.0
Jack Hammer	67.9
Front End Loader	61.2
Paver	60.2
Pumps	64.0
Roller	59.0

Equipment	Typical Noise Level (dBA at 250 feet from source)
Scraper	65.6
Dump Truck	58.5

Source: U.S. Department of Transportation Roadway Construction Noise Model, 2008.

At 250 feet, construction noise levels would range from 58.5 dBA to 67.9 dBA, depending on the equipment in use. For the purposes of this analysis, a significant increase in noise would occur if construction noise levels exceed 5 dBA above ambient conditions at the time of project construction. At these distances, ambient noise levels ranging between 54.0 and 54.5 dBA may exceed 5 dBA at nearby residences, resulting in a significant construction noise impact at the Housing Element sites. Implementation of mitigation measure NOI-1 would reduce this impact to a less than significant level.

## Operational Noise

### Stationary Noise

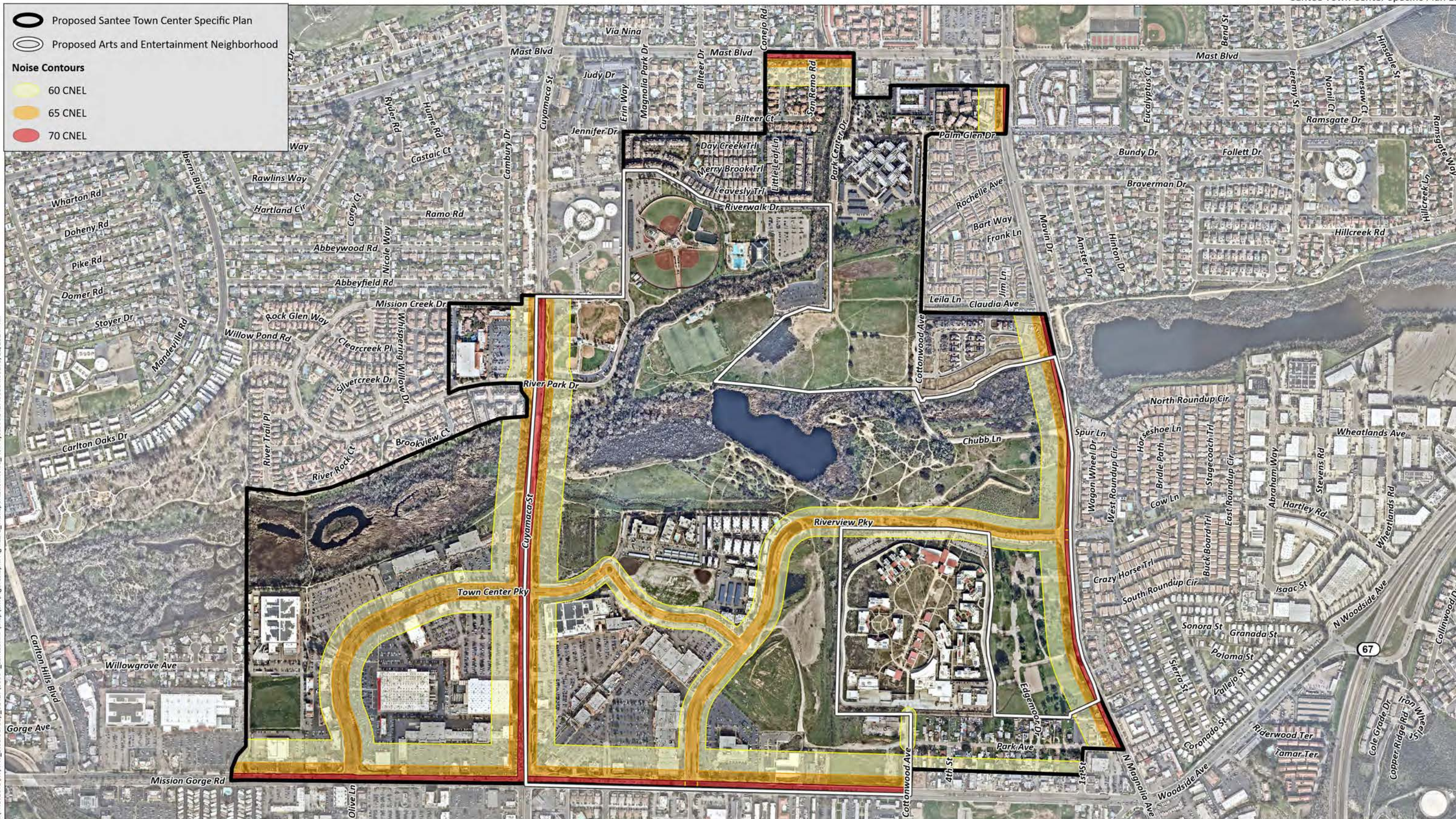
#### *TCSP Area and AEN*

Similar to existing conditions, future development within the TCSP area would be subject to various stationary noise sources including noise from equipment and commercial activities. The SMC does not provide numerical standards for noise generated by individual uses, but requires that HVAC uses do not create a noise disturbance at nearby occupied properties. In addition, noise generated during nighttime hours are not to exceed the average conversational level at a distance of 50 feet. Because there is no numerical standard set by the SMC, adequate reduction of future projects' noise levels is not guaranteed. Stationary operational noise is therefore considered significant for the TCSP area and AEN. Mitigation measure NOI-2 will reduce this impact to a less than significant level.

#### *Housing Element Sites*

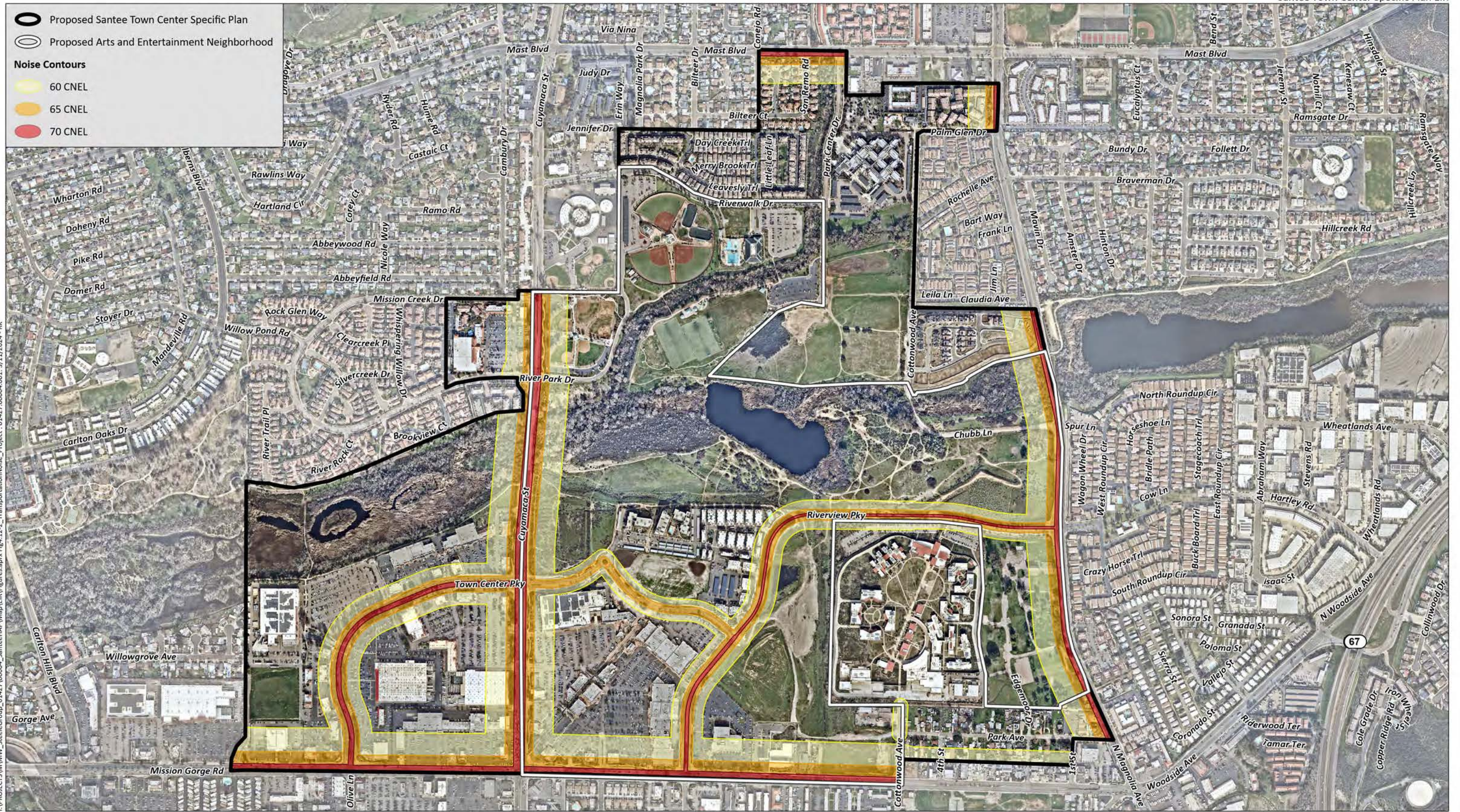
For the Housing Element sites, specific planning data for the future HVAC systems and exact building site locations are not available; however, analysis using a typical to larger-sized residential condenser mounted on ground level pads provides a reasonable basis for analysis. HVAC units are anticipated to be located on project building rooftops or mounted on pads at distances greater than 25 feet from nearby property lines. Modeling assumed that the HVAC unit would be a Carrier 38HDR060 split system condenser. This unit typically generates a noise level of 56 dBA at a distance of 7 feet. If placed at a distance of 25 feet from nearby noise-sensitive land uses, a single HVAC would generate a noise level of approximately 45 dBA. Because the location of future HVAC units is unknown and there is no numerical standard set by the SMC, adequate reduction of future projects' noise levels is not guaranteed. Stationary operational noise is therefore considered significant for the Housing Element sites. Mitigation measure NOI-2 will reduce this impact to a less than significant level.





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Source: Aerial (SanGIS, 2023)



## Traffic Noise

### *TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites*

As noted in the assumptions, future traffic noise levels presented in this analysis are based on existing and future traffic volumes provided by Intersecting Metrics (2023). These future volumes include implementation of the TCSP area, AEN, and construction of the Housing Element sites. TNM software was used to calculate the noise contour distances for Existing and Future conditions for the 2050 horizon year. The off-site roadway modeling represents a conservative analysis that does not consider topography or attenuation provided by existing structures. The results of this analysis for the CNEL at 100 feet from the roadway centerline are shown below in Table 4.12-5, *Traffic Noise Levels – 2050 Horizon year*. Additional analysis for the 75, 70, 65, and 60 CNEL distances are provided in Appendix F. Vehicular traffic noise level contours for the 2050 horizon year are depicted in Figure 4-12.1, *Transportation Noise Contours – No Project* and Figure 4-12.2, *Transportation Noise Contours – With Project*. The noise levels are expressed in terms of CNEL. All noise contours depict the predicted noise level based on existing traffic volumes, and do not reflect attenuating effects of existing features such as noise barriers, buildings, topography, and dense vegetation.

A significant direct impact would occur if existing noise conditions approach or exceed the City significance thresholds for traffic noise for nearby land uses and the project more than doubles (increases by more than 3 CNEL) the existing noise level. Roadway noise increases associated with future development pursuant to the proposed TCSP, including the Housing Element sites, are shown in Table 4.12-5.

**Table 4.12-5  
TRAFFIC NOISE LEVELS – 2050 HORIZON YEAR**

Roadway Segment	No Project CNEL at 100 feet <sup>1</sup>	With Project CNEL at 100 feet	Change from Existing (CNEL)	Direct Impact? <sup>1</sup>
<b>Cottonwood Avenue</b>				
Street A to Riverview Parkway	57.5	57.5	+0	No
Park Avenue to Mission Gorge Road	50.7	50.7	+0	No
Mission Gorge Road to Buena Vista Avenue	56.7	56.7	+0	No
Buena Vista Avenue to Prospect Avenue	56.7	56.7	+0	No
<b>Cuyamaca Street</b>				
Woodglen Vista Road to El Nopal	62.9	62.4	-0.5	No
El Nopal to Mast Boulevard	63.4	63.4	+0	No
Mast Boulevard to Riverpark Drive	65.0	65.1	+0.1	No
Riverpark Drive to Town Center Parkway	65.8	65.9	+0.1	No
Town Center Parkway to Mission Gorge Road	65.5	65.8	+0.3	No
Mission Gorge Road to State Route (SR) 52 Westbound Ramps	67.7	67.8	+0.1	No
<b>Magnolia Avenue</b>				
Mast Boulevard to Braverman Drive	64.9	65.2	+0.3	No
Braverman Drive to Mission Gorge Road	65.6	65.9	+0.3	No
<b>Mast Boulevard</b>				
Cuyamaca Street to Magnolia Avenue	65.8	65.8	+0	No
Magnolia Avenue to Los Ranchitos Road	60.3	60.3	+0	No

Roadway Segment	No Project CNEL at 100 feet <sup>1</sup>	With Project CNEL at 100 feet	Change from Existing (CNEL)	Direct Impact? <sup>1</sup>
<b>Mission Gorge Road</b>				
Carlton Hills Boulevard to Town Center Parkway	67.2	67.5	+0.3	No
Town Center Parkway to Cuyamaca Street	66.5	66.7	+0.2	No
Cuyamaca Street to Riverview Parkway	66.8	67.0	+0.2	No
Riverview Parkway to Cottonwood Avenue	66.8	67.0	+0.2	No
Cottonwood Avenue to Magnolia Avenue	66.5	66.7	+0.2	No
<b>Riverview Parkway</b>				
Mission Gorge Road to Town Center Parkway	61.4	61.4	+0	No
Town Center Parkway to Cottonwood Avenue	61.0	61.0	+0	No
Cottonwood Avenue to Magnolia Avenue	60.6	60.6	+0	No
<b>Town Center Parkway</b>				
Mission Gorge Road to Cuyamaca Street	62.9	62.9	+0	No
Cuyamaca Street to Transit Way	59.1	59.4	+0.3	No
Transit Way to Riverview Parkway	59.3	59.4	+0.1	No

Source: Caltrans 2013; Intersecting Metrics 2024

<sup>1</sup> A direct impact to off-site uses would occur if the project would increase noise levels above the applicable threshold or, where the existing noise level exceeds the threshold, would increase noise levels by 3 CNEL.

CNEL = Community Noise Equivalent Level

When measured at 100 feet from a given roadway's centerline, noise levels along some roadways may exceed 65 CNEL with or without implementation of the project. Noise levels from traffic associated with implementation of the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would increase by up to 0.3 CNEL. Noise level increases below 3 CNEL are not perceptible. Traffic operational noise is less than significant for the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites.

### Outdoor Performances

#### *TCSP Area and AEN*

The AEN may include outdoor events and gatherings of people for artistic, cinematic, theatrical, musical, sporting, cultural, education or civic purposes. Design details for outdoor venues, designs, and associated events are not known at this stage; however, potential locations could include the Civic Center Site, Karl Strauss Site, Polo Barn site, Trolley Square Site, Vacant Site (Parcel 6), and the Sportsplex/Town Center Community Park (RRM 2024b). Noise levels associated with gathering areas may therefore vary significantly depending on the type of event, use of amplified equipment, and size of crowds.

Similar to stationary operational noise, noise associated with outdoor performances would be regulated by the SMC, which does not provide numerical thresholds for noise generation. For the purposes of this analysis, conversational noise levels and noise disturbances are considered noise levels that exceed 60 dBA at nearby NSLUs. Because no set plans are available for outdoor performance areas, including site layouts or locations of potential noise-amplification equipment, impacts are considered significant for the TCSP area and AEN. Mitigation measure NOI-3 would be required for future event spaces; however, outdoor events and entertainment activities in proposed commercial and mixed use spaces may result in noise levels in exceedance of 60 dBA at nearby NSLUs and impacts would remain significant and unavoidable.

### *Housing Element Sites*

No outdoor performance areas are proposed for the Housing Element sites. No impact will occur.

#### **4.12.5.2 Mitigation Measures**

##### **Construction Noise**

###### TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites

**NOI-1 Construction Noise Management Plan.** Noise levels from construction of future projects within the TCSP area shall not exceed 5 dBA above the maximum hourly average daytime baseline ambient noise levels as measured at nearby noise-sensitive land uses. To ensure the reduction of noise levels, a Construction Management Plan describing measures shall be included on future construction plans to ensure compliance with the aforementioned limits. The plans shall be prepared by future project applicants and submitted to the City for approval prior to issuance of a grading permit. The following measures may be included to reduce construction noise:

- Construction equipment to be properly outfitted and maintained with manufacturer-recommended noise-reduction devices.
- Diesel equipment to be operated with closed engine doors and equipped with factory-recommended mufflers.
- Mobile or fixed “package” equipment (e.g., arc-welders and air compressors) to be equipped with shrouds and noise control features that are readily available for that type of equipment.
- Electrically powered equipment to be used instead of pneumatic or internal combustion powered equipment, where feasible.
- Unnecessary idling of internal combustion engines (e.g., in excess of 5 minutes) to be prohibited.
- Material stockpiles and mobile equipment staging, parking, and maintenance areas to be located as far as practicable from noise sensitive receptors.
- The use of noise-producing signals, including horns, whistles, alarms, and bells, shall be for safety warning purposes only.
- No project-related public address or music system shall be audible at any adjacent sensitive receptor.
- Temporary sound barriers or sound blankets may be installed between construction operations and adjacent noise-sensitive receptors. If barriers are to be used, the noise barrier should be constructed of a material with an STC 20 rating with no gaps or perforations and remain in place until the conclusion of demolition, grading, and construction activities.

- The project applicant shall notify residences within 100 feet of the project's property line in writing within one week of any construction activity such as demolition, concrete sawing, asphalt removal, and/or heavy grading operations. The notification shall describe the activities anticipated, provide dates and hours, and provide contact information with a description of a complaint and response procedure.
- The on-site construction supervisor shall have the responsibility and authority to receive and resolve noise complaints. A clear appeal process for the affected resident shall be established prior to construction commencement to allow for resolution of noise problems that cannot be immediately solved by the site supervisor.
- On-site noise measurements may be used to monitor compliance of construction noise levels at nearby noise-sensitive land uses.

### Stationary Operational Noise

#### TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites

**NOI-2 Operational Noise Reduction.** Noise generated by standard operation of future projects within the TCSP area shall not exceed 60 dBA hourly average or the maximum hourly average ambient level if it already exceeds 60 dBA when measured at nearby noise-sensitive land uses such as residences, schools, daycares, hospitals, or hotels. To ensure that noise levels are reduced to adequate levels, a site-specific noise study may be requested by the City for individual future projects, as deemed necessary by the City's Planning Department. If noise levels are anticipated to exceed this limit, the City shall ensure that appropriate noise-attenuation features are installed by the project applicant to ensure noise levels are reduced. ~~Outdoor Performance Uses~~

#### TCSP Area and AEN

**NOI-3 Performance Areas Noise Studies.** When plans for future temporary or permanent performance spaces or entertainment activities are prepared, they shall be analyzed to ensure that noise levels generated by future events are reduced to 60 dBA hourly average or the maximum hourly average ambient level if it already exceeds 60 dBA at nearby noise-sensitive land uses such as residences, schools, daycares, hospitals, or hotels. For each proposed performance area or venue where noise levels could exceed this limit, a noise assessment shall be performed by a qualified noise consultant which analyzes anticipated noise-generating sources. The study shall assess any noise-amplifying equipment, directionality of amplified noise, positioning of bandstands, and potential crowd noise. The analysis shall also consider the anticipated event types. If modeled noise levels exceed the limits, design considerations shall be provided to ensure noise levels are reduced to 60 dBA or the maximum hourly average ambient noise level if it already exceeds 60 dBA. Noise attenuation features to be considered may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Permanent barriers blocking the line-of-sight between the noise source and sensitive land use;

- Relocation of noise-generating equipment or areas where noise-generating activities may occur;
- Repositioning of noise-generating equipment facing away from sensitive uses; and
- Enclosing event spaces within structures, as feasible.

The results of the study shall be incorporated into design plans and be approved by the City Planning Department.

#### Housing Element Sites

No mitigation is required.

#### **4.12.5.3 Significance After Mitigation**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Mitigation measure NOI-1 would apply to future projects within the TCSP area, AEN and Housing Element sites and impacts related to construction noise would be reduced to less than significant levels. Mitigation measure NOI-2 would reduce impacts from future operational noise levels in the TCSP area, AEN and Housing Element sites to less than significant levels. Mitigation measure NOI-3 would pertain to impacts from future outdoor performance venues in the TCSP and AEN; however, reducing noise levels to 60 dBA may not be achievable in every instance and impacts would be significant and unavoidable after incorporation of mitigation measure NOI-3.

#### **4.12.6 Issue 2: Groundborne Noise and Vibration**

*Would the project result in exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration of groundborne noise levels?*

##### **4.12.6.1 Impact Analysis**

##### **Construction Vibration**

##### TCSP Area and AEN

Construction activities are known to generate excessive ground-borne vibration. Construction activities related to implementation of the proposed TCSP area and AEN would not take place all at once; however, future development accommodated by the proposed TCSP would have the potential to temporarily generate vibration resulting in a short-term effect on nearby vibration-sensitive land uses. Sources of vibration during the construction of future projects within the proposed TCSP area and AEN may include the potential for pile driving equipment and smaller equipment such as a vibratory roller. According to the Caltrans Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual, “strongly perceptible” ground-borne vibration is defined as equal to or exceeding 0.1 in/sec PPV. Construction activities within 200 feet and pile-driving within 600 feet of a vibration sensitive use would be potentially disruptive to vibration-sensitive operations (Caltrans 2013). Impacts from future projects within the TCSP area and AEN, excluding the Housing Element sites, are not known and, therefore, are considered significant. Implementation of mitigation measure NOI-4 will reduce this impact to a less than significant level.



### Housing Element Sites

A possible source of vibration during construction of the Housing Element sites would be a vibratory roller, which may be used for compaction of soil beneath building foundations. Most usage of a vibratory roller, however, would occur at distances greater than 50 feet from any single residence due to the mobile nature of its use across the large project sites. A vibratory roller would create approximately 0.210 inch per second PPV at a distance of 25 feet (Caltrans 2020). A 0.210 inch per second PPV vibration level would equal 0.098 inch per second PPV at a distance of 50 feet.<sup>1</sup> This would be lower than the “strongly perceptible” impact for humans of 0.1 inch per second PPV. Additionally, off-site exposure to such ground-borne vibration would be temporary as it would be limited to the short-term construction period. Construction at the Housing Element sites is anticipated to require the use of a vibratory roller, and are not anticipated to be used within 50 feet of any nearby residences. At these distances, impacts would be less than significant.

#### **4.12.6.2 Mitigation Measures**

##### **TCSP Area and AEN**

**NOI-4 Construction Vibration Analysis.** A site-specific vibration study shall be prepared for proposed land uses that have the potential for construction-related vibration impacts. Construction activities within 200 feet and pile-driving within 600 feet of a vibration-sensitive use could be potentially disruptive to vibration-sensitive operations. Proposed development shall implement recommended measures within the study to ensure that projects reduce construction-related vibration impacts to below 0.1 in/sec PPV at vibration-sensitive uses. Measures to reduce noise may include, but are not limited to, placing vibratory rollers in static mode within set distances of vibration-sensitive structures, prohibiting vibratory construction operations during specific hours, and limiting pile driving operations.

##### **Housing Element Sites**

No mitigation is required.

#### **4.12.6.3 Significance After Mitigation**

##### **TCSP Area and AEN**

Impacts would be less than significant with implementation of mitigation measure NOI-4.

##### **Housing Element Sites**

Impacts from construction at the Housing Element sites would be less than significant without mitigation.

<sup>1</sup> Equipment PPV = Reference PPV \* (25/D)<sup>n</sup> (inches per second), where Reference PPV is PPV at 25 feet, D is distance from equipment to the receiver in feet, and n = 1.1 (the value related to the attenuation rate through the ground); formula from Caltrans 2013.

**4.12.7 Issue 3: Airport Noise**

*Would the project be located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan, or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, and expose people residing or working in the area to excessive noise levels?*

**4.12.7.1 Impact Analysis****TCSP Area and AEN**

The TCSP area is subject to some aircraft noise associated with Gillespie Field, located approximately 0.5 miles to the south. The TCSP area is mostly located in locations that would be exposed to aircraft related noise levels below 60 CNEL. Portions of the commercial areas north of Mission Gorge Road and west of Town Center Parkway are located within an area that would be exposed to 60 CNEL. The aircraft noise levels within these areas would not exceed the land use compatibility standards of 70 CNEL for commercial uses described in the City General Plan Noise Element. Impacts would be less than significant.

**Housing Element Sites**

As described above, only commercial uses would be exposed to aircraft noise levels exceeding 60 CNEL. Housing Element sites would not be located in these areas and impacts would be less than significant.

**4.12.7.2 Mitigation Measures**

No mitigation is required.

**4.12.7.3 Significance After Mitigation**

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

## 4.13 Population and Housing

The following section analyzes the potential environmental impacts that may occur to population and housing as a result of implementation of the proposed project.

### 4.13.1 Existing Conditions

#### 4.13.1.1 Regional Setting

The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) projects the region's population will grow by approximately 100,000 people by 2050. This forecast is consistent with previous expectations, although future growth rates have been reduced due to increased domestic migration out of the region. The growth in population will drive job growth and housing demand within the region—adding nearly 200,000 jobs and more than 200,000 housing units by 2050. This forecast represents a continuing trend in the San Diego region to provide more housing and job opportunities in the existing urbanized areas of the region.

#### Population

The population growth rate for the San Diego region (i.e., County of San Diego [County]) between 2022 and 2050 is shown in Table 4.13-1, *Regional and Local Population Growth*. The region's 2022 population of approximately 3.3 million is expected to increase 3.4 percent by 2050 to approximately 3.4 million. In the City of Santee (City), the population is projected to increase by 3,883, or 6.6%, between 2022 and 2050, which would be more than the regional trend.

**Table 4.13-1  
REGIONAL AND LOCAL POPULATION GROWTH**

Year	San Diego Region	City of Santee
	Total Population	Total Population
2022	3,287,306	59,015
2029	3,334,675	59,485
2040	3,432,211	62,912
2050	3,400,250	62,898

Source: SANDAG Series 15: Regional Growth Forecast (SANDAG 2024)

<sup>1</sup> Change from 2022-2050

#### Housing

As shown in Table 4.13-1, the region will need to plan for a 3.4 percent increase in population between 2022 and 2050 and the City will need to plan for a 6.6 percent increase in population during the same timeframe. As shown in Table 4.13-2, *Regional and Local Housing*, total housing units forecasted through the year 2050 would increase by 17.1 percent and would accommodate the anticipated population growth.

**Table 4.13-2  
REGIONAL AND LOCAL HOUSING**

Year	San Diego Region	City of Santee
	Total Housing Units	Total Housing Units
2022	1,235,642	21,427
2029	1,320,010	22,457
2040	1,410,615	24,428
2050	1,438,461	25,089

Source: SANDAG Series 15: Regional Growth Forecast (SANDAG 2024)

<sup>1</sup> Change from 2022-2050

## Jobs

The region's job market is expected to expand alongside population and housing growth. As shown in Table 4.13-3, *Regional and Local Jobs*, the region will need to plan for a 10.6 percent increase in jobs between 2022 and 2050 and the City will need to plan for an 8.2 percent increase in jobs during the same timeframe.

**Table 4.13-3  
REGIONAL AND LOCAL JOBS**

Year	San Diego Region	City of Santee
	Total Jobs	Total Jobs
2022	1,611,632	17,838
2029	1,641,598	17,947
2040	1,721,324	18,716
2050	1,782,389	19,299

Source: SANDAG Series 15: Regional Growth Forecast (SANDAG 2024)

<sup>1</sup> Change from 2022-2050

## 4.13.2 Regulatory Framework

### 4.13.2.1 State

#### Senate Bill 375 and Assembly Bill 1233

Senate Bill (SB) 375, the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act, was approved in 2008. SB 375 focuses on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, as discussed further in Section 4.8 of this Environmental Impact Report (EIR). As a part of this effort, this act requires that regional housing needs be addressed in conjunction with regional transportation to integrate housing, land use, and transportation planning together. In the San Diego region, this unified regional planning effort is completed by SANDAG via San Diego Forward. SB 375 also requires the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) be completed every eight years and, if a jurisdiction does not meet this requirement, penalties may be incurred.

#### Regional Housing Needs Assessment

To respond to state population and household growth, and to ensure the availability of decent affordable housing for all income groups, the state enacted a law that requires SANDAG and other councils of governments to periodically distribute the state identified housing need for their regions. Local jurisdictions are required by state law (Government Code Section 65580 et seq.)

to plan for their fair share of projected housing reconstruction needs in their region over a specified planning period. Housing unit construction goals are set by the State Department of Housing and Community Development and allocated to cities through regional planning agencies. The State's Housing and Community Development is responsible for determining this regional need, initiating the process by which each region must then distribute their share of statewide need to all jurisdictions within its region.

The City has recently updated their Housing Element for an eight-year planning period spanning 2021 through 2029 (City 2022a). The City's RHNA allocation for the 6<sup>th</sup> Cycle Housing Element Update is a total of 1,219 units of total new construction, allocated by income level categories as follows:

- Extremely Low Income: 203 units (17 percent of total)
- Very Low Income: 203 units (17 percent of total)
- Low Income: 200 units (16 percent of total)
- Moderate Income: 188 units (15 percent of total)
- Above-Moderate Income: 425 units (35 percent of total)

The 2021-2029 Housing Element includes Programs 9 and 10, which require the adoption of rezones to allow the City to accommodate the required housing. Since adoption of the Housing Element, the rezone program anticipated in Programs 9 and 10 has occurred.

#### **4.13.2.2 Regional**

##### **San Diego Forward**

San Diego Forward (SANDAG 2021b), adopted by the SANDAG Board of Directors on December 10, 2021, is a comprehensive regional planning document that sets the vision for the future of the San Diego region and includes various planning document components to guide future improvements to meet that vision. The Regional Plan is updated every four years and combines three planning documents that SANDAG must complete per state and federal laws: The Regional Transportation Plan, Sustainable Communities Strategy, and Regional Comprehensive Plan. In addition, San Diego Forward addresses regional growth and housing needs utilizing regional growth forecast and the RHNA.

#### **4.13.2.3 Local**

##### **General Plan**

##### Housing Element

The City's General Plan, Housing Element, adopted on July 14, 2021, is designed to provide the City with a coordinated and comprehensive strategy for promoting the production of safe, decent, and affordable housing within the community. The Housing Element is an eight-year plan for the 2021- 2029 period. State law requires housing elements to be updated periodically to reflect a community's changing housing needs. A critical measure of compliance with the state Housing Element law is the ability of a jurisdiction to accommodate its share of the regional housing needs – RHNA. For the San Diego region, the regional growth projected by the state was for the period between June 30, 2020 and April 15, 2029.

The RHNA uses June 30, 2020 as the baseline for growth projections for the Housing Element planning period. Jurisdictions may count the number of new units issued building permits or certificates of occupancy since June 30, 2020 toward their RHNA. In the City of Santee, development since June 30, 2020 has reduced the RHNA from 1,219 units to 605 units.

Additionally, a jurisdiction may meet the RHNA requirement using potential development on suitable vacant and/or nonvacant sites within the community. The Housing Element includes a sites inventory demonstrating adequate land capacity and zoning and development standards to accommodate the remaining RHNA. The sites inventory identifies sites for rezoning to be included in the Housing Element implementation program, including sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B. The Draft Housing Element Rezone Program Implementation Program EIR (PEIR) was certified on October 12, 2022 to allow for the rezoning of the Housing Element sites to their current density allowances. The Housing Element sites are identified for future housing development to meet the remaining RHNA requirements.

### 4.13.3 Significance Determination Thresholds

Consistent with the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines, impacts related to population/housing would be significant if the project would:

- 1) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure).
- 2) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

### 4.13.4 Methodology

The forecasted growth of the Town Center Specific Plan (TCSP) area, Arts and Entertainment Neighborhood (AEN), and Housing Element sites was compared to existing land use designations and General Plan policies to assess if population growth resulting from implementation of the proposed project would be unplanned or displace existing residents.

### 4.13.5 Issue 1: Induce Unplanned Population Growth

*Would the project induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?*

#### 4.13.5.1 Impact Analysis

##### TCSP Area and AEN

Buildout of the proposed TCSP would result in potential future construction of up to 3,140 new residential units, providing capacity for projected growth in the region consistent with SANDAG 2050 forecasts shown in Table 4.13-2, the densities and intensities allowed by existing zoning, the 2021-2029 Housing Element and state density bonus law. The TCSP would also allow the expansion of non-residential uses that could generate jobs within the City consistent with the projections provided in Table 4.13-3. Further, infrastructure may be upgraded within certain locations to meet the demand of the planned developments. These infrastructure improvements



would not extend into previously unserved areas or provide excess capacity beyond planned growth. No unplanned direct or indirect population growth would occur from implementation of the TCSP area. Impacts would be less than significant.

### **Housing Element Sites**

The Housing Element sites would facilitate the development of 1,480 residential units that would allow the City and region to achieve their housing goals. This is consistent with the adopted zoning designations and densities currently allowed within the Housing Element sites. The project would further implement SANDAG's vision and goals by placing higher density in areas most able to support residential growth, including existing infrastructure and access to transit and would therefore be consistent with the RTP/SCS. The project would not induce substantial unplanned population growth as the Housing Element sites are in an urbanized area with access to services, roadways, and utilities. Additionally, the Housing Element sites are already designated for high-density development in the City's General Plan. Impacts would be less than significant.

#### **4.13.5.2 Mitigation Measures**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

No mitigation is required.

#### **4.13.5.3 Significance After Mitigation**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

### **4.13.6 Issue 2: Displace People or Housing**

*Would the project displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?*

#### **4.13.6.1 Impact Analysis**

##### **TCSP Area and AEN**

While specific future projects within the TCSP area are not currently known, future residential development within the TCSP area would have the potential to displace some people and housing through demolition of existing residential structures. However, if a home were removed, more housing units would be provided in its place, which would accommodate more people and ensure no net loss of housing. Impacts related to displacement of people and housing would be less than significant.

##### **Housing Element Sites**

Sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B are vacant parcels that do not contain existing housing development. As a result, buildout of the Housing Element sites would not result in the demolition of existing housing, and impacts related to displacement of people and housing would be less than significant.

#### **4.13.6.2 Mitigation Measures**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

No mitigation is required.

#### **4.13.6.3 Significance After Mitigation**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

## **4.14 Public Services**

### **4.14.1 Existing Conditions**

#### **4.14.1.1 Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services**

The Santee Fire Department (SFD) provides fire and paramedic service in the City of Santee (City). The SFD is a full-service department, providing structural fire suppression, wildland fire suppression, medical first response, advanced life support, paramedic ambulance service, search and rescue operations, hazardous materials operations, public education programs, emergency preparedness planning, and fire code inspection services and permits (City 2021). The department currently maintains two stations, one at 8950 Cottonwood Avenue (Station 4) and another at 9130 Carlton Oaks Drive (Station 5). The Cottonwood Avenue station is located within the Town Center Specific Plan (TCSP) area and Arts and Entertainment Neighborhood (AEN) and is adjacent to the southeastern edge of Housing Element Site 16B. The station has one battalion chief's vehicle and four response units: one fire engine, one fire truck, one brush engine, and one paramedic ambulance with a minimum daily staffing of nine personnel. Station 4 also houses two reserve fire engines and two reserve ambulances.

The Carlton Oaks Drive station (Station 5) is located in the western portion of the City and is not within the TCSP area, AEN, or Housing Element sites. It currently has three response units: two fire engines and one paramedic ambulance with a minimum daily staffing of eight personnel.

Emergency call volumes related to typical projects, such as new residential developments, can be estimated based on the historical per capita call volume from a particular fire jurisdiction. The City's per capita annual call volume is approximately 100 calls per 1,000 persons (City 2022b).

The City's General Plan states the goal is to provide an average maximum initial response time of no more than 6 minutes for fire, rescue, and emergency medical services with an average maximum response time of no more than 10 minutes for supporting paramedic transport units 90 percent of the time (City 2003d). The average SFD response times (from unit notification until unit arrives on scene, averaged) for emergency and non-emergency calls are 6 minutes and 18 seconds for fire and explosions; 5 minutes and 43 seconds for rescue and emergency medical; and 6 minutes and 40 seconds for service and non-emergency calls.

The City has a signed automatic aid agreement on first alarm or greater fires with adjacent and nearby fire departments including Alpine Fire Protection District, East County Fire Protection District, El Cajon Fire Department, Lakeside Fire Protection District, La Mesa Fire Department, Lemon Grove Fire Department, San Miguel Fire Protection District, and the SFD. Each participating member has a mutual aid agreement with the others and participate in the Unified San Diego County (County) Emergency Services Organization to provide paramedic and fire protection services if additional firefighting units are required. El Cajon Fire Department, La Mesa Fire Department, and Lemon Grove Fire Department all contract with Heartland Fire through a Joint Power Agreement (JPA).

#### **4.14.1.2 Police Protection Services**

Police protection in the City is provided by the San Diego County Sheriff's Department under a contractual agreement with the City. The Santee Sheriff's substation is located at 8811 Cuyamaca Street, roughly 800 feet south of the TCSP area and AEN southern boundary and less than a mile from the Housing Element sites. The substation has over 60 employees providing patrol and traffic

services, criminal investigations, juvenile intervention, crime analysis, and crime prevention education. A Sheriff's Station storefront is operated in the Santee Town Center near the San Diego Trolley line and San Diego Christian College, within the TCSP area and AEN and less than a mile from the Housing Element sites. The station includes an active volunteer unit that provides community services including vacation checks and regular visits to homebound citizens (County of San Diego Sheriff's Department 2021).

The City has contracted with the Sheriff's Department for 14 enforcement units during each 24-hour period. These units are divided into two beats, one for law enforcement and another for traffic enforcement. There are a total of 54 sworn law enforcement officers, and other personnel including retired senior volunteers and reserve officers. The ratio of officers to population is one officer per 1,000 residents (City 2003d).

The Santee Sheriff's Station typically has quicker response times than the County of San Diego (County) average. The average response time for non-priority calls within the unincorporated County was approximately 30 minutes while the average response time for priority calls within the unincorporated area was approximately 16 minutes. Response times vary greatly between command areas. Typically, response times in urbanized or built-out areas are lower than in areas that are rural and characterized by spaced or scattered development patterns (County 2011). In contrast, the average priority call response time for general law enforcement within the City is 9 minutes for priority 1 to 2 calls and 20 minutes for priority 3 to 7 calls. Service calls are assigned a priority based on the nature of the incident and the level of urgency.

The crime rate in the City is lower than the County as a whole. In 2022, total crimes reported in the City were equivalent to 11.9 per 1,000 persons in the population, while those reported in the County were equivalent to 19.4 crimes per 1,000 persons. For violent crimes, the City reported 2.8 per 1,000 persons, while the County as a whole reported 3.8 per 1,000 persons. For property crimes, 9.1 per 1,000 persons were reported in the City, while 15.6 per 1,000 persons were reported in the County (San Diego Association of Governments [SANDAG] 2023).

#### **4.14.1.3 Schools**

##### **Elementary Schools**

The Santee School District (SSD) serves the Santee area for grades kindergarten through eighth grade (K-8) and has nine schools, eight of which are within the City. Existing (K-8) schools serving the City are Cajon Park, Carlton Hills, Carlton Oaks, Chet F. Harritt STEAM Elementary, Hill Creek Elementary, PRIDE Academy at Prospect Avenue, Rio Seco Elementary, and Sycamore Canyon. In addition, SSD also has the Alternative School, which is an alternative education school to assist children being home-schooled and operates a tenth elementary school, Pepper Drive Elementary, which is located outside the City. The SSD has a full capacity of 7,808 and a current enrollment of 6,091, leaving a future enrollment capacity of 1,717 more students. There are no schools located within the TCSP area, AEN, or Housing Element sites, but all elementary schools except Chet F. Harritt Elementary, Carlton Oaks Elementary, and Sycamore Canyon Elementary are within one mile of the TCSP area and AEN boundaries. Rio Seco Elementary and Hill Creek Elementary are within approximately one mile of the Housing Element sites.

