5.0 ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

5.1 INTRODUCTION

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6 requires an assessment of a reasonable range of alternatives to a project. The alternatives must meet most of the objectives and avoid or substantially lessen potentially significant environmental impacts associated with the project. CEQA also requires that an EIR assess the No Project alternative, providing an assessment of what would reasonably be expected to occur if the project were not implemented.

Section 15126.6(e)(3) of the State CEQA Guidelines states that:

> (3) A discussion of the "no project" alternative will usually proceed along one of two lines: (A) When the project is the revision of an existing land use or regulatory plan, policy or ongoing operation, the "no project" 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.

5.2 RATIONALE FOR SELECTING THE ALTERNATIVES

The City of Lake Elsinore evaluated alternatives during the development of the GPU. The alternatives were evaluated to consider the implications for the City's infrastructure based on a higher density of units that would facilitate a larger population and a lower density for a lower population. Because the City is growing quickly, the forecast population needs to be accommodated appropriately. These alternatives were chosen to analyze the impacts of higher and lower density development than the density proposed in the GPU.

5.3 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT REJECTED

The General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) is made up of City staff, community members, developers, and consultants. This committee was established in order to create a vision for the City and a direction for the General Plan. Through discussions, the committee came up with the two alternatives discussed below. In the process of deciding on alternatives, several options were discussed but rejected. One included creating a land-use map similar to the existing map, which does not show land-use designations in Specific Plan Areas. Another included not allowing any development in the Eastlake District, which was integrated into the Low Density Alternative. No other broad scale alternatives to the GPU were considered.

5.4 ALTERNATIVES ANALYZED IN THE EIR

5.4.1 NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

CEQA requires that the EIR address a No Project Alternative. For purposes of this PEIR, the No Project Alternative is defined as the existing conditions plus the projects that had received planning approvals but were not completed prior to preparation of the Draft GPU. The No Project Alternative also consists of implementing the existing General Plan, zoning and other City regulations, and ordinances without a GPU. The No Project Alternative reflects the City's current General Plan and the current Land Use Plan is shown in **Figure 5.0-1, No Project Alternative/Existing General Plan**. There are 18 General Plan Land Use Designations; **Table 5.0-1, Existing General Plan Land Use Designations,** lists the area and percentage of each land use designation within the incorporated City boundaries. At buildout of the existing General Plan, there would be approximately 103,395 dwelling units and a population of 287,400 people.

5.4.2 ALTERNATIVE 1 - LOW DENSITY ALTERNATIVE

The Low Density Alternative allows for up to 18 dwelling units per acre. The Low Density Alternative includes the low end of the ranges of permitted density/intensity of use per acre in each land use designation. The Low Density Alternative differs from the Proposed Land Use Plan because the densities are lower than the mid-range densities of the Proposed Land Use Plan. This alternative would allow for fewer dwelling units for those lands designated residential, including hillside, low, low-medium, medium, high, residential mixed use, and commercial mixed use. The Low Density Alternative includes commercial, industrial, and other non-residential. (See **Table 5.0-2, Low Density Alternative Land Uses**.) Under the Low Density Alternative, there would be approximately 45,099 dwelling units and a population of 135,159 people at buildout.

The Low Density Alternative also includes changes to the Proposed Land Use Plan (**Figure 5.0-2, Alternative 1 – Low Density Alternative Land Use Plan**) shows the differences, which are located in the following Districts: Lake Edge, Riverview, Ballpark, Country Club Heights, and Meadowbrook Sphere. In the Lake Edge District, the Low Density Alternative designates the western portion of the District as all recreation whereas the Proposed Land Use Plan shows the area as medium-density residential and residential mixed use. The southern portion of the Riverview District is designated by the Low Density Alternative as mostly residential mixed use, with a small amount of medium-density residential, and additional open space buffering the river. This differs from the Proposed Land Use Plan, which designates these areas as low–medium, medium-, and high-density residential. The Low Density Alternative designates the southwestern area of the Ballpark District as having tourist/commercial and residential mixed use, and none of the general commercial designations, which are proposed in the Proposed Land Use Plan. The Low Density Alternative designates the Country Club Heights District as hillside residential and floodway while the Proposed Land Use Plan designates the District as low- and low–medium density residential.

Table 5.0-1, Existing General Plan Land Use Designations

LAND USE DESIGNATION	ACREAGE	% OF TOTAL
Residential		
Hillside	1,343.9	6.64%
Low Density	1,048.9	5.18%
Low Medium Density	6,323.6	31.25%
Medium Density	599.4	2.96%
High Density	315.5	1.56%
Residential Total		
Commercial/Office/Industrial		
Business Professional	44.7	0.22%
Freeway Business	0	0%
General Commercial	960.5	4.74%
Neighborhood Commercial	35.9	0.18%
Tourist Commercial	96.4	0.48%
Limited Industrial	363.8	1.80%
Commercial/Office Total		
Mixed Use		
Primarily Residential	179.2	0.89%
Primarily Commercial	175.0	0.86%
Mixed Use Total		
Floodway	473.9	2.34%
Open Space	2,552.6	12.62%
Public/Institutional	303.0	1.32%
Recreation	1,772.6	8.76%
MSHCP Conservation	3,484.3	17.22%
Total Acres	**20,233***	**100%**
*Specific Plan Area	6,649.2	32.86%

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