##### **High Schools**

The Grossmont Union High School District (GUHSD) serves the Santee area for grades 9 through 12. The high school district has 19 schools, 2 of which are in Santee: West Hills High

School on Mast Boulevard near Medina Drive; and Santana High School on Magnolia Avenue between Mast Boulevard and Second Street. The GUHSD has a full capacity of 20,000 and a current enrollment of 16,528, leaving a future enrollment capacity of 3,472 more students. Santana High is within one mile of the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites.

#### **4.14.1.4 Library Services**

Currently, library service in the City is provided by the San Diego County Library (SDCL) system. The Santee branch library is located on Carlton Hills Boulevard about one-third of a mile from the eastern boundary of the TCSP area, less than one mile from the AEN, and approximately 1.5 miles from the Housing Element sites. There are also libraries nearby in the communities of Lakeside, San Carlos, and El Cajon (City 2003c).

In addition to these branches, the City of San Diego Public Library operates a Bookmobile that is used primarily to bring books to immobile people, educate elementary school children, and provide access to books when a particular branch is closed for some reason. Several cities within the County are also part of a countywide cooperative relationship known as the Serra Cooperative Library System. This cooperative library system allows residents of the various cities and the County of San Diego to use facilities of other public libraries in the same area. For example, a resident of the City of Santee could use the City of San Diego Main Library or any branch library facilities through the Serra Cooperative Library System, and a resident of the City of San Diego could use the library facilities of the City of Santee. This system expands the accessibility of public library facilities to communities that are adjacent to each other (City 2003c).

The Friends of Santee Library, a non-profit organization working out of the SDCL, operates a used bookstore in which all proceeds benefit the Santee branch library programs, events, and the New Library Building Fund. The Friends of Santee Library created the New Library Building Fund in response to demand for a new, larger library in the City.

The SDCL service ratio goal is 0.5 square feet (sf) of library floor space for each resident averaged throughout the service area. However, this is a very ambitious goal and most of the County libraries do not meet the goal. Based on the City's current population of 60,037, a total of 30,019 square feet of library space would be required to achieve the County's goal. Thus, the 7,500 square feet of library space contained within the Santee Library would achieve 25 percent of the goal. Although the goal is not met, library service within the City is considered to be adequate due to the additional programs mentioned above, and no current plans for expansion exist. The SDCL maintains a Capital Plan, also known as the Capital Improvement Needs Assessment (CINA), which includes a list of forecast planned and potential projects, including libraries, and includes the City in the 2023-2028 CINA.

#### **4.14.1.5 Park Facilities**

The City offers a variety of parks and recreational services within the City's boundary. A wide range of active and passive public recreation opportunities are available in a network of regional, community, neighborhood, and mini-parks, which differ based on size, available facilities, and location. All parks and recreational facilities located in the Santee General Plan area, including those maintained by other agencies such as the County, are shown on Figure 4.12-5. The City's 2017 Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update identifies 115 acres for publicly operated parks in addition to approximately 272.25 acres of regional parkland, including Mission Trails and Goodan Ranch/Sycamore Canyon County Preserve (City 2017b). The recently constructed Weston Park located at 9050 Trailmark Way is not included in the latest Master Plan Update, but

provides additional park acreage. Approximately 190.91 acres of other recreational facilities, which include the Santee Aquatics Center and Santee Lakes Recreation Preserve, are also accessible to the City. Parks and recreation land in school playgrounds, ballfields, and courts account for an additional 109.24 acres in the City. In total, the City has access to approximately 838.22 acres of developed park, open space, and recreational facilities including mini-parks, neighborhood parks, community parks, school playgrounds, regional parks, and City-owned open space (see Table 4.14-1, *Existing Parks and Recreational Facilities in the City of Santee*). Based on the current population of 60,037 residents, 838.22 acres represents a ratio of 13.96 acres of developed park, open space, and recreational facilities for every 1,000 residents. The City's Parks and Recreation Master Plan sets the City's goal for parks at 10 acres of parkland for every 1,000 people in the City. Of the 10 acres, the goal is for five acres to be developed public parkland and the remaining five acres be comprised of other recreational facilities, such as the school facilities and the Mission Trails and Goodan Ranch regional parks. While this standard is the City policy, and will continue to direct City park development efforts, the City has also attempted to locate new parks in areas currently deficient in park acreage. Currently, almost every home within the City is within one mile of a neighborhood park and within three miles of a community or future regional-serving park (City 2003g).

A brief description of the City's mini-parks, neighborhood parks, community parks, school playgrounds, regional parks, and City-owned open space is provided below and summarized in Table 4.14-1.

**Table 4.14-1  
EXISTING PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES IN THE CITY OF SANTEE**

<b>Park/Facility Name</b>	<b>Date Constructed</b>	<b>Total Acreage</b>
<b><i>Parks – Mini Parks</i></b>		
Sky Ranch	2010	0.73
<b><i>Parks – Neighborhood</i></b>		
Deputy Ken Collier Neighborhood Park	2016	0.57
Big Rock	1976	5.77
Shadow Hill	1998	4.51
Woodglen Vista	1980	9.74
West Hills	1994	13.99
Weston	2020	4.47
<b><i>Parks – Community</i></b>		
Mast Park	1982	24.70
Mast Park West	2011	0.80
Town Center West	2003	10.97
Town Center East	2011	24.73
Sportsplex	2011	16.53
<b><i>Parks – Regional</i></b>		
Mission Trails	1974	192.00
Goodan Ranch/Sycamore Canyon Preserve	1991	80.25 <sup>1</sup>
<b><i>Open Space</i></b>		
Forester Creek	2010	24.96
Walker Preserve	2015	39.71
Shadow Hill	1998	0.61
Sky Ranch	2010	0.55
Mast Park	1982	37.50
Mast Park West	1982	42.50



Park/Facility Name	Date Constructed	Total Acreage
Non-Park City Asset		6.70
<b>Other Recreational Facilities</b>		
City Aquatics Center – Town Center Community Plan East	2001	0.91
Santee Lakes Recreation Preserve	1967	190.00
<b>Schools</b>		
School Playgrounds, Ballfields, and Courts	Various	109.24
Total Parks and Recreational Lands		842.51
<b>Trails</b>		
		Length in Linear Miles
Paved Surface Trails	Various	17.08
Non-Paved Trails	Various	3.00
Bikeways	Various	44.27
Total Trails		64.35

<sup>1</sup>80.25 of the Preserve's 2,847 acres are within City limits.

- **Mini-Parks:** Mini parks are small areas, no larger than 2 acres, which serve a population of between 500 to 1,000. Features include picnic tables, children's play area, open space/grass area, barbeque grills, and shade structures. There is one mini park within the City: and Sky Ranch Mini Park (0.73 acre).
- **Neighborhood Parks:** Neighborhood parks range in size from 2 to 20 acres and serve a population of between 2,000 and 5,000. They typically provide the following types of recreation opportunities: active sports, passive recreation and relaxation, and neighborhood centers. There are six neighborhood parks within the City: Weston, Deputy Ken Collier Park (0.57 acre), Big Rock Park (5.77 acres), Shadow Hill Park (4.51 acres), Woodglen Vista Park (9.74 acres), and West Hills Park (13.99 acres).
- **Community Parks:** Community parks range in size from 20 to 50 acres and serve a population of 10,000 to 25,000. Recreational activities commonly include the use of sports fields, camping, fishing, and passive recreation. There are five community parks in the City. Mast Park (24.70 acres), Mast Park West (0.80 acre), Town Center West (10.97 acres), Town Center East (24.73 acres), and Sportsplex (16.53 acres).
- **Regional Parks:** Some of the most diverse recreational opportunities are found in two regional parks. Recreational opportunities include visitor centers, multi-use trails, boating, picnic tables, and a variety of other recreational amenities. There are two regional parks within or adjacent to the City, Mission Trails Regional Park (192 acres) and Goodan Ranch/Sycamore Canyon Preserve (80.25 of the Preserve's 2,847 acres are within City limits).
- **Open Space:** Open space areas offer active and passive recreational opportunities, including hiking and equestrian uses. There are seven open space areas within or adjacent to the City, Forester Creek (24.96 acres), Walker Preserve (39.71 acres), Shadow Hill (0.61 acre), Sky Ranch (0.55 acre), Mast Park (37.50 acres), Mast Park West (42.50 acres), and a non-park City asset (6.70 acres).
- **Other Recreational Facilities:** There are two other recreational facilities within or adjacent to the City, the City Aquatics Center and the Santee Lakes Recreation Preserve. The City

Aquatics Center provides aquatic and recreation programs, including training pool, activity pool with a play structure, water slide, water exercise area, swim lessons, and water aerobics classes. The Santee Lakes Recreation Preserve, owned and operated by the Padre Dam Municipal Water District, a 190-acre preserve with seven recycled water lakes stocked with sport fish and recreational amenities such as camping, cabin rentals, fishing, boating, special events, playgrounds, walking trails, and bird watching. Like other regional parks noted above, the Santee Lakes Recreation Preserve functions as a community park for the City's residents even though it is not managed by the City.

- **School Sites:** Existing school sites in the SSD and GUHSD are utilized through use agreements to provide public outdoor recreational areas for City residents. Active recreation uses including sports fields, hard-court games (tennis, basketball) and other indoor recreational facilities. Due to their limited time availability to the public, these school areas are figured for park acreage purposes at 50 percent of their total acreage (City 2003g).
- **Trails:** In addition to the parks and recreation acreages above, the City also has 64.35 linear miles of trails that include paved and non-paved surface trails and bikeways, as shown in Table 4.14-1. In addition, the Stowe Trail, an approximately 4-mile-long trail runs parallel to the eastern border of Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Miramar. The Stowe Trail allows mountain biking, hiking, and other outdoor activities via permits obtained from the Marine Corps (MCAS Miramar 2021).

## 4.14.2 Regulatory Framework

The following regulatory framework discussion focuses on state and local regulations because there are no relevant public services or recreation-related federal laws.

### 4.14.2.1 State

#### Fire Regulations

State fire regulations are set forth in Sections 13000 et seq. of the California Health and Safety Code, which include regulations concerning building standards (as also set forth in the California Building Code), fire protection and notification systems, fire protection devices such as extinguishers and smoke alarms, high-rise building and childcare facility standards, and fire-suppression training. The state Fire Marshal enforces these regulations and building standards in all state-owned buildings, state-occupied buildings, and state institutions throughout California. The code also includes topics such as fire department access, fire hydrants, automatic sprinkler systems, fire alarm systems, fire and explosion hazards safety, hazardous materials storage and use, provisions to protect and assist first responders, and industrial processes.

#### Police Protection

##### Emergency Response/Evacuation Plans

California Government Code, Section 8607(a), directs the Governor's Office of Emergency Services to prepare a Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) program, which sets forth measures by which a jurisdiction should handle emergency disasters. The program is intended to effectively manage multi-agency and multijurisdictional emergencies in California.

SEMS consists of five organizational levels, which are activated as necessary: (1) Field Response, (2) Local Government, (3) Operational Area, (4) Regional, and (5) State.

Local governments must use the SEMS to be eligible for funding of their response-related personnel costs under state disaster assistance programs. The City has adopted an Emergency Operation Plan that is consistent with the SEMS.

## Schools

### Development Impact Fees (DIF)/Senate Bill 50 (SB-50)

Proposition 1A, the Kindergarten-University Public Education Facilities Bond Act of 1998, or Senate Bill (SB) 50, was approved by voters in November 1998. This proposition provided \$6.7 billion in general obligation bonds for K–12 public school facilities as well as the first funding for the new School Facility Program, which provides state funding assistance for new construction and modernization. This bill made major changes in the State School Facilities Program as well as developer fee mitigation for school districts in California. A primary result of SB 50 was the creation of different levels of developer fees. Specifically, the levy and collection of developer fees is governed by Education Code, Section 17620, and Government Code, Sections 65995 through 65998 and 66000 through 66008:

- Level 1 fees are the current statutory fees (also referred to as “Stirling Fees”) allowed under Education Code, Section 17620.
- Level 2 fees are outlined in California Government Code, Section 65995.5, and allow school districts to impose higher fees on residential construction if certain conditions are met. This level of developer fees is subject to a School Facility Needs Analysis based on Government Code, Section 65995.6.
- Level 3 developer fees are outlined in Government Code, Section 65995.7, and may be implemented by a district if the state certifies that there is no money available for facilities.

#### 4.14.2.2 Local

### General Plan

The City General Plan contains policies related to public services and recreation.

### Land Use Element

Objective 3.0: Provide and maintain the highest level of service possible for all community public services and facilities.

- **Policy 3.1:** The City should ensure that land divisions and developments are approved within the City only when a project’s improvements, dedications, fees and other revenues to the City and other agencies fully cover the project’s incremental costs to the City and other agencies. These costs are for providing new or upgraded capital improvements and other public facilities and equipment resulting from, and attributable to the project, which are necessary to protect and promote the public’s health, safety, and welfare and to implement feasible mitigation measures. Such facilities include, but are not limited to parks, bridges, major roads, traffic signals, street lights, drainage systems, sewers, water,

flood control, fire, police, schools, hiking/bicycle trails and other related facilities. In calculating benefits of land divisions and developments, the City may consider other public objectives and goals including social, economic (job creation, secondary economic benefits, etc.) and environmental factors.

### Safety Element

Objective 4.0: Minimize injuries, loss of life, and property damage resulting from fire hazards.

- **Policy 4.2:** The City should ensure that all new development meets established response time standards for fire and life safety services.
- **Policy 4.8:** Encourage and support the delivery of a high level of emergency services through cooperation with other agencies and use of available financial opportunities.
- **Policy 4.10:** Encourage the continued development, implementation, and public awareness of fire prevention programs.
- **Policy 4.11:** To minimize fire hazards, the Santee Fire Department shall routinely be involved in the review of development applications. Considerations shall be given to adequate emergency access, driveway widths, turning radii, fire hydrant locations and needed fire flow requirements.
- **Policy 4.12:** The timing of additional fire station construction or renovation, or new services shall relate to the rise of service demand in the City and surrounding areas.
- **Policy 4.13:** Support mutual aid agreements and communications links with County and the other municipalities participating in the Unified San Diego County Emergency Service Organization.
- **Policy 5.4:** The City shall involve law enforcement personnel in the review of new development applications through participation in the Development review process.

### **Municipal Code**

#### Title 12 – Subdivision of Land, Development Fees, and Dedications

Chapter 12.30 - Development Impact Fees establishes appropriate standards for public facilities, including drainage improvements, traffic improvements, traffic signals, public park facilities, community facilities and other public improvements, public services, and community amenities. This chapter effectively establishes provisions to collect fees as a condition of approval of a final map or as a condition of issuing a building permit. The purpose of the fees established by this chapter is to impose upon new development the costs of constructing public facilities that are reasonably related to the impacts of the new development.

#### **4.14.3 Significance Determination Thresholds**

Consistent with Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines, impacts to public services and recreation would be significant if the proposed project would:

- 1) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:
  - a. Fire protection
  - b. Police protection
  - c. Schools
  - d. Parks
  - e. Other public facilities

#### **4.14.4 Methodology**

The impact analysis in the following subsections is based on an evaluation of the project's potential demand for new services. Public services information was acquired through secondary source materials and regional and local planning documents, including the City's General Plan, fire protection regulations, and evacuation plans. School districts were contacted to determine the capacity to serve projected school populations.

#### **4.14.5 Issue 1a: Fire Service**

*Would the project promote growth patterns resulting in the need for and/or provision of new or physically altered fire emergency facilities to maintain service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives, and the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts?*

##### **4.14.5.1 Impact Analysis**

#### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

As described in Section 3.0, *Project Description*, the TCSP anticipates replacement of Station 4 at its current location with a new facility up to 20,000 square feet in size. However, the site specific design and details of this facility are unknown at this time. At the time the future Station 4 replacement is proposed, it would undergo project-specific environmental review with consideration of the analysis and mitigation framework established in this EIR. No additional construction or operational impacts beyond those identified throughout this EIR have been identified due to the replacement of Station 4.

While future development in the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would accommodate future population growth in the City, construction of new residential and non-residential development within the project area could also increase demand for additional fire protection facilities. All future development, whether discretionary or by-right, would be required to adhere to the Santee Municipal Code (SMC). Specifically, Chapter 12.50, would require payment of a DIF to ensure the costs of constructing public facilities that are reasonably related to the impacts of the new development. Likewise, future project compliance with the City's General Plan requires land developers to pay the cost of ensuring adequate public services and facilities. Safety Element Policy 4.2 requires that all new development meets established response time standards for fire and life safety services, and Policy 4.12 requires the timing of additional fire station construction or renovation, or new services to be related to the rise of service demands. Each incremental development would pay DIF towards anticipated fire facility needs

that would ultimately support funding for improvements to fire facilities and operations. At the time future fire facilities are proposed, they would require a separate environmental review, and compliance with regulations in existence at that time would address potential environmental impacts related to the construction and operation of new fire facilities. Therefore, impacts related to the need for and/or provision of new or physically altered fire emergency facilities would be less than significant.

#### **4.14.5.2 Mitigation Measures**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

No mitigation is required.

#### **4.14.5.3 Significance After Mitigation**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

#### **4.14.6 Issue 1b: Police Protection**

*Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered police protection facilities to maintain service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services?*

#### **4.14.6.1 Impact Analysis**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

While future development in the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would accommodate future population growth in the City, construction of new residential and non-residential development within the project area could potentially increase demand for police protection facilities. All future development, whether discretionary or by-right, would be required to adhere to the SMC. Specifically, Chapter 12.50, would require payment of a DIF to ensure the costs of constructing public facilities that are reasonably related to the impacts of the new development. Likewise, future project compliance with the City's General Plan requires land developers to pay the cost of ensuring adequate public services and facilities. Safety Element Policy 4.2 requires that all new development meets established response time standards for fire and life safety services, and Policy 4.12 requires the timing of additional fire station construction or renovation, or new services to be related to the rise of service demands. The review of project applications by law enforcement personnel would ensure that City's police department are comfortable with the level of safety associated with the proposed development. In the future, if law enforcement facilities are proposed, they would require a separate environmental review, and compliance with regulations in existence at that time would address potential environmental impacts related to the construction and operation of new fire facilities. Therefore, impacts related to the need for and/or provision of new or physically altered police facilities would be less than significant.



#### 4.14.6.2 Mitigation Measures

##### TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites

No mitigation is required.

#### 4.14.6.3 Significance After Mitigation

##### TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

#### 4.14.7 Issue 1c: Schools

*Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered school facilities to maintain service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services?*

#### 4.14.7.1 Impact Analysis

##### TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites

The SSD and the GUHSD were contacted to determine their availability to accommodate student enrollment generated by the project. The SSD has a full capacity of 7,808 and a current enrollment of 6,091, leaving a future enrollment capacity of 1,717 more students. The GUHSD has a full capacity of 20,000 and a current enrollment of 16,528, leaving a future enrollment capacity of 3,472 more students.

The proposed TCSP would facilitate the potential future construction of up to 3,140 new residential units. As described below, up to 1,480 of these units would be constructed in the Housing Element sites, leaving 1,660 units to be constructed through future projects in the TCSP area. The SSD estimates that the addition of 3,140 multi-family residential units would generate an additional 501 students. This number is well within the remaining capacity of the SSD and the elementary schools that service the project area. However, given the location of newly proposed residential uses and existing school service area boundaries, students may be directed to schools that are located more than a mile from their homes, requiring traversing the San Diego River to attend Hill Creek School and perhaps walking in areas with no sidewalk improvements. As the TCSP area develops, there may be a need to redirect students to Rio Seco Elementary and/or make improvements to pedestrian accessways, such as the proposed River Bridge and other multimodal improvements identified in the TCSP Chapter 3: Mobility and Beautification.

The GUHSD estimates that the addition of 3,140 multi-family residential units would generate an additional 430 students, which is also well within the remaining capacity of the GUHSD. However, only two high schools in the GUHSD, Santana High School and West Hills High School, would service the TCSP area. According to the GUHSD, buildout of the Housing Element sites would generate an additional 202 students which would require the addition of six classroom teachers and up to six classrooms, depending on which school future students choose to attend. Future construction of the remaining 1,660 units in the TCSP area would likely require additional facilities, but updated school capacities would be analyzed at the time of future project finalization.

To reduce impacts to school facilities, all future development would be required to adhere to state statutory fees pursuant to SB 50. Specifically, the SSD and GUHSD each currently levy impact fees on development within their district boundaries; for SSD and GUHSD, residential development fees are \$3.21/sf and \$1.20/sf, respectively. Commercial development fees are \$0.52/sf and \$0.19/sf, respectively (SSD 2024; GUHSD 2024). The statutory fees provided by project development would contribute to the expansion of necessary school services and ensure impacts to school facilities remain less than significant. Future development of the remaining 1,660 units in the TCSP area would contribute similar fees to both school districts upon project finalization and ensure impacts to school facilities remain less than significant.

#### **4.14.7.2 Mitigation Measures**

No mitigation is required.

#### **4.14.7.3 Significance After Mitigation**

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

#### **4.14.8 Issue 1d: Library Services**

*Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered library facilities to maintain service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services?*

#### **4.14.8.1 Impact Analysis**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

As noted in Section 4.14.1.4, based on the San Diego County service ratio goals for library services the Santee Library, with 75,000 square feet of space, is at a deficit; however, including the combination of a cooperative library system with surrounding cities, and participation in Bookmobile, library service within the City is considered to be adequate. Nonetheless, construction of additional development could potentially increase demand for library services.

All future development, whether discretionary or by-right, would be required to adhere to the SMC. Specifically, Chapter 12.50, would require payment of DIF to ensure the costs of constructing public facilities that are reasonably related to the impacts of the new development, including libraries. Additionally, the City would continue to participate in programs related to providing residents access to library books and programs and support the efforts of the Friends of Santee Library, a non-profit organization committed to raising funds for a new larger library. Development within the project site would not directly result in sufficient demand to require construction or expansion of a library, since each incremental development would pay its fair share toward anticipated library facility needs. At the time a future library is proposed, it would require a separate environmental review, and compliance with regulations in existence at that time would address potential environmental impacts related to the construction and operation of new school facilities. Therefore, impacts related to the need for and/or provision of new or physically altered library would be less than significant.

#### 4.14.8.2 Mitigation Measures

##### TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites

No mitigation is required.

#### 4.14.8.3 Significance After Mitigation

##### TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

#### 4.14.9 Issues 1e: Parks Facilities

*Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered park facilities to maintain service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services?*

##### 4.14.9.1 Impact Analysis

As detailed in Section 4.14.1.5, the City currently meets its overall goal for parkland; however, construction of development could potentially increase demand for park and recreational facilities. The TCSP anticipates new park and recreational facilities in the future, and potential impacts to recreation are discussed in Section 4.15, *Recreation*.

All future development, whether discretionary or by-right, would be required to pay in-lieu fees consistent with the Quimby Act and SMC Section 12.40 to fund additional park facilities within the City. Payment of such fees would allow the City to continue to implement numerous General Plan policies in place to maintain park and recreation facilities within the City, including Land Use Policy 3.1 (adequate parkland consistent with development); Conservation Element Policies 11.1, 11.2, and 11.4 (promote dedicated open space, both active and passive, throughout the City); Recreation Element Policies 1.1 and 2.2 (increase parkland ratios, and focus on recreational facilities to be constructed in mixed-use development); and numerous Trails Element policies which all envision the continued development of bicycle, equestrian and pedestrian trails throughout the City. Development within the project site would not directly result in sufficient demand to directly require construction or expansion of a parks and recreational facilities, since each incremental development would pay its fair share toward anticipated park needs.

As discussed in Section 4.15, the TCSP proposes a pedestrian River Bridge across the San Diego River in an area designated Floodway/Open Space. Riverview Art Trail is a proposed pedestrian linkage connecting Riverview Parkway at the north to Mission Gorge Road at the south and is designated Park/Open Space in the TCSP. The TCSP would also strive to connect future development to the San Diego River trails. These elements would contribute to City parkland and potential impacts of these elements are discussed throughout this EIR. At the time a future parkland project is proposed, it would require environmental review, and compliance with regulations in existence at that time would address potential environmental impacts related to the construction and operation of new park facilities. Therefore, impacts related to the need for and/or provision of new or physically altered parks and recreation facilities would be less than significant.

#### **4.14.9.2 Mitigation Measures**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

No mitigation is required.

#### **4.14.9.3 Significance After Mitigation**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

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## 4.15 Recreation

This section analyzes potential impacts to recreation that could result from implementation of the proposed project.

### 4.15.1 Existing Conditions

#### 4.15.1.1 Citywide Recreation

The City of Santee (City) offers a variety of parks and recreational services within its boundary. A wide range of active and passive public recreation opportunities are available in a network of regional, community, neighborhood, and mini-parks, which differ based on size, available facilities, and location. The City's 2017 Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update identifies 265.82 acres for various park types in addition to approximately 272.25 acres of regional parkland, including Mission Trails and Goodan Ranch/Sycamore Canyon County Preserve (City 2003g, 2017b). Weston Park, located at 9050 Trailmark Way, is not included in the latest Master Plan Update as it was constructed in 2020, but provides an additional 4.47 acres of parkland. Approximately 190.91 acres of other recreational facilities, which include the Santee Aquatics Center and Santee Lakes Recreation Preserve, are also accessible to the City. Parks and recreation land in school playgrounds, ballfields, and courts account for an additional 109.24 acres in the City. In total, the City has access to approximately 838.22 acres of developed park, open space, and recreational facilities including mini-parks, neighborhood parks, community parks, school playgrounds, regional parks, and City-owned open space (see Table 4.15-1, *Existing Parks and Recreational Facilities in the City of Santee*).

Based on the current population of 60,037 residents (City 2020b), 838.22 acres represents a ratio of 13.97 acres of developed park, open space, and recreational facilities for every 1,000 residents. The City's Parks and Recreation Master Plan sets the City's goal for parks at 10 acres of parkland for every 1,000 people in the City. Of the 10 acres, the goal is for five acres to be developed public parkland and the remaining five acres be comprised of other recreational facilities, such as the school facilities and the Mission Trails and Goodan Ranch regional parks. While this standard is the City policy, and will continue to direct City park development efforts, the City has also attempted to locate new parks in areas that are currently deficient in park acreage. Currently, almost every home within the City is within one mile of a neighborhood park and within three miles of a community or future regional-serving park (City 2003g).

A brief description of the City's mini-parks, neighborhood parks, community parks, school playgrounds, regional parks, and City-owned open space is provided below and summarized in Table 4.15-1.

**Table 4.15-1  
EXISTING PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES IN THE CITY OF SANTEE**

<b>Park/Facility Name</b>	<b>Date Constructed</b>	<b>Total Acreage</b>
<b><i>Parks – Mini Parks</i></b>		
Sky Ranch	2010	0.73
<b><i>Parks – Neighborhood</i></b>		
Deputy Ken Collier Neighborhood Park	2016	0.57
Big Rock	1976	5.77
Shadow Hill	1998	4.51
Woodglen Vista	1980	9.74
West Hills	1994	13.99
Weston	2020	4.47
<b><i>Parks – Community</i></b>		
Mast Park	1982	24.70
Mast Park West	2011	0.80
Town Center West	2003	10.97
Town Center East	2011	24.73
Sportsplex	2011	16.53
<b><i>Parks – Regional</i></b>		
Mission Trails	1974	192.00
Goodan Ranch/Sycamore Canyon Preserve	1991	80.25
<b><i>Open Space</i></b>		
Forester Creek	2010	24.96
Walker Preserve	2015	39.71
Shadow Hill	1998	0.61
Sky Ranch	2010	0.55
Mast Park	1982	37.50
Mast Park West	1982	42.50
Non-Park City Asset		6.70
<b><i>Other Recreational Facilities</i></b>		
City Aquatics Center – Town Center Community Plan East	2001	0.91
Santee Lakes Recreation Preserve	1967	190.00
<b><i>Schools</i></b>		
School Playgrounds, Ballfields, and Courts	Various	109.24
<b>Total Parks and Recreational Lands</b>		<b>838.22</b>
<b><i>Trails</i></b>		
		Length in Linear Miles
Paved Surface Trails	Various	17.08
Non-Paved Trails	Various	3.00
Bikeways	Various	44.27
<b>Total Trails</b>		<b>64.35</b>

Source: City of Santee 2003g, 2017b

- Mini-Parks: Mini parks are small areas, no larger than two acres, which serve a population of between 500 to 1,000. Features include picnic tables, children’s play area, open space/grass area, barbeque grills, and shade structures. There is one mini park within the City: Sky Ranch Mini Park (0.73 acre).



- **Neighborhood Parks:** Neighborhood parks range in size from 2 to 20 acres and serve a population of between 2,000 and 5,000. They typically provide the following types of recreation opportunities: active sports, passive recreation and relaxation, and neighborhood centers. There are six neighborhood parks within the City, Deputy Ken Collier Park (0.57 acre), Big Rock Park (5.77 acres), Shadow Hill Park (4.51 acres), Woodglen Vista Park (9.74 acres), Weston Park (4.47 acres) and West Hills Park (13.99 acres).
- **Community Parks:** Community parks range in size from 20 to 50 acres and serve a population of 10,000 to 25,000. Recreational activities commonly include the use of sports fields, camping, fishing, and passive recreation. There are five community parks in the City. Mast Park (24.70 acres), Mast Park West (0.80 acre), Town Center West (10.97 acres), Town Center East (24.73 acres), and Sportsplex (16.53 acres).
- **Regional Parks:** Some of the most diverse recreational opportunities are found in two regional parks. Recreational opportunities include visitor centers, multi-use trails, boating, picnic tables, and a variety of other recreational amenities. There are two regional parks within or adjacent to the City, Mission Trails Regional Park (192 acres) and Goodan Ranch/Sycamore Canyon Preserve (80.25 acres).
- **Open Space:** Open space areas offer active and passive recreational opportunities, including hiking and equestrian uses. There are seven open space areas within or adjacent to the City, Forester Creek (24.96 acres), Walker Preserve (39.71 acres), Shadow Hill (0.61 acre), Sky Ranch (0.55 acre), Mast Park (37.50 acres), Mast Park West (42.50 acres), and a non-park City assets (6.70 acres).
- **Other Recreational Facilities:** There are two other recreational facilities within or adjacent to the City, the City Aquatics Center and the Santee Lakes Recreation Preserve. The City Aquatics Center provides aquatic and recreation programs, including training pool, activity pool with a play structure, water slide, water exercise area, swim lessons, and water fitness classes. The Santee Lakes Recreation Preserve, owned and operated by the Padre Dam Municipal Water District, a 190-acre preserve with seven recycled water lakes stocked with sport fish and recreational amenities such as camping, cabin rentals, fishing, boating, special events, playgrounds, walking trails, and bird watching.
- **School Sites:** Existing school sites in the Santee School District and Grossmont Union High School District are utilized through use agreements to provide public outdoor recreational areas for City residents. Active recreation uses include sports fields, hard-court games (tennis, basketball) and other indoor recreational facilities. Due to their limited time availability to the public, these school areas are figured for park acreage purposes at 50 percent of their total acreage (City 2003g).
- **Trails:** In addition to the parks and recreation acreages above, the City also has 64.35 linear miles of trails that include paved and non-paved surface trails and bikeways, as shown in Table 4.15-1. In addition, the Stowe Trail, an approximately 6-mile-long trail runs parallel to the eastern border of Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Miramar (MCAS Miramar 2021). The Stowe Trail allows mountain biking, hiking, and other outdoor activities via permits obtained from the Marine Corps (MCAS Miramar 2021).

#### **4.15.1.2 Recreational Facilities in TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

##### **TCSP Area**

Recreational opportunities within the Town Center Specific Plan (TCSP) area include Town Center Park, Cameron Family YMCA, Sportsplex USA, and trails associated with the San Diego River.

##### **AEN**

The Arts and Entertainment Neighborhood (AEN) contains the same recreational resources as the TCSP Town Center Park, Cameron Family YMCA, Sportsplex USA, and trails associated with the San Diego River.

##### **Housing Element Sites**

The Housing Element sites are vacant and do not contain any recreational resources.

#### **4.15.1.3 Recreational Programming**

In addition to providing physical park facilities, the City also offers a wide range of recreational programs and activities for preschoolers, youth, teens and adults. Programs include performing arts, sports and fitness, , enrichment, Teen Center and day camp. The City also provides senior-specific activities including trips and sponsors several community-wide events such as the Summer Concert Series and the Fourth of July fireworks show.

There are also several sport leagues that offer recreational activities for City youth. These leagues include baseball, softball, soccer, lacrosse, cheer and football. While these are not City recreational offerings, the City does provide financial assistance in coordinating use of City fields and maintaining joint access agreements for use of school fields.

Programming takes place Citywide and might therefore occur within the boundaries of the proposed TCSP area and AEN.

#### **4.15.2 Regulatory Framework**

The following regulatory framework discussion focuses on state and local regulations because there are no relevant recreation-related federal laws.

##### **4.15.2.1 State**

###### **Public Park Preservation Act**

The primary instrument for protecting and preserving parkland is the state Public Park Preservation Act. Under the California Public Resources Code, cities and counties may not acquire any real property that is used as a public park for any non-park use unless compensation or land, or both, are provided to replace the parkland acquired. This provides no net loss of parkland and facilities.

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## Quimby Act

Originally passed in 1975, the Quimby Act (California Government Code, Section 66477) allows cities and counties to pass ordinances requiring that developers set aside land, donate conservation easements, or pay fees for park improvements. This act allows local agencies to establish ordinances requiring developers of residential subdivisions to pay impact fees for land or recreational facilities. Revenues generated through the Quimby Act cannot be used for the operation and maintenance of park facilities. In 1982, the act was substantially amended, further defining acceptable uses of or restrictions on Quimby funds, establishing acreage/population standards and formulas for determining the exaction, and indicating that the exactions must be closely tied to a proposed project's impacts. Currently, park fees in the City are \$10,099 per single-family residential unit and \$9,208 per multi-family residential unit (City 2024b).

### 4.15.2.2 Local

The City General Plan contains policies related to public services and recreation.

#### Land Use Element

Objective 3.0: Provide and maintain the highest level of service possible for all community public services and facilities.

- **Policy 3.1:** The City should ensure that land divisions and developments are approved within the City only when a project's improvements, dedications, fees and other revenues to the City and other agencies fully cover the project's incremental costs to the City and other agencies. These costs are for providing new or upgraded capital improvements and other public facilities and equipment resulting from, and attributable to the project, which are necessary to protect and promote the public's health, safety and welfare and to implement feasible mitigation measures. Such facilities include, but are not limited to: parks, bridges, major roads, traffic signals, street lights, drainage systems, sewers, water, flood control, fire, police, schools, hiking/bicycle trails and other related facilities. In calculating benefits of land divisions and developments, the City may consider other public objectives and goals including social, economic (job creation, secondary economic benefits, etc.) and environmental factors.

#### Conservation Element

Objective 11.0: Promote a balanced mix of open space uses with development throughout the City to enhance visual resources, avoid hazards and conserve resources.

- **Policy 11.1:** The City should promote the dedication of open space or parklands and the designation of private open space within all proposed residential developments.
- **Policy 11.2:** The City should encourage, where feasible, the development of an interconnected system of open spaces throughout the City.
- **Policy 11.4:** The City should ensure that adequate passive and active open space uses are incorporated into the development of the Town Center, Fanita Ranch, Rattlesnake Mountain and other large, existing vacant areas.

## Recreation Element

As discussed in the Recreation Element of the General Plan, the City provides four types of recreational accommodations for residents and visitors. These include mini-parks, neighborhood parks, community parks, and regional parks.

The Recreation Element also contains goals, guidelines, and policies to guide the management of the parks and recreational system and requires that a project provide adequate active and passive forms of recreation. The Recreation Element recognizes the contributory role habitat preserves play in meeting the recreational needs of citizens and that the City's Draft Multiple Species Conservation Program Subarea Plan contributes to passive recreational opportunities such as hiking, biking, and nature appreciation.

Objective 1.0: Provide a minimum of 10 acres of park and recreational facilities for every 1,000 population in Santee. These 10 acres could include a combination of local parks, trails, school playgrounds, and other public facilities that meet part of the need for local recreational facilities.

- Policy 1.1: The City shall increase the amount of park and recreational facility acreage in Santee to more closely conform to the local parkland standard.
- Policy 2.2: The City shall encourage the inclusion of recreational facilities in all mixed land use developments, especially within the Town Center and the Fanita Ranch.

## Trails Element

As discussed in the Trails Element of the Santee General Plan, the City plans to continue developing bicycle, equestrian, and pedestrian trails throughout the City to expand recreational and commuter use of this trails system.

Objective 1.0: Provide safe and viable regional and community trails within the City.

- Policy 1.1: Priority should be placed on establishing multiple use trails (pedestrians, bicyclists, equestrians) wherever feasible.
- Policy 1.2: All new subdivisions or planned developments whether residential, commercial, or industrial which include proposed trail locations shall dedicate easements which will provide safe and direct access to community or regional trails, and provide for trail maintenance.
- Policy 1.5: The City's trail network should link focal points of the City such as Town Center, Fanita Ranch, employment centers, schools, residential neighborhoods, parks and open space, and the San Diego River.

Objective 5.0: Provide paved trails which are safe.

- **Policy 5.2:** Trails should be designed to facilitate bicycle riding by incorporating standards which would reduce slopes, sharp curves, and interference with vegetation, pedestrians, and traffic.

- Policy 5.3: Bicycle paths should be incorporated into the design of community land use plans, Capital Improvement Projects, and in parks and open space as specified in the General Plan.

Objective 6.0: Provide unimproved trails that are viable routes within the community.

- Policy 6.1: Priority shall be given to designating unimproved trails for multipurpose use whenever feasible.
- Policy 6.2: Develop a future system of trails on the Fanita Ranch site as well as throughout the City's Multiple Species Conservation Program Preserve Planning Area. Priority shall be given to using existing trail alignments whenever feasible.

Objective 8.0: Provide community trails that link with regional trail systems and facilities.

- Policy 8.1: Encourage the establishment of trail systems in the East Elliot area and on the Fanita Ranch site that link the Fanita Ranch and Mission Trails Regional Park with Santee Lakes and Goodan Ranch Regional Park/Sycamore Canyon Open Space Preserve and any future northern expansion of Mission Trails Regional Park.

## **Municipal Code**

### Title 12 – Subdivision of Land, Development Fees, and Dedications

Chapter 12.30, Development Impact Fees, establishes appropriate standards for public facilities, including drainage improvements, traffic improvements, traffic signals, public park facilities, community facilities and other public improvements, public services, and community amenities. This chapter effectively establishes provisions to collect fees as a condition of approval of a final map or as a condition of issuing a building permit. The purpose of the fees established by this chapter is to impose upon new development the costs of constructing public facilities that are reasonably related to the impacts of the new development.

Chapter 12.40, Park Lands Dedication, establishes the provision for dedication of land, payment of in-lieu fees, or a combination of both to provide park and recreation facilities to serve future residents of a subdivision development. Santee Municipal Code (SMC) , Section 12.40.070, requires the amount of land to be dedicated based on the average occupancy rate per residential unit type and the ratio of dedication equivalent to 5 acres per 1,000 population.

### **4.15.3 Significance Determination Thresholds**

Consistent with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, impacts to recreation would be significant if the proposed project would:

- 1) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?
- 2) Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

#### 4.15.4 Methodology

The impact analysis in the following subsections is based on an evaluation of the project's potential demand for new recreational facilities. Recreation information was acquired through secondary source materials and regional and local planning documents, including the City's General Plan.

#### 4.15.5 Issue 1: Existing Recreational Facilities

*Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?*

##### 4.15.5.1 Impact Analysis

###### TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites

As detailed in Section 4.15.1.1, the City currently meets its overall goal for parkland; however, construction of additional residential units could potentially increase demand for park and recreational facilities. All future development, whether discretionary or by-right, would be required to provide common open space areas and pay in-lieu fees consistent with the Quimby Act and SMC Section 12.40 to fund additional park facilities within the City. Payment of such fees would allow the City to continue to implement numerous General Plan policies in place to maintain park and recreation facilities within the City, including Land Use Policy 3.1 (adequate parkland consistent with development); Conservation Element Policies 11.1, 11.2, and 11.4 (promote dedicated open space, both active and passive, throughout the City); Recreation Element Policies 1.1 and 2.2 (increase parkland ratios, and focus on recreational facilities to be constructed in mixed-use development); and numerous Trails Element policies which all envision the continued development of bicycle, equestrian and pedestrian trails throughout the City. The TCSP also envisions several recreational opportunities to be added to the City as described in Section 4.15.6.1 below. Development within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would not result in sufficient demand to directly require construction or expansion of a parks and recreational facilities. At the time a future recreational facility is proposed, it would require a separate environmental review; and compliance with regulations in existence at that time would address potential environmental impacts related to the construction and operation of new park facilities. Therefore, impacts related to the need for and/or provision of new or physically altered parks and recreation facilities would be less than significant.

##### 4.15.5.2 Mitigation Measures

###### TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites

No mitigation is required.

##### 4.15.5.3 Significance After Mitigation

###### TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.



#### **4.15.6 Issue 2: New Recreational Facilities**

*Would the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?*

##### **4.15.6.1 Impact Analysis**

###### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

The TCSP does not currently provide project-level details regarding specific proposed recreational facilities in the TCSP area, AEN, or Housing Element sites. However, as buildout of the TCSP area occurs, recreational facilities may be proposed. Potential features described in the TCSP include passive recreation amenities (community gardens, outdoor gathering/seating areas, picnic/barbeque areas, pet/dog parks, courtyards, plazas) and active recreation amenities (playgrounds/tot lots, sport courts/fields, outdoor fitness areas, swimming pools, exercise structures, clubhouses with kitchens, recreation halls). The TCSP also proposes a pedestrian River Bridge across the San Diego River in an area designated Floodway/Open Space. Riverview Art Trail is a proposed pedestrian linkage connecting Riverview Parkway at the north to Mission Gorge Road at the south and is designated Park/Open Space in the TCSP. The TCSP would also strive to connect future development to the San Diego River trails.

All future development, whether discretionary or by-right, would be required to pay in-lieu fees consistent with the Quimby Act and SMC Section 12.40 to fund additional park facilities within the City. Payment of such fees would allow the City to continue to implement numerous General Plan policies in place to maintain park and recreation facilities within the City, including Land Use Policy 3.1 (adequate parkland consistent with development); Conservation Element Policies 11.1, 11.2, and 11.4 (promote dedicated open space, both active and passive, throughout the City); Recreation Element Policies 1.1 and 2.2 (increase parkland ratios, and focus on recreational facilities to be constructed in mixed-use development); and numerous Trails Element policies which all envision the continued development of bicycle, equestrian and pedestrian trails throughout the City. Development within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would not result in sufficient demand to directly require construction or expansion of a parks and recreational facilities, since each incremental housing development would pay its fair share toward anticipated park needs. At the time a future parkland or recreational project is proposed, it would require environmental review, and compliance with regulations in existence at that time would address potential environmental impacts related to the construction and operation of new park facilities. Therefore, impacts related to the need for and/or provision of new or physically altered parks and recreation facilities would be less than significant.

##### **4.15.6.2 Mitigation Framework**

###### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

No mitigation is required.

##### **4.15.6.3 Significance After Mitigation**

###### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

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## 4.16 Transportation

The following section analyzes the potential transportation impacts that may occur as a result of implementation of the proposed project. This evaluation addresses potential impacts associated with changes to transportation resulting from implementation of the project and evaluates the project's consistency with applicable transportation goals and policies.

### 4.16.1 Existing Conditions

This section describes the existing roadway network, pedestrian and bicycle networks, and public transit within the City of Santee (City), Town Center Specific Plan (TCSP) area, and Arts and Entertainment Neighborhood (AEN).

#### Transportation Network

The existing roadway network in the City consists of regional facilities such as State Route (SR) 52, 67, and 125, as well as numerous arterials and local streets. These regional corridors run adjacent to or traverse the City, carrying significant levels of traffic while providing regional access to and from the City. Existing primary north-south roadways include Carlton Hills Boulevard, Cuyamaca Street, Cottonwood Avenue, Fanita Drive, Graves Avenue, and Magnolia Avenue. Existing primary east-west roadways include Carlton Oaks Drive, Halberns Boulevard, El Nopal, Mast Boulevard, Mission Gorge Road, Prospect Avenue, Town Center Parkway, and Woodside Avenue.

#### Freeways

- **SR 52** is a major east-west regional facility and provides access between Interstate 5 (I-5) and SR 67. SR 52 is also known as the Soledad Freeway and the San Clemente Canyon Freeway. There are plans to add one lane in each direction, as well as two reversible lanes, from I-15 to SR 125. These plans were put on hold in 2008 due to a budget shortfall. Completion is scheduled to take place by 2040 per current San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). SR 52 occurs about 0.4 mile south of the project site.
- **SR 67** is a major north-south regional facility and provides access for the rural northeastern parts of the County of San Diego (County) to the major east-west freeway facilities in the central and southern County. Also known as the San Vincente Freeway, SR 67 starts in the City of El Cajon and ends in the rural unincorporated community of Ramona. SR 67 is about 0.6 mile east of the project site.
- **SR 125** is a major north-south regional facility and provides access from the City of Santee to the north to Otay Mesa Road in the City of Chula Vista, near the United States-Mexico border. SR 125 becomes a toll road south of SR 54 entering the City of Chula Vista. SR 125 is about a mile east of the project site.

#### Roadways

Roadways in the project area are depicted on Figure 3-7 and described below.

- **Town Center Parkway** connects Mission Gorge Road to Riverview Parkway. Between Mission Gorge Road and Cuyamaca Street, Town Center Parkway is classified as a Major

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Arterial and is built to its ultimate classification with four-travel lanes and a raised median. This portion of the roadway has Class II bicycle lanes and sidewalks on both sides of the roadway, and has a posted speed limit of 35 miles per hour (mph). From Cuyamaca Street to Riverview Parkway, Town Center Parkway is classified as Parkway and is built to its ultimate classification with two travel lanes that are separated with a two-way-left-turn lane. This segment of Town Center Parkway includes a Class III bicycle route with sharrow markings and sidewalks on both sides of the roadway. Currently no on-street parking is allowed on any portion of Town Center Parkway. Town Center Parkway occurs in the southeastern part of the TCSP Area and the AEN. The eastern terminus of Town Center Parkway is at Housing Element Sites 16A and 16B.

- **Cuyamaca Street** is a north–south roadway that connects Fletcher Parkway in the City of El Cajon to its current terminus just north of Chaparral Drive. From its existing northern terminus to Town Center Parkway, Cuyamaca Street is classified as a Major Arterial. Between Town Center Parkway and the southern City limits, it is classified as a Prime Arterial. North of its existing terminus, Cuyamaca Street is planned to be extended as a Parkway per the Santee General Plan Mobility Element. Within the TCSP area, south of Mast Boulevard to Town Center Parkway, it is built to its current classification as a divided four-lane Major Arterial with Class II bike lanes and sidewalks on both sides of the roadway, except on the bridge over the San Diego River. From Town Center Parkway to Prospect Avenue, it is built to its ultimate classification as a divided six-lane Prime Arterial with pedestrian sidewalks on both sides of the roadway and a posted speed limit of 35 mph. Within the TCSP area, on-street parking is currently prohibited on Cuyamaca Street. Cuyamaca Street forms the eastern boundary of the AEN between Mission Gorge Road to north of the San Diego River.
- **Riverview Parkway** is a four-lane roadway separated by a two-way-left-turn lane and is classified as a Parkway. There are two portions of Riverview Parkway—the western segment is a north-south roadway that connects Mission Gorge Road to its current terminus to the north near Meadow Way, and an eastern segment that is an east-west roadway connecting Magnolia Avenue and its current terminus at the Las Colina Detention Facility driveway. The current gap in the roadway between Meadow Way and the Las Colinas Detention Facility driveway is planned to ultimately be constructed in the future, per the Santee General Plan Mobility Element. On the western segment, Class II bicycle lanes and sidewalks are provided on both sides of the roadway. Riverview Parkway occurs along the western edge of Housing Element Sites 16A and 16B and at the northern edge of Housing Element Site 20A near Magnolia Avenue.
- **Park Center Drive** is a north-south roadway that connects Mast Boulevard to its current terminus in the south at the Town Center Community Park parking lot. The roadway is classified as a Parkway. There are no bicycle facilities, but sidewalks are provided on both sides of the roadway. Park Center Drive occurs in the northeastern corner of the AEN.
- **Walker Trails Drive** is an east-west roadway that connects Park Center Drive to Cottonwood Avenue. The roadway is classified as a Parkway and provides two travel lanes, one lane in each direction. Walker Trails Drive traverses through the southern portion of the Mast Boulevard Residential Neighborhood.
- **Cottonwood Avenue** has two existing separate segments: the north segment between Palm Glen Drive and Chubb Lane, and the south segment between Las Colinas Detention Facility and Prospect Avenue. Cottonwood Avenue is classified as a Parkway and includes

an undivided two-lane roadway with a posted speed limit of 25 mph and on-street parallel parking provided on both sides of the roadway. There are no bicycle facilities, but sidewalks are provided on both sides of the roadway. Per the Santee General Plan Mobility Element, the roadway is planned to extend the northern segment from its current terminus at Chubb Lane to connect to Riverview Parkway in the eastern part of the AEN.

- **Magnolia Avenue** (from Princess Joann Road north of the TCSP area to Mission Gorge Road at the southeastern corner of the TCSP area) is currently built to its ultimate classification as a four-lane Major Arterial. It is divided by two-way-left-turn lane and has a posted speed limit of 40 mph. Class II bike lanes and sidewalks are provided on both sides of the roadway, with on-street parking permitted intermittently on the east side of the roadway. Housing Element Sites 20A and 20B are located along Magnolia Avenue north of Mission Gorge Road.
- **Riverwalk Drive** is an east-west roadway that connects Cuyamaca Street to Park Center Drive. It is built to its ultimate classification as an undivided two-lane Parkway with on-street parallel parking on both sides of the roadway. There are currently sharrow markings, and sidewalks are provided on both sides of the roadway. Riverwalk Drive has a posted speed limit of 25 mph and occurs in the northern part of the AEN, north of the San Diego River.
- **Mission Gorge Road** is the principal east–west roadway in the City. Within the TCSP area, between Town Center Parkway and Riverview Parkway, it is currently built to its ultimate classification as a divided six-lane Prime Arterial. From Riverview Parkway to Magnolia Avenue, it is classified as a four-lane Major Arterial, however it is currently built as a six-lane roadway with a raised median. The posted speed limit varies between 35 mph and 40 mph, and on-street parking is currently prohibited on both sides of the roadway. No bicycle facilities are provided; however, sidewalks are provided on both sides of the roadway. Mission Gorge Road is the southern boundary of the TCSP area and AEN.

## Public Transit

Transit service throughout the City is provided by the Metropolitan Transit System (MTS), and includes both bus and light rail trolley services as shown on Figure 4.16-1, *TCSP Area Transit Network*. There are currently three intracity bus routes serving the City. Intracity bus routes include routes 832, 833, and 834, which are described below:

- **Route 832** is a loop route running clockwise between Santee Town Center and the northern areas of the City via Cuyamaca Street, Woodglen Vista Drive, Magnolia Avenue, and Mission Gorge Road. Route 832 operates seven days a week with service generally between 6:00 a.m. to 7:20 p.m. during the weekdays and between 8:20 a.m. to 4:20 p.m. during the weekend. Service is as frequent as every 45 minutes during peak periods and is at 1-hour intervals during off-peak periods and weekends.
- **Route 833** is a generally north–south route running between Santee Town Center and the El Cajon Transit Center, via Mission Gorge Road, Magnolia Avenue, Graves Avenue, Pepper Drive, Mollison Avenue, E. Bradley Avenue, Fletcher Parkway, Arnele Avenue, and Marshall Avenue. Route 833 operates generally between 6:20 a.m. to 5:50 p.m. during the weekdays and between 8:50 a.m. to 4:50 p.m. during the weekends. Route 833 runs at approximately 45-minute frequency all-day weekdays and 1-hour frequency on weekends.





Fig4.16-1\_TransitAreaNetwork.indd 01427.00004.001 02/29/2024 - RK

Source: City of Santee 2024



- **Route 834** is a loop route running between Santee Town Center and the western areas of the City. Route 834 runs along Town Center Parkway, Mission Gorge Road, West Hills Parkway, Mast Boulevard, and Carlton Hills Boulevard. Route 834 operates generally between 6:35 a.m. and 6.45 p.m. during the weekday at 1-hour frequencies. There are no services during the weekend.

The City is also served by the San Diego Trolley , with one station located at the Santee Transit Center. The station provides transit access from Santee through connections in El Cajon, La Mesa, and into Mission Valley and downtown San Diego. Headways are approximately 10 to 15 minutes on weekdays and 10 to 30 minutes on weekends. As shown on Figure 4.16-2, *Transit Priority Areas*, most of the TCSP area, including the AEN and Housing Element sites 16A and 16B, are located within one-quarter mile of a transit stop.

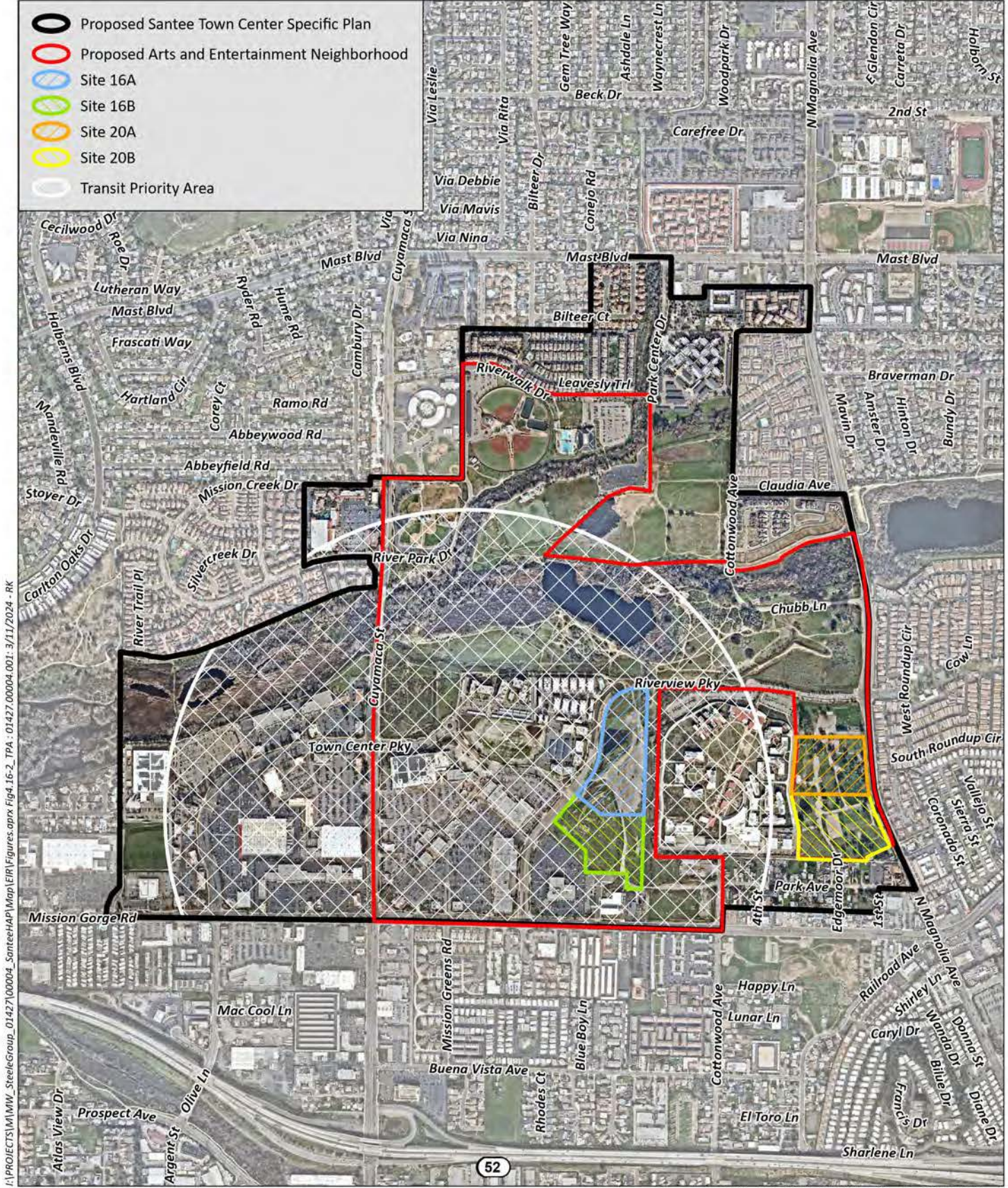
### **Pedestrian and Bicycle Network**

Pedestrian facilities generally include sidewalks, curb ramps, and other amenities such as street trees for shading. There are approximately 1,088,681 linear feet of sidewalks within the City. Bicycle travel has become an integral part of transportation and circulation network planning and is a component of the City's transportation system. The term "bikeway" is used to define lanes designated primarily for safe bicycle travel. There are three classifications of bikeways identified in the City of Santee Mobility Element:

- Class I Bikeway (bike path or trail). Provides a completely separated right-of-way designated for the exclusive use of bicycles. Crossflows of pedestrians and vehicles are minimized.
- Class II Bikeway (bike lane). Provides a restricted right-of-way designated for the exclusive or semi-exclusive use of bicycles. Through travel by motor vehicles or pedestrians is prohibited, though parking and crossflows of pedestrian and motorist traffic are permitted.
- Class III Bikeway (bike route). Provides for a right-of-way designated by signage or permanent markings with shared use of pedestrians and/or motorists.

Bicycle facilities along Town Center Parkway, Park Center Drive, Cottonwood Avenue, Riverview Parkway, Cuyamaca Street and Magnolia Avenue provide local connection, as well as the Class I bicycle path along the San Diego River that provides local and regional connection. As a part of the Santee General Plan Mobility Element, extended bike lanes are planned to connect with existing bicycle facilities on these streets to achieve enhanced connectivity in the City. The majority of the roadways in the TCSP area and the adjacent neighborhoods provide multi-use paths that can be used by both pedestrians and cyclists and are separated from the street and designed along landscaped corridors. The City's current policy is to provide noncontiguous sidewalks on all new and widened streets of collector classification or larger.





I:\PROJECTS\I\MW\_SteelGroup\_01427\00004\_SanteeHAP\Map\EIR\Figures.aprx Fig. 4.16-2\_TPA : 01427.00004.001: 3/11/2024 - RK

Source: Aerial (SanGIS, 2023); TPA (City of Santee 2024, digitized)



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## **4.16.2 Regulatory Framework**

Several existing federal, state, regional, and local plans and programs provide transportation and traffic guidance. Applicable plans are discussed below.

### **4.16.2.1 State**

#### **Senate Bill 375**

SB 375, the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act, was approved in 2008. SB 375 focuses on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, as discussed further in Section 4.6.2. As a part of this effort, this act requires that regional housing needs be addressed in conjunction with regional transportation in order to integrate housing, land use, and transportation planning together. In the San Diego region, this unified regional planning effort is completed by SANDAG via San Diego Forward. SB 375 also requires the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) be completed every eight years and, if a jurisdiction does not meet this requirement, penalties may be incurred. State Transportation Improvement Program

The California State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) is an intermodal program of transportation projects consistent with the statewide transportation plan and planning processes, metropolitan plans, and Title 23 of the Code of Federal Regulations. The STIP was first prepared in 2006 and is added to every two years by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in cooperation with the metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) and the regional transportation planning agencies. The most recent STIP Guidelines were adopted on August 27, 2015. In San Diego County, the MPO and regional transportation planning agency is SANDAG. The STIP contains all capital and non-capital transportation projects or identified phases of transportation projects for funding under the Federal Transit Act and Title 23 of the U.S. Code, including federally funded projects. All projects funded through the STIP in San Diego County are included in the SANDAG Regional Transportation Improvement Program.

#### **Senate Bill 743**

SB 743 (2013) created a process to change the way projects analyze transportation impacts pursuant to CEQA. Previously environmental review of transportation impacts focused on the delay that vehicles experience at intersections and on roadway segments. That delay was measured using a metric known as LOS. Under SB 743, the focus of transportation analysis has shifted from driver delay to reduction of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions, creation of multimodal networks and promotion of a mix of land uses since July 1, 2020. The Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) has amended the CEQA Guidelines to provide an alternative to level of service for evaluating transportation impacts. The alternative criteria must promote the reduction of GHG emissions, the development of multimodal transportation networks, and a diversity of land uses. According to the legislative intent contained in SB 743, these changes were necessary to balance the needs of congestion management more appropriately with statewide goals related to infill development, promotion of public health through active transportation, and reduction of GHG emissions.

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#### **4.16.2.2 Regional**

##### **San Diego Forward**

San Diego Forward (Regional Plan) was adopted by the SANDAG Board of Directors on December 10, 2021. San Diego Forward combines and updates the region's two regional planning documents: the Regional Comprehensive Plan (2004) and the San Diego Forward (2015)/Sustainable Communities Strategy (2011). San Diego Forward provides a vision for the region's growth through the year 2050. The plan reflects a strategy for a sustainable future which includes investing in a transportation network that will provide people more travel choices, protects the environment, creates healthy communities, and stimulates economic growth (SANDAG 2021b). San Diego Forward includes a detailed blueprint for the investment in transportation over the next 35 years. The plan outlines the investment of nearly \$204 billion in year-of expenditure dollars in local, state, and federal dollars to build a comprehensive, interconnected transportation system that provides choices.

##### **Regional Transportation Improvement Program**

The Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) is a multi-year program that includes all proposed major highway, arterial, transit, and non-motorized projects in the region. Improvements to nearly all of the major highways in the San Diego region are included in the 2021 RTIP, adopted by the SANDAG Board of Directors on February 26, 2021. The 2021 RTIP covers fiscal years 2021 through 2025.

#### **4.16.2.3 Local**

##### **City of Santee Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) Analysis Guidelines**

Consistent with SB 743, the Santee City Council approved a resolution adopting its VMT Analysis Guidelines on April 27, 2022 (City 2022d). The guidelines contain thresholds of significance for purposes of analyzing transportation impacts under CEQA. The intent of the VMT Analysis Guidelines is to provide consistency in significance determinations to integrate environmental review with other environmental program planning and regulation.

##### **Active Santee Plan**

The Active Santee Plan (ASP 2021) was prepared as a comprehensive update of the Bicycle Master Plan (2009) of the Santee General Plan and a comprehensive pedestrian plan. The ASP provides a framework for development of the City's bicycle network and pedestrian network. Many of the highest priority segments identified in the ASP have been implemented or are currently being constructed, including segments of the River Trail (City 2017a).

The goal of the ASP is to encourage alternative means of transportation on a regional and community scale. The four overarching goals identified as desired future outcomes for active transportation within the City include:

- A balanced, interconnected multimodal transportation network that allows for the efficient and safe movement of all people and goods, and that supports the current and future needs of Santee community members and travel generated by planned land uses.

- Encourage alternative means of transportation on a regional and community scale for all trip types: work commute, school commute, errands, and recreation.
- Designate the location and the appropriate type of bikeways and paved bicycle trails that would have the greatest potential to serve the commuter and recreational needs of the community of Santee.
- To create an environment that allows for school aged children to safely walk and ride their bicycles to school on convenient and connected networks.

Specific ASP objectives and policies that are relevant to the project are described below:

Objective 1.0: Ensure that the existing and future transportation system is accessible, safe, reliable, efficient, integrated, convenient, well connected, and multi-modal.

- **Policy 1.1:** The City shall provide integrated transportation and land use decisions that enhance smart growth development served by complete streets, which facilitate multimodal transportation opportunities.

Objective 2.0: Upgrade and maintain Santee's transportation corridors to meet the safety needs of all roadway users – including youth and elderly and travelers of varying physical abilities – and to provide a well-connected system throughout the City.

- **Policy 2.3:** The City's pedestrian and bicycle networks should connect to trailheads, in particular at such locations as the San Diego River Trail and at parks and open spaces.
- **Policy 2.4:** Near commuter rail stations, provide access paths to these transit centers to encourage walking and cycling.

Objective 3.0: Develop, maintain, and support a safe, comprehensive, and integrated bikeway system that encourages bicycling.

- **Policy 3.2:** The City shall require new development and redevelopment to provide connections to existing and proposed bicycle routes, where appropriate.

Objective 5.0: Promote bicycle usage.

- **Policy 5.2:** Bicycle racks should be made available at all new or rehabilitated nonresidential developments.
- **Policy 5.3:** The City shall consider every street in Santee as a street that bicyclists will use.
- **Policy 5.4:** Develop a City-wide bicycle map.

Objective 7.0: Develop and maintain an accessible, safe, complete, and convenient pedestrian system that encourages walking.

- **Policy 7.1:** The City should require the incorporation of pedestrian-friendly design concepts where feasible including separated sidewalks and bikeways, landscaped

parkways, traffic calming measures, safe intersection designs and access to transit facilities and services into both public and private developments.

Objective 8.0: Increased use of alternative modes of travel to schools to reduce peak hour vehicular trips, save energy, and improve air quality around schools.

- **Policy 8.2:** The City should improve safety of walking and biking environment around schools to reduce school-related vehicle trips.

In addition to goals, objectives, and policies, the ASP includes recommendations consisting of a planned bicycle network, sidewalk infill and trail accessibility enhancements. The City's planned bicycle network includes three classifications: Bicycle paths (Class 1; should be utilized as much as possible for regional and community trails, but not for those designated on small local streets where traffic volume is minimal); Bicycle lanes (Class 2; should be utilized as necessary links to bicycle paths or local routes where paths are not feasible); and Bicycle routes (Class 3; should be utilized for necessary links or as interim links prior to the implementation of bicycle lanes or paths. Implementation includes signage).

## General Plan

Divided into nine elements, the General Plan is a statement of intent by the City as to the future development of the community. This is accomplished through objectives and policies that serve as a long-term policy guide for physical, economic, and environmental growth.

As one of the mandated elements of the General Plan, the Mobility Element (City 2017a) serves as an update to the General Plan's Circulation Element intended to provide a vision and framework for the development of the City's transportation network through the year 2035, while assuming full buildout of the current General Plan land uses. This update describes existing transportation systems in the City and establishes a plan for a multimodal transportation system. This element is intended to provide for a balanced mobility system that will support travel demands associated with land uses in the Land Use Element while maintaining a high quality of life for the residents of the City and all roadway users.

The goal of the Mobility Element is a balanced, interconnected multimodal transportation network that allows for the efficient and safe movement of all people and goods, and that supports the current and future needs of City community members and travel generated by planned land uses. The relevant objectives and policies are as follows (City 2017a):

### Mobility Element

Objective 1.0: Ensure that the existing and future transportation system is accessible, safe, reliable, efficient, integrated, convenient, well connected, and multimodal. The system will accommodate active transportation, and accommodate people of all ages and abilities, including pedestrians, disabled, bicyclists, users of mass transit, motorists, emergency responders, freight providers, and adjacent land uses.

- **Policy 1.1:** The City shall provide integrated transportation and land use decisions that enhance smart growth development served by complete streets, which facilitate multimodal transportation opportunities.



- **Policy 1.2:** The City should design streets in a manner that is sensitive to the local context and recognizes that needs vary between mixed use, urban, suburban, and rural settings.

Objective 2.0: Develop an efficient, safe, and multimodal transportation network, consisting of local roads, collectors, arterials, freeways, and transit services, in a manner that promotes the health and mobility of Santee residents and that meets future circulation needs, provides access to all sectors of the City, and supports established and planned land uses.

- **Policy 2.1:** The City shall encourage an automobile LOS “D” on street segments and at intersections throughout the circulation network while also maintaining or improving the effectiveness of the nonautomotive components of the circulation system (i.e., pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transit), especially in the Santee Town Center area. The City may approve a lower automobile LOS if it finds that the effectiveness of nonautomotive components of the circulation system would be maintained or improved as a result.
- **Policy 2.2:** The City should ensure adequate accessibility for all modes to the northern undeveloped area of the City by designating a functional network of public streets for future dedication either prior to, or concurrent with anticipated need.
- **Policy 2.7:** The City should coordinate with Caltrans, SANDAG, MTS [Metropolitan Transit System], and other responsible agencies to identify, plan, and implement needed transportation improvements.

Objective 7.0: Develop, maintain, and support a safe, comprehensive, and integrated bikeway system that encourages bicycling, as documented in the City’s Bicycle Master Plan.

- **Policy 7.4:** The City should require new development and redevelopment to provide connections to existing and proposed bicycle routes, where appropriate.

Objective 8.0: Develop and maintain an accessible, safe, complete, and convenient pedestrian system that encourages walking.

- **Policy 8.1:** The City should require the incorporation of pedestrian-friendly design concepts where feasible including separated sidewalks and bikeways, landscaped parkways, traffic calming measures, safe intersection designs and access to transit facilities and services into both public and private developments.

### 4.16.3 Significance Determination Thresholds

Consistent with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, impacts related to transportation would be significant if implementation of the project would:

- 1) Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities.
- 2) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b).
- 3) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment).

- 4) Result in inadequate emergency access.

#### 4.16.4 Methodology

Traffic impacts related to VMT are assessed for land use development projects, as well as transportation projects, including roadway capacity projects. Lead agencies have the discretion to establish their preferred significance thresholds to determine the level of VMT increase that would result in a significant environmental impact. The City established their transportation based significance thresholds through the City of Santee VMT Analysis Guidelines (VMT Analysis Guidelines) on April 27, 2022. The analysis below relies on the significance thresholds from the VMT Analysis Guidelines to determine if the project would be consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b).

#### Land Use Development Projects

Table 4.16-1, *City of Santee VMT Significance Thresholds*, summarizes the significance thresholds for land use projects, as identified in the VMT Analysis Guidelines.

**Table 4.16-1  
CITY OF SANTEE VMT SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLDS**

Land Use	Metric	Threshold
Residential	VMT/Capita	15% below the City average VMT/Capita
General Employment	VMT/Employee	15% below the regional average VMT/Employee
Industrial Employment	VMT/Employee	At or below regional average VMT/Employee
Mixed Use	VMT/Capita and VMT/Employee	Each project component is evaluated per the appropriate metric based on land use type (e.g., residential, employment, and retail)
Regional Retail, Recreation, or Public Facilities	Total VMT	A net increase in total regional VMT using the boundary method

Source: City of Santee VMT Analysis Guidelines (City of Santee 2022d).

The VMT Analysis Guidelines outline the analysis methods, significance thresholds, and screening criteria which the City uses to identify VMT related impacts under CEQA Section 15064.3(b). Per the guidelines, a VMT assessment includes a project screening as a first step to see if a full VMT assessment would be required; if a project cannot be screened out, a full VMT analysis is required. Screening criteria considers land use development projects located within a half-mile radius of an existing major transit stop or an existing stop along a high-quality transit corridor<sup>1</sup> may be presumed to have a less-than-significant impact absent substantial evidence to the contrary. As noted in the VMT Analysis Guidelines Section 2.2, transportation VMT analysis for CEQA should be conducted using the SANDAG Regional Travel Demand Model. The model outputs can be used to produce VMT/Capita, VMT/Employee, and Total VMT. For land use development projects, the VMT Analysis Guidelines indicate that the following two metrics be used to determine if a project has a significant transportation related VMT impact.

<sup>1</sup> Section 21064.3 of the California Public resources defines “Major transit stop” as a site containing an existing rail transit station, a ferry terminal served by either a bus or rail transit service, or the intersection of two or more major bus routes with a frequency of service interval of 15 minutes or less during the morning and afternoon peak commute periods. High quality transit corridor: a corridor with fixed route bus service with service intervals no longer than 15 minutes during peak commute periods.

1. **VMT/Capita:** Includes all vehicle-based person trips grouped and summed to the home location of individuals who are drivers or passengers on each trip, both home-based and non-homebased. The VMT for each home is then summed for all homes in a particular census tract and divided by the population of that census tract to arrive at VMT/Capita.
2. **VMT/Employee:** Includes all vehicle-based person trips grouped and summed to the work location of individuals on the trip. This includes all trips, not just work-related trips. The VMT for each work location is then summed for all work locations in a particular census tract and then divided by the total number of employees of that census tract to arrive at the VMT/Employee.

### **Transportation/Roadway Capacity Projects**

State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 indicates that a VMT analysis should also be conducted for transportation projects, including roadway capacity projects. The VMT Analysis Guidelines specifies that projects that result in an increase in additional motor vehicle capacity (such as constructing a new roadway or adding more vehicle travel lanes to an existing roadway) have the potential to increase vehicle travel, referred to as “induced vehicle travel.” The VMT Analysis Guidelines identifies a list of transportation projects that “would not lead to a substantial or measurable increase in vehicle travel, and therefore generally should not require an induced travel analysis.” The transportation improvements screening criteria used to screen and evaluate the project is listed below.

- Addition of roadway capacity on local or collector streets, provided the project also substantially improves conditions for pedestrians, cyclists, and, if applicable, transit
- Closing gaps in the transportation network in conformance with the Mobility Element of the General Plan where the project also substantially improves conditions for pedestrians, cyclists, and, if applicable, transit
- Reduction in number of through lanes
- Installation of roundabouts, or traffic circles
- Installation or reconfiguration of traffic calming devices
- Removal or relocation of off-street or on-street parking spaces
- Adoption or modification of on-street parking or loading restrictions (including meters, time limits, accessible spaces, and preferential/reserved parking permit programs)
- Addition of new or enhanced bike or pedestrian facilities on existing streets/highways or within existing public rights-of-way
- Addition of Class I bike paths, trails, multi-use paths, or other off-road facilities that serve nonmotorized travel

#### **4.16.5 Issue 1: Circulation System**

*Would the project conflict with a plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities?*

##### **4.16.5.1 Impact Analysis**

###### **TCSP Area and AEN**

The City's Circulation Element of the General Plan guides the overall circulation system in the City. The circulation system in the TCSP area and AEN is guided by the TCSP, which implements the City's Circulation Element. Project approval would involve amendments to the City's General Plan and Zoning Ordinance and the proposed changes to the TCSP circulation system would remain the guiding policy document. The ASP, which was formerly the Bicycle Master Plan, is also a planning document that addresses bicycling opportunities throughout the City.

The proposed TCSP includes a long-range plan to provide circulation throughout the TCSP area and AEN for various modes of transportation, and identifies specific roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities improvements. As shown on Figures 3-5 and 3-6, improvements including bike lanes and multi-use pathways are identified along portions of existing Cuyamaca Street and Riverview Parkway. New roadway connections along Riverview Parkway, Cottonwood Avenue, Main Street, and Park Center Drive extensions and improvements are also identified and would close gaps in the existing transportation network (see Figure 3-7). The proposed project improvements to the circulation system would become part of the TCSP and would guide future improvements to the circulation system. The City's Mobility Element includes Objective 1.0 and Policy 1.1, which specifies that the City shall provide integrated transportation and land use decisions that enhance smart growth development served by complete streets. The bike lane improvements would also support the ASP by increasing bicycling opportunities throughout the TCSP area.

The project would provide a roadway network within the TCSP area that is consistent with the City's Mobility Element and result in improved pedestrian, bicycle, and transit amenities, and foster increased safety for all forms of transportation by providing transportation improvements that would serve all types of travel modes. Thus, impacts related to conflicts with an adopted plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system would be less than significant for the TCSP and AEN.

###### **Housing Element Sites**

Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B are located in the AEN and the introduction of new residents and commercial business would have some effect on the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities. While future development of the Housing Element sites may not require subsequent discretionary approvals or environmental review (if the project is consistent with the TCSP), they would at the least be subject to a ministerial review that would include consistency with the City's Public Works Standards. Per SMC Section 13.11.010 eligible by-right housing projects must comply with all objective development standards and all applicable design, performance, improvement and development standards of the Santee Municipal Code, Santee Town Center Specific Plan, applicable Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Programs and the Santee General Plan. Where applicable, projects are required to obtain regulatory permits and/or clearances as required by state or Federal law, including, but not limited from agencies such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency

(FEMA), the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), the United States Fish and Wildlife Agency, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the San Diego Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC), and the State Water Resources Control Board. The City's Engineering Division review would ensure individual projects include appropriate frontage requirements to ensure consistency with the City's Mobility Element and the ASP. Pedestrian and bicycle improvements necessary to meet City Public Work Standards could include providing sidewalks and landscape buffers, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility requirements, and other improvements that would support bicycle, pedestrian, and transit accessibility. To support implementation of these requirements, the project includes objective design and performance standards that would be implemented during the review process for future ministerial development. The standards include a requirement that project applicants shall make roadway improvements along the project frontage including adjoining intersections in accordance with the Mobility Element.

Regarding transit, future development of the Housing Element sites would be consistent with Policy 2.2 of the City's General Plan Land Use Element, which encourages the development of higher density residential developments in areas close to the multi-modal transit station (at Santee Town Center near Housing Element Sites 16A and 16B) and along major road corridors where transit and other convenience services are available (at Magnolia Avenue near Housing Element sites 20A and 20B). Refer to Figure 3-7 for the location of transit including bus stops and the trolley stop at the Santee Town Center in relation to the Housing Element sites. As shown, the project would add density in locations proximate to transit, providing consistency with City policies. No aspects of the projects would conflict with existing transit routes or planned services. Therefore, the project would not conflict with an adopted plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system and impacts would be less than significant for the four Housing Element sites.

#### **4.16.5.2 Mitigation Measures**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

No mitigation is required.

#### **4.16.5.3 Significance After Mitigation**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

#### **4.16.6 Issue 2: Vehicle Miles Traveled**

*Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?*

##### **4.16.6.1 Impact Analysis**

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 requires that the determination of significance for transportation impacts be based on VMT instead of a congestion metric such as LOS. The change in the focus of transportation analysis is the result of SB 743. Specific types of transportation projects that are not presumed to significantly increase vehicle travel are listed in the City's VMT Analysis Guidelines (adopted on April 27, 2022) as screening criteria.

## Land Use Development Projects

### TCSP Area

According to the City VMT Analysis Guidelines and CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3(b)(1), land development projects located within ½ mile of a major transit stop are assumed to have a less than significant VMT-related impact. As shown in Figure 4.16-2, much of the TCSP is located within a transit-accessible area/transit priority area (TPA). The MTS maintains a transit station in the Santee Trolley Square and provides high-quality rail transit between the City of Santee and Downtown San Diego. Therefore, planned development in the TCSP area that is located within a TPA is presumed to have a less than significant VMT-related impact.

For areas of the TCSP area that are not within a TPA and do not meet other screening VMT criteria, such as the Mast Boulevard Residential Neighborhood and the new residential on the west side of Town Center Commercial Neighborhood, a VMT analysis was conducted. Table 4.16-2, *VMT Analysis – TCSP Area*, evaluates the VMT per capita in which the TCSP area is anticipated to generate, and compares it to the City's significance threshold to identify if the Housing Element sites would have a significant VMT related impact.

**Table 4.16-2  
VMT ANALYSIS– TCSP AREA**

Metric	Residential Uses VMT/Capita (miles/person)	
	Mast Boulevard Residential Neighborhood	Town Center Commercial Neighborhood
City Average	20.8 <sup>1</sup>	
Significant Impact Threshold <sup>2</sup>	17.7	
Proposed Project	17.8 <sup>3</sup>	20.1 <sup>4</sup>
Proposed Project vs Significant Impact Threshold	.01 miles over	2.4 miles over
Significant Impact?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>

Notes:

<sup>1</sup> City of Santee Average source: SANDAG Series 14 Year 2016 Model (Scenario ID 458).

<sup>2</sup> City/Regional Average × 85 percent (See Section 4.16.4)

<sup>3</sup> San Diego Regional Average source: SANDAG Series 14 Year 2016 Model (Scenario ID 458). Census Tract 166.15

<sup>4</sup> San Diego Regional Average source: SANDAG Series 14 Year 2016 Model (Scenario ID 458). Census Tract 166.14

As shown in Table 4.16-2, the VMT per capita is higher than the significance threshold of the citywide average for the Mast Boulevard Residential Neighborhoods and Town Center Commercial Neighborhood, resulting in a VMT significant impact. Implementation of the “VMT Reduction” Objective Design Standard in *Chapter 2, Land Use* of the TCSP as described in MM-TRA-1 would be required.

### AEN

As shown in Figure 4.16-2, planned development in the AEN is mostly within a TPA (except for Housing Element Sites 20A and 20B). Therefore, future development in the AEN, except Housing Element sites 20A and 20B as discussed below, is presumed to result in a less than significant transportation impact related to inconsistencies with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 subdivision (b).



### Housing Element Sites 16A and 16B

Housing Element sites 16A and 16B are located within a within ½ mile of a major transit stop at the transit station in the Santee Trolley Square. Therefore, future development in Housing Element sites 16A and 16B is presumed to result in a less than significant transportation impact related to inconsistencies with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 subdivision (b).

### Housing Element Sites 20A and 20B

Housing Element sites 20A and 20B are outside of a TPA; therefore, a VMT analysis was conducted. Table 4.16-3, *VMT Analysis – Housing Element Sites 20A and 20B*, evaluates the VMT per capita in which the Housing Element sites are anticipated to generate, and compares it to the City’s significance threshold to identify if Housing Element sites 20A and 20B would have a significant VMT related impact.

**Table 4.16-3  
VMT ANALYSIS– HOUSING ELEMENT SITES 20A AND 20B**

<b>Metric</b>	<b>VMT/Capita (miles/person)</b>
City Average	20.8 <sup>1</sup>
Significant Impact Threshold <sup>2</sup>	17.7
Proposed Project	17.8 <sup>3</sup>
Proposed Project vs Significant Impact Threshold	0.1 miles over
Significant Impact?	<b>Yes</b>

Notes:

<sup>1</sup> City of Santee Average source: SANDAG Series 14 Year 2016 Model (Scenario ID 458).

<sup>2</sup> City/Regional Average × 85 percent (See Section 4.16.4)

<sup>3</sup> San Diego Regional Average source: SANDAG Series 14 Year 2016 Model (Scenario ID 458). Census Tract 166.15

As shown in Table 4.16-3, Housing Element sites 20A and 20B are anticipated to generate a VMT per capita that is above the City’s significance threshold, and therefore, a significant VMT related impact would occur. Implementation of the “VMT Reduction” Objective Design Standard in Chapter 2, Land Use of the TCSP, as described in MM-TRA-1, would be required.

## **Transportation Projects**

### TCSP Area and AEN

The project includes several transportation projects including adding new multi-use pathways and bike routes to existing roadways, as well as identifying roadway connections throughout the TCSP area and AEN. The TCSP identifies improvements along portions of existing Cuyamaca Street and Riverview Parkway, and identifies new roadway connections including Riverview Parkway, Cottonwood Avenue, Main Street, and Walker Trails Drive. The roadway improvements on Cuyamaca Street and Riverview Parkway would contribute to the multimodal transportation network by providing new bicycle and pedestrian facilities on those roadways, which would promote non-auto use. Additionally, the proposed roadway connections along Riverview Parkway, Cottonwood Avenue, Main Street, and Walker Trails Drive would provide direct connections through the TCSP area and AEN, as well as onto major arterial roadways and would improve traffic congestion in the area. Per the City’s VMT Analysis Guidelines, the transportation projects identified in the TCSP meet the screening criteria of “closing gaps in the transportation

network” and/or “adding new or enhanced bicycle or pedestrian facilities on existing streets” and are presumed not to increase vehicle travel.

Since the transportation projects identified in the TCSP area and AEN are intended to increase pedestrian and bicycle safety and connection within the area, the proposed transportation projects would not result in an increase in VMT, and traffic impacts related to inconsistencies with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 subdivision (b) would be less than significant for the transportation projects identified within the TCSP and AEN.

### Housing Element Sites

None of the Housing Element sites would include transportation projects as these are specific development areas that would be individually developed within the developable areas of each site and would not include new roadway connections or other improvements to major arterial roadways. As there are no transportation projects associated with the Housing Element sites, traffic impacts related to transportation projects and inconsistencies with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 subdivision (b) would be less than significant.

#### **4.16.6.2 Mitigation Measures**

##### **Land Use Development Projects**

##### TCSP Area and Housing Element Sites 20A and 20B(excluding Housing Element Sites 16A and 16B)

**TRA-1** For development projects located outside of a TPA that both: do not meet other VMT screening criteria and exceed VMT thresholds established by the City, the City shall require implementation of applicable Mobility Element Policies that would support VMT reductions for individual projects. Specifically, the City shall require that future projects are compliant with Mobility Element Policies 9.1 through 9.5, which encourage the use of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies, such as ride sharing programs, flexible work schedule programs, and incentives for employees to use transit. Additionally, alternative transportation modes, such as walking, cycling and public transit are encouraged to reduce peak hour vehicular trips, save energy, and improve air quality. Sample TDM measures that may be applied at the project-level are provided below:

- Increase mixed-use development
- Increase transit accessibility
- Provide pedestrian network improvement along project frontage
- Provide bicycle network improvement along project frontage
- Provide bicycle parking and bike lockers
- Implement subsidized or discounted transit passes
- Provide rider-sharing programs

- Implement commute trip reduction marketing
- Implement school pool program
- Implement bike-sharing or micro mobility program
- Provide local shuttle to connect visitors to different attractions throughout the City

Additional measures can be found in the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association Quantifying Greenhouse Gas Mitigation Measures report (<https://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/ceqa/handbook/capcoa-quantifying-greenhouse-gas-mitigation-measures.pdf>). Mitigation measures should be consistent with the City's Active Transportation Plan

#### AEN and Housing Element Sites 16A and 16B

No mitigation is required.

#### **Transportation Projects**

##### TCSP Area, AEN and Housing Element Sites

No mitigation is required.

#### **4.16.6.3 Significance After Mitigation**

##### **Land Use Development Projects**

##### TCSP Area and Housing Element Sites 20A and 20B

Implementation of MM-TRA-1 as part of future projects reviews would potentially reduce VMT per capita. However, the effectiveness of VMT reducing measures is context-sensitive and would vary depending on project details, such as the location, access to transit, etc. At a program level of review with no specific development proposals available for review, it is not guaranteed that each individual project would be able to fully mitigate the potential impacts. While MM-TRA-1 would minimize VMT impacts associated with future development, impacts would not be fully mitigated. Therefore, impacts associated with VMT would remain significant and unavoidable.

#### AEN and Housing Element Sites 16A and 16B

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

#### **Transportation Projects**

##### TCSP Area, AEN and Housing Element Sites

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

### **4.16.7 Issue 3: Hazards Due to a Design Feature**

*Would the project substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?*

#### **4.16.7.1 Impact Analysis**

##### **TCSP Area and AEN**

As discussed above in Sections 4.16.5 and 4.16.6, the project includes several transportation improvement projects related to multi-use pathways, bike lanes, and roadways. These improvements are designed to enhance existing connections in the area to improve accessibility, encourage the use of multi-modal facilities, and decrease conflict between vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians. Specific plans have not been prepared for the transportation improvements in the TCSP area and AEN; however, all future development would be subject to policies set forth in the Mobility Element of the General Plan and designed in accordance with the City's Public Works Standards. Final plans for the proposed transportation infrastructure designs would be subject to review and approval by the City's Engineering Division prior to construction which would include a review for design safety. Implementation of the project would not result in hazards due to a design feature and impacts in the TCSP area and AEN would be less than significant.

##### **Housing Element Sites**

Development of Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B may require improvements to the existing roadway network at the time plans are prepared for their development. These improvements would be subject to an engineering review to ensure roads and access are configured consistent with established roadway design standards. Development projects on Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B would be subject to a ministerial review that would include consistency with the City's Public Works Standards. The Engineering Division review would consider the potential for design hazards and that improvements are designed consistent with established standards. Impacts related to hazards due to a design feature would be less than significant for the four Housing Element sites.

#### **4.16.7.2 Mitigation Measures**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

No mitigation is required.

#### **4.16.7.3 Significance After Mitigation**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

**4.16.8 Issue 4: Emergency Access**

*Would the project result in inadequate emergency access?*

**4.16.8.1 Impact Analysis****TCSP Area and AEN**

The project includes the development of transportation infrastructure projects that would physically alter the existing roadway network. Transportation infrastructure improvements may include narrowing or widening of roadways, adding bike paths and/or bike lanes to road rights-of-way, and connecting existing roadways that may alter existing circulation patterns or points of emergency vehicle access within the TCSP area and AEN. The improvements would involve connections to existing gaps in the transportation network, such as on Riverview Parkway, Cottonwood Avenue, Main Street, and Park Center Drive. Extending these roadways would create a more comprehensive transportation network by providing more direct connections between Town Center area and the adjacent residential neighborhood, and therefore, would improve overall emergency access in the TCSP area and AEN.

In addition, future development would result in new residential dwelling units and new or expanded visitor-serving development including, but not limited to, retail shops, commercial recreational uses, restaurants, and parks. The construction of these future development projects could result in certain elements, such as driveways, access roads, barriers, parking lot, or other circulation-related features that could potentially affect emergency access. However, all future development projects that may occur with the TCSP area would be subject to review by the City's Fire Department, which reviews projects for sufficient emergency access for fire trucks and other emergency vehicles. Thus, all future development projects would be reviewed for certain elements such as width of egress/ingress to ensure the driveways and other access points would be properly sized to allow emergency vehicle access and turn-around, if necessary. In addition, transportation infrastructure improvements would be constructed in compliance with all applicable standards, including City's Public Work Standards. Therefore, compliance with the applicable regulations and review requirements would ensure that future development within the TCSP area and AEN under the proposed project would not result in inadequate emergency access.

**Housing Elements Sites**

Development of Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B may require improvements to the existing roadway network at the time plans are prepared for their development which could affect emergency access. As stated above for the TCSP Area and AEN, all improvements would be subject to an engineering review to ensure roads and access are configured consistent with established roadway design standards. Development projects on Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B would be subject to a ministerial review by the City's Fire Department to provide adequate emergency access. Impacts related to inadequate emergency access would be less than significant within the four Housing Element sites.

**4.16.8.2 Mitigation Measures****TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

No mitigation is required.

### **4.16.8.3 Significance After Mitigation**

#### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.



## 4.17 Tribal Cultural Resources

The following sections analyze the potential environmental impacts that may occur to tribal cultural resources as a result of the proposed project.

### 4.17.1 Existing Conditions

#### 4.17.1.1 Terminology

Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 21074(a) defines tribal cultural resources as either of the following:

- (1) Sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are either of the following:
  - (A) Included or determined to be eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources.
  - (B) Included in a local register of historical resources as defined in subdivision (k) of Section 5020.1.
- (2) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Section 5024.1 for the purposes of this paragraph, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

PRC Section 21074 further states that a cultural landscape that meets the criteria above is a tribal cultural resource to the extent that the landscape is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape. A historical resource, unique archaeological resource, or a nonunique archaeological resource may also be a tribal cultural resource if it conforms with the criteria above.

#### 4.17.1.2 Cultural Setting

Please refer to Section 4.5 of this EIR for a full discussion regarding the existing cultural and historical setting of the project area.

#### 4.17.1.3 Tribal Cultural Resources

The following information is from the cultural resources report prepared for the proposed project and attached as Appendix D of this EIR.

The project area is located within the traditional territory of the Kumeyaay people, also known as Ipai, Tipai, or Diegueño (named for Mission San Diego de Alcalá). At the time of Spanish contact, Yuman-speaking Kumeyaay bands occupied southern San Diego and southwestern Imperial counties and northern Baja California. The Kumeyaay are a group of exogamous, patrilineal territorial bands that lived in semi-sedentary, politically autonomous villages or rancherías. Most rancherías were the seat of a clan, although it is thought that, aboriginally, some clans had more than one ranchería, and some rancherías contained more than one clan. Several sources indicate that large Kumeyaay villages or rancherías were located in river valleys and along the shoreline

of coastal estuaries. They subsisted on a hunting and foraging economy, exploiting San Diego's diverse ecology throughout the year; coastal bands exploited marine resources, while inland bands might move from the desert, ripe with agave and small game, to the acorn and pine-nut-rich mountains in the fall.

At the time of Spanish colonization in the late 1700s, several major Kumeyaay villages were located in proximity to the study area. The closest of these settlements was the village of Micheagua, located along the San Diego River east of Mission Gorge and possibly within and immediately adjacent to the project area. Archaeological site CA-SDI-5669, located partially within the project area and extending to the east of the Town Center Specific Plan (TCSP) area, has been recently suggested as the possible location of this village. Other nearby villages include the village of Nipaguay, located along the north side of the San Diego River approximately eight miles southwest of the project area, at the second and final location of the Mission San Diego de Alcalá; the village of Cosoy, located approximately 13 miles to the southwest of the project area along the San Diego River near the location of the San Diego Presidio and the first location of the Mission San Diego de Alcalá; and the village of Jamo (Rinconada), located approximately 14 miles to the west of the study area, where the Rose Canyon drainage enters into Mission Bay. These latter two village locations (Cosoy and Jamo) were documented as inhabited at the inception of Spanish colonization when they were visited by the Spanish during the initial Portolá expedition in 1769.

Some native speakers referred to river valleys as oon-ya, meaning trail or road, describing one of the main routes linking the interior of San Diego with the coast; the floodplain from the Mission San Diego de Alcalá to the ocean was hajir or qajir. Inland travel in prehistoric times along major drainages, such as the San Diego River and its tributaries, may reflect coastal Kumeyaay bands accessing inland resources such as outcrops of metavolcanic and quartz toolstone, and/or vegetal resources such as seeds from grassland and sage scrub habitats adjacent to the river and acorns from riparian and oak woodland habitats along the river as well as the bedrock outcrops needed to process these vegetal foodstuffs. It is also likely that the Kumeyaay people used the San Diego River valley and some of its larger tributaries as travel corridors from interior coastal plain areas to and from villages located along, and at the mouth of, the San Diego River, such as Nipaguay, Micheagua, Cosoy, and Jamo, as well as other villages along the coast to the north of the river and the study area, such as Ystagua and Onap.

## **4.17.2 Regulatory Framework**

### **4.17.2.1 Federal**

See Section 4.5.2.1 for a discussion of federal cultural resources regulations. Cultural resources listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) may also be considered tribal cultural resources.

### **4.17.2.2 State**

See Section 4.5.2.2 for a discussion of California's cultural resources regulations. Cultural resources listed in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) may also be considered tribal cultural resources. PRC Section 5097.98 provides the specific procedure to follow if human remains are determined to be of Native American origin.

**Senate Bill (SB) 18**

SB 18, the Traditional Tribal Cultural Places Bill of 2004, requires local governments to consult with Native American tribes during the project planning process, specifically before adopting or amending a General Plan or a Specific Plan, or when designating land as open space for the purpose of protecting Native American cultural places. The intent of this legislation is to encourage consultation and assist in the preservation of Native American places of prehistoric, archaeological, cultural, spiritual, and ceremonial importance. Through consultation required under SB 18, governments should develop appropriate and dignified treatment of identified cultural resources.

**Assembly Bill 52**

AB 52, effective July 1, 2015, introduced tribal cultural resources as a class of cultural resources and additional considerations relating to Native American consultation into the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). As such, a project that would have an adverse effect on a significant tribal cultural resource would have a significant impact under CEQA. See Section 4.17.1.1 for the definition of a tribal cultural resource provided by PRC Section 21074. AB 52 also established a government-to-government consultation process for consultation between lead agencies and Native American tribes for projects subject to CEQA that are not subject to consultation under SB 18.

**PRC Section 21074**

PRC Section 21074 provides a definition of tribal cultural resources as either of the following:

1. Sites features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are either of the following:
  - a. Included or determined to be eligible for inclusion in the CRHR.
  - b. Included in a local register of historical resources as defined in subdivision (k) of Section 5020.1.
2. A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Section 5024.1 for the purposes of this paragraph, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

This PRC Section also states that a cultural landscape that meets the criteria above is a tribal cultural resource to the extent that the landscape is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape. Furthermore, a historical resource described in Section 21084.1, a unique archaeological resource as defined in subdivision (g) of Section 21083.2, or a “nonunique archaeological resource” as defined in subdivision (h) of Section 21083.2 may also be a tribal cultural resource if it conforms with the criteria above.

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### **PRC Section 5020.1(k)**

PRC Section 5020.1(k) provides a definition of “local register of historical resources” as a list of properties officially designated or recognized as historically significant by a local government pursuant to a local ordinance or resolution.

### **PRC Section 5024.1**

PRC Section 5024.1 establishes the CRHR and defines the criteria for listing on the CRHR. For listing in the CRHR, a historical resource must be significant at the local, state, or national level under one or more of the following four criteria:

- Criterion 1: It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California’s history and cultural heritage.
- Criterion 2: It is associated with the lives of persons important in our past.
- Criterion 3: It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction; represents the work of an important creative individual; or possesses high artistic values.
- Criterion 4: It has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory.

#### **4.17.2.3 Local**

The City of Santee’s (City) General Plan policies related to tribal cultural resources and criteria for listing of resources in the local register are provided in Section 4.5.2.3.

#### **4.17.3 Significance Determination Thresholds**

Thresholds used to evaluate potential tribal cultural resources impacts are based on applicable criteria in CEQA Guidelines Appendix G. A significant tribal cultural resources impact could occur if implementation of the proposed project would:

- 1) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in PRC Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:
  - i. Listed or eligible for listing in the CRHR, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in PRC Section 5020.1(k); or
  - ii. A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of PRC Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of PRC Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

#### 4.17.4 Methodology

In addition to the records search, historic aerial photograph and map review, and pedestrian survey described in Chapter 4.5, *Cultural Resources*, the cultural resources study included a Sacred Lands File search and Native American outreach that contributed to the assessment of potential tribal cultural resources impacts.

The NAHC was contacted in May of 2022 for a Sacred Lands File search and a list of Native American contacts for the project area. The response received from the NAHC was positive for the presence of sacred lands within the project vicinity. HELIX sent letters on October 2, 2023 to the 16 tribal contacts listed by the NAHC for this project. A total of four tribes responded to these outreach invitations. The San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians and the Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians requested government-to-government consultation. The Barona Band of Mission Indians requested to receive the results of the cultural resources study and be kept apprised of any updates. Finally, the Jamul Indian Village deferred to closer tribes. The Barona Band of Mission Indians noted that the San Diego is a known use area and has the potential for intact buried cultural deposits.

The project requires the opportunity for Tribes to engage in formal government-to-government consultation with the City under AB 52 and SB 18. The City sent letters inviting the appropriate tribes to consult under AB 52 and SB 18 on January 31, 2024. The Campo Band of Mission Indians requested consultation on February 26, 2024 and no other tribes requested consultation. On March 18, 2024, the City provided the Cultural Report and Confidential Appendices for the subject Town Center Specific Plan update being prepared based on the request for consultation. A follow up email regarding the status of consultation was sent by the City to the Campo Band of Mission Indians on April 29, 2024. No additional requests for information or consultation were received by the City for the project and government-to-government consultation for the project under AB 52 and SB 18 is concluded.

#### 4.17.5 Issue 1: Historical Resources

*Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in PRC Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is listed or eligible for listing in the CRHR, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in PRC Section 5020.1(k)?*

##### 4.17.5.1 Impact Analysis

###### TCSP Area and AEN

While the TCSP and AEN do not specifically propose alteration of a known tribal cultural resource, it can be assumed that future development within the TCSP area could have the potential to directly or indirectly impact resources through such activities. Because site-specific details of future projects are not known at this program-level of analysis, impacts to tribal cultural resources would be considered potentially significant. The implementation of mitigation measures CUL-1, CUL-2, CUL-3, and CUL-4 will reduce these impacts to less than significant.

## Housing Element Sites

Although no specific tribal cultural resources have been identified in the Housing Element sites, the presence of historical resources throughout the TCSP area suggests that there is a potential for encountering previously unidentified tribal cultural resources. Future development of sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B therefore has the potential to cause substantial adverse changes to tribal cultural resources, as described in Section 4.5.5.1. The implementation of mitigation measures CUL-2, CUL-3, and CUL-4 will reduce these impacts to a less than significant level.

### 4.17.5.2 Mitigation Measures

#### TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites

Mitigation is proposed for the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites, as described above. Mitigation measures CUL-1 through CUL-4 would be required to reduce impacts to a less than significant level.

### 4.17.5.3 Significance After Mitigation

#### TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites

Potentially significant impacts to historical resources would be mitigated through the application of mitigation measures CUL-1 through CUL-4. Impacts would be reduced to a less than significant level.

### 4.17.6 Issue 2: Significant Resource per PRC Section 5024.1

*Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in PRC Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is a resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of PRC Section 5024.1? In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of PRC Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.*

#### 4.17.6.1 Impact Analysis

#### TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites

As previously described, the NAHC Sacred Lands File search was positive for the presence of sacred lands within the project vicinity. In addition, the San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians and the Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians requested government-to-government consultation. The Barona Band of Mission Indians requested to receive the results of the cultural resources study and be kept apprised of any updates. Finally, the Jamul Indian Village deferred to closer tribes. The Barona Band of Mission Indians noted that the San Diego is a known use area and has the potential for intact buried cultural deposits. Through formal consultation under SB 18 and AB 52, no formal tribal cultural resources were specifically identified. However, given the presence of sacred lands in the project vicinity and the potential for tribal cultural resources to underly the project site, ground-disturbing activities associated with project construction have the potential to cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of tribal cultural resources. The



implementation of mitigation measures CUL-1, CUL-2, CUL-3, and CUL-4 will reduce these impacts to less than significant.

#### **4.17.6.2 Mitigation Measures**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Mitigation measures CUL-1 through CUL-4, as identified in Section 4.4.5.1 provide for the presence of archaeological and Native American monitors during ground-disturbing activities that would be able to identify any previously unidentified cultural resources, to prevent inadvertent disturbance of any intact cultural deposits that may be present. Should any resources be identified, implementation of mitigation measures CUL-1 through CUL-4 would ensure proper handling and treatment of such resources by providing for a proper evaluation to determine whether additional archaeological work is necessary. Mitigation measures CUL-1 through CUL-4 also provide additional protections for significant resources and describe the process for proper treatment and handling to ensure impacts are minimized.

#### **4.17.6.3 Significance After Mitigation**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

With implementation of mitigation measures CUL-1 through CUL-4, impacts to tribal cultural resources would be less than significant.

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## 4.18 Utilities and Service Systems

This section analyzes potential impacts to public utilities (water [demand and supply], storm drain, wastewater, solid waste disposal, and energy) that could result from implementation of the proposed project. A Water Supply Assessment prepared in July 2024 for the project is contained in Appendix H of this Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

### 4.18.1 Existing Conditions

#### 4.18.1.1 Current and Projected Water Use Demands

Padre Dam Municipal Water District (PDMWD; District) is the service provider for the City of Santee (City). One hundred percent of PDMWD's potable water supply is imported through the San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA). The SDCWA is one of 26 Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (Metropolitan) member agencies (PDMWD 2021).

Table 4.18-1, *Retail: Total Gross Water Use (Potable and Non-Potable)*, contains the 2020 actual and future projected potable water demands within and outside of the District boundaries from 2025 through 2045. As shown in Table 4.18-1, the District potable water demand is anticipated to increase to 17,176 AFY by year 2045. It is noted that as temperatures rise due to global climate changes, water demands from various types of users will likely increase. The altered climate patterns in California creating hotter days and longer heat waves will increase customer water use and evaporative water losses. The combination of a long-term reduction in water supply availability with a long-term increase in water demand and higher summer demand peaks will increase pressure on the District and SDCWA to meet demands (PDMWD 2024).

Conservation measures assist in reduction of demand. The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) developed mandates for the State of California to conserve water due to the increase in drought frequency. Four methods were developed by DWR for agencies to calculate target water use in compliance with Senate Bill X7-7. The District utilizes Method 3, requiring the limited water use to not exceed 95 percent of the DWR's target water use. Because of the ongoing conservation efforts of East County customers, the District has experienced a sustained per capita average water use reduction of approximately 25 percent per capita water use since 2010 (City 2020a).

**Table 4.18-1  
RETAIL: DEMAND FOR POTABLE AND NON-POTABLE WATER**

	Actual	Projected Water Use				
	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
Potable Water, Raw, Other Non-potable	9,588	12,422	13,586	14,623	15,473	15,944
Recycled Water Demand	1,750	2,202	1,232	1,232	1,232	1,232
<b>Total Water Use</b>	<b>11,388</b>	<b>14,644</b>	<b>14,818</b>	<b>15,855</b>	<b>16,705</b>	<b>17,176</b>

Source: PDMWD 2024

#### 4.18.1.2 Water Supply and Distribution System

Water supply sources for the District fall into two categories: (1) purchased or imported water; and (2) recycled water. Padre Dam produces two million gallons of recycled water a day at the Ray Stoyer Water Recycling Facility (WRF). Except for the recycled water produced, the District imports all water supply from SDCWA. This potable water supply is imported from the California State Water Project (SWP) (North Bay, South Bay, and California aqueducts) and the Colorado River (Los Angeles and Colorado River aqueducts) by Metropolitan. The water supply is treated at Metropolitan's Skinner Treatment Plant near Temecula, California and then released into SDCWA's system (PDMWD 2021).

The District is additionally looking to expand its recycled water supply and increase potable reuse to provide drought-proof sources of water. Currently, recycled water from Santee Lakes provides water supplies for irrigation purposes. However, potable reuse is projected to make up 17 percent of San Diego County's drinking water supply by 2035. Padre Dam is currently working with Helix Water District, the City of El Cajon, and the County of San Diego on the East County Advanced Water Purification Project. This project would purify recycled water to create up to 30 percent of East County's drinking water supply. Together with projects including Pure Water San Diego and Pure Water Oceanside, the East County Advanced Water Purification Project is anticipated to reduce San Diego County's reliance on imported water over the long term.

The District relies on the SDCWA to acquire water transfer agreements, as needed, for water supply reliability during normal and dry year conditions. These water transfers consist of water purchases from Metropolitan, water transfers from Imperial Irrigation District that consist of water savings from canal lining projects that wheel water through Metropolitan's conveyance facilities, and spot water transfers that are pursued on an as-needed basis to offset reductions in supplies from Metropolitan. In addition to water imported through Metropolitan, SDCWA signed and amended an agreement (Water Authority-IID Water Conservation and Transfer Agreement) with the Imperial Irrigation District (IID) for long-term transfer of conserved Colorado River water. The term of the agreement is 45 years with a provision to extend for an additional 30 years (PDMWD 2021).

In 2012, SDCWA also entered into a formal Water Purchase Agreement with Poseidon Water to purchase desalinated ocean water at the Carlsbad Desalination Plant. The desalinated water is conveyed to SDCWA's Twin Oaks Valley Water Treatment Plant and is mixed with existing drinking water supplies. The Carlsbad Desalination Plant can produce 56,000 AFY, of which 50,000 AFY is conveyed to SDCWA (PDMWD 2021).

The actual source and volume of water for the year 2020 is presented in Table 4.18-2, *Retail: Water Supplies – Actual*. As shown in Table 4.18-2, the District's actual supply was approximately 11,338 AFY.

**Table 4.18-2  
RETAIL: WATER SUPPLIES – ACTUAL**

Water Supply	2020	
	Actual Volume (AFY)	Water Quality
Purchased or Imported Water	9,588	Drinking Water
Recycled Water	1,750	Recycled Water
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,338</b>	

Source: PDMWD 2021  
AFY = acre-feet per year

The projected water supply in five-year increments is included in Table 4.18-3, *Retail: Water Supplies – Projected*. The projected supply values are based on supplying normal demands and include the purchased water and recycled water supplies, including the SDCWA accelerated forecasted growth increment accounted for in the Water Supply Assessment prepared for the project (Appendix H; PDMWD 2024).

**Table 4.18-3  
RETAIL: WATER SUPPLIES – PROJECTED**

Land Use Type	Additional Description (as needed)	Projected Water Supply (acre-feet/year)				
		2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
Purchased or Imported Water	In-District	6,054	7,198	8,235	9,085	9,556
Purchased or Imported Water	Outside of District	2,388	2,388	2,388	2,388	2,388
Recycled Water	N/A	1,232	1,232	1,232	1,232	1,232
Potable Reuse	East County Advanced Water Purification Project	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
SSDCWA Increment		42	42	42	42	42
<b>Total</b>		<b>13,716</b>	<b>14,860</b>	<b>15,897</b>	<b>16,747</b>	<b>17,128</b>

Source: PDMWD 2024

#### 4.18.1.3 Storm Drain System

The City's drainage basins and storm drain conveyance system discharges both directly and indirectly to the San Diego River through the various creeks and channels such as Forester Creek and Sycamore Creek. These untreated discharges are then conveyed by the San Diego River westward to the Pacific Ocean, at Ocean Beach. The City establishes, maintains, and enforces adequate legal authority within its jurisdiction to control pollutant discharges into and from its storm drain system (City 2015). The City has approximately 1,400 storm drain inlets within residential areas, 114 inlets within commercially zoned areas, and 210 inlets within industrial zoned areas (City 2015).

#### 4.18.1.4 Wastewater and Recycled Water System

##### Wastewater Collection, Treatment and Disposal

PDMWD provides wastewater collection and treatment services to the City. The PDMWD Sewer System Management Plan (PDMWD 2019) describes the District's sewer collection, conveyance, and treatment system. The District's wastewater collection system consists of sewer mains, lift stations, and flow diversion structures. The PDMWD service area contributed nearly 5,042 AFY of wastewater flow into the District's wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) in 2020. The majority of the collected wastewater flows to the District's Influent Pump Station. From there, up to 1,856 AFY of wastewater is pumped to the District's Ray Stoyer WRF; the remaining flow is pumped to the City of San Diego's Metropolitan Wastewater System where it ultimately receives advanced primary treatment at the Point Loma Wastewater Treatment Plant (PDMWD 2021).

The District has an effective operation and maintenance (O&M) program in place that includes cleaning, inspection, and monitoring of the sewer collection system. The O&M program is based on a proactive preventative maintenance approach to keep the collection system in good repair, preventing excessive infiltration/inflow, minimizing system failures which can lead to overflows, and protecting the capital investment in the collection system (PDMWD 2019).

## Recycled Water

The PDMWD's existing recycled water system includes approximately 31 miles of distribution mains within the District's Water Service Area. The key recycled water system facilities include the Ray Stoyer WRF, the Recycled Water Effluent Pump Station, and Fanita Terrace Reservoir (PDMWD 2021). The District's recycled water customer base and associated demand steadily increased from 2001 to 2014 with a peak of 1,025 AFY in 2014. Since 2014, recycled water demands have decreased. In the year 2019-2020, the District served 250 customers with a combined recycled water demand of 780 AFY. This total excludes the recycled water supply discharged to Santee Lakes.

Recycled water uses include landscape irrigation, including parks, medians, homeowners association landscapes, dust control, and recreational impoundment which is the replenishment and flushing of Santee Lakes. Table 4.18-4, *Recycled Water Use in the PDMWD Service Area*, provides the projected and actual uses for recycled water in the City of Santee for the year 2020.

**Table 4.18-4  
RECYCLED WATER USE IN THE PDMWD SERVICE AREA (2020)**

Use Type	2020 Projected Use (AFY)	2020 Actual Use (AFY)
Landscape Irrigation	780	780
Recreational Impoundment	970	970
Total Water Use	1,750	1,750

Source: PDMWD 2024  
AFY = acre-feet per year

The PDMWD does not plan on expanding the future recycled water system; however, PDMWD is implementing a Phase I Water Recycling Project which includes the expansion of the Ray Stoyer Reclamation Facility, construction of a new advanced water purification facility, potable reuse conveyance pipelines, a product water pump station, and a biosolids digestion facility to offset energy demands of the Phase I Water Recycling Project. It will create 3,900 acre-feet, or 127 million gallons, per year of potable water by capturing wastewater flows that would otherwise be discharged to the ocean.

Through the future Advanced Water Purification (AWP) Program, PDMWD will generate potable reuse water for local surface water augmentation. The AWP Program is intended to deliver highly purified water to Lake Jennings, a reservoir owned and operated by the Helix Water District. As part of this program, PDMWD will no longer discharge recycled water into Santee Lakes; therefore, the recycled water use is anticipated to decrease further in future years (PDMWD 2021).

### 4.18.1.5 Solid Waste Disposal

The City's franchise waste hauler, Waste Management, Inc., is responsible for the collection, removal, and disposal of solid waste for residential and commercial uses in the City. In addition, the hauler provides curbside recycling and yard waste collection, household hazardous waste disposal services, public education, and other services required to meet the waste management needs of the City. This includes the development of programs necessary to meet the state-mandated 50 percent waste reduction goal established by Assembly Bill (AB) 939 (the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989).



As of 2019, the waste disposal rate in California per resident was approximately 6.7 pounds per day and a recycling rate of 37 percent. Currently, most of the waste collected in the City is disposed at the approximately 603-acre Sycamore Landfill in the eastern portion of the City of San Diego. According to Republic Services, the Sycamore Landfill has approximately 100 million cubic yards of remaining capacity as of 2023. Assuming Miramar Landfill and Otay Landfill reach capacity around 2030-2032, Sycamore Landfill would have roughly 50 million cubic yards of remaining capacity in 2042, with final capacity being reached between 2052 and 2055.

#### **4.18.1.6 Utilities**

##### **Electric Power Facilities**

The San Diego Gas & Electric Company (SDG&E) provides electricity to the San Diego region, including the City and the Town Center Specific Plan (TCSP) area. The City is currently served with electricity through both aboveground and underground transmission lines within City streets.

##### **Natural Gas Facilities**

SDG&E provides natural gas to the San Diego region, including the City and the TCSP area. The City is currently served with natural gas through underground gas mains within City streets.

##### **Telecommunications Facilities**

AT&T, Cox Communications, and Crown Castle would continue to provide telecommunications services in the TCSP area.

#### **4.18.2 Regulatory Framework**

##### **4.18.2.1 Federal**

###### **Telecommunications Act of 1966**

The Telecommunications Act of 1996 amended the Communications Act of 1934. It provided major changes in laws affecting cable television, telecommunications, and the internet. The law's main purpose is to stimulate competition in telecommunication services. The law specifies (1) how local telephone carriers can compete; (2) how and under what circumstances local exchange carriers can provide long-distance services; and (3) the deregulation of cable television services.

###### **Safe Drinking Water Act**

The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA), passed by Congress in 1974, authorizes the federal government to set national standards for drinking water. These National Primary Drinking Water Regulations protect against both naturally occurring and man-made contaminants. The SDWA sets enforceable maximum contaminant levels (MCLs) for drinking water, and all water providers in the United States, excluding private wells serving fewer than 25 people, must treat water to remove contaminants.

The 1986 amendments to the SDWA and the 1987 amendments to the Clean Water Act (CWA) established the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) as the primary authority for water programs throughout the country. The USEPA is the federal agency responsible for providing clean and safe surface water, groundwater, and drinking water, and protecting and restoring

aquatic ecosystems. USEPA Region 9 (Pacific Southwest) includes Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, the Pacific Islands (Northern Marianas, Guam, and American Samoa), and 148 Tribal Nations located within Arizona, California, and Nevada.

### **Clean Water Act**

The CWA (33 United States Code Section 1251 et seq.) (1972) is the primary federal law that protects the nation's waters, including lakes, rivers, aquifers, and coastal areas. The CWA established basic guidelines for regulating discharges of pollutants into the waters of the United States and requires that states adopt water quality standards to protect public health, enhance the quality of water resources, and ensure implementation of the CWA.

Section 401 of the CWA requires that any applicant for a federal permit to conduct any activity, including the construction or operation of a facility that may result in the discharge of any pollutant, must obtain certification from the state. Section 402 of the CWA established the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) to regulate the discharge of pollutants from point sources. The CWA was amended in 1987 to address urban runoff. One requirement of the amendment was the obligation for municipalities to obtain NPDES permits for discharges of urban runoff from their municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s).

#### **4.18.2.2 State**

### **Water and Wastewater**

#### California Department of Public Health Drinking Water Program

The California Department of Public Health Drinking Water Program conducts most enforcement activities related to water providers abiding by MCLs set by the SDWA. If a water system does not meet standards, it is the water supplier's responsibility to notify its customers. The Drinking Water Program is within the Division of Drinking Water and Environmental Management, and San Diego falls under the Southern California Field Operation Branch in Region V, District 14. The Drinking Water Program is also responsible for the following tasks:

- Regulating public water systems;
- Certifying drinking water treatment and distribution operators;
- Supporting and promoting water system security;
- Providing support for small water systems and for improving technical, managerial, and financial capacity; and
- Providing funding opportunities for water system improvements.

#### Department of Water Resources

The California DWR was established in 1956 and is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the California SWP. DWR is also responsible for:

- Overseeing the statewide process of developing and updating the California Water Plan (Bulletin 160 series);
- Protecting and restoring the Sacramento–San Joaquin Delta;

- Regulating dams, providing flood protection, and assisting in emergency management;
- Educating the public about the importance of water and its proper use; and
- Providing technical assistance to service local water needs

#### California Water Plan (Update 2018)

The California Water Plan is the state's strategic plan for managing and developing water resources statewide for current and future generations, as required by the California Water Code. The 2018 Update provides recommended actions, funding scenarios, and an investment strategy to bolster efforts by water and resource managers, planners, and decision-makers to overcome California's water resource challenges.

#### Urban Water Management Planning Act (California Water Code, Division 6, Part 2.6, Section 10610 et. Seq.)

The Urban Water Management Planning Act was developed due to concerns for potential water supply shortages throughout California. It requires information on water supply reliability and water use efficiency measures. Urban water suppliers are required, as part of the act, to develop and implement UWMPs to describe their efforts to promote the efficient use and management of water resources.

#### Senate Bill 606 and Assembly Bill 1668

Signed in 2018, Senate Bill (SB) 606 and AB 1668 emphasize efficiency and stretching existing water supplies throughout the state through the understanding that efficient water use is the most cost-effective way to achieve long-term conservation goals. Specifically, the bills call for creation of new urban efficiency standards for indoor use, outdoor use, and water lost leaks, as well as any appropriate variances for unique local conditions. The legislature set the residential indoor standard in 2022 with the passage of Senate Bill 1157. The State Water Board adopted the water loss standard in 2023. The regulation that sets the outdoor standards, Making Conservation a California Way of Life, was adopted in July 2024.

#### California Senate 1087: Sewer and Water Service Priority for Housing Affordable to Lower-Income Households (2006)

This statute requires local governments to provide a copy of the updated housing element to water and sewer providers immediately subsequent to adoption. Water and sewer providers must grant priority for service allocation to proposed development that includes housing units affordable to lower-income households. Additionally, UWMPs are required to include projected water use for future lower-income households.

#### California State Senate Bill 221 and Senate Bill 610 (January 2002)

SB 610 requires water suppliers to prepare a Water Supply Assessment report for inclusion by land use agencies within the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process for new projects (as defined in Water Code 10912[a]) subject to SB 610. SB 221 requires water suppliers to prepare written verification that sufficient water supplies are planned to be available prior to approval of large-scale subdivisions. As defined in SB 221 and SB 610, large-scale projects include residential development projects that include more than 500 residential units and/or

shopping centers or business establishments resulting in a net increase of more than 1,000 employees or more than 500,000 square feet of floor space.

#### Water Conservation Act of 2009 (Senate Bill X7-7)

The Water Conservation Act of 2009 (Senate Bill X7-7) was enacted in November 2009 and requires that all water suppliers increase their water use efficiency, requiring the state to reduce urban water consumption by 20 percent by the year 2020. The key purpose of the law is to encourage both urban and agricultural water providers to implement conservation strategies, monitor water usage, and report data to the DWR. The law sets goals and deadlines regarding when the implementations must occur and, to encourage participation, makes water suppliers ineligible for state water grants or loans unless certain terms have been met.

#### Senate Bill 7 Water Meters in Multi-Unit Structures

SB7, approved by the Governor in 2016, requires water meters and submeters to be installed in apartments and other rental housing buildings constructed after January 1, 2018. According to the law, owners of such properties must provide residents with accurate information about the volume and cost of their water use, and water bills must be based on actual usage rather than by estimation or other methodology. The purpose of the law is to encourage responsible water use and conservation in a state that is experiencing a multi-year drought. The legislation amended and added regulations to the Civil Code, the Health and Safety Code, and the Water Code, relating to housing.

### **Stormwater**

#### Municipal Separate Storm Water Sewer System Permits

The San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board (SDRWQCB) regulates discharges from Phase I MS4s in the San Diego region under the Regional MS4 Permit. The Regional MS4 Permit covers 39 municipal, county government, and special district entities (referred to jointly as “copermittees”) in the County of San Diego, southern County of Orange, and southwestern County of Riverside who own and operate large MS4s that discharge stormwater (wet weather) runoff and non-stormwater (dry weather) runoff to surface waters throughout the San Diego region. The Regional MS4 Permit, Order No. R9-2013-0001, was adopted on May 8, 2013, and initially covered the County of San Diego copermittees. Order No. R9-2015-0001 was adopted on February 11, 2015, amending the Regional MS4 Permit to extend coverage to the County of Orange copermittees. Finally, Order No. R9-2015-0100 was adopted on November 18, 2015, amending the Regional MS4 Permit to extend coverage to the County of Riverside copermittees.

The City is 1 of 18 municipalities in the County of San Diego that is a copermittee (SDRWQCB 2024). The Regional MS4 Permit expired on June 27, 2018, but remains in effect under an administrative extension until it is reissued by the San Diego Water Board. The San Diego Water Board has begun the development of proposed changes to the Regional MS4 Permit and will hold focused meetings to discuss proposed changes to the Regional MS4 Permit and hear preliminary input from the Copermittees and interested person. In application for NPDES permit reissuance of the Regional MS4 Permit, the Copermittees submitted a Report of Waste Discharge (ROWD) on December 27, 2017. The ROWD summarizes the Copermittees' existing storm water programs and makes recommendations for updates and other modifications to the Regional MS4 Permit (SDRWQCB 2024).

### 2006-2022 Waste Discharge Requirements Order

The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) adopted Statewide General Waste Discharge Requirements for Sewer Systems (Order No. ~~2006~~2022-00030103-DWQ). The intent of the order is to regulate all collections systems in the state to reduce or eliminate the number of sanitary sewer overflows which, by their nature, pollute the environment. A sanitary sewer overflow is any overflow, spill, release, discharge, or diversion of wastewater from a sewer system. The order is applicable for all publicly-owned sewage collection systems with more than one mile of sewer pipe.

### **Solid Waste**

#### California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (Assembly Bill 939 and as amended by Assembly Bill 341)

AB 939, the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989, establishes the current organization, structure, and mission of CalRecycle as an integrated waste management hierarchy that consists of the following (in order of importance): source reduction, recycling, composting, and land disposal of solid waste. AB 939 requires cities and counties in the state to reach a 50 percent waste reduction goal by the year 2000 and beyond. It also requires counties to develop an integrated waste management plan that describes local waste diversion and disposal conditions, and lays out realistic programs to achieve the waste diversion goals.

Originally, the Integrated Waste Management Plan mandated to divert 25 percent of their solid waste by 1995 and 50 percent by 2000. AB 341 amends these requirements as follows: (1) CalRecycle to issue a report to the Legislature that includes strategies and recommendations that would enable the state to divert 75 percent of the solid waste generated in the state from disposal by January 1, 2020; (2) requires businesses that meet specified thresholds in the bill to arrange for recycling services by January 1, 2012; (3) streamlines the amendment process for non-disposal facility elements, by allowing changes without review and comment from a local task force; and (4) allows a solid waste facility to modify their existing permit, instead of having to undergo a permit revision, under specified circumstances.

#### Senate Bill 1383: CalRecycle Organics Regulation

In September 2016, the state set methane emission reduction targets for California in SB 1383, intended as a statewide effort to reduce emissions of short-lived climate pollutants (like organic waste) in various sectors of California's economy. Specifically, SB 1383 establishes statewide targets to reduce the amount of organic waste disposed of in landfills (50 percent reduction by 2020 and 75 percent by 2025). It also sets a goal to rescue at least 20 percent of currently disposed edible food by 2025 and redirect that food to people in need. The new regulations took effect in January 2022.

#### Assembly Bill 1826

In October 2014, Governor Brown signed AB 1826, Chesbro (Chapter 727, Statutes of 2014), requiring businesses to recycle their organic waste on and after April 1, 2016, depending on the amount of waste they generate per week. Organic waste means food waste, green waste, landscape and pruning waste, non-hazardous wood waste, and food-soiled paper waste that is mixed in with food waste. Currently, businesses that generate 4 cubic yards or more of solid waste per week must have had an organic waste recycling program in place. Multi-family properties are

regulated but only required to divert green waste and non-hazardous wood waste. This law also requires local jurisdictions across the state to implement an organic waste recycling program to divert organic waste generated by businesses, including certain multi-family residential units, starting on January 1, 2016. An exemption process is available for rural counties.

#### Senate Bill 1374

SB 1374 seeks to assist jurisdictions with diverting their construction and demolition (C&D) waste material with a primary focus on CalRecycle developing and adopting a model C&D diversion ordinance for voluntary use by California jurisdictions. CalRecycle adopted such an ordinance at its March 16, 2004, meeting. In 2011, the City adopted an ordinance to promote the recycling of C&D debris to meet the City's obligations under AB 939 and the California Green Buildings Standards Code.

#### **4.18.2.3 Local**

##### **Metropolitan Water District of Southern California Urban Water Management Plan (2020)**

Metropolitan demonstrates its ability to meet expected water demands in the region for the next quarter century, even under drought conditions, through its UWMP. Required by the state, the plan provides a summary of Metropolitan's anticipated water demands and supplies through 2045 and shows it will meet demands under normal water years, single dry-years, and five-year drought sequences. At the center of Metropolitan's 2020 UWMP plan is its diverse portfolio of water resources, including imported supplies from the Colorado River and State Water Project; local projects offering water recycling and groundwater recovery; short- and long-term water transfers; storage, both inside and outside of the region; and continued investment in water-use efficiency and demand management.

##### **Padre Dam Urban Water Management Plan (2020)**

Padre Dam's UWMP addresses the District's water system and includes a description of the water supply sources, magnitudes of historical and projected water use and a comparison of water supply and water demands during normal, single-dry, and multiple-dry years. The State legislature requires the document to contain a detailed evaluation of the supplies necessary to reliably meet demands over at least a 20-year period in both normal and dry years. The 2020 UWMP serves as the long-term guide to ensure a safe and reliable water supply for the District's population of more than 103,000. Additionally, Padre Dam has a Water Shortage Contingency Plan (PDMWD 2020) that outlines planned water shortage response levels and actions that would be taken in the event of potable water shortages. Shortage levels 1 through 6 are defined along with associated demand reduction actions.

##### **Santee General Plan**

The City's General Plan contains policies related to storm water, wastewater, water distribution system, water use, solid waste disposal, and the provision of public utilities. Pertinent goals and policies are listed below:

##### **Land Use Element**

Objective 3.0: Provide and maintain the highest level of service possible for all community public services and facilities.



- **Policy 3.1:** The City should ensure that land divisions and developments are approved within the City only when a project's improvements, dedications, fees and other revenues to the City and other agencies fully cover the project's incremental costs to the City and other agencies. These costs are for providing new or upgraded capital improvements and other public facilities and equipment resulting from, and attributable to the project, which are necessary to protect and promote the public's health, safety and welfare and to implement feasible mitigation measures. Such facilities include, but are not limited to parks, bridges, major roads, traffic signals, street lights, drainage systems, sewers, water, flood control, fire, police, schools, hiking/bicycle trails and other related facilities. In calculating benefits of land divisions and developments, the City may consider other public objectives and goals including social, economic (job creation, secondary economic benefits, etc.) and environmental factors.
- **Policy 3.2:** The City should encourage the development and use of recycled water for appropriate land uses to encourage the conservation of, and reduce demand for, potable water.
- **Policy 3.6:** Development projects shall be reviewed to ensure that all necessary utilities are available to serve the project and that any land use incompatibilities or impacts resulting from public utilities shall be mitigated to the maximum extent possible.

### **Safety Element**

Objective 3.0: Minimize the risk of damage to persons, property and the environment caused by hazardous materials.

- **Policy 3.8:** Promote safe, environmentally sound means of solid waste disposal for the community.
- **Policy 3.9:** Investigate ways to encourage businesses to recycle their waste.

### **City of Santee Best Management Practices Design Manual**

The City's Best Management Practices (BMP) Design Manual provides guidelines for compliance with on-site post-construction stormwater requirements in the Regional MS4 Permit and assists the land development community by streamlining project reviews and maximizing cost-effective environmental benefits, meeting performance standards specified in the Regional MS4 Permit. By following the process outlined in the BMP Design Manual, applicants (for both private and public developments) can develop a single integrated design that complies with the Regional MS4 Permit source control and site design requirements, stormwater pollutant control requirements (i.e., water quality), and hydromodification management (flow control and sediment supply) requirements.

### **Municipal Code**

The City's primary legal authority for requiring construction projects to implement water quality control measures are set forth in Chapters 9.06, 11.40, and 12.30 of the Santee Municipal Code (SMC).

### Chapter 9.06, Stormwater Management and Discharge Control

The purposes of Chapter 9.06, Storm Water Ordinance, are as follows (City 2020a):

1. Effectively prohibiting non-stormwater discharges to the stormwater conveyance system.
2. Eliminating illicit discharges and illicit connections to the stormwater conveyance system.
3. Reducing the discharge of pollutants from the stormwater conveyance system, to the maximum extent practicable to achieve applicable water quality objectives for surface waters in San Diego County.
4. Achieving compliance with Total Maximum Daily Load regulations.

Ultimately, the intent of this chapter is to protect and enhance the water quality of our watercourses, water bodies, and wetlands in a manner pursuant to and consistent with the CWA, Porter-Cologne Act, and Regional MS4 Permit.

### Chapter 11.40, Excavation and Grading

This chapter establishes minimum requirements for grading, excavating, and filling of land and provides water quality protection provisions. It also provides for the issuance of permits and provides for the enforcement of the chapter provisions.

### Chapter 12.30, Development Impact Fees

There are several development impact fees in the SMC. These fees impose on new development the costs of constructing public facilities, which are reasonably related to the impacts of the new development. In particular, the drainage fee provides funds for the installation of needed drainage improvements identified in the City of Santee Citywide Drainage Study prepared by BSI Consultants dated February 1990 (BSI Consultants 1990). Section 12.30.160 in the SMC includes how fees are calculated depending on land use types (City 2020a).

## **4.18.3 Significance Determination Thresholds**

Consistent with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, impacts to utilities and service systems would be significant if the project would:

- 1) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment, stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities which could cause significant environmental effects.
- 2) Not have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years.
- 3) Result in determination by the wastewater provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments.
- 4) Generate solid waste in excess of state or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals.

- 5) Not comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

#### 4.18.4 Methodology

The potential for significant impacts associated with the project has been determined based upon review of existing secondary source information, including the Padre Dam UWMP, the City's BMP Design Manual, and applicable regulations discussed in Section 4.18.2. Specific utility requirements of individual projects are not assessed as no specific development project is proposed. Rather, the analysis addresses anticipated utility demand and associated environmental impacts programmatically to identify whether existing regulations would adequately address impacts associated with the provision of required utilities and services.

#### 4.18.5 Issue 1: Utility Infrastructure

*Would the project require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?*

##### 4.18.5.1 Impact Analysis

#### TCSP Area, Arts and Entertainment Neighborhood (AEN), and Housing Element Sites

##### Water

Development anticipated for the proposed project would occur within areas of the City that are already served by existing water utility infrastructure. Water service in the TCSP area would continue to be provided by PDMWD. The PDMWD's potable water system in the TCSP area would continue to be entirely gravity fed and supplied by water main pipelines. A large ~~transmission~~ distribution pipeline from the El Capitan Reservoir is also located beneath Mission Gorge Road. While future projects within the TCSP area would require connection to existing water pipelines, localized water utility infrastructure improvements and relocations would be evaluated upon submittal of project specific development plans. All future project applications, whether discretionary or ministerial, would be required to comply with relevant City regulations and adhere to the mitigation framework presented in this EIR, including mitigation measures BIO-1 through BIO-6, CUL-1 through CUL-4, GEO-1, HAZ-1, and NOI-1, NOI-2, and NOI-4, which would ensure that any physical impacts associated with construction of pipeline connections to existing water infrastructure would be addressed as part of the City review for each individual project. Additionally, future projects would be required to comply with General Plan policies including Land Use Element Policy 3.6, which requires the review of development projects to ensure that all necessary utilities are available to serve the project.

##### Wastewater

Development anticipated for the proposed project would occur within areas of the City that are already served by existing wastewater utility infrastructure. The PDMWD would also continue to provide wastewater collection and disposal to the TCSP area. There is a network of existing sewer pipelines throughout the TCSP area, including larger pipelines up to 27 inches in diameter near the intersection of Town Center Parkway and Cuyamaca Street. The adopted five-year budget for PDMWD identifies two capital projects within the TCSP area: the Mission Gorge Sewer and Sewer Lifts Station Rehabilitation. Both projects are planned to be implemented during Fiscal Years 2026

through 2027 and would increase sewage capacity and provide maintenance to the sewer system. While future projects within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would require localized connection to existing wastewater pipelines, wastewater utility infrastructure improvements and relocations would be evaluated upon submittal of project specific development plans. All future project applications, whether discretionary or ministerial, would be required to comply with relevant City regulations and adhere to the mitigation framework presented in this EIR, including mitigation measures BIO-1 through BIO-6, CUL-1 through CUL-4, GEO-1, HAZ-1, and NOI-1, NOI-2, and NOI-4, which would ensure that any physical impacts associated with construction of pipeline connections to existing wastewater infrastructure would be addressed as part of the City review for each individual project. Additionally, future projects would be required to comply with General Plan policies including Land Use Element Policy 3.6, which requires the review of development projects to ensure that all necessary utilities are available to serve the project.

### **Stormwater**

Development anticipated for the proposed project would occur within areas of the City that are already served by existing stormwater infrastructure. Existing stormwater infrastructure would be able to accommodate post project stormwater flows considering existing requirements for detention and on-site infiltration. While future projects within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would require connection to existing stormwater facilities, localized stormwater infrastructure would be evaluated upon submittal of project specific development plans. All future project applications, whether discretionary or ministerial, would be required to comply with relevant City regulations and adhere to the mitigation framework presented in this EIR, including mitigation measures BIO-1 through BIO-6, CUL-1 through CUL-4, GEO-1, HAZ-1, and NOI-1, NOI-2, and NOI-4, which would ensure that any physical impacts associated with construction of pipeline connections to existing wastewater infrastructure would be addressed as part of the City review for each individual project. Additionally, future projects would be required to comply with General Plan policies including Land Use Element Policy 3.6, which requires the review of development projects to ensure that all necessary utilities are available to serve the project.

It is further noted that future projects would be required to design all on-site storm water facilities to comply with the City's BMP Design Manual. As discussed in greater detail in Section 4.10 of this EIR, adherence to the BMP Design Manual ensures new development and redevelopment provide adequate storm water facilities that are compatible with existing City systems and conform to all performance standards presented in the MS4 permit. Physical impacts of all utility improvements would be addressed as part of the future project-specific applications and appropriate mitigation for impacts would be applied consistent with this PEIR.

### **Electric Power, Natural Gas, and Telecommunications**

Development anticipated for the proposed project would occur within areas of the City that are already served by existing electrical, natural gas, and telecommunications utility infrastructure. The proposed TCSP states that AT&T, Cox Communications, and Crown Castle would continue to provide telecommunications services in the TCSP area. SDG&E would continue to provide electricity and natural gas services to the TCSP area, and existing transmission and distribution facilities in the TCSP area would remain. Additional Underground Utility Districts, or areas where utilities such as poles, wires, or other overhead structures must be placed below ground for aesthetic and safety purposes, may be established during project buildout, as determined by the City Council. While future projects within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would require connection to these existing facilities, localized utility infrastructure improvements and

relocations would be evaluated upon submittal of project specific development plans. All future project applications, whether discretionary or ministerial, would be required to comply with relevant City regulations and adhere to the mitigation framework presented in this EIR, including mitigation measures BIO-1 through BIO-6, CUL-1 through CUL-4, GEO-1, HAZ-1, and NOI-1, NOI-2, and NOI-4, which would ensure that any physical impacts associated with construction of connections to existing electrical, natural gas, and telecommunications utility infrastructure would be addressed as part of the City review for each individual project. Additionally, future projects would be required to comply with General Plan policies including Land Use Element Policy 3.6, which requires the review of development projects to ensure that all necessary utilities are available to serve the project.

#### **4.18.5.2 Mitigation Measures**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Future development of TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would require implementation of the following construction and ground disturbance related mitigation measures BIO-1 through BIO-6, CUL-1 through CUL-4, GEO-1, HAZ-1, and NOI-1, NOI-2, and NOI-4.

#### **4.18.5.3 Significance After Mitigation**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Impacts associated with the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities would be reduced to a level less than significant with implementation of the mitigation measures BIO-1 through BIO-6, CUL-1 through CUL-4, GEO-1, HAZ-1, and NOI-1, NOI-2, and NOI-4.

### **4.18.6 Issue 2: Water Supply**

*Would the project have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?*

#### **4.18.6.1 Impact Analysis**

##### **TCSP Area**

The PDMWD approved a Water Supply Assessment in July 2024 for the TCSP area confirming that adequate water supply is available to serve the project (PDMWD 2024). The Water Supply Assessment accounts for additional water demand based on land use changes and supply that were not considered when the UWMP was last updated in 2020. As shown in Table 4.18-1 and included in the Water Supply Assessment, non-recycled potable and non-potable water use within the PDMWD service area is projected to be 12,442 AFY in 2025 and increase to 15,944 AFY in 2045. The estimate is based on SANDAG demographic estimates included in the PDMWD UWMP which included the anticipated increase in population from 92,434 in 2020 to 117,701 by the year 2045. Commercial demands account for approximately 11 percent of the total projected 2025 demand and 10 percent of the total projected 2045 demand.

As shown in Table 4.18-3, water supplies are projected to exceed the demands within the PDMWD service area and would adequately cover the demands of the project. Specific projected demands related to normal, dry and multiple dry years are discussed in the PDMWD UWMP. As

shown therein, with continued conservation, the use of recycled water, and the addition of added supply with the upcoming AWP Project, supplies are projected to meet demands through year 2045 under average year, single-dry year, and for a five-consecutive-year drought conditions.

Buildout potential within the TCSP area could result in the construction of additional dwelling units and non-residential square footage that were not previously considered within the latest UWMP but have been considered within the WSA approved by PDMWD for the project. UWMPs are required to be updated on a five-year cycle and the next update to the PDMWD UWMP is anticipated by 2025. Future UWMP updates would account for the anticipated water use associated with future development consistent with the WSA and adopted TCSP. While the proposed TCSP area would add development potential and increase water demand by approximately 42 acre feet per year, the increase in demand could be met by the PDMWD along with additional water supplied by the SDCWA. Specifically, the SDCWA has confirmed that it can meet the project demand not considered in the 2020 UWMP through the use of the accelerated forecasted growth component of the Water Authority 2020 UWMP (PDMWD 2024). Therefore, the increase in water demand would be covered in the water district's projected available water supplies, which are projected to exceed demand through 2045, including during single and multiple dry year scenarios. Additionally, it is noted that higher density residential development is more water efficient than single-family residential development.

Existing regulations would ensure water-efficient fixtures are installed with new development. The California Green Building Standards Code requires 20 percent reduction in indoor water use relative to specified baseline levels. SMC Section 13.10.040 provides minimum standards for residential development and requires that all appliances and fixtures shall be energy conserving (e.g., reduced consumption showerheads, water conserving toilets, etc.). The requirements for the energy efficiency of buildings are set forth in the current California Energy Code for Climate Zone 10 in which the City is located. Additionally, all new residential units, including accessory dwelling units, shall meet or exceed California Green Building Standards Tier 2 Voluntary Measures.

Additionally, all future projects would be required to adhere to the following ongoing water conservation measures mandated by the PDMWD as authorized by Water Code sections 375 et seq.:

- Stop washing down paved surfaces, including but not limited to sidewalks, driveways, parking lots, tennis courts, or patios, except when it is necessary to alleviate safety or sanitation hazards.
- Stop water waste resulting from inefficient landscape irrigation, such as runoff, low head drainage, or overspray, etc. Similarly, stop water flows onto non-targeted areas, such as adjacent property, non-irrigated areas, hardscapes, roadways, or structures. Irrigation runoff is prohibited.
- Irrigate residential and commercial landscape before 10 a.m. and after 6 p.m. only.
- Do not irrigate while it is raining and within 48 hours after it rains.
- Use a hand-held hose equipped with a positive shut-off nozzle or bucket to water landscaped areas, including trees and shrubs located on residential and commercial properties that are not irrigated by a landscape irrigation system.



- Use recirculated or recycled water to operate ornamental fountains, ponds, and similar decorative water features.
- Wash vehicles using a bucket and a hand-held hose with positive shut-off nozzle, mobile high pressure/low volume wash system, or at a commercial site that re-circulates (reclaims) water on-site. Boats and boat engines may be washed down immediately after use using a bucket or hand-held hose with positive shut-off nozzle. Runoff is prohibited.
- Repair all water leaks within five days of notification by Padre Dam unless other arrangements are made with the CEO/General Manager. Severe water leaks must be stopped immediately.
- Use recycled or non-potable water for construction purposes, such as dust control and soil compaction, when available and required by Padre Dam (PDMWD 2020).

Based on the PDMWD estimated water supply, water efficiency of multi-family development, water conservation requirements, along with existing regulations that require new construction to be water efficient, it is not anticipated that the project would affect the ability of PDMWD to plan for adequate water supplies within the City during normal, dry, and multiple dry years. Impacts would be less than significant.

## **AEN**

While specific projects within the AEN are not currently known, the only residential development anticipated in the AEN is the Housing Element sites, which would add up to an additional 1,480 housing units. The AEN would also add up to an additional 1,792,103 sf of non-residential development. These quantities are included in the analysis performed for the TCSP area. It was determined that water supplies are projected to exceed the needs of the PDMWD service area and would adequately cover the demands of the project. Impacts would be less than significant.

### **Housing Element Sites**

The Housing Element sites would add up to 1,480 new residential units and 389,651 sf of non-residential development. These quantities are included in the analysis performed for the TCSP area. It was determined that water supplies are projected to exceed the needs of the PDMWD service area and would adequately cover the demands of the project. Impacts would be less than significant.

#### **4.18.6.2 Mitigation Measures**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

No mitigation is required.

#### **4.18.6.3 Significance After Mitigation**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

**4.18.7 Issue 3: Wastewater Treatment**

*Would the project result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?*

**4.18.7.1 Impact Analysis****TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Development anticipated within the TCSP would occur within areas of the City that are already served by existing wastewater infrastructure, including pipelines to the PDMWD WWTP and WRF. Although future development within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would require connection to existing wastewater infrastructure within surrounding roadways and result in additional wastewater generation, the PDMWD is currently implementing plans to expand the Ray Stoyer Reclamation Facility, which would allow for treatment of wastewater for potable use that would otherwise be discharged to the ocean. Thus, additional capacity improvements would not be anticipated with the project as wastewater flows would ultimately be managed as a potable resource or a recycled water resource. Furthermore, as discussed in Section 4.18.6, higher density residential development would generally be more water efficient than lower density residential and all new development would be subject to water conservation requirements that would help to minimize wastewater flows. All future project applications, whether discretionary or ministerial would be required to adhere to the SMC which requires the assurance of adequate water facilities through payment of development impact fees for the constructing public facilities, which are reasonably related to the impacts of the new development (SMC Chapter 12.30). Additionally, future projects would be required to comply with General Plan policies including Land Use Element Policy 3.6, which requires the review of development projects to ensure that all necessary utilities are available to serve the project. Impacts would be less than significant.

**4.18.7.2 Mitigation Measures****TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

No mitigation is required.

**4.18.7.3 Significance After Mitigation****TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

#### **4.18.8 Issues 4 and 5: Solid Waste**

*Would the project generate solid waste in excess of state or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?*

*Would the project comply with federal, state, or local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?*

##### **4.18.8.1 Impact Analysis**

###### **TCSP**

Future development within the TCSP area, including throughout the five proposed neighborhoods, would increase solid waste generation. While specific projects within the TCSP area are not currently known, the project is anticipated to add an additional 3,140 multi-family housing units and 2,287,189 sf of non-residential space, assumed to be commercial for the purposes of this analysis, compared to existing conditions. The addition of 3,140 multi-family housing units would increase solid waste generation by 12,560 pounds per day. The addition of 2,287,189 sf of commercial development would increase solid waste generation by 11,436 pounds per day. In total, the TCSP area would increase solid waste generation by approximately 23,996 pounds per day. As detailed above, the Sycamore Landfill has a current remaining capacity of approximately 100 million cubic yards, or 168.5 billion pounds, as of 2023. Future projects, whether discretionary or ministerial, would be required to adhere to state and local regulations relating to solid waste and recycling. Specifically, the City is required to meet solid waste diversion goals set forth in the California Integrated Waste Management Act which would decrease waste delivered to the landfill. Additional measures for the reduction of solid waste include goals set by the state to reduce organic waste disposed of in landfills. The City would require future development to contract with available solid waste service providers that would provide the required solid waste disposal, including recycling and organic material recycling to meet existing State and local requirements. Future projects would also be required to comply with General Plan Safety Element Policy 3.8 which promotes the safe, environmentally sound means of solid waste disposal for the community. Impacts would be less than significant.

###### **AEN**

While specific projects within the AEN are not currently known, the only residential development anticipated in the AEN is the Housing Element sites, which would add up to 1,480 units of multi-family housing. The AEN would also add up to 1,792,103 sf of non-residential development, which is assumed to be commercial for the purposes of this analysis. Using the waste generation rates described above, the AEN would increase solid waste generation by approximately 14,880 pounds per day. This is well within the capacity of the Sycamore Landfill, and future development would comply with the necessary state and local requirements, including the General Plan, to ensure impacts to solid waste disposal remain less than significant.

###### **Housing Element Sites**

The Housing Element sites would add up to 1,480 units of multi-family housing and up to 389,651 square feet of non-residential development, which is assumed to be commercial for the purposes of this analysis. Using the waste generation rates described above, the Housing Element sites would increase solid waste generation by approximately 7,868 pounds per day. This is well within the capacity of the Sycamore Landfill, and future development would comply

with the necessary state and local requirements, including the General Plan, to ensure impacts to solid waste disposal remain less than significant.

**4.18.8.2 Mitigation Measures**

**TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

No mitigation is required.

**4.18.8.3 Significance After Mitigation**

**TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

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## 4.19 Wildfire

The following section analyzes the potential wildfire impacts that may occur as a result of implementation of the proposed project. This evaluation includes the potential for the proposed project to result in exacerbating wildfire impacts.

### 4.19.1 Existing Conditions

#### Climate

The Pacific Ocean influences the Inland County of San Diego (County) and the City of Santee's (City) weather, and are frequently under the influence of a seasonal, migratory subtropical high-pressure cell known as the "Pacific High". Wet winters and dry summers with mild seasonal changes characterize the southern California climate. The local climate, which has a large influence on wildfire risk, is typical of a Mediterranean area. The climate pattern is occasionally interrupted by extreme periods of hot weather, winter storms, or dry, easterly Santa Ana winds. The average high temperature for the City during July is around 88 degrees Fahrenheit (°F). Precipitation typically occurs between December through April with 12 inches of rain per year. The prevailing wind is an on-shore flow from the Pacific Ocean, which is approximately 15 miles to the west.

Hot, dry Santa Ana winds, which typically occur in the fall, but have in recent years also occurred in the spring (May, in particular), are usually from the northeast and can gust to speeds of 50 miles per hour or higher. The Santa Ana winds are the result of occasional pressure gradients between the high pressure in the plateaus of the Great Basin and the lower pressure gradient over the Pacific Ocean (Murphee et al. 2018). Drying vegetation with fuel moisture of less than 5 percent for smaller fuels (which dry faster than larger fuels) is possible during the summer months and becomes fuel available to advancing flames should an ignition occur. Extreme conditions include 92°F temperatures in summer and winds of up to 50 miles per hour during the fall based on worst-case conditions from County data sets during the Cedar Fire (in 2003). Relative humidity of 12 percent or less is possible during fire season.

#### Vegetation (Fuels)

The potential for wildland fires represents a hazard where development is adjacent to open space or within close proximity to wildland fuels. Vegetation is important relative to wildfire as some vegetation, such as grassland habitats, are highly flammable while other vegetation, such as chaparral and oak riparian forest, may be more difficult to ignite but would burn under more intense fire conditions. The City's steep scrub brush-covered hillsides, and surrounding vacant land create areas of Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) as shown in Figures 4.9-3 and 4.9-4. The Town Center Specific Plan (TCSP), including the Arts and Entertainment Neighborhood (AEN) and the Housing Element sites, is not within or adjacent to the City's VHFHSZ; however, the northeastern and southwestern portions of the TCSP area are in a wildland urban interface (WUI) zone, which includes areas close to vacant sites with vegetation susceptible to fire.

#### Fire History

Fire history information provides an understanding of fire frequency, fire type, most vulnerable project areas, and significant ignition sources. Fire history represented in this section uses the Fire and Resource Assessment Program database, which summarizes fire perimeter data dating

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to the late 1800s but is incomplete because it only includes fires over 10 acres in size and does not have complete perimeter data, especially for the first half of the twentieth century.

There have been 65 fires recorded by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) since 1910 (CAL FIRE 2018) in the Santee area. In total, 16 fires ranging from 25 acres (unnamed 1974 fire) to 280,276 acres (Cedar Fire in 2003) are noted to have burned in the area. The most notable fire, the Cedar Fire, occurred during October and November 2003, and burned large areas of central San Diego County.

Based on fire history data for the City, fire return intervals range between 1 and 25 years. This indicates significant wildfire potential in the region and the potential for occasional wildfire encroachment, most likely from the large expanses of open space.

## **4.19.2 Regulatory Framework**

The following section discusses applicable state and local regulations pertaining to wildfire. There are no federal wildfire regulations that apply.

### **4.19.2.1 State**

#### **California Building Code**

The California Building Code (California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 24, Part 2) contains regulations that must be followed to satisfy minimum acceptable levels of safety for buildings and non-building structures. Chapter 7A focuses primarily on fire-resistive construction methods for exterior wildfire exposure for preventing ember penetration into buildings, which is a leading cause of structure loss from wildfires.

#### **California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection**

CAL FIRE protects the people of California from fires, responds to emergencies, and protects and enhances more than 31 million acres of California's privately owned wildlands. CAL FIRE's firefighters, fire engines, and aircraft responded to an average of 4,901 wildland fires per year over a five year average between 2019 and 2024, which burned an average of approximately 236,00 acres per year (CAL FIRE 2024). As part of the CAL FIRE team since 1995, the Office of the State Fire Marshal supports the CAL FIRE mission to protect life and property through fire prevention engineering programs, law, and code enforcement and education.

#### **California Fire Code**

The California Fire Code (CCR Title 24, Part 9) contains regulations consistent with nationally recognized accepted practices for safeguarding, to a reasonable degree, life and property from the hazards of the following: fire and explosion; hazardous conditions in the use or occupancy of buildings or premises; and dangerous conditions arising from the storage, handling, and use of hazardous materials and devices. It also contains provisions to assist emergency response personnel. The California Fire Code and the California Building Code use a hazard classification system to determine what protective measures are required to protect fire and life safety. These measures may include construction standards, separations from property lines, and specialized equipment.

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## California Public Resources Code

### Fire Hazard Severity Zones

California Public Resources Code, Sections 4201–4204 applies to state responsibility areas, and Government Code Sections 51175–89 direct CAL FIRE to map areas of significant fire hazards based on fuels, terrain, weather, and other relevant factors. The Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZs) define the application of various mitigation strategies to reduce risk associated with wildland fires. Fire hazard designations are based on topography, vegetation, and weather, among other factors, with higher hazard category sites including steep terrain, unmaintained fuels/vegetation, and WUI locations. Projects situated in VHFHSZs require fire hazard analysis and application of fire protection measures that have been developed to specifically result in defensible communities in these WUI locations.

### California Strategic Fire Plan

The California Strategic Fire Plan is a cooperative effort between the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection and CAL FIRE. By placing the emphasis on what needs to be done long before a fire starts, the California Strategic Fire Plan looks to reduce firefighting costs and property losses, increase firefighter safety, and contribute to ecosystem health. The Strategic Fire Plan has a vision for a natural environment that is more fire resilient, buildings and infrastructure that are more fire resistant, and a society that is more aware of and responsive to the benefits and threats of wildland fire—all achieved through local, state, federal, tribal, and private partnerships (CAL FIRE 2018).

### **Subdivision Map Act**

In 2012, Senate Bill 1241 added Section 66474.02 to Title 7, Division 2, of the California Government Code, commonly known as the “Subdivision Map Act.” The statute prohibits subdivision of parcels designated very high fire hazard or are in a State Responsibility Area, unless certain findings are made prior to approval of the Vesting Tentative Map. The statute requires that a city or county planning commission make three new findings regarding fire hazard safety before approving a subdivision proposal. The three findings are (1) the design and location of the subdivision and its lots are consistent with defensible space regulations found in California Public Resources Code, Section 4290–91; (2) structural fire protection services would be available for the subdivision through a publicly funded entity; and (3) ingress and egress street standards for fire equipment are met per any applicable local ordinance and California Public Resources Code, Section 4290.

### **State Fire Regulations**

Fire regulations for California are established in Sections 13000 et seq. of the California Health and Services Code (California Health & Safety Code Section 13000) and include regulations for structural standards (similar to those identified in the California Building Code); fire protection and public notification systems; fire protection devices, such as extinguishers and smoke alarms; standards for high-rise structures and childcare facilities; and fire suppression training.



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#### **4.19.2.2 Regional**

##### **County of San Diego Code of Regulatory Ordinances, Removal of Fire Hazard (Section 96.1.005 and 96.1.202)**

The County Fire Authority, in partnership with CAL FIRE, the Bureau of Land Management, and the U.S. Forest Service, is responsible for the enforcement of defensible space inspections. Inspectors are responsible for ensuring that adequate defensible space has been created and maintained around structures. City businesses are required to undergo an annual fire prevention inspection. These inspections are to ensure compliance with fire codes and City Fire Code Amendments. Inspections provide an opportunity for the City's fire personnel to identify potential ignition sources of fire prior to an event and to familiarize themselves with various building layouts throughout the City. The City contracts with Fire Prevention Services to perform routine defensible space inspections and the program is managed by Code Compliance in Santee. If violations of the program requirements are noted, inspectors list the required corrective measures and provide a reasonable time frame in which to complete the task. If violations still exist upon re-inspection, the local fire inspector will forward a complaint to the County for further enforcement action.

##### **San Diego County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan**

The purpose of the County's Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (MHMP) is to identify the County's hazards, review and assess past disaster occurrences, estimate the probability of future occurrences, and set goals to mitigate potential risks to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people and property from natural and human-made hazards. The City participates in the MHMP (County 2023b). An important component of the plan is the Community Emergency Response Team, which educates community members about disaster preparedness and trains them in basic response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, and disaster medical operations. The City is one of 20 jurisdictions that support and participate in the team.

##### **County of San Diego Emergency Operations Plan**

The County's Emergency Operations Plan dictates who is responsible for an evacuation effort and how regional resources will be requested and coordinated. First responders are responsible for determining initial protective actions before the Emergency Operations Center and emergency management personnel have an opportunity to convene and gain situational awareness. Initial protective actions are shared and communicated to local Emergency Operations Centers and necessary support agencies as soon as possible to ensure an effective, coordinated evacuation. During an evacuation effort, the designated County Evacuation Coordinator is the County Sheriff, who is also the Law Enforcement Coordinator. The County Evacuation Coordinator is assisted by other law enforcement and support agencies.

#### **4.19.2.3 Local**

##### **Santee Emergency Operations Plan**

On August 12, 2020, the City Council approved the updated City Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) to provide a framework to use in performing emergency functions before, during, and after an emergency event, natural disaster, or technological incident. The EOP is based on the San Diego County Operational Area Emergency Plan, but designed to meet the needs of the City with respect to organizational structure and the City's top hazards. This plan establishes the emergency organization and addresses the coordination of emergency response activities. The

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goal of this plan is to provide for a coordinated effective response to ensure the protection of life, property, and the environment. The EOP is based on a whole community approach. This concept is a process by which residents, emergency management representatives, organizational and community leaders, and government officials can understand and assess the needs of their respective communities and determine the best ways to organize and strengthen their resources, capacities, and interests. Under the EOP, the Santee Fire Department and Sheriff's Department (as the City's contracted law enforcement service provider) work together to provide coordinated training on procedures and processes for managing emergency incidents.

## **General Plan**

The City's General Plan Safety Element contains policies related to the reduction of loss of life, injuries, and damage to property resulting from fire. Relevant policies are listed below.

### Safety Element

- **Policy 4.1:** Proposed development should be approved only after it is determined that there will be adequate water pressure to maintain the required fire flow at the time of development.
- **Policy 4.2:** The City should ensure that all new development meets established response time standards for fire and life safety services.
- **Policy 4.4:** The City shall require emergency access routes in all developments to be adequately wide to allow the entry and maneuvering of emergency vehicles.
- **Policy 4.7:** The City shall ensure that the distribution of fire hydrants and capacity of water lines is adequate through periodic review.
- **Policy 4.8:** Encourage and support the delivery of a high level of emergency services through cooperation with other agencies and use of available financial opportunities.
- **Policy 4.9:** All proposed development shall satisfy the minimum structural fire protection standards contained in the adopted edition of the Uniform Fire and Building Codes; however, where deemed appropriate the City shall enhance the minimum standards to provide optimum protection.
- **Policy 4.10:** Encourage the continued development, implementation, and public awareness of fire prevention programs.
- **Policy 4.12:** The timing of additional fire station construction or renovation, or new services shall relate to the rise of service demand in the City and surrounding areas.
- **Policy 4.15:** In order to minimize fire hazards the Santee Fire and Life Safety Department shall routinely be involved in the review of development applications. Considerations shall be given to adequate emergency access, driveway widths, turning radii, fire hydrant locations and needed fire flow requirements.

## Municipal Code

Chapter 11.18 of the Santee Municipal Code (SMC) adopts the 2022 California Fire Code, Part 9, Title 24, of the California Code of Regulations. The California Fire Code includes regulations requiring all new commercial or residential development to install sprinkler systems, the minimum required unobstructed street widths for fire apparatus access, and requirements that include a Fire Protection Plan for development in WUI. The City requires a minimum of 26 feet width for fire apparatus access roadways throughout the City, which is more restrictive than the California Fire Code. Ordinance 605 amended the SMC to formally adopt the 2022 California Fire Code as the City's Fire Code.

### 4.19.3 Significance Determination Thresholds

Consistent with Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines, impacts related to wildfire would be significant if the project is located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones and the project would:

- 1) Threshold 1: Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.
- 2) Threshold 2: Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or uncontrolled spread of wildfire.
- 3) Threshold 3: Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment.
- 4) Threshold 4: Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope stability, or drainage changes.

### 4.19.4 Methodology

The impact evaluation of potential impacts associated with wildfire consisted of a review of secondary sources, including the City's adopted VHFHSZ map.

### 4.19.5 Issue 1: Emergency Response Plans

*Would the project substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?*

#### 4.19.5.1 Impact Analysis

##### TCSP Area and AEN

The TCSP, including the AEN, is not within or adjacent to the City's VHFHSZ; however, the northeastern and southwestern portions of the TCSP area are in a wildland urban interface (WUI) zone, which includes areas close to vacant sites with vegetation susceptible to fire. At the program level, the proposed update to the TCSP, including the proposed changes to the TCSP area and the AEN, would not directly result in the construction of new housing or other development but

would provide capacity for future development consistent with the TCSP, state Housing Element Law, and state density bonus law. The resulting increase in development and population concentrations within the TCSP and AEN would place some increase in demand on emergency evacuation facilities and services. At the program level, the project would also result in changes in the City's existing circulation network, consisting of plans for roadways and updated roadway facility guidelines and standards establishing pedestrian, bicycle, transit, auto, and parking standards to facilitate connectivity throughout the TCSP area and the AEN.

Emergency response in the City and the TCSP area and AEN is guided by regional and local plans and policies as described in the regulatory framework above and are focused on preparing local resources and training to respond to emergencies. The land uses and anticipated development within the TCSP area and AEN would continue to guide development within the area and would not include land uses that would impair implementation of or physically interfere with the City's emergency response efforts or evacuation routes. Furthermore, applications for future projects within the TCSP area and AEN would be reviewed and approved by the City's Fire Department prior to issuance of building permits to ensure consistency with fire standards and regulations. Additionally, future development would be required to adhere to the City's General Plan (Safety Element) policies including, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.11, and 4.12 which address emergency response and emergency evacuation. Future development within the TCSP area and AEN would not conflict with emergency response and impacts would be less than significant.

### **Housing Element Sites**

At the project level, development at Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B would also result in an increase in development and population concentrations in the southeastern part of the AEN. However, development at the Housing Element sites would not be within a VHFHSZ or include land uses that would impair implementation of or physically interfere with the City's emergency response efforts or evacuation routes. Temporary construction and development of Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B would not conflict with emergency response and impacts would be less than significant.

#### **4.19.5.2 Mitigation Measures**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

No mitigation is required.

#### **4.19.5.3 Significance After Mitigation**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

**4.19.6 Issue 2: Wildfire**

*Would the project, due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or uncontrolled spread of wildfire?*

**4.19.6.1 Impact Analysis****TCSP Area and AEN**

The TCSP area and AEN are within an urbanized part of the City and are generally not located near areas of wildfire risk. None of the programmatic elements of the project are located within the CAL FIRE VHFHSZ; however, portions of the TCSP area are in a WUI zone (see Section 4.9). Additional development will occur within this WUI zone. Fire safety in general would be addressed by the City's General Plan policies 4.2 through 4.13 which provide guidance for the minimization of fire hazards including ensuring adequate response times, setting standards for emergency access, structural standards, other planning design measures required to be considered in all new development. Additionally, future projects would require review by the Building Official/Fire Marshal that would include review of defensible space and other wildfire protection/preventative measures. Significant impacts related to exacerbating a wildfire risk would not occur in the TCSP area or AEN.

**Housing Element Sites**

The Housing Element sites are located in the southeastern part of the AEN on vacant and graded sites that are generally flat and located along existing roadways and near existing developed areas. None of the sites are located near slopes or other factors that would exacerbate wildfire risks. Building and occupancy permits for future use of the Housing Element sites would include review for fire safety by the Building Official/Fire Marshal. Significant impacts related to exacerbating a wildfire risk would not occur within the Housing Element sites.

**4.19.6.2 Mitigation Measures****TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

No mitigation is required.

**4.19.6.3 Significance After Mitigation****TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

#### **4.19.7 Issue 3: Infrastructure**

*Would the project require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?*

##### **4.19.7.1 Impact Analysis**

###### **TCSP Area and AEN**

The proposed project identifies new roadways and pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and other infrastructure and public facilities improvements throughout the TCSP area, including the AEN. The proposed TCSP Chapter 4, *Infrastructure and Public Utilities*, discusses the water, wastewater, and stormwater facilities that would continue to serve the TCSP area and AEN. The project is not located within the CAL FIRE VHFHSZ and none of the required infrastructure needed to serve future development within the TCSP area or the AEN would exacerbate fire risk or result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment. Impacts would be less than significant on the TCSP area and AEN.

###### **Housing Element Sites**

Development of Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B would rely on existing infrastructure in the area such as roads, utilities and emergency services. None of the Housing Element sites would require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure that may exacerbate fire risk and impacts in the Housing Element sites would be less than significant.

##### **4.19.7.2 Mitigation Measures**

###### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

No mitigation is required.

##### **4.19.7.3 Significance After Mitigation**

###### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.

#### **4.19.8 Issue 4: Flooding or Landslides**

*Would the project expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope stability, or drainage changes?*

##### **4.19.8.1 Impact Analysis**

###### **TCSP Area and AEN**

Wildfires can greatly reduce the amount of vegetation on hillsides. Slope failures, mudflows, and landslides are common in areas where steep hillsides and embankments are present, and such conditions would be exacerbated in a post-fire environment where vegetative cover has been

removed. The TCSP area, including the AEN, is generally flat and surrounds the San Diego River. CAL FIRE mapping data indicates low to moderate erosion potential within the City limits. As discussed in EIR Section 4.10 and 4.7, future development within the TCSP area and AEN would not result in significant changes to runoff, slope stability, landslides, erosion, or drainage, and impacts would be less than significant.

### **Housing Element Sites**

The Housing Element sites are in the southeastern part of the AEN on vacant and graded areas that do not have high erosion potential. None of the sites are located near slopes or other factors that would expose people or structures to downslope or downstream flooding risks or landslides. Housing Element sites 16A and 20A are near the San Diego River and are identified as partially within flood hazard areas of the San Diego River; however, as discussed in EIR Section 4.10, development of the Housing Element sites would not result in significant changes to runoff, slope stability, or drainage on either site, and impacts associated with the Housing Element sites would be less than significant.

#### **4.19.8.2 Mitigation Measures**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

No mitigation is required.

#### **4.19.8.3 Significance After Mitigation**

##### **TCSP Area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites**

Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation.



## **5.0 Significant Unavoidable Environmental Effects/ Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes**

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15126.2 (c) and (d) require that the significant unavoidable impacts of the project, as well as any significant irreversible environmental changes that would result from project implementation, be addressed in an Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

### **5.1 Significant Environmental Effects Which Cannot Be Avoided if the Project is Implemented**

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2 (c) any significant unavoidable impacts of a project, including those impacts that can be mitigated but not reduced to below a level of significance despite the applicant's willingness to implement all feasible mitigation measures, must be identified in the EIR. Implementation of the Town Center Specific Plan (TCSP) area, Arts and Entertainment Neighborhood (AEN), and Housing Element sites (project) would result in significant unavoidable impacts to air quality (net increases of criteria pollutants at the program level only), and hazards and land use (potential conflicts with airport hazards), noise (potential for future outdoor performance noise levels to exceed 60 dBA), and traffic (vehicle miles traveled [VMT) at the program and project levels. All other significant impacts identified in Chapter 4.0, Environmental Analysis, of this EIR can be reduced to below a level of significance with implementation of the mitigation framework provided in Chapter 4.0 of this EIR.

### **5.2 Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes Which Would Result if the Project is Implemented**

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2 (d) requires an evaluation of significant irreversible environmental changes. Examples of possible irreversible changes include:

- Primary impacts such as the use of nonrenewable resources (i.e., biological habitat, agricultural land, mineral deposits, water bodies, energy resources and cultural resources);
- Secondary impacts, which would generally commit future generations to similar uses (such as highway improvements that provide access to a previously inaccessible areas); and
- Environmental accidents potentially associated with buildout of the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites.

#### **5.2.1 Non-renewable Resources**

The majority of the TCSP area and AEN are located within existing developed or disturbed areas; however, the Housing Element sites are located on vacant land with potentially sensitive resources present. While the potential for impacts to biological habitat and cultural resources is low, there is a potential for impacts to resources at certain sites. Biological and cultural resource impacts associated with future development would be mitigated to a level less than significant, as described in Sections 4.4 and 4.5. The potential for paleontological resources impacts to occur associated with future development at the Housing Element sites would be mitigated to less than

significant (Section 4.7) with implementation of a mitigation framework that would ensure paleontological monitoring is required (where appropriate). Implementation of the project would result in less than significant impacts to water bodies (drainage and water quality) as described in Section 4.10.

As described in Section 4.2, the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program classifies the majority of the Rezone Sites as “Urban and Built Up Land,” “Other Land,” and “Grazing Land.” The areas classified as “Grazing Lands” are not considered a significant farmland resource under CEQA. Portions of the project area are classified as “Farmland of Local Importance”; however, there is no recent history of agricultural use at these sites. There are no lands protected by a Williamson Act Contract within the City. Additionally, there is no forestland within the City, and the City does not possess any zoning classifications for forestland, timberland, or timberland production zones. Therefore, no impacts to agricultural and forestry resources would occur.

Although portions of the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites in the vicinity of the San Diego River are located within a Mineral Resource Zone (MRZ) 2 designated area, these areas are not zoned for mining operations and no mining operations exist within the sites. While these lands may support mineral resources, mining operations at these sites would not be feasible considering the proximity to sensitive receptors and existing established neighborhoods. Furthermore, the project area is not designated as locally important mineral resource recovery sites in the City’s General Plan. Therefore, the project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource or locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan, and impacts would be less than significant.

With regard to energy resources, actions related to future development would result in an irretrievable commitment of nonrenewable resources, including energy supplies and construction materials, such as lumber, steel and aggregate. Non-renewable energy resources (coal, natural gas, oil) would be used in construction, heating and refrigeration of food and water, transportation, lighting, and other associated energy needs.

Residential and mixed-use development anticipated within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites, together with other projects in the City, would require the commitment or destruction of other nonrenewable and slowly renewable resources. These resources include (but are not limited to) lumber and other forested products; sand and gravel; asphalt; petrochemical construction materials; steel, copper, lead, other metals; and water. However, the amount and rate of consumption of these resources would not result in significant environmental impacts because multi-family and mixed-use development are not uses that are associated with an unnecessary, inefficient, or wasteful use of resources.

As described previously, the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites are mainly developed with existing commercial uses or located on underutilized residential sites. Development in these areas would reinvigorate underutilized areas by allowing new residential uses in close proximity to commercial services and community facilities, while preserving established residential neighborhoods. Most of the project areas are presently developed. Development on vacant parcels would, however, result in the long term commitment to urbanization because reversion back to vacant land would be difficult and highly unlikely. However, the development of mid- to high-density residential units or mixed uses would result in an efficient provision of housing and efficient land use pattern.

In summary, future construction and operation associated with implementation of the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would result in the irretrievable commitment of limited, slowly

renewable, and nonrenewable resources, which would limit the availability of these particular resource quantities for future generations or for other uses. Therefore, although irreversible environmental changes would result from future development, such changes would not be considered significant.

### **5.2.2 Secondary Impacts**

The TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites are accessible via major roadways (e.g., State Routes (SR) 52, 67, and 125, as well as numerous arterials and local streets) and are served by existing utilities, and other public services. As a result, secondary impacts are not anticipated from environmental changes resulting from the construction of new infrastructure, as discussed in Sections 4.14 and 4.18.

### **5.2.3 Environmental Accidents**

The CEQA Guidelines also require a discussion of the potential for irreversible environmental damage caused by an accident associated with the project. As described in Section 4.9, implementation of the proposed project would allow for the development of residential and mixed-uses (including commercial uses) that commonly store, use, and dispose of hazardous materials. Likewise, industries and businesses using hazardous materials may expand or increase to accommodate the projected population growth under buildout of the project.

Due to the nature of past and current land uses, future development/redevelopment within the City has the potential to expose people and the environment to hazards through the routine transport, use, disposal, or accidental release of hazardous materials. Businesses that are likely to store hazardous substances and petroleum products or generate waste include the following: gasoline service stations, automobile repair facilities, dry cleaning facilities, photograph developing facilities, and medical and dental facilities. While none of these uses are explicitly planned in the TCSP area, AEN, or Housing Element sites, future projects could propose these uses.

All future projects would be subject to review to ensure conformance with the Municipal Code, General Plan policies, and regulations imposed by federal, state, and local agencies. Compliance with applicable federal, state, and local hazardous materials regulations such as the Chemical Accident Prevention Provision, Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act, the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, the California Health and Safety Code, California Code of Regulations Title 23, the Aboveground Petroleum Storage Act, California Accidental Release Prevention Program, and the California Emergency Services Act would ensure that buildout of the Housing Element sites would not result in irreversible environmental damage related to the accidental release of hazardous materials.

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## 6.0 Growth Inducement

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that an environmental impact report (EIR) evaluate the “growth-inducing” effects of a proposed project. Specifically, CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(e) requires that an EIR:

Discuss the ways in which the proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Included in this are projects which would remove obstacles to population growth (for example, a major expansion of a wastewater treatment plant might, for example, allow for more construction in service areas). Increases in the population might tax existing community services facilities, requiring construction of new facilities that could cause significant environmental effects. Also discuss the characteristics of some projects which may encourage and facilitate other activities that could significantly affect the environment, either individually or cumulatively. It must not be assumed that growth in any area is necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment.

A project can directly or indirectly induce growth. Construction of new housing would directly induce population growth. Also, if a project creates substantial new permanent employment opportunities, it could indirectly induce growth by stimulating the need for additional housing and services to support the new employment demand. It could also indirectly induce growth by removing infrastructure limitations or regulatory constraints on a required public service, such as roads or water service. The following section analyzes potential impacts that could result from growth inducing conditions from the update to the City of Santee’s (City) Town Center Specific Plan (TCSP; project).

### 6.1 Population and Housing Growth

The project would result in the expansion of the boundaries of the overall TCSP area and create updated development standards and conceptual development plans and Objective Design Standards for Housing Element sites. Buildout of the TCSP would result in an increase of approximately 3,140 dwelling units and 2,148,864 square feet (sf) of non-residential development in the TCSP area. Of that growth, 1,480 dwelling units and 1,792,103 sf of non-residential development would be within the Arts and Entertainment Neighborhood (AEN). Development at Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B would result in an increase of 1,480 dwelling units and 389,651 sf of non-residential development pursuant to the maximum densities permitted in the City’s adopted 6<sup>th</sup> Cycle Housing Element and state density bonus assumptions. Non-residential development throughout the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would generally be composed of local neighborhood-serving retail and office uses, intended to serve the residents of new and existing housing in the immediate area. The potential for new residential and non-residential development within the TCSP area would foster economic growth consistent with the City’s General Plan (see EIR Section 4.13.5 for more discussion on population growth). Buildout of the TCSP would therefore be consistent with existing projections for development in the City and would not be considered growth inducing in regard to significant economic or employment growth.

### 6.2 Removal of an Impediment to Growth

The project does not propose the construction or expansion of new services or infrastructure to currently unserved or undeveloped areas; rather it would update the TCSP to facilitate

development and supporting infrastructure consistent with the City's General Plan, including its most recently adopted Housing Element. A vast majority of the permitted future residential and mixed-use development would occur as infill development and redevelopment within the urbanized TCSP area, which is already served by essential roads, utilities, and public services. Therefore, the project would not remove an impediment to growth.

### **6.3 Foster Economic or Employment Growth**

Buildout of the TCSP area would result in an increase of approximately 2,148,864 sf of non-residential development in the TCSP area, including 1,792,103 sf of non-residential development within the AEN. Development at Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B would also result in an increase of 389,651 sf of non-residential development. New non-residential development would generally be composed of local neighborhood-serving retail and office uses, intended to serve the residents of existing and planned housing in the immediate area. Economic and employment growth because of the additional development would be consistent with the City's growth projections within their General Plan and would not be considered growth inducing in regard to significant economic or employment growth for the City.

### **6.4 Conclusion**

Overall, the project would facilitate growth through updating the TCSP area and development standards, consistent with the City's General Plan, including its most recently adopted Housing Element. The project would not remove an impediment to growth; nor does it propose to develop or permit the encroachment into an isolated area adjacent to open space or foster economic and employment expansion. As discussed above, the project would accommodate projected population growth and would not be considered growth inducing because it would provide residential and non-residential capacity for projected population growth. The opportunities to provide housing would be consistent with the City's need to establish a resilient housing base for the community and to comply with state law.

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## 7.0 Cumulative Impacts

This section addresses cumulative impacts associated with implementation of the updated City of Santee (City) Town Center Specific Plan (TCSP; project). The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15355 defines cumulative impacts as “two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts.” Section 15355 further states that cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant projects taking place over a period of time.

Section 15130(a) of the CEQA Guidelines requires a discussion of cumulative impacts of a project “when the project’s incremental effect is cumulatively considerable.” Cumulatively considerable, as defined in Section 15065(a)(3), “means that the incremental effects of an individual project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.”

According to Section 15130(b) of the CEQA Guidelines, the discussion of cumulative effects “... need not provide as great a detail as is provided for the effects attributable to the project alone. The discussion should be guided by standards of practicality and reasonableness...” The evaluation of cumulative impacts is to be based on either (a) “a list of past, present, and probable future projects producing related or cumulative impacts, including, if necessary, those impacts outside the control of the agency,” or (b) “a summary of projections contained in an adopted local, regional, or statewide plan or related planning document, that describes or evaluates conditions contributing to the cumulative effect... Any such planning document shall be referenced and made available to the public at a location specified by the Lead Agency” (CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(b)(1)). Pursuant to Section 15130(d), cumulative impact discussions may rely on previously approved land use documents such as general plans, specific plans, and local coastal plans, which may be incorporated by reference.

### 7.1 Cumulative Analysis Setting and Methodology

The project includes a comprehensive update to the TCSP area boundaries and development standards, adjustments to the boundaries of the Arts and Entertainment Neighborhood (AEN), as well as conceptual development plans for Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B. Therefore, cumulative effects would occur from development associated with buildout of the TCSP area combined with effects of projected development on land within and around the City. The cumulative impacts of the project would, therefore, consider growth projected by the City and surrounding jurisdictions, including the cities of San Diego and El Cajon, and the County of San Diego (County). A broad examination of cumulative impacts involves considering buildout of the project together with growth and new development in the surrounding jurisdictions identified above.

The geographic area considered for each cumulative impact depends upon the impact that is being analyzed. For example, in assessing air quality impacts, all development within the air basin contributes to regional emissions of criteria pollutants, and basin wide projections of emissions are the best tool for determining the cumulative effect. Each subsection below identifies the specific parameters for the cumulative evaluation.

A significant impact would occur if the project’s contribution to a significant cumulative effect is determined to be substantial. Each subsection below provides an overview of the potential cumulative impacts that could occur followed by a summary of the project’s contribution to that



cumulative effect. The subsection concludes with a determination of the significance of the project.

### **7.1.1 Plans and Programs Evaluated for Determination of Cumulative Impacts**

Multiple federal, state, and local planning documents and programs were used to evaluate the project's contribution to cumulative impacts. These plans and programs are discussed under the Regulatory Framework subsections throughout Chapter 4.0. Highlighted below are a number of regional and City plans and programs relied upon throughout the cumulative evaluation.

#### **San Diego Forward: The 2021 Regional Plan**

San Diego Forward combines and updates the region's two big picture planning documents: the Regional Comprehensive Plan and the Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Community Strategy. San Diego Forward provides a vision for the region's growth through the year 2050. The plan reflects a strategy for a more sustainable future.

#### **General Plan**

The City's General Plan, including the adopted and certified 2021-2029 Housing Element, serves as a blueprint for physical development and contains goals and policies, which aim to enhance the City's character, to provide a balance of land uses and services, and to preserve environmentally sensitive areas.

#### **Municipal Code**

The Santee Municipal Code (SMC) contains the primary zoning implementation mechanisms for the General Plan Land Use Element. The zoning ordinance classifies and regulates the uses of land and structures within the City, consistent with the General Plan. The Zoning Code (Title 13) is adopted to protect and to promote the public health, safety, comfort, convenience, prosperity, and general welfare of residents and businesses in the City. The City's Zoning Code also regulates the physical development of land by imposing minimum standards on lot size, lot width and depth, setbacks, and by placing maximum limits on lot coverage and floor area ratio. These development standards are intended to reduce unacceptable mass and bulk, ensure proper scale of development, provide minimum light, air, and open space for every lot, and minimize the potential for spillover and edge effects between uses.

## **7.2 Cumulative Effect Analysis**

### **7.2.1 Agriculture and Forestry Resources**

The study area for the assessment of cumulative agriculture and forestry resources impacts is limited to the TCSP area as areas surrounding the TCSP are generally urbanized and while much of the City and surrounding areas were once used for agricultural production and grazing, there is no active agricultural uses or operations in the TCSP area or surrounding areas. As the majority of the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites have been part of the TCSP since its adoption in 1986, the project site has been identified for urban development and not been used for agricultural use or contained forestry resources.

Project approval would result in the expansion of the boundaries of the overall TCSP area and updated development standards, as well as conceptual development plans and Objective Design Standards for Housing Element sites. As noted in Table 4.2-1 in EIR Section 4.2, portions of the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites 16A and 16B are designated as Farmland of Local Importance; however, these areas are not in active agricultural use and are identified for residential and non-residential development in the existing and proposed TCSP. As there are no active or planned agricultural uses or forestry resources in the TCSP area or nearby surrounding urban areas, the project would not contribute to a cumulative agricultural and forestry resources impact.

Overall, future development in the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites, combined with development in the surrounding cumulative study areas, would not result in a cumulatively significant agricultural and forestry resources impact due to the mostly urbanized and non-agricultural nature of the cumulative study area. Thus, the project's incremental contribution to agricultural and forestry resources impacts would not be cumulatively considerable and cumulative agricultural and forestry resources impacts would be less than significant.

### **7.2.2 Aesthetics**

The study area for the assessment of cumulative visual impacts includes the entirety of the City as well as parts of the surrounding cities within viewshed of the TCSP area and AEN including the City of El Cajon to the south and southwest, the City of San Diego to the west and northwest, and the County of San Diego to the east and northeast. The project is the update to the TCSP that is part of the City's General Plan. Future development within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites could have a cumulative impact on visual resources due to changes in the existing visual quality and aesthetics resulting from incremental increases in density and urbanization. This growth could gradually alter the visual nature of the study area. The following is a summary of the project's contribution to cumulative aesthetic impacts.

The most noticeable visual changes would occur with development of vacant and underutilized sites within the TCSP area that is surrounded by residential and commercial development. Development of the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would be consistent with the visual quality and character of surrounding development based on application of required design review and consistency with SMC standards, including those provided in the TCSP. Additionally, some of the underutilized sites consist of aging structures with poor visual quality, and redevelopment of these structures would result in new residential structures developed consistent with the visual requirements of the SMC. Furthermore, development of vacant and underutilized sites within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would be required to adhere to the land use plan in the TCSP.

Regarding public views, the TCSP area involves a majority of the central portion of the City. Development within the TCSP area would constitute infill development resulting in development consistent with surrounding urbanization that would not affect existing views. However, some larger vacant sites located near the San Diego River could affect views. Future development would be required to adhere to relevant portions of the SMC including Chapter 13.08, et seq., which establishes the City's Development review procedures, including the supplemental development regulations of the proposed TCSP. The Development review process would ensure that future development would not degrade scenic vistas and views and, therefore, there would be no substantial cumulative obstruction of public views.

Regarding light pollution, development with the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would be required to comply with the SMC standards related to light and glare (Chapter 13.08.070(G)), which requires that outdoor lighting be directed away from adjacent properties and set in a way to avoid any detriment to the surrounding area. Additionally, the City's General Plan Community Enhancement Element includes the standard for lighting and signage to minimize spillover of lighting through use of directional, cut-off, and non-glare fixtures.

Overall, future development in the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites, combined with development in the surrounding cumulative study areas, would not result in a cumulatively significant visual impact due to the mostly urbanized nature of the cumulative study area. Adherence to regulatory requirements including Development review consistent with SMC Chapter 13.08 implementation and proposed TCSP development regulations would ensure that future development would not substantially degrade scenic resources. Thus, the project's incremental contribution to visual impacts would not be cumulatively considerable and cumulative visual impacts would be less than significant.

### **7.2.3 Air Quality**

Cumulative impacts to air quality may be regional or localized. Regional air quality would be impacted if emissions from the project contributed to cumulative degradation of air quality in the San Diego Air Basin (SDAB). Localized air quality would be impacted if emissions from the project and other proximate emissions sources resulted in pollutant concentrations that exceeded standards at a sensitive receptor.

The study area for the assessment of cumulative regional air quality impacts is the SDAB which is considered a nonattainment area due to exceedances of the California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) for ozone and inhalable particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>). Future development within the SDAB could have a cumulative impact on air quality due to increased air pollution emissions associated with construction and operations, including transportation.

The cumulative assessment of regional air quality impacts to the SDAB relies partially on assessment of the project's consistency with the adopted Regional Air Quality Strategies (RAQS) and State Implementation Plan (SIP). The RAQS and SIP are based on growth forecasts for the region, which are in turn based on maximum buildout of land uses as allowed in the adopted community and general plans. As discussed in Section 4.3.5, the project would update the TCSP but would not result in increased land use intensity compared to what is anticipated in the current TCSP, and thereby would not result in increased air emissions that not accounted for in the Attainment Plan or RAQS. The project would be consistent with adopted land use plans upon which the RAQS was based, a significant impact would not occur.

As detailed in Section 4.3.6, construction emissions associated with cumulative construction activities associated with buildout of the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites may result in some instances where future development would occur simultaneously; however, short term air quality emissions associated with construction would not cumulatively exceed the relevant thresholds. Therefore, cumulative construction-related regional air quality impacts for the TCSP, AEN, and Housing Element sites would be less than significant. Regarding cumulative operational emissions, while buildout of the project would not conflict with implementation of the RAQS, a cumulatively considerable net increase in emissions is identified for buildout of the TCSP area and AEN. The Housing Element sites are not identified to result in a cumulatively significant increase in operational emissions.

Mitigation measure AQ-1 would be applied to address significant cumulative operational impacts associated with buildout of the TCSP area and AEN. This measure would require the use of electrically powered landscape equipment; however, operational emissions would still exceed maximum daily operational emissions. Therefore, the project's contribution to a significant cumulative effect is determined to be substantial relative to operational air quality emissions, and cumulative air quality impacts would remain significant and unavoidable.

#### **7.2.4 Biological Resources**

The study area for the assessment of cumulative impacts to biological resources includes the East County inland region composed of the City and neighboring jurisdictions identified above. As development occurs throughout this region, cumulative impacts to sensitive biological resources could occur, particularly with resources associated with the San Diego River. However, cumulative impacts are expected to be addressed and minimized through compliance with resource planning documents such as the Multiple Species Conservation Plan, draft subarea plans, Resource Protection Ordinance, and Vernal Pool Habitat Conservation Plan and applicable federal and state regulatory standards and permit requirements.

As shown on Table 4.4-1 in Section 4.4, most of the TCSP area is developed; however, wetland and upland habitats are present within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element Site 16A. Other biological resources have the potential to occur at any of the project areas, such as smooth tarplant and sensitive animal species. Mitigation measures BIO-1 through BIO-11 are included in Section 4.4 to mitigate potentially significant impacts to less than significant requiring focused surveys and translocation plans for smooth tarplant, exclusionary fencing, construction personnel training, revegetation requirements, pre-construction surveys, and jurisdictional waters and wetlands permitting requirements. Future development within the TCSP area and AEN, outside of the Housing Element sites, would also require a site-specific general biological resources survey in areas where the City has determined there to be potential for sensitive biological resources. For projects within the TCSP area and AEN, outside of the Housing Element sites in biologically sensitive areas, additional analysis would be required to identify the presence of sensitive species and appropriate mitigation would be applied to reduce potential impacts to less than significant. Mitigation measures in Section 4.4 address these potentially significant impacts to sensitive communities, including plant and animal species, and the project's contribution to cumulative biological resources impacts would also be reduced to less than significant.

Impacts to state or federally protected wetlands associated with future projects within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element Site 16A would require mitigation for future development projects. The implementation of mitigation measure BIO-6, BIO-10, and BIO-11 would reduce impacts to a level less than significant and ensure that the project would not contribute to a significant cumulative impact to biological resources.

#### **7.2.5 Cultural Resources**

The study area for the assessment of cumulative impacts to cultural resources includes the entirety of the City because loss of cultural resources associated with actions occurring in the City could affect the City's overall historic context and setting. Future development within the cumulative study area could have a cumulative impact on cultural resources through loss of records or artifacts as land is developed (or redeveloped).

As discussed in Section 4.5, future development in accordance with the project could impact historical or archaeological resources, which may be present within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites. Implementation of mitigation measures CUL-1 through CUL-4 would reduce impacts to cultural resources to less than significant through the requirement for historic and archaeological surveys and archaeological monitoring during grading and construction for projects. Mitigation measure CUL-5 would reduce potential historic resources impacts to the Edgemoor Polo Barn during future development of Housing Element Site 20A. Implementation of these measures would ensure that the project would not contribute to a significant cumulative impact to historical or archaeological resources.

### **7.2.6 Energy**

The study area for energy is the San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) service area which serves the County. New development or redevelopment within the service area could result in cumulative impacts associated with additional demands for energy, resulting in the need for new or expanded facilities. As discussed in Section 4.6, future development associated with implementation of development in the TCSP area and AEN would be subject to compliance with the California Building Code (Title 24) which aims to reduce excessive and inefficient energy use. As new development and redevelopment occurs, buildings will be required to comply with the Title 24 requirements in place at the time of building permit issuance. Project adherence with state and federal regulations and the Sustainable Santee Plan goals would also guide reductions in the City's collective long-term operational energy use. Other projects proposed in the City would similarly be required to comply with Title 24 and Sustainable Santee Plan goals. Therefore, the project would not contribute to a significant cumulative impact to energy.

### **7.2.7 Geology and Soils**

The study area for the assessment of cumulative impacts related to geology and soils is the City. Future development in the City would be required to adhere to regulatory requirements including the California Building Code and SMC requirements for soils engineering/engineering geology reports and erosion control plans would prevent adverse effects associated with fault rupture, ground shaking, liquefaction, or landslides. Like the project, all future development would be required to adhere to all regulations applicable to the site/zone, including Chapter 11.40 (Grading Ordinance), which include objective standards relating to the elimination or reduction of potential seismic hazards prior to the issuance of permits. Additionally, all development would be subject to General Plan policies from the Safety Element. Future development within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites, in addition to other future development throughout the City, would be required to adhere to regulatory requirements including preparation of Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan and SMC Chapter 11.40 (Grading Ordinance) to ensure that they would not result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil. Adherence to California Building Code requirements as adopted by the City would ensure that future development would not create substantial direct or indirect risks associated with expansive soils. Therefore, the project would not contribute to a significant cumulative impact to these issues.

Regarding paleontological resources, the mitigation measure GEO-1 would reduce project impacts to a less than significant level. Additionally, other development in the City would be required to implement measures identified in the City's General Plan mitigation monitoring program for paleontological resources which would reduce impacts to a level less than significant. All potential impacts associated with geology and soils would be reduced to less than significant levels because future development would be required to adhere to regulations and implement the General Plan EIR's existing mitigation framework. Additionally, mitigation measure GEO-1 would

require applicants to provide information to the City regarding the paleontological sensitivity of the site. On properties determined to be moderately to highly sensitive for paleontological resources where grading would disturb sensitive formations, the ordinance shall require implementation of a mitigation plan. Therefore, implementation of mitigation measures GEO-1 and GEO-2 would ensure that the project would not contribute to a significant cumulative impact to paleontological resources.

### **7.2.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

The analysis of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions is, by its nature, a cumulative issue; thus, the study area is global in nature. The analysis provided in Section 4.8 was modeled in year 2035 to align with the Sustainable Santee Plan emission projections. The Housing Element sites were modeled in the soonest operational year in 2026.

Development of the TCSP area and AEN would result in GHG emissions; however, the project would not result in an increase in anticipated development or traffic generation nor would it result in an increase in emissions that are not already accounted for in the Sustainable Santee Plan. However, mitigation measures GHG-1 through GHG-5 are included for the Housing Element sites to ensure implementation of identified GHG emissions strategies consistent with the Sustainable Santee Plan Project Consistency Checklist (Checklist) is completed for the Housing Element sites. Other future development within the TCSP area and AEN would be required to demonstrate compliance with Sustainable Santee Plan through completion of a Checklist.

Overall, the project would be consistent with the 2022 Scoping Plan, 2021 Regional Plan/SCS, and Sustainable Santee Plan goals and would not conflict with GHG emissions reduction plans and impacts would be less than significant. Implementation of mitigation measures GHG-1 through GHG-5 would reduce GHG impacts associated with future development at the Housing Element sites and impacts would be mitigated to less than significant. Likewise, the project's contribution to cumulatively significant impacts associated with GHG emissions would be less than significant.

### **7.2.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials**

The cumulative study area for the assessment of cumulative impacts to hazards and hazardous materials impacts is the City. As population growth increases, the number of people potentially exposed to hazards and hazardous materials would increase. The cumulative study area for airport hazards includes the entirety of the airport influence areas (AIA) for the Gillespie Field Airport and Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Miramar.

Generally, the release of hazardous materials has site-specific impacts that do not compound or increase in combination with impacts elsewhere. As discussed in Section 4.9, future development within the TCSP area, AEN, or Housing Element sites could result in hazards to the public or the environment by accidental release of hazardous materials. Mitigation measure HAZ-1 would require that future projects identify potentially hazardous conditions prior to grading, through preparation of a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) and a Phase II ESA if necessary. Remediation of any contaminated soils would be required prior to development. Additionally, cumulative projects within the region would be required to comply with applicable federal, state, and local regulations of agencies having jurisdiction over hazardous materials, including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, County Department of Health Services, and County of San Diego Department of Environmental Health. Therefore, implementation of mitigation measure HAZ-1 would ensure that the project

would not contribute to a significant cumulative impact to hazards or the release of hazardous materials.

The Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP) includes policies that are applicable within the AIA. To ensure safety compliance with the Gillespie Field ALUCP, future development must adhere to the existing City policies and regulations, and policies of the ALUCP. While the project could result in future development that could exceed the density allowed in Gillespie Field Safety Zones 3 and 4, all other projects in these safety zones would similarly be subject to ALUC review and the project's incremental contribution to airport hazard impacts would not be cumulatively considerable. As discussed in Section 4.9, the project would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with the City's emergency response plan, evacuation routes and would not conflict with any Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan hazard mitigation goals. Furthermore, applications for all future projects within the project areas in addition to cumulative projects in the surrounding area would require review and approval by the Santee Fire Department prior to issuance of building permit. Therefore, the cumulative impacts associated with airport safety would be less than significant.

Regarding potential cumulative impacts related to wildfire, the TCSP area, including the AEN and Housing Element sites, are outside of the City's designated Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) which occurs north of the TCSP area. However, portions of the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites are within the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) which identifies areas close to vacant sites with vegetation susceptible to fire. As a result, future development in the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites, as well as other cumulative projects in the City, would be required to comply with state and local regulations including SMC Chapter 11.18, which states all new developments, subdivisions, or tracts that are planned in WUI Areas shall have a minimum of 100 horizontal feet of "fuel modified" defensible space between structure and wildland areas. Adherence to these regulations and the General Plan policies would reduce risks in conjunction with future development related to wildland fire. Thus, the project's incremental contribution to wildfire impacts would not be cumulatively considerable and cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

### **7.2.10 Hydrology and Water Quality**

The study area for potential hydrology and water quality impacts is the Santee Drainage Basin. While future development within the Santee Drainage Basin has the potential to increase pollutants discharged into surface waters, all future development would be subject to federal, state, and local regulations aimed at controlling water quality impacts, including SMC Chapters 9.06 (Stormwater Ordinance) and Chapter 11.40 (Grading Ordinance), which include requirements to ensure stormwater runoff is captured and treated and erosion control measures are implemented. Thus, based on the requirements of future development within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites to comply with the existing regulatory framework that requires treatment of pollutants generated on-site, the project's incremental contribution to cumulative water quality impacts would be less than cumulatively considerable and cumulative impacts associated with water quality would be less than significant.

While future development has the potential to alter drainage patterns resulting in increased erosion, stormwater runoff, and impacts to the existing drainage system, all future development would be subject to federal, state, and local regulations aimed at reducing polluted storm water and avoiding overloading the City's drainage system. Development would be required to adhere to regulatory requirements including City Municipal Chapter 9.06 (Stormwater Ordinance), which includes requirements for the elimination or reduction of stormwater runoff. Impacts associated



with drainage patterns and stormwater runoff would be less than cumulatively considerable and cumulative impacts associated with drainage would be less than significant.

Future development of the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would be required to conform to applicable federal, state, and City regulatory standards to effectively avoid and/or address potential impacts associated with development in flood zones. The TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites are not within an area anticipated to be adversely affected by a tsunami. Implementation of all regulatory requirements would ensure that cumulative impacts related to flood hazards would be less than significant.

### **7.2.11 Land Use and Planning**

The study area for the assessment of cumulative land use impacts would be the City and neighboring jurisdictions as detailed above. Cumulative land use impacts could result from changes to land use plans, which become incompatible and/or unsustainable. Adoption of the project could contribute to cumulative impacts if buildout would conflict with land use plans and/or policies or physically divide a community. As discussed in Section 4.11.6, the City's 2021-2029 Housing Element and current Zoning Ordinance allow up to 36 dwelling units per acre (du/ac), and none of the residential densities established by the TCSP would exceed 36 du/ac. The proposed modifications to the TCSP would become part of the City's General Plan and Zoning Ordinance and would not conflict with applicable state and local land use requirements. Future development proposals within the City and surrounding jurisdictions would still be subject to review for consistency with applicable plans and zoning ordinances that serve to reduce or avoid cumulative environmental impacts, including ALUC review for compatible densities within Gillespie Field Safety Zones 3 and 4. Further, no major features are proposed or known that would divide an established community. Therefore, cumulative impacts related to land use and planning would be less than significant.

### **7.2.12 Noise**

The analysis for noise provided in Section 4.12 is cumulative in nature as it considers buildout conditions within the City. As discussed, the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites are in locations where noise levels are generally acceptable for the proposed uses; however, temporary project-related construction and operational noise was identified as less than significant with mitigation NOI-1 and NOI-2. NOI-3 was identified to regulate outdoor performance and other entertainment uses that could result in temporary increases in ambient noise levels if future events are not reduced to 60 A-weighted decibel one-hour equivalent noise level at nearby noise-sensitive land uses. The project would not generate a level of additional traffic that would perceptibly increase noise levels on roadways within and adjacent to the City. Despite the incorporation of NOI-3, outdoor noise levels were concluded at the project level to result in significant and unavoidable impacts. Therefore, while implementation of mitigation measure NOI-1 and NOI-2 would reduce some noise impacts associated with the project to a level less than significant, cumulative outdoor noise level impacts in the TCSP area may not be reduced to acceptable levels, and the project would result in a significant cumulative noise impact.

### **7.2.13 Population and Housing**

The study area considered for the population and housing cumulative impact analysis is defined as the region (County). Buildout of the project would result in future construction of up to 3,140 new residential units, providing capacity for projected growth in the region consistent with the adopted zoning designations and densities currently allowed within the TCSP area, AEN, and

Housing Element sites, and would also be consistent with the population and housing growth identified in the City's 2021-2029 Housing Element. The increase in housing stock would accommodate the projected growth in population in the region and is consistent with adopted plans and regional growth principles. No permanent displacement of housing or people would occur with implementation of the project. Significant population and housing impacts associated with cumulative development within the region is not anticipated to result in a displacement of housing or people because future development is generally growth accommodating and each jurisdiction has a mandate to comply with its adopted Housing Element. Therefore, cumulative impacts associated with population and housing would be less than significant.

#### **7.2.14 Public Services**

The study area for public services is the applicable provider's service area. New development or redevelopment within the service area could result in cumulative impacts associated with additional demands for public services, resulting in the need for new or expanded facilities. As discussed in Section 4.14, all future development within the City would be reviewed to ensure that adequate facilities and services are available at the time of application. Other projects proposed in the City would similarly be required to demonstrate adequate facilities are available prior to development. All future development is required to pay applicable fees that support schools. Cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

#### **7.2.15 Recreation**

The study area for recreation is the City and nearby regional parks located within the City of San Diego and the County. New development or redevelopment within the service area could result in cumulative impacts associated with additional demands for recreation and parks, resulting in the need for new or expanded facilities. As discussed in Section 4.15, all future development within the City would be reviewed to ensure that adequate recreation opportunities are available at the time of application. Other projects proposed in the City would similarly be required to demonstrate adequate recreation opportunities are available prior to development. All future development is required to pay applicable fees that support recreational facilities. Cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

#### **7.2.16 Transportation**

The study area for transportation is the region served by the ~~Green-Copper~~ Line trolley which connects the TCSP area and the City with downtown San Diego. Future development of the region could result in significant cumulative impacts associated with transportation, particularly vehicle miles traveled (VMT). Buildout of the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would occur in accordance with the land use and densities identified in the TCSP, some of which would occur within ½ mile of a major transit stop (including Housing Element Sites 16A and 16B). Also, several transportation projects would be implemented under the proposed TCSP, including multi-use pathways, bike routes, roadway connections throughout the TCSP area, AEN, and near the Housing Element sites. As discussed in Section 4.16.6, the transportation projects identified in the TCSP are intended to increase pedestrian and bicycle safety and connection within the TCSP area and would not result in an increase in VMT. The TCSP would mostly accommodate development near transit, enhance roadway connections within the TCSP area, and would not result in an increase in density or housing beyond what is permitted under current plans and zoning. No project level or cumulative impact will occur associated with VMT in relation to development in Housing Element Sites 20 A and 20B. However, for areas outside transit priority areas, significant VMT impacts could occur with future development projects, contributing to

significant cumulative impacts associated with VMT in a part of the region that has greater VMT per capita than the region as a whole. Mitigation measure TRA-1 would be applied to address significant VMT impacts associated with buildout of the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element Sites 20A and 20B. However, this measure cannot be guaranteed to reduce all VMT impacts to less than significant. Therefore, the project's contribution to a significant cumulative effect is determined to be substantial related to regional VMT, and cumulative VMT impacts would remain significant and unavoidable.

### **7.2.17 Tribal Cultural Resources**

The study area for the assessment of cumulative impacts to tribal cultural resources includes the entirety of the tribal lands of those tribes that responded to the City's invitation for consultation under Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52) associated with government-to-government consultation conducted by the City. Future development within the cumulative study area could have a cumulative impact on tribal cultural resources through loss of cultural landscapes, sacred places, or objects with cultural value as land is developed (or redeveloped).

As discussed in Section 4.17, future development in accordance with the project could impact historical or archaeological resources, which may be present within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites. Implementation of mitigation measures CUL-1 through CUL-4 would also reduce impacts to tribal cultural resources to less than significant through the requirement to include Native American monitors archaeological monitoring during grading and construction for projects. Implementation of these measures would ensure that the project would not contribute to a significant cumulative impact to tribal cultural resources.

### **7.2.18 Utilities and Service Systems**

The study area for public utilities is the applicable provider's service area, including the Padre Dam Municipal Water District (PDMWD) and San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA). Future development within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would occur within existing developed areas with access to existing utility infrastructure. Significant utility extensions or improvements are not anticipated beyond local connections from adjacent roadways. Similarly, other projects in the City would be required to undergo a similar review to ensure the environmental impacts of utility and services improvements are minimized. A cumulative impact related to the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects, is not anticipated. Cumulative impacts related to utilities and service systems would be less than significant.

Development anticipated as part of the project would occur within areas of the City that are already served by existing stormwater and water infrastructure. Although development of the Housing Element sites would require connection to these existing facilities, stormwater and water infrastructure improvements would be evaluated upon submittal of project-specific development plans. All future project applications would be required to adhere to the mitigation framework presented in this EIR which would address physical impacts associated with construction of pipeline connections to existing stormwater and water infrastructure. The project's incremental contribution to stormwater and water facility impacts would not be cumulatively considerable.

Buildout potential within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites could result additional development that was not accounted for in the latest Urban Water Management Plan but has been accounted for within the PDMWD Water Supply Assessment approved by the PDMWD

Board in 2024 (Appendix G). The PDMWD approved the Water Supply Assessment for the project, which demonstrated that there is adequate capacity to adequately serve the anticipated buildout of the TCSP, AEN, and Housing Element sites. Urban Water Management Plans (UWMPs) are required to be updated on a five-year cycle and the next update to the PDMWD UWMP is anticipated by 2025. Future UWMP updates would account for the anticipated water use associated with future development consistent with the adopted TCSP and approved Water Supply Assessment. While the proposed TCSP area would add development potential within the City, it would primarily authorize higher density residential development which is more water efficient than single-family residential development. Based on the water efficiency of multi-family development, water conservation requirements, along with existing regulations that require new construction to be water efficient, it is not anticipated that the project would affect the ability of PDMWD to plan for adequate water supplies within the City during normal, dry, and multiple dry years. As the PDMWD and SDCWA consider water supply on a regional basis for their entire service areas, the project's incremental contribution to water system/water supply impacts would not be cumulatively considerable.

Cumulative impacts related to solid waste disposal would be less than significant because an existing regulatory framework is in place, detailed in Section 4.18.8, that would apply to future development associated with the project in addition to cumulative development within the City. Future development in the TCSP area, AEN and Housing Element sites is located within existing developed areas with access to solid waste disposal services. No development is proposed as part of the project; however, it is anticipated that future projects would result in an increase in solid waste generation. Solid waste requirements associated with the future development of the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would be evaluated upon submittal of project-specific development plans. All projects would be reviewed for conformance with state and local regulations and adherence to General Plan and TCSP policies. Thus, with implementation of the existing regulatory framework addressing solid waste disposal, the project's incremental contribution to solid waste disposal impacts would not be cumulatively considerable.

### **7.2.19 Wildfire**

The study area for the assessment of cumulative impacts related to wildfire is the City. Development within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would not physically interfere with any emergency response or evacuation plans because they would not include any features that would prevent continued implementation of these plans. Additionally, applicable General Plan Safety Element policies would continue to be implemented to ensure adequate citywide emergency response and preparedness. While none of the project components are within or adjacent to VHFHSZ, the project is within the WUI and could potentially result in impacts related to wildfire. However, future development within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would be required to adhere to all regulatory requirements in place to minimize wildfire hazards including applicable sections of the SMC, fire and building codes, and requirements from the fire marshal that would be identified during future building permit reviews. Additionally, implementation of the City's General Plan policies support implementation of measures that will enhance wildfire safety. Future development projects would require review by the Building Official/Fire Marshal. All impacts associated with infrastructure improvements including any required measures to address fire safety would be evaluated in their respective subsequent environmental documents for discretionary projects, as necessary. The City fire marshal may also use their authority to require additional building, planning, or landscaping requirements that provide enhanced fire protection. Development would be required to comply with applicable regulations and policies related to flooding, drainage patterns, and landslides, and thereby avoid significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a

result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes. Like the project, all future development in the City would be required to comply with applicable SMC and building and fire code regulations that would reduce the potential for cumulative impacts. The project's incremental contribution to impacts related to wildfire would not be cumulatively considerable.

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## **8.0 Effects Found Not To Be Significant**

Section 15128 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines requires that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) briefly describe potential environmental effects that were determined not to be significant, and therefore were not discussed in detail in the EIR. Based on initial environmental review, the City of Santee (City) determined that the project would not have the potential to cause significant impacts associated with the environmental category discussed below. All other CEQA Guidelines Appendix G issue areas are addressed in Section 4.0 of this EIR.

### **8.1 Mineral Resources**

Consistent with CEQA Guidelines Appendix G, a significant impact to mineral resources would occur if the project would:

- 1) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be a value to the region and the residents of the state; or
- 2) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan.

The County of San Diego's General Plan Program EIR displays generalized mineral land classifications. Although portions of the Town Center Specific Plan (TCSP) area, Arts and Entertainment Neighborhood (AEN), and Housing Element sites in the vicinity of the San Diego River are located within a Mineral Resource Zone (MRZ) 2 designated area, these areas are not zoned for mining operations and no mining operations existing within the sites. While mining operations exist northeast of the City limits, these operations are approximately 4 miles from the TCSP area and would not be affected by the proposed project. Lands within the project area may support mineral resources, but mining operations at these sites would not be feasible considering the proximity to sensitive receptors and existing established neighborhoods. Furthermore, the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites are not designated as locally important mineral resource recovery sites in the City's General Plan. Therefore, the project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource or locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan, and impacts would be less than significant.



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## 9.0 Project Alternatives

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15126.6 requires that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) compare the effects of a “reasonable range of alternatives” to the project. The State CEQA Guidelines further specify that the alternatives selected should attain most of the basic project objectives and avoid or substantially lessen one or more significant effects of the project. The “range of alternatives” is governed by the “rule of reason,” which requires the EIR to set forth only those alternatives necessary to permit an informed and reasoned choice by the lead agency, and to foster meaningful public participation (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6[f]). CEQA generally defines “feasible” to mean an alternative that is capable of being accomplished in a successful manner within a reasonable period of time, while also considering economic, environmental, social, technological, and legal factors.

### 9.1 Selection of Alternatives

As discussed throughout Chapter 4.0 of this EIR (EIR), the updated Town Center Specific Plan (TCSP) (project) would result in less than significant environmental impacts with mitigation for aesthetics, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs), and tribal cultural resources,. Project level and cumulative operational long-term air quality, and hazards, land use and planning, noise, and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) impacts would remain significant and unavoidable after mitigation. Impacts to all other issue areas would be less than significant and not require mitigation. In developing the alternatives to be addressed, consideration was given to their ability to meet the basic objectives of the project and eliminate or substantially reduce the significant environmental impacts associated with the project. As identified in Chapter 3.0, project objectives include the following:

- Allow for a unified comprehensive open space system to be an integral part of the design concept of the TCSP area. The river shall be an open space area for the benefit of the community;
- Provide and encourage both active and passive recreational opportunities to help meet the recreational needs of the community;
- Establish criteria for architectural designs and concepts that reinforce the sense of community identity and support high quality development. These criteria should foster uniqueness and cohesive design enhancing Santee’s character;
- Use landscape design to enhance the quality of the environment, resiliency of the community, and contribute to high quality, safe, and sustainable development;
- Provide for the development of a varied, safe, efficient, and cost-effective transportation system to adequately support the mobility needs of the TCSP area with minimal negative impact on the community;
- Provide a variety of housing types and sizes with a mixture of ownership and rental housing;
- Create a variety of commercial and office/professional opportunities to provide goods, services, and employment opportunities to the region and establish the TCSP area as an activity center of the community;

- Incorporate community-serving, civic, and public uses within the TCSP area to become focal points for residents and visitors to enjoy;
- Limit new institutional uses within the TCSP area;
- Establish employment-supportive uses as part of new developments to provide job opportunities for the community and establish revenue sources within the TCSP area. These should include research and development and office/ professional uses; and
- Provide for housing development opportunities on Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B consistent with the City's adopted Housing Element for 2021-2029

Alternatives considered but rejected included a No Project (No Build) Alternative, Reduced Residential Alternative (Site 20A), Reduced Residential Alternative (sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B), and Increased Institutional Alternative (sites 20A and 20B) and are discussed in Section 9.2. Alternatives selected for consideration include the No Project Alternative, Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative, Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative, and the No Outdoor Performance Uses Project Alternative are discussed in Section 9.3. As required under Section 15126.6 (2) of the CEQA Guidelines, an EIR must identify the environmentally superior alternative. Pursuant to the CEQA Guidelines, if the No Project Alternative is determined to be the most environmentally superior project, then another alternative among the alternatives evaluated must be identified as the environmentally superior project. Section 9.4 addresses the environmentally superior alternative selected.

The following section provides an analysis of each major issue area included in the impact analysis for the project. Table 9-1, *Matrix Comparison of the Project and Alternatives Impacts*, provides a matrix comparison of the significant impacts of the project as compared to each alternative.

**Table 9-1  
MATRIX COMPARISON OF THE PROJECT AND ALTERNATIVES IMPACTS**

<b>Issue Area</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>No Project Alternative</b>	<b>Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative</b>	<b>Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative</b>	<b>No Outdoor Performance Uses Alternative</b>
Aesthetics	SM	SM/ Similar	SM/ Similar	SM/ Similar	SM/ Similar
Agricultural Resources	LTS	LTS/ Similar	LTS/ Similar	LTS/ Similar	LTS/ Similar
Air Quality	SU	SU/ Similar	SU/ Similar	SU/ Greater	SU/ Similar
Biological Resources	SM	SM/ Less	SM/ Less	SM/ Similar	SM/ Less
Cultural Resources	SM	SM/ Less	SM/ Less	SM/ Similar	SM/ Similar
Energy	LTS	LTS/ Similar	LTS/ Similar	LTS/ Similar	LTS/ Similar
Geology and Soils	SM	SM/ Similar	SM/ Similar	SM/ Similar	SM/ Similar
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	SM	SM/ Similar	SM/ Similar	SM/ Similar	SM/ Similar
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	SU	SU/ Similar	SU/ Similar	SU/ Similar	SU/ Similar

Issue Area	Project	No Project Alternative	Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative	Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative	No Outdoor Performance Uses Alternative
Hydrology and Water Quality	LTS	LTS/ Similar	LTS/ Similar	LTS/ Similar	LTS/ Similar
Land Use and Planning	SU	SU/ Similar	SU/ Similar	SU/ Similar	SU/ Similar
Noise	SU	SM/Less	SM/ Less	SM/ Similar	SM/ Less
Population and Housing	LTS	LTS/ Similar	LTS/ Similar	LTS/ Similar	LTS/ Similar
Public Services	LTS	LTS/ Similar	LTS/ Similar	LTS/ Similar	LTS/ Similar
Recreation	LTS	LTS/ Similar	LTS/ Similar	LTS/ Similar	LTS/ Similar
Transportation	SU	SU/ Similar	SU/ Similar	SU/ Similar	SU/Similar
Tribal Cultural Resources	SM	SM/Less	SM/Less	SM/ Similar	SM/ Similar
Utilities and Service Systems	LTS	LTS/ Similar	LTS/ Similar	LTS/ Greater	LTS/ Similar
Wildfire	LTS	LTS/ Similar	LTS/ Similar	LTS/ Similar	LTS/ Similar

LTS = less than significant; SM = significant and mitigated; SU = significant and unavoidable

## 9.2 Alternatives Considered But Rejected

Four alternatives were considered but rejected and are not analyzed further. Specifically, a No Project (No Build) Alternative was considered which would assume existing conditions would remain and buildout of the vacant areas subject to the adopted TCSP would not occur. This alternative was rejected because the adopted TCSP would continue to guide land use and development decisions within the TCSP area, and development would continue to be allowed within the project area per existing plans and regulation. A “no build” alternative is more commonly included in an alternatives analysis if the applicant or Lead Agency has the authority or ability to not develop a project and maintain existing conditions.

Other alternatives considered but rejected included two reduced residential alternatives. The Reduced Residential Alternative (Site 20A) considered changing the land uses of Site 20A from Residential TC-R-22 MU to Park/Open Space but was rejected as it would not implement the adopted Housing Element. Similarly, a Reduced Residential Alternative (sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B) was considered to reduce the density at each of the Housing Element sites; however, this alternative was rejected as it would also not implement the adopted and certified Housing Element. Lastly, an Increased Institutional Alternative (sites 20A and 20B) was considered that would change the zoning at Housing Element Sites 20A and 20B from Residential TC-R-22 MU to Institutional at the request of the County of San Diego Department of General Services; however, this alternative would also not implement the adopted and certified Housing Element. It is important for the City to have an adopted and certified Housing Element because when a jurisdiction’s Housing Element is found to be out of compliance, its General Plan is at risk of being deemed inadequate, and therefore, invalid. Cities without a valid Housing Element may also be at risk of losing state and federal funding for certain activities.

## 9.3 Project Alternatives

Consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15126(d), the alternatives described below are analyzed to include sufficient information to allow a meaningful analysis and comparison with the

project. For purposes of this analysis, those subject areas included in Chapter 4.0 are also included in the analysis of the alternatives. The following sections include a discussion of the impacts of the alternatives compared to the project. The conclusion for each alternative also provides an overview of how the alternative meets, partially meets, or fails to meet the project objectives.

### **9.3.1 No Project Alternative**

The following discussion of the No Project Alternative is based on the CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)(3)(A) which states:

When the project is the revision of an existing land use or regulatory plan, policy or ongoing operation, an alternative will be the continuation of the existing plan, policy, or operation into the future. Typically, this is a situation where other projects initiated under the existing plan will continue while the new plan is developed. Thus, the projected impacts of the proposed plan or alternative plans would be compared to the impacts that would occur under the existing plan.

Consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)(3)(A), the No Project Alternative represents the continued implementation of the TCSP land use and development standards, including the current boundaries of the overall TCSP area and existing Arts and Entertainment Overlay District (AEOD) boundary. Under the No Project Alternative, development within the current TCSP area boundaries would proceed pursuant to the adopted TCSP and 2021-2029 Housing Element and would not include updated development standards and conceptual development plans and design standards for Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B. Also, the No Project Alternative would not include the proposed roadway network upgrades and roadway connections or associated pedestrian and bicycle improvements, including the River Bridge spanning the San Diego River. Other improvements identified in the TCSP, including outdoor events in the Arts and Entertainment Neighborhood (AEN), would not be included in the TCSP as proposed under the project.

#### **9.3.1.1 Environmental Analysis of the No Project Alternative**

##### **a. Aesthetics**

Under the No Project Alternative, development within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would be subject to the existing TCSP as well as the City's General Plan and Santee Municipal Code (SMC). The No Project Alternative would not result in the expansion of the TCSP area and AEN and the updated development standards and conceptual development plans and design standards for Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B. Although the proposed TCSP development and design standards would not apply to future development in the TCSP area and AEN and conceptual designs for the Housing Element sites would not be part of the TCSP, development could proceed based on the existing TCSP. Development under the No Project Alternative would be subject to Development review consistent with SMC Chapter 13.08 to ensure consistency with General Plan policies and applicable design and development review requirements including the existing design guidelines in the adopted TCSP. The development review process would ensure that future development would not degrade scenic vistas, scenic resources, or visual quality. Compliance with SMC standards related to light and glare (Chapter 13.08.070(G)), requiring that outdoor lighting be directed away from adjacent properties and set in a way to avoid any detriment to the surrounding area and lighting standards of the Community Enhancement Element would ensure that future development would not result in impacts related

to light and glare. A mitigation measure identified to address potential impacts to the Edgemoor Polo Barn near Housing Element sites 20A and 20B (MM CUL-5) would not be implemented under the No Project Alternative; however, development within Housing Element sites 20A and 20B would still be required to demonstrate compliance with the Secretary of Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. Potentially significant aesthetics impacts under the No Project Alternative would be similar to the project as the potential for development of Housing Element sites 20A and 20B has the potential to damage views of an historic resource at the Edgemoor Polo Barn.

#### **b. Agriculture and Forestry Resources**

Under the No Project Alternative, development within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would be subject to the adopted TCSP as well as the City's General Plan and SMC. While the proposed development and design standards and conceptual designs for Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B would not be adopted as part of the TCSP, areas identified as Farmland of Local Importance in the TCSP area and AEN would still be developed and would similarly result in less than significant impacts as these areas are identified for development and do not contain active agricultural uses. Therefore, impacts associated with agriculture and forestry resources under the No Project Alternative would be less than significant and similar to the project.

#### **c. Air Quality**

Future development under the No Project Alternative would be subject to the development standards in the adopted TCSP, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC, and therefore would be consistent with the existing growth projections for which regional air quality standards (RAQs) are based. Development potential would be similar compared to the project since there are no increases in density or development intensity associated with the project. Construction time frames and equipment for site-specific development projects are not available at this time, and there is a potential for multiple development projects to be constructed at one time, resulting in significant construction-related emissions. While future development under this alternative would be required to implement mitigation measures documented in the City's General Plan, mitigation for air quality impacts would remain significant and unavoidable. Therefore, impacts associated with air quality under the No Project Alternative would be significant and unavoidable, similar to the project.

#### **d. Biological Resources**

Future development under the No Project Alternative would occur as guided under the adopted TCSP, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC. The No Project Alternative would not include the River Bridge or outdoor performance uses in the AEN as these details are not identified in the adopted TCSP. Although not including the River Bridge and not allowing outdoor performances in the AEN would avoid some of the potential impacts to biological resources associated with the project, development consistent with the existing TCSP could still occur within areas that support sensitive biological resources.

Future development under the No Project Alternative would be subject to implementation of mitigation measures documented in the City's General Plan for biological resources, which would reduce impacts related to sensitive species, sensitive habitats, and wetlands to a level less than significant. Applicable federal, state, and local regulations would also apply, such as the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA), Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), California Fish and Game (CFG) Code, and San Diego County Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP). Not constructing the River Bridge and not allowing outdoor performance uses in the AEN under the

No Project Alternative would avoid some of the potentially significant project impacts on the biological resources along the San Diego River. Therefore, impacts related to biological resources under the No Project Alternative would remain less than significant with mitigation and would have slightly less impacts compared to the project.

**e. Cultural Resources**

Future development under the No Project Alternative would occur pursuant to the City's adopted TCSP, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC. The No Project Alternative would not include the River Bridge, as it is not included in the adopted TCSP. Future development under this alternative would be required to implement mitigation measures documented in the City's General Plan for cultural resources. As described in Section 4.5, the project would result in less than significant cultural resources impacts with mitigation incorporated. Both the No Project Alternative and the proposed project would similarly result in potential impacts on historic resources due to the proximity of Housing Element sites 20A and 20B to the Edgemoor Polo Barn. The No Project Alternative would not include the River Bridge which is located within an area identified for moderate potential to contain eligible buried archaeological sites, and the potential for cultural resources impacts would be slightly reduced. Therefore, impacts related to cultural resources under the No Project Alternative would be less than significant with mitigation, slightly less than the project.

**f. Energy**

Future development under the No Project Alternative would be subject to the City's adopted TCSP land use plan and zoning, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC, and would not be subject to the development and design standards and conceptual designs provided in the updated TCSP. Future development under the No Project Alternative would not result in increased energy use compared to the project as no changes to land uses or zoning are proposed. Therefore, impacts associated with energy would be less than significant, similar to the project.

**g. Geology and Soils**

Future development under the No Project Alternative would be subject to the City's adopted TCSP land use plan and zoning, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC, and would not be subject to the development and design standards and conceptual designs provided in the updated TCSP. The No Project Alternative would support development consistent with the existing TCSP which could be subject to potential geologic hazards. Adherence to Safety Element policies, the SMC, and the California Building Code would ensure that future development under this alternative would not cause substantial adverse effects associated with fault rupture, ground shaking, liquefaction, landslide, or expansive soils, and impacts would be less than significant. Similarly, adherence to applicable SMC requirements would ensure that future development under this alternative would not result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil, and impacts would be less than significant. Implementation of mitigation measures documented in the City's General Plan for paleontological resources would reduce impacts related to paleontological resources to a level less than significant. Therefore, impacts related to geology and soils under the No Project Alternative would be mitigated to a level less than significant, similar to the project.

**h. Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

Future development under the No Project Alternative would be subject to the City's adopted TCSP land use plan and zoning, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC, and would not be subject



to the development and design standards and conceptual designs provided in the updated TCSP. Future development under the No Project Alternative would also be subject to implementation of the City's Sustainable Santee Plan (Climate Action Plan). The project would result in less than significant GHG impacts with mitigation and impacts associated with GHG under the No Project Alternative would also be less than significant with mitigation, similar to the project.

**i. Hazards and Hazardous Materials**

The No Project Alternative would not involve changes to land use or zoning compared to the project, and thereby would not result in changes related to exposing potential hazards and hazardous materials to more people. Future development would be required to adhere to multiple regulations related to hazardous materials handling and transport, including applicable state and local regulatory measures. Citywide General Plan Safety Element policies would also support safe handling of hazardous materials. Future development under this alternative would be required to implement mitigation measures documented in the City's General Plan for hazardous materials. Furthermore, applications for all future projects under the No Project Alternative would be reviewed and approved by the Santee Fire Department prior to issuance of a building permit. Future development under this alternative located within the Gillespie Field and MCAS Miramar Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans (ALUCPs) would be required to adhere to applicable City policies and regulations, as well as policies of the ALUCP. Similar to the project, future development under the No Project Alternative could be determined by the Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) to not conform to density requirements for areas identified within ALUCPs as potentially hazardous due to the proximity to an airstrip. Because the ALUC may identify a hazard during review of development under the No Project Alternative, impacts associated with hazards and hazardous materials under the No Project Alternative may also be significant and unavoidable, similar to the project.

**j. Hydrology and Water Quality**

Future development under the No Project Alternative would be subject to the City's adopted TCSP land use plan and zoning, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC, and would not be subject to the development and design standards and conceptual designs provided in the updated TCSP. Future development under the No Project Alternative would be required to adhere to all applicable water quality standards as provided in various water quality regulations and plans including all pertinent requirements of the City's Jurisdictional Runoff Management Plan, Best Management Practice (BMP) Design Manual, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Construction Permit, as well as all regulations related to water quality. Both redevelopment and new development on vacant sites would be required to comply with applicable stormwater management requirements which focus on retention and infiltration of waters on-site. Additionally, development under this alternative would be required to comply with City General Plan policies and regulations that prioritize infiltration and treatment of stormwater. Future development would also be required to implement applicable stormwater BMPs and erosion control measures to retain flows on-site and minimize the velocity of stormwater runoff. Such BMPs could include on-site drainage swales, bioretention features, use of permeable pavers in parking areas and streets, or infiltration basins which also serve as a means for pollutant removal. Development under this alternative would be required to adhere to all state and local development regulations including the SMC (Chapter 11.36), which establishes Flood Damage Prevention standards. Therefore, impacts associated with hydrology and water quality under the No Project Alternative would be less than significant, similar to the project.

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**k. Land Use and Planning**

Future development under the No Project Alternative would be subject to the City's adopted TCSP land use plan and zoning, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC, and would not be subject to the development and design standards and conceptual designs provided in the updated TCSP. All future development under this alternative would be subject to a site-specific review that considers consistency with all applicable plans, including the City's General Plan and the ALUCP. As discussed above for hazards, the ALUC may determine a safety concern during future review of projects under the No Project Alternative and a significant land use conflict may result. Therefore, impacts related to land use under the No Project Alternative would be significant and unavoidable, similar to the project.

**l. Noise**

Future development under the No Project Alternative would be subject to the adopted TCSP, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC. The No Project Alternative would not include outdoor performance uses in the AEN as this activity is not identified in the existing TCSP. Future development under the No Project Alternative would be subject to implementation of mitigation measures documented in the City's General Plan for noise, which would reduce noise impacts to less than significant. Not allowing outdoor performance uses in the AEN under the No Project Alternative would avoid potentially significant noise impacts. Therefore, impacts related to noise under the No Project Alternative would be less than significant with mitigation and have less impacts compared to the project.

**m. Population and Housing**

Future development under the No Project Alternative would be located in areas that are already served by infrastructure as identified in the existing TCSP, and therefore would not induce population growth. The No Project Alternative would not displace a substantial number of people or housing. Therefore, impacts associated with population and housing would be less than significant, similar to the project.

**n. Public Services**

Future development under the No Project Alternative would be subject to the adopted TCSP land use plan and zoning, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC, and would not be subject to the development and design standards and conceptual designs provided in the updated TCSP. Future development under the No Project Alternative would not result in increased demand to require construction of new fire protection, police protection, school, or library facilities, since each future development would pay its fair share toward anticipated facility needs. Construction of any future public service facilities would require a separate environmental review and approval. Therefore, impacts associated with public services would be less than significant, similar to the project.

**o. Recreation**

Future development under the No Project Alternative would be subject to the adopted TCSP land use plan and zoning, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC, and would not be subject to the development and design standards and conceptual designs provided in the updated TCSP. Future development under the No Project Alternative would not result in increased demand to require construction of new recreational facilities since each future development would pay its fair

share toward anticipated facility needs. Construction of any future public service facilities would require a separate environmental review and approval, implementing mitigation similar as proposed for the project. Therefore, impacts associated with recreation would be less than significant, similar to the project.

**p. Transportation**

Future development under the No Project Alternative would occur pursuant to the City's adopted TCSP, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC. The No Project Alternative would not include the roadway improvements identified in the project as they are not included in the existing TCSP. Future development would be designed consistent with established roadway design standards, and access to the existing roadway network would be configured consistent with established roadway design standards that would allow for emergency access. Because the No Project Alternative applies the same land use densities and intensities in the project area, including within those areas located outside transit priority areas, significant VMT impacts could occur. Therefore, impacts associated with transportation would be significant and unavoidable, similar to the project.

**q. Tribal Cultural Resources**

Future development under the No Project Alternative would occur pursuant to the City's adopted TCSP, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC. The No Project Alternative would not include the River Bridge, which is consistent with the existing TCSP. Future development under this alternative would be required to conduct tribal consultation consistent with the requirements of Assembly Bill (AB) 52. The No Project Alternative would not include the River Bridge which is located within an area identified for moderate potential to contain eligible buried archaeological sites, which may also be considered tribal cultural resources. As a result, the potential for tribal cultural resources impacts would be slightly reduced and impacts related to tribal cultural resources under the No Project Alternative would be less than significant with mitigation, slightly less than the project.

**r. Utilities and Service Systems**

Future development under the No Project Alternative would be subject to the adopted TCSP land use plan and zoning, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC, and would not be subject to the development and design standards and conceptual designs provided in the updated TCSP. Development under the existing General Plan would increase demand for utilities and services. Utility infrastructure improvements and relocations under the No Project Alternative would be evaluated as part of a future review for site-specific projects. Should separate utility extensions be required outside of the footprints of future site-specific projects, they would require an environmental review and compliance with regulations in existence at that time would address potential environmental impacts. The No Project Alternative would likely result in similar demand for water supply, wastewater treatment, and solid waste disposal compared to development proposed under the project. Therefore, impacts associated with utilities and service system would be less than significant, similar to as the project.

**s. Wildfire**

Future development under the No Project Alternative would be subject to the adopted TCSP land use plan and zoning, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC, and would not be subject to the development and design standards and conceptual designs provided in the updated TCSP. This alternative does not propose any changes to the City's existing circulation network, and no

land uses are proposed that would impair implementation of or physically interfere with the City's emergency response plan, evacuation routes, or conflict with any of the Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan specific hazard mitigation goals, objectives, and related actions. Additionally, future development would be required to adhere to the City's General Plan (Safety Element) policies including 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.11, and 4.12 which address emergency response and emergency evacuation. Future development located within the Wildland Urban Interface would comply with applicable California Fire Code and City General Plan requirements, and include enhanced fire protection measures as detailed in the City's building and fire codes. Future development under this alternative would also be required to comply with applicable regulations and policies related to flooding, drainage patterns, and landslides. Therefore, impacts associated with wildfire under the No Project Alternative would be less than significant, similar to the project.

### **9.3.1.2 Conclusion Regarding the No Project Alternative**

As described above and summarized in Table 9-1, the No Project Alternative would result in similar impacts compared to the project, with none of the environmental resources seeing an increase in the severity of impacts. Under the No Project Alternative, updated development standards and conceptual development plans and design standards for Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B would not be adopted as part of the TCSP to guide future development within the TCSP area and future development would be required to adhere to existing state and local regulations and would be required to implement relevant mitigation measures set forth in the City's General Plan EIR. Therefore, less than significant impacts (with and without mitigation) associated with aesthetics, agricultural resources, energy, geology and soils, GHGs, hydrology and water quality, population and housing, public services, recreation, utilities and service systems, and wildfire would be similar under the No Project Alternative compared to the project. Impacts to biological resources and cultural resources would be slightly reduced under this alternative due to the absence of the River Bridge in and near areas of biological and cultural sensitivity. Impacts related to air quality, hazards, land use and planning, noise, and traffic would remain significant and unavoidable, similar to the project.

This alternative would partially meet some of the project objectives stated in Chapter 3.0, Project Description, as the adopted TCSP does provide for mobility needs, a variety of housing types and commercial and office/professional opportunities, including employment-supportive uses. However, the proposed project is a comprehensive update to the adopted TCSP that addresses the future needs of the TCSP area and would better fulfill all of the project objectives. Buildout of the No Project Alternative would not include the River Bridge which would provide recreational opportunities and would be part of the open space system to unify areas north and south of the San Diego River within the AEN. Also, the No Project Alternative would not include the roadway improvements or conceptual designs for Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B which would improve the mobility needs of the TCSP area and would provide for improved housing development opportunities.

### **9.3.2 Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative**

The Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative represents a modified update to the TCSP to avoid some of the biological impacts identified for the project. Under this alternative the land use designations for an approximately 6-acre undeveloped area in the northeastern part of the TCSP area would be changed from Residential TC-R-14 (14 to 22 dwelling units per acre [du/ac]) to Floodway/Open Space. The 6-acre area is bound by Park Center Drive and Park/Open Space areas to the west, Institutional land uses to the north, and Residential land use to the south. The eastern part of the 6-acre site is bound by Cottonwood Avenue. This change would avoid impacts

to 2.94 acres of biologically sensitive areas identified in the Biological Resources Technical Report (Appendix C). Also, the River Bridge over the San Diego River would not be included in the TCSP under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative, which would similarly avoid biologically sensitive areas in the TCSP area. The remaining aspects of the proposed TCSP, including the expansion of the TCSP area and AEN, updated development standards, proposed roadway network upgrades and roadway connections or associated pedestrian and bicycle improvements, and conceptual development plans and design standards for Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B, would remain as they are in the proposed project. While approximately 6 less acres of residential development would be available for development under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative, overall buildout of the TCSP area is assumed to be the same as the proposed project and as assumed in the City's 6<sup>th</sup> Housing Element because development would likely be able to shift to other portions of residentially designated land, as needed.

### **9.3.2.1 Environmental Analysis of the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative**

#### **a. Aesthetics**

Under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative, development within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would be similar to the proposed TCSP under the project, except that an area in the northeastern part of the TCSP area would be changed from Residential to Floodway/Open Space land uses and the River Bridge would not be constructed across the San Diego River. Development under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would be subject to development review consistent with SMC Chapter 13.08 to ensure consistency with General Plan policies and applicable design and development review requirements including the proposed design guidelines in the proposed update to the TCSP. The development review process would ensure that future development would not degrade scenic vistas, scenic resources, or visual quality. Compliance with SMC standards related to light and glare (Chapter 13.08.070(G)), requiring that outdoor lighting be directed away from adjacent properties and set in a way to avoid any detriment to the surrounding area and lighting standards of the Community Enhancement Element would ensure that future development would not result in impacts related to light and glare. A mitigation measure identified to address potential impacts to the Edgemoor Polo Barn near Housing Element sites 20A and 20B (MM CUL-5) would be implemented under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative as there would be no changes to the project near Housing Element sites 20A and 20B, which are in the southeastern part of the TCSP area and AEN. Potentially significant aesthetics impacts under the No Project Alternative would be similar to the project as the potential for development of Housing Element sites 20A and 20B has the potential to damage views of an historic resource at the Edgemoor Polo Barn.

#### **b. Agricultural Resources**

Under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative, development within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would be similar to the project, except that an area in the northeastern part of the TCSP area would be changed from Residential to Floodway/Open Space land uses and the River Bridge would not be identified across the San Diego River. Areas identified as Farmland of Local Importance in the TCSP area and AEN do not include the 6-acre site that would be changed to Floodway/Open Space and remaining areas would still be developed and similarly result in less than significant impacts. Therefore, impacts associated with agriculture and forestry resources under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would be less than significant and similar to the project.

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**c. Air Quality**

The updated TCSP under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would be subject to the development standards in the updated TCSP, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC. While this alternative would reduce the amount of residential land uses at an approximately 6-acre area in the northeastern part of the TCSP area, it is not anticipated that overall residential development in the TCSP area would be decreased. As there would be no change in overall development under this alternative, the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would be consistent with the existing growth projections for which regional air quality standards (RAQs) are based. Development potential would be similar compared to the project as it is expected that residential development would not decrease under this alternative. Construction time frames and equipment for site-specific development projects are not available at this time, and there is a potential for multiple development projects to be constructed at one time, resulting in significant construction-related emissions. While future development under this alternative would be required to implement air quality mitigation measures documented in the EIR, mitigation for air quality impacts would remain significant and unavoidable. Therefore, impacts associated with air quality under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would be significant and unavoidable, similar to the project.

**d. Biological Resources**

The updated TCSP under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would result in the redesignation of 6 acres of Residential land uses in the northeastern part of the TCSP area to Floodway/Open Space and would not include the proposed River Bridge. While this alternative would avoid impacts to some of the biologically sensitive areas in the TCSP area, development consistent with the updated TCSP could still occur within other areas that support sensitive biological resources.

Future development under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would be subject to implementation of mitigation measures documented in this EIR for biological resources, which would reduce impacts related to sensitive species, sensitive habitats, and wetlands to a level less than significant. Applicable federal, state, and local regulations would also apply, such as the FESA, MBTA, CFG Code, and San Diego County MSCP. Not constructing housing in a 2.94-acre biologically sensitive area in the northeastern part of the TCSP area and leaving it as an undeveloped site would reduce some of the biological resources impacts associated with the project. Also, not constructing the River Bridge would avoid potentially significant project impacts on biological resources along the San Diego River. Therefore, impacts related to biological resources under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would be less than significant with mitigation and would have slightly less impacts compared to the project.

**e. Cultural Resources**

The updated TCSP under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would result in the redesignation of 6 acres of Residential land uses in the northeastern part of the TCSP area to Floodway/Open Space and would not include the proposed River Bridge. The 6-acre area that would be changed from Residential to Floodway/Open Space is not located in a culturally sensitive area; however, the River Bridge is located in a culturally sensitive area and while this alternative would avoid some potential cultural resources impacts, development consistent with the updated TCSP could still occur in other areas that could result in cultural resources impacts.

Future development under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would occur pursuant to the City's adopted TCSP, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC. Future development under

this alternative would be required to implement mitigation measures documented in this EIR for cultural resources. As described in Section 4.5, the project would result in less than significant cultural resources impacts with mitigation incorporated. Both the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative and the proposed project would similarly result in potential impacts on historic resources due to the proximity of Housing Element sites 20A and 20B to the Edgemoor Polo Barn. The Reduced Biological Impacts would not include the River Bridge which is located within an area identified for moderate potential to contain eligible buried archaeological sites, and the potential for cultural resources impacts would be slightly reduced. Therefore, impacts related to cultural resources under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would be less than significant with mitigation, slightly less than the project.

#### **f. Energy**

Future development under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would be subject to the updated TCSP land use plan and zoning, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC, and would be subject to the development and design standards and conceptual designs provided in the updated TCSP. Future development under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would not result in increased energy use compared to the project as no changes to overall buildout of the TCSP area are assumed. Therefore, impacts associated with energy would be less than significant, similar to the project.

#### **g. Geology and Soils**

Future development under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would be subject to the City's updated development and design standards and conceptual designs provided in the updated TCSP, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC. The Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would support development consistent with the updated TCSP which could be subject to potential geologic hazards. Adherence to Safety Element policies, the SMC, and the California Building Code would ensure that future development under this alternative would not cause substantial adverse effects associated with fault rupture, ground shaking, liquefaction, landslide, or expansive soils, and impacts would be less than significant. Similarly, adherence to applicable SMC requirements would ensure that future development under this alternative would not result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil, and impacts would be less than significant. Implementation of mitigation measures documented in this EIR for paleontological resources would reduce impacts related to paleontological resources to a level less than significant. Therefore, impacts related to geology and soils under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would be mitigated to a level less than significant, similar to the project.

#### **h. Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

Future development under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would be subject to the City's updated development and design standards and conceptual designs provided in the updated TCSP, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC. Future development under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would also be subject to implementation of the City's Sustainable Santee Plan (Climate Action Plan). While residential land uses would be reduced under this alternative, buildout of the TCSP area is anticipated to be the same as the project. The project would result in less than significant GHG impacts with mitigation and impacts associated with GHG under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would also be less than significant with mitigation, similar to the project.



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**i. Hazards and Hazardous Materials**

The updated TCSP under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would result in the redesignation of 6 acres of Residential land uses in the northeastern part of the TCSP area to Floodway/Open Space and would not include the proposed River Bridge. Overall buildout and development intensity is anticipated to be the same under this alternative and the proposed project. Future development would be required to adhere to multiple regulations related to hazardous materials handling and transport, including applicable state and local regulatory measures. Citywide General Plan Safety Element policies would also support safe handling of hazardous materials. Future development under this alternative would be required to implement mitigation measures documented in this EIR for hazardous materials. Furthermore, applications for all future projects under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would be reviewed and approved by the Santee Fire Department prior to issuance of a building permit. Future development under this alternative located within the Gillespie Field and MCAS Miramar Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans (ALUCPs) would be required to adhere to applicable City policies and regulations, as well as policies of the ALUCP. Similar to the project, future development under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative could be determined by the ALUC to not conform to density requirements for areas identified within ALUCPs as potentially hazardous due to the proximity to an airstrip. Because the ALUC may identify a hazard under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative, impacts associated with hazards and hazardous materials under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative may also be significant and unavoidable, similar to the project.

**j. Hydrology and Water Quality**

The updated TCSP under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would result in the redesignation of 6 acres of Residential land uses in the northeastern part of the TCSP area to Floodway/Open Space and would not include the proposed River Bridge. Overall buildout and development intensity is anticipated to be the same under this alternative and the proposed project. Future development under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would be required to adhere to all applicable water quality standards as provided in various water quality regulations and plans including all pertinent requirements of the City's Jurisdictional Runoff Management Plan, BMP Design Manual, NPDES General Construction Permit, as well as all regulations related to water quality. Both redevelopment and new development on vacant sites would be required to comply with applicable stormwater management requirements which focus on retention and infiltration of waters on-site. Additionally, development under this alternative would be required to comply with City General Plan policies and regulations that prioritize infiltration and treatment of stormwater. Future development would also be required to implement applicable stormwater BMPs and erosion control measures to retain flows on-site and minimize the velocity of stormwater runoff. Such BMPs could include on-site drainage swales, bioretention features, use of permeable pavers in parking areas and streets, or infiltration basins which also serve as a means for pollutant removal. Development under this alternative would be required to adhere to all state and local development regulations including SMC (Chapter 11.36), which establishes Flood Damage Prevention standards. Therefore, impacts associated with hydrology and water quality under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would be less than significant, similar to the project.

**k. Land Use and Planning**

The updated TCSP under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would result in the redesignation of 6 acres of Residential land uses in the northeastern part of the TCSP area to

Floodway/Open Space and would not include the proposed River Bridge. Overall buildout and development intensity is anticipated to be the same under this alternative and the proposed project. Future development under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would be subject to the City's updated development and design standards and conceptual designs provided in the updated TCSP, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC. All future development under this alternative would be subject to a site-specific review that considers consistency with all applicable plans, including the updated TCSP and ALUCP. The ALUC may determine a safety concern during future review of projects under the No Project Alternative and a significant land use conflict may result. Therefore, impacts related to land use under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would be significant and unavoidable, similar to the project.

#### **I. Noise**

Future development under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would be subject to the updated TCSP, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC. The Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would not include residential development in a 6 acre area in the northeastern part of the TCSP area and would also not include the River Bridge spanning the San Diego River. Future development under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would be subject to implementation of mitigation measures documented in this EIR for noise, which would reduce noise impacts to less than significant. Removing residential land uses and the River Bridge under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would not avoid potentially significant noise impacts associated with construction and stationary sources and outdoor performances. Therefore, impacts related to noise under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would be less than significant with mitigation and have less impacts compared to the project.

#### **m. Population and Housing**

Future development under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would be located in areas that are already served by infrastructure as identified in the existing TCSP, and therefore would not induce population growth. While there would be less Residential land uses in the TCSP area, buildout under this alternative would not be reduced compared to the project. The Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would not displace a substantial number of people or housing. Therefore, impacts associated with population and housing would be less than significant, similar to the project.

#### **n. Public Services**

Future development under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would not result in increased demand to require construction of new fire protection, police protection, school, or library facilities, since each future development would pay its fair share toward anticipated facility needs. Construction of any future public service facilities would require a separate environmental review and approval. Therefore, impacts associated with public services would be less than significant, similar to the project.

#### **o. Recreation**

Future development under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would be located in areas that are already served by infrastructure as identified in the existing TCSP, and therefore would not result in increased demand to require construction of new recreational facilities since each incremental housing development would pay its fair share toward anticipated facility needs. Construction of any future recreation facilities would require a separate environmental review and

approval. Therefore, impacts associated with recreation would be less than significant, similar to the project.

**p. Transportation**

Future development under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would occur pursuant to the City's updated TCSP, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC. While there would be less Residential land uses in the TCSP area, buildout under this alternative would not be reduced compared to the project and traffic levels would not change. The Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would include the roadway improvements identified in the updated TCSP. Future development would be designed consistent with established roadway design standards, and access to the existing roadway network would be configured consistent with established roadway design standards that would allow for emergency access. Because the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative applies the same land use densities and intensities in the majority of the project area, including within those areas located outside transit priority areas, significant VMT impacts could occur. Therefore, impacts associated with transportation would be significant and unavoidable, similar to the project.

**q. Tribal Cultural Resources**

The updated TCSP under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would result in the redesignation of 6 acres of Residential land uses in the northeastern part of the TCSP area to Floodway/Open Space and would not include the proposed River Bridge. The 6-acre area that would be changed from Residential to Floodway/Open Space is not located in a culturally sensitive area; however, the River Bridge is located in a culturally sensitive area that could also be a tribal cultural resource. While this alternative would avoid some potential tribal cultural resources impacts, development consistent with the updated TCSP could still occur in other areas that could result in tribal cultural resources impacts.

Future development under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would occur pursuant to the City's adopted TCSP, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC. Future development under this alternative would be required to implement mitigation measures documented in this EIR for tribal cultural resources. As described in Section 4.17, the project would result in less than significant tribal cultural resources impacts with mitigation incorporated. The Reduced Biological Impacts would not include the River Bridge which is located within an area identified for moderate potential to contain eligible buried archaeological sites, and the potential for tribal cultural resources impacts would be slightly reduced. Therefore, impacts related to tribal cultural resources under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would be less than significant with mitigation, slightly less than the project.

**r. Utilities and Service Systems**

Future development under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would be subject to the updated TCSP land use plan and zoning, development and design standards, and conceptual designs provided in the updated TCSP. Development under this alternative, like the project, would increase demand for utilities and services. Utility infrastructure improvements and relocations under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would be evaluated as part of a future review for site-specific projects. Should separate utility extensions be required outside of the footprints of future site-specific projects, they would require an environmental review and compliance with regulations in existence at that time would address potential environmental impacts. The Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would likely result in similar demand for water supply, wastewater

treatment, and solid waste disposal compared to development proposed under the project. Therefore, impacts associated with utilities and service system would be less than significant, similar to the project.

#### **s. Wildfire**

Future development under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would be subject to the updated TCSP land use plan and zoning, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC, and would be subject to the development and design standards and conceptual designs provided in the updated TCSP. This alternative does not include land use changes that would impair implementation of or physically interfere with the City's emergency response plan, evacuation routes, or conflict with any of the Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan specific hazard mitigation goals, objectives, and related actions. Additionally, future development would be required to adhere to the City's General Plan (Safety Element) policies including 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.11, and 4.12 which address emergency response and emergency evacuation. Future development under this alternative would also be required to comply with applicable regulations and policies related to flooding, drainage patterns, and landslides. Therefore, impacts associated with wildfire under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would be less than significant, similar to the project.

#### **9.3.2.2 Conclusion Regarding the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative**

As described above and summarized in Table 9-1, the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would result in similar impacts compared to the project, with none of the environmental resources seeing an increase in the severity of impacts. Under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative, most of the updated TCSP under the project would be similar; however, the land use designations for an approximately 6-acre undeveloped area in the northeastern part of the TCSP area would be changed from Residential TC-R-14 (14 to 22 du/ac) to Floodway/Open Space and the River Bridge would not be included. Therefore, less than significant impacts (with and without mitigation) associated with aesthetics, agricultural resources, energy, geology, and soils, GHGs, hydrology and water quality, population and housing, public services, recreation, utilities and service systems, and wildfire would be similar under the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative compared to the project. Impacts to biological resources and cultural resources would be slightly reduced under this alternative due to the redesignation of 6 acres from Residential to Floodway/Open Space and the removal of the River Bridge in and near areas of biological and cultural sensitivity. Impacts related to air quality, hazards, land use and planning, noise, and traffic would remain significant and unavoidable, similar to the project. This alternative would partially meet some of the project objectives stated in Chapter 3.0, Project Description, as this alternative does provide for mobility needs, a variety of housing types and commercial and office/professional opportunities, including employment-supportive uses. Buildout of the Reduced Biological Impacts Alternative would not include the River Bridge which would provide recreational opportunities and would be part of the open space system to unify areas north and south of the San Diego River within the AEN and would better meet the project objectives.

#### **9.3.3 Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative**

The Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative represents a modified update to the TCSP to further support the City's goals to provide additional affordable housing opportunities in the City and within a transit priority area (TPA). Under this alternative, the Trolley Commercial land use designations near the center of the TCSP area and AEN would be revised to allow transit oriented development. Specifically, this alternative would allow residential development up to 36

du/ac consistent with the Residential TC-R-3030 (30 to 36 du/ac) land use designation in the TCSP. For the purposes of this alternatives analysis, potential increases in residential development are estimated at an additional 1,515 du in the TCSP area and AEN at a density of 34 du/ac. The remaining aspects of the proposed TCSP, including the expansion of the TCSP area and AEN, updated development standards, proposed roadway network upgrades and roadway connections or associated pedestrian and bicycle improvements, and conceptual development plans and design standards for Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B, would remain as they are in the proposed project.

### **9.3.3.1 Environmental Analysis of the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative**

#### **a. Aesthetics**

Under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative, development within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would be similar to the proposed TCSP under the project, except that the Trolley Commercial land use designations near the center of the TCSP area and AEN would be revised to allow increased density, transit oriented development. Development under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would be subject to development review consistent with SMC Chapter 13.08 to ensure consistency with General Plan policies and applicable design and development review requirements including the proposed design guidelines in the proposed update to the TCSP. The development review process would ensure that future development would not degrade scenic vistas, scenic resources, or visual quality. Compliance with SMC standards related to light and glare (Chapter 13.08.070(G)), requiring that outdoor lighting be directed away from adjacent properties and set in a way to avoid any detriment to the surrounding area and lighting standards of the Community Enhancement Element would ensure that future development would not result in impacts related to light and glare. This alternative does not propose changes to the Housing Element sites, and a mitigation measure identified to address potential impacts to the Edgemoor Polo Barn near Housing Element sites 20A and 20B (MM CUL-5) would be implemented under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative as there would be no changes to the project near Housing Element sites 20A and 20B. Potentially significant aesthetics impacts under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would be similar to the project as the potential for development of Housing Element sites 20A and 20B still has the potential to damage views of an historic resource at the Edgemoor Polo Barn.

#### **b. Agricultural Resources**

Under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative, development within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would be similar to the project, except Trolley Commercial land use designations near the center of the TCSP area and AEN would be revised to allow increased density, transit oriented development. Areas identified as Farmland of Local Importance in the TCSP area and AEN would still be developed and similarly result in less than significant impacts as these areas are identified for development and do not contain active agricultural uses. Therefore, impacts associated with agriculture and forestry resources under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would be less than significant and similar to the project.

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**c. Air Quality**

The updated TCSP under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would be subject to the development standards in the updated TCSP, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC. This alternative would increase the amount of residential land uses within the Trolley Commercial land uses in the central part of the TCSP area and AEN by an additional 1,515 du. As there would be an increase in overall development under this alternative, the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would not be consistent with the existing growth projections for which regional air quality standards (RAQs) are based. Construction time frames and equipment for site-specific development projects are not available at this time, and there is a potential for multiple development projects to be constructed at one time, resulting in significant construction-related emissions. As future development under this alternative would be required to implement mitigation measures documented in this EIR, mitigation for air quality impacts would remain significant and unavoidable. Because there would be more development under this alternative, impacts associated with air quality under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would be significant and unavoidable, and greater than the project.

**d. Biological Resources**

The updated TCSP under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would result in an increase in the amount of residential land uses within the Trolley Commercial land uses in the central part of the TCSP area and AEN by an additional 1,515 du. This alternative would not avoid impacts to biologically sensitive areas and development under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative still occur within areas that support sensitive biological resources.

Future development under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would be subject to implementation of mitigation measures documented in this EIR for biological resources, which would reduce impacts related to sensitive species, sensitive habitats, and wetlands to a level less than significant. Applicable federal, state, and local regulations would also apply, such as the FESA, MBTA, CFG Code, and San Diego County MSCP. Adding housing in the Trolley Commercial land uses would not reduce any of the biological resources impacts associated with the project. Therefore, impacts related to biological resources under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would be less than significant with mitigation and would have similar impacts compared to the project.

**e. Cultural Resources**

The updated TCSP under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would result in an increase in the amount of residential land uses within the Trolley Commercial land uses in the central part of the TCSP area and AEN by an additional 1,515 du. This alternative would not avoid impacts to culturally sensitive areas and development under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative still occur within areas that support sensitive cultural resources.

Future development under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would occur pursuant to the City's adopted TCSP, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC. Future development under this alternative would be required to implement mitigation measures documented in this EIR for cultural resources. As described in Section 4.5, the project would result in less than significant cultural resources impacts with mitigation incorporated. Both the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative and the proposed project would similarly result in potential impacts on historic resources due to the proximity of Housing Element sites 20A and

20B to the Edgemoor Polo Barn. Therefore, impacts related to cultural resources under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would be less than significant with mitigation, similar to the project.

**f. Energy**

Future development under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would be subject to the updated TCSP land use plan and zoning, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC, and would be subject to the development and design standards and conceptual designs provided in the updated TCSP. Future development under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would result in some increased energy use compared to the project as overall buildout of the TCSP area would increase by 1,515 du; however, the increase in development would occur near transit and urban uses and would not conflict with energy plans or result in wasteful or inefficient energy use. Impacts associated with energy would be less than significant, similar to the project.

**g. Geology and Soils**

Future development under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would be subject to the City's updated development and design standards and conceptual designs provided in the updated TCSP, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC. The Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would support development consistent with the updated TCSP which could be subject to potential geologic hazards. Adherence to Safety Element policies, the SMC, and the California Building Code would ensure that future development under this alternative would not cause substantial adverse effects associated with fault rupture, ground shaking, liquefaction, landslide, or expansive soils, and impacts would be less than significant. Similarly, adherence to applicable SMC requirements would ensure that future development under this alternative would not result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil, and impacts would be less than significant. Implementation of mitigation measures documented in this EIR for paleontological resources would reduce impacts related to paleontological resources to a level less than significant. Therefore, impacts related to geology and soils under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would be mitigated to a level less than significant, similar to the project.

**h. Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

Future development under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would be subject to the City's updated development and design standards and conceptual designs provided in the updated TCSP, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC. Future development under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would also be subject to implementation of the City's Sustainable Santee Plan (Climate Action Plan). Transit-oriented residential land uses would be increased under this alternative and buildout of the TCSP area is anticipated to include 1,515 du more than the project. The project would result in less than significant GHG impacts with mitigation and impacts associated with GHG under the Increased Density /Transit Oriented Design Alternative would also be less than significant with mitigation, and similar to the project.

**i. Hazards and Hazardous Materials**

The updated TCSP under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would include an anticipated 1,515 additional du in the Trolley Commercial land uses in the central part



of the TCSP area and AEN. Future development would be required to adhere to multiple regulations related to hazardous materials handling and transport, including applicable state and local regulatory measures. Citywide General Plan Safety Element policies would also support safe handling of hazardous materials. Future development under this alternative would be required to implement mitigation measures documented in this EIR for hazardous materials. Furthermore, applications for all future projects under the Increased Density /Transit Oriented Design Alternative would be reviewed and approved by the Santee Fire Department prior to issuance of a building permit. Future development under this alternative located within the Gillespie Field and MCAS Miramar ALUCPs could increase the potential for land use compatibility issues related to aircraft overflight hazards and like the proposed project, developments allowed under this alternative would be required to adhere to applicable City policies and regulations, as well as policies of the ALUCP and FAA and may result in similar safety conflicts during ALUC review. Therefore, impacts associated with hazards and hazardous materials under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would be significant and unavoidable, similar to the project.

#### **j. Hydrology and Water Quality**

The updated TCSP under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would result in the addition of residential development within the Trolley Commercial land uses in the central part of the TCSP area and AEN. Overall buildout and development intensity is anticipated to increase by 1,515 du compared to the proposed project. Future development under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would be required to adhere to all applicable water quality standards as provided in various water quality regulations and plans including all pertinent requirements of the City's Jurisdictional Runoff Management Plan, BMP Design Manual, NPDES General Construction Permit, as well as all regulations related to water quality. Both redevelopment and new development on vacant sites would be required to comply with applicable stormwater management requirements which focus on retention and infiltration of waters on-site. Additionally, development under this alternative would be required to comply with City General Plan policies and regulations that prioritize infiltration and treatment of stormwater. Future development would also be required to implement applicable stormwater BMPs and erosion control measures to retain flows on-site and minimize the velocity of stormwater runoff. Such BMPs could include on-site drainage swales, bioretention features, use of permeable pavers in parking areas and streets, or infiltration basins which also serve as a means for pollutant removal. Development under this alternative would be required to adhere to all state and local development regulations including the SMC (Chapter 11.36), which establishes Flood Damage Prevention standards. Therefore, impacts associated with hydrology and water quality under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would be less than significant, similar to the project.

#### **k. Land Use and Planning**

The updated TCSP under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would result in allowing residential development in the Trolley Commercial land use with a zoning designation of Residential TC-R-3030 (30 to 36 du/ac). This alternative is estimated to result in an additional 1,515 du in the TCSP area and AEN compared to the project which would not allow residential in the Trolley Commercial land use. Future development under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would be subject to the City's updated development and design standards and conceptual designs provided in the updated TCSP, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC. All future development under this alternative would be subject to a site-specific review that considers consistency with all applicable plans, including the updated TCSP and ALUCP. The ALUC may determine a safety concern during future review of projects under the

Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative and a significant land use conflict may result. Therefore, impacts related to land use under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would be significant and unavoidable, similar to the project.

**I. Noise**

Future development under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would be subject to the updated TCSP, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC. This alternative is estimated to result in an additional 1,515 du in the TCSP area and AEN compared to the project, which would not allow residential in the Trolley Commercial land use. Future development under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would be subject to implementation of mitigation measures documented in this EIR for noise, which would reduce noise impacts to less than significant. Allowing residential development in the Trolley Commercial land use under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would not increase noise; however, it would also not avoid potentially significant noise impacts associated with construction and stationary sources and outdoor performances. Therefore, impacts related to noise under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would be significant and unavoidable with mitigation and have similar impacts compared to the project.

**m. Population and Housing**

Future development under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would be located in areas that are already served by infrastructure as identified in the existing TCSP, and therefore would not induce population growth. While there would be increased residential development in the TCSP area, the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would not displace a substantial number of people or housing as the Trolley Commercial area does not include residential development under existing conditions. Therefore, impacts associated with population and housing would be less than significant, similar to the project.

**n. Public Services**

Future development under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would not result in increased demand to require construction of new fire protection, police protection, school, or library facilities, since each future development would pay its fair share toward anticipated facility needs. Construction of any future public service facilities would require a separate environmental review and approval. Therefore, impacts associated with public services would be less than significant, similar to the project.

**o. Recreation**

Future development under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would be located in areas that are already served by infrastructure as identified in the existing TCSP, and therefore would not result in increased demand to require construction of new recreational facilities since each incremental housing development would pay its fair share toward anticipated facility needs. Construction of any future recreation facilities would require a separate environmental review and approval. Therefore, impacts associated with recreation would be less than significant, similar to the project.

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**p. Transportation**

Future development under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would occur pursuant to the City's updated TCSP, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC. While there would be more residential development in the TCSP area, the additional development is located near transit and would be within a TPA. The Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would include the roadway improvements identified in the updated TCSP. Future development would be designed consistent with established roadway design standards, and access to the existing roadway network would be configured consistent with established roadway design standards that would allow for emergency access. Although the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would provide more transit oriented development opportunities in TPAs located within the TCSP, this alternative applies the same land use densities and intensities in the majority of the project area, including within those in areas outside of TPAs, resulting in a similar potential for VMT impacts to occur. Therefore, impacts associated with transportation under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would be significant and unavoidable, similar to the project.

**q. Tribal Cultural Resources**

The Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would result in additional residential development in the Trolley Commercial land use designation in the southern part of the TCSP area and AEN. The Trolley Commercial land use is in a culturally sensitive area that could also be a tribal cultural resource. Development consistent with the updated TCSP could still occur in other culturally sensitive areas that could result in tribal cultural resources impacts. Future development under this alternative would be required to implement mitigation measures documented in this EIR for tribal cultural resources. As described in Section 4.17, the project would result in less than significant tribal cultural resources impacts with mitigation incorporated. Therefore, impacts related to tribal cultural resources under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would be less than significant with mitigation, similar to the project.

**r. Utilities and Service Systems**

Future development under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would be subject to the updated TCSP land use plan and zoning, development and design standards, and conceptual designs provided in the updated TCSP. Development under this alternative would involve 1,515 du more than the project and would result in some increase demand for utilities and services. Utility infrastructure improvements and relocations under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would be evaluated as part of a future review for site-specific projects. Should separate utility extensions be required outside of the footprints of future site-specific projects, they would require an environmental review and compliance with regulations in existence at that time would address potential environmental impacts. The Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would likely result in some increase in demand for water supply, wastewater treatment, and solid waste disposal compared to development proposed under the project. Therefore, impacts associated with utilities and service system would be less than significant, greater than the project.

**s. Wildfire**

Future development under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would be subject to the updated TCSP land use plan and zoning, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC, and would be subject to the development and design standards and conceptual designs

provided in the updated TCSP. This alternative does not include land use changes that would impair implementation of or physically interfere with the City's emergency response plan, evacuation routes, or conflict with any of the Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan specific hazard mitigation goals, objectives, and related actions. Additionally, future development would be required to adhere to the City's General Plan (Safety Element) policies including 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.11, and 4.12 which address emergency response and emergency evacuation. Future development located within the Wildland Urban Interface would comply with applicable California Fire Code and City General Plan requirements and include enhanced fire protection measures as detailed in the City's building and fire codes. Future development under this alternative would also be required to comply with applicable regulations and policies related to flooding, drainage patterns, and landslides. Therefore, impacts associated with wildfire under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would be less than significant, similar to the project.

### **9.3.3.2 Conclusion Regarding the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative**

As described above and summarized in Table 9-1, the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would result in similar impacts compared to the project, with a slight increase in the severity of impacts for air quality, GHGs, and utilities and service systems. Under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative, most of the updated TCSP under the project would be the same; however, the Trolley Commercial land use areas in the central part of the TCSP area and AEN would include residential development estimated to include 1,515 du. Therefore, less than significant impacts (with and without mitigation) associated with aesthetics, agricultural resources, biological resources, cultural resources, energy, geology and soils, hydrology and water quality, population and housing, public services, recreation, tribal cultural resources, utilities and service systems, and wildfire would be similar under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative compared to the project. Impacts related to air quality, hazards and hazardous materials, land use and planning, noise, and traffic would remain significant and unavoidable, greater than the project. This alternative would partially meet some of the project objectives stated in Chapter 3.0, Project Description, as this alternative does provide for mobility needs, a variety of housing types and commercial and office/professional opportunities, including employment-supportive uses. However, this alternative would not substantially avoid or reduce the project's environmental impacts.

### **9.3.4 No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative**

The No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative represents a modified update to the TCSP to avoid some of the noise impacts identified for the project. Under this alternative outdoor performance uses would not be allowed within the Commercial Entertainment areas of the TCSP, north of the Town Center Transit Station, and would avoid an operational noise impact associated with outdoor gatherings of people for artistic, cinematic, theatrical, musical, sporting events, cultural, education or civic purposes. The remaining aspects of the proposed TCSP, including the expansion of the TCSP area and AEN, updated development standards, proposed roadway network upgrades and roadway connections or associated pedestrian and bicycle improvements, and conceptual development plans and design standards for Housing Element sites 16A, 16B, 20A, and 20B, would remain as they are in the proposed project.

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### **9.3.4.1 Environmental Analysis of the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative**

#### **a. Aesthetics**

Under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative, development within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would be similar to the proposed TCSP under the project, except that outdoor performance uses would not be allowed within the Commercial Entertainment areas of the TCSP, north of the Town Center Transit Station. All other requirements related to aesthetics as discussed throughout this section for the other alternatives would apply to this alternative, and a mitigation measure identified to address potential impacts to the Edgemoor Polo Barn near Housing Element sites 20A and 20B (MM CUL-5) would be implemented under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative as there would be no changes to the project near Housing Element sites 20A and 20B. Potentially significant aesthetics impacts under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would be similar to the project as the potential for development of Housing Element sites 20A and 20B has the potential to damage views of an historic resource at the Edgemoor Polo Barn.

#### **b. Agricultural Resources**

Under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative, development within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would be similar to the proposed TCSP under the project, except that outdoor performance uses would not be allowed within the Commercial Entertainment areas of the TCSP, north of the Town Center Transit Station. Areas identified as Farmland of Local Importance in the TCSP area and AEN would still be developed and similarly result in less than significant impacts as these areas are identified for development and do not contain active agricultural uses. Therefore, impacts associated with agriculture and forestry resources under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would be less than significant and similar to the project.

#### **c. Air Quality**

The updated TCSP under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would be subject to the development standards in the updated TCSP, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC. As there would be no change in overall development under this alternative, the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would be consistent with the existing growth projections for which regional air quality standards (RAQs) are based. Development potential would be similar compared to the project. Construction time frames and equipment for site-specific development projects are not available at this time, and there is a potential for multiple development projects to be constructed at one time, resulting in significant construction-related emissions. While future development under this alternative would be required to implement air quality mitigation measures documented in the EIR, mitigation for air quality impacts would remain significant and unavoidable. Therefore, impacts associated with air quality under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would be significant and unavoidable, similar to the project.

#### **d. Biological Resources**

Under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative, development within the TCSP area, AEN, and Housing Element sites would be similar to the proposed TCSP under the project, except that outdoor performance uses would not be allowed within the Commercial Entertainment areas of the TCSP, north of the Town Center Transit Station.

Future development under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would be subject to implementation of mitigation measures documented in this EIR for biological resources, which would reduce impacts related to sensitive species, sensitive habitats, and wetlands to a level less than significant. Applicable federal, state, and local regulations would also apply, such as the FESA, MBTA, CFG Code, and San Diego County MSCP. Restricting outdoor performance use would reduce noise levels in the TCSP area and would reduce the potential for noise to result in biological resources impacts associated with outdoor performances. Therefore, impacts related to biological resources under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would be less than significant with mitigation and would have less impacts compared to the project.

#### **e. Cultural Resources**

The updated TCSP under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would result in not allowing outdoor performance uses within the Commercial Entertainment areas of the TCSP, north of the Town Center Transit Station. This alternative would not avoid impacts to culturally sensitive areas and development under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative still occur within areas that support sensitive cultural resources.

Future development under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would occur pursuant to the City's adopted TCSP, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC. Future development under this alternative would be required to implement mitigation measures documented in this EIR for cultural resources. As described in Section 4.5, the project would result in less than significant cultural resources impacts with mitigation incorporated. Both the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative and the proposed project would similarly result in potential impacts on historic resources due to the proximity of Housing Element sites 20A and 20B to the Edgemoor Polo Barn. Therefore, impacts related to cultural resources under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would be less than significant with mitigation, similar to the project.

#### **f. Energy**

Future development under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would be subject to the updated TCSP land use plan and zoning, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC, and would be subject to the development and design standards and conceptual designs provided in the updated TCSP. Future development under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would not result in increased energy use compared to the project as overall buildout of the TCSP area would remain and would not conflict with energy plans or result in wasteful or inefficient energy use. Impacts associated with energy would be less than significant, similar to the project.

#### **g. Geology and Soils**

Future development under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would be subject to the City's updated development and design standards and conceptual designs provided in the updated TCSP, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC. The No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would support development consistent with the updated TCSP which could be subject to potential geologic hazards. Adherence to Safety Element policies, the SMC, and the California Building Code would ensure that future development under this alternative would not cause substantial adverse effects associated with fault rupture, ground shaking, liquefaction, landslide, or expansive soils, and impacts would be less than significant. Similarly, adherence to applicable SMC requirements would ensure that future development under this alternative would not result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil, and impacts would be less than significant. Implementation of mitigation measures documented in this EIR for paleontological resources

would reduce impacts related to paleontological resources to a level less than significant. Therefore, impacts related to geology and soils under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would be mitigated to a level less than significant, similar to the project.

#### **h. Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

Future development under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would result in a similar level and type of development throughout the TCSP, except outdoor performances would not be allowed within the Commercial Entertainment areas of the TCSP. Like the proposed project, development would be subject to the City's updated development and design standards and conceptual designs provided in the updated TCSP, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC. Future development under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would also be subject to implementation of the City's Sustainable Santee Plan (Climate Action Plan). The project would result in less than significant GHG impacts with mitigation and impacts associated with GHG under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would also be less than significant with mitigation, similar to the project.

#### **i. Hazards and Hazardous Materials**

The updated TCSP under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would result in not allowing outdoor performance uses within the Commercial Entertainment areas of the TCSP, north of the Town Center Transit Station. Like the proposed project, all other future development would be required to adhere to multiple regulations related to hazardous materials handling and transport, including applicable state and local regulatory measures. Citywide General Plan Safety Element policies would also support safe handling of hazardous materials. Future development under this alternative would be required to implement mitigation measures documented in this EIR for hazardous materials. Future development under this alternative located within the Gillespie Field and MCAS Miramar ALUCPs would be required to adhere to applicable City policies and regulations, as well as policies of the ALUCP. Furthermore, applications for all future projects under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would be reviewed and approved by the Santee Fire Department prior to issuance of a building permit. Therefore, impacts associated with hazards and hazardous materials under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would be mitigated to a level less than significant, similar to the project.

#### **j. Hydrology and Water Quality**

The updated TCSP under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would result in not allowing outdoor performance uses within the Commercial Entertainment areas of the TCSP, north of the Town Center Transit Station. Overall buildout and development intensity is anticipated to be the same as the proposed project. Future development under the Increased Density/Transit Oriented Design Alternative would be required to adhere to all applicable water quality standards as provided in various water quality regulations and plans including all pertinent requirements of the City's Jurisdictional Runoff Management Plan, BMP Design Manual, NPDES General Construction Permit, as well as all regulations related to water quality. Both redevelopment and new development on vacant sites would be required to comply with applicable stormwater management requirements which focus on retention and infiltration of waters on-site. Additionally, development under this alternative would be required to comply with City General Plan policies and regulations that prioritize infiltration and treatment of stormwater. Future development would also be required to implement applicable stormwater BMPs and erosion control measures to retain flows on-site and minimize the velocity of stormwater runoff. Such BMPs could include on-site drainage swales, bioretention features, use of permeable pavers in parking areas and



streets, or infiltration basins which also serve as a means for pollutant removal. Development under this alternative would be required to adhere to all state and local development regulations including SMC (Chapter 11.36), which establishes Flood Damage Prevention standards. Therefore, impacts associated with hydrology and water quality under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would be less than significant, similar to the project.

**k. Land Use and Planning**

The updated TCSP under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would result in the prohibition of outdoor performance uses in the TCSP area and AEN. Overall buildout and development intensity is anticipated to be the same under this alternative and the proposed project. Future development under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would be subject to the City's updated development and design standards and conceptual designs provided in the updated TCSP, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC. All future development under this alternative would be subject to a site-specific review that considers consistency with all applicable plans, including the updated TCSP and ALUCP. The ALUC may determine a safety concern during future review of projects under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative and a significant land use conflict may result. Therefore, impacts related to land use under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would be significant and unavoidable, similar to the project.

**l. Noise**

The updated TCSP under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would not allow outdoor performance uses within the Commercial Entertainment areas of the TCSP, north of the Town Center Transit Station. Future development under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would be subject to the updated TCSP, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC. Future development under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would be subject to implementation of mitigation measures documented in this EIR for noise, which would reduce noise impacts to less than significant. Restricting outdoor performance uses under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would avoid potentially significant noise impacts associated with outdoor performances (NOI-3). Other noise impacts under the project would remain under this alternative. Therefore, impacts related to noise under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would be less than significant with mitigation and have reduced impacts compared to the project.

**m. Population and Housing**

Future development under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would be located in areas that are already served by infrastructure as identified in the existing TCSP, and therefore would not induce population growth. Buildout under this alternative would not be reduced compared to the project. The No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would not displace a substantial number of people or housing. Therefore, impacts associated with population and housing would be less than significant, similar to the project.

**n. Public Services**

Future development under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would not result in increased demand to require construction of new fire protection, police protection, school, or library facilities, since each future development would pay its fair share toward anticipated facility needs. Construction of any future public service facilities would require a separate environmental

review and approval. Therefore, impacts associated with public services would be less than significant, similar to the project.

**o. Recreation**

Future development under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would be located in areas that are already served by infrastructure as identified in the existing TCSP, and therefore would not result in increased demand to require construction of new recreational facilities since each incremental housing development would pay its fair share toward anticipated facility needs. Construction of any future recreation facilities would require a separate environmental review and approval. Therefore, impacts associated with recreation would be less than significant, similar to the project.

**p. Transportation**

Future development under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would occur pursuant to the City's updated TCSP, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC. While there would be outdoor performance uses, buildout under this alternative would not be reduced compared to the project and traffic levels would not change. The No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would include the roadway improvements identified in the updated TCSP. Future development would be designed consistent with established roadway design standards, and access to the existing roadway network would be configured consistent with established roadway design standards that would allow for emergency access. Because the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative applies the same land use densities and intensities in the majority of the project area, including within those areas located outside of transit priority areas, significant VMT impacts could occur. Therefore, impacts associated with transportation would be significant and unavoidable, similar to the project.

**q. Tribal Cultural Resources**

The updated TCSP under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would result in not allowing outdoor performance uses within the Commercial Entertainment areas of the TCSP, north of the Town Center Transit Station. Future development under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would occur pursuant to the City's adopted TCSP, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC. Future development under this alternative would be required to implement mitigation measures documented in this EIR for tribal cultural resources. As described in Section 4.17, the project would result in less than significant tribal cultural resources impacts with mitigation incorporated. The No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would not include the River Bridge which is located within an area identified for moderate potential to contain eligible buried archaeological sites, and the potential for tribal cultural resources impacts would be slightly reduced. Therefore, impacts related to tribal cultural resources under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would be less than significant with mitigation, similar to the project.

**r. Utilities and Service Systems**

Future development under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would be subject to the updated TCSP land use plan and zoning, development and design standards, and conceptual designs provided in the updated TCSP. Development under this alternative, like the project, would increase demand for utilities and services. Utility infrastructure improvements and relocations under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would be evaluated as part of a future review for site-specific projects. Should separate utility extensions be required outside of the footprints

of future site-specific projects, they would require an environmental review and compliance with regulations in existence at that time would address potential environmental impacts. The No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would likely result in similar demand for water supply, wastewater treatment, and solid waste disposal compared to development proposed under the project. Therefore, impacts associated with utilities and service system would be less than significant, similar to the project.

#### **s. Wildfire**

Future development under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would be subject to the updated TCSP land use plan and zoning, as well as the City's General Plan and SMC, and would be subject to the development and design standards and conceptual designs provided in the updated TCSP. This alternative does not include land use changes that would impair implementation of or physically interfere with the City's emergency response plan, evacuation routes, or conflict with any of the Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan specific hazard mitigation goals, objectives, and related actions. Additionally, future development would be required to adhere to the City's General Plan (Safety Element) policies including 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.11, and 4.12 which address emergency response and emergency evacuation. Future development located within the Wildland Urban Interface would comply with applicable California Fire Code and City General Plan requirements and include enhanced fire protection measures as detailed in the City's building and fire codes. Future development under this alternative would also be required to comply with applicable regulations and policies related to flooding, drainage patterns, and landslides. Therefore, impacts associated with wildfire under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would be less than significant, similar to the project.

#### **9.3.4.2 Conclusion Regarding the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative**

As described above and summarized in Table 9-1, the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would result in similar impacts compared to the project, with none of the environmental resources seeing an increase in the severity of impacts. Under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative, most of the updated TCSP under the project would be similar; however, the updated TCSP would not allow outdoor performance uses within the Commercial Entertainment areas of the TCSP, north of the Town Center Transit Station. Therefore, less than significant impacts (with and without mitigation) associated with aesthetics, agricultural resources, cultural resources, energy, geology and soils, GHGs, hydrology and water quality, population and housing, public services, recreation, tribal cultural resources, utilities and service systems, and wildfire would be similar under the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative compared to the project. Impacts to biological resources would be slightly reduced under this alternative due to the elimination of outdoor performance uses near areas of biological sensitivity and a significant noise impact associated with outdoor performances would be avoided. Impacts related to air quality, hazards and hazardous materials, land use and planning, noise, and traffic would remain significant and unavoidable, similar to the project. This alternative would partially meet some of the project objectives stated in Chapter 3.0, Project Description, as this alternative does provide for mobility needs, a variety of housing types and commercial and office/professional opportunities, including employment-supportive uses. This alternative would not fully meet the project objectives to create a variety of commercial services to establish the TCSP area as an activity center of the community and to create community-serving public and civic uses within the TCSP as it would reduce opportunities to provide outdoor activities.

### **9.3.5 Environmentally Superior Alternative**

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)(2) requires an EIR to identify the environmentally superior alternative. If the No Project Alternative is the environmentally superior alternative, the EIR must identify an environmentally superior alternative from the other alternatives. The project itself may not be identified as the environmentally superior alternative. The No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would be the environmentally superior alternative because it would incrementally reduce significant impacts associated with biological resources and would avoid a noise impact compared to the project. Although this alternative would provide less flexibility for potential outdoor uses, the No Outdoor Performance Use Alternative would ultimately result in development of the same amount of residential and non-residential development as the project as no other aspects of the TCSP would be altered. The No Outdoor Performance Use would meet most project objectives; however, it might not as fully meet the project objective to allow for community-serving, civic, and public uses within the TCSP area to become focal points for residents and visitors to enjoy.

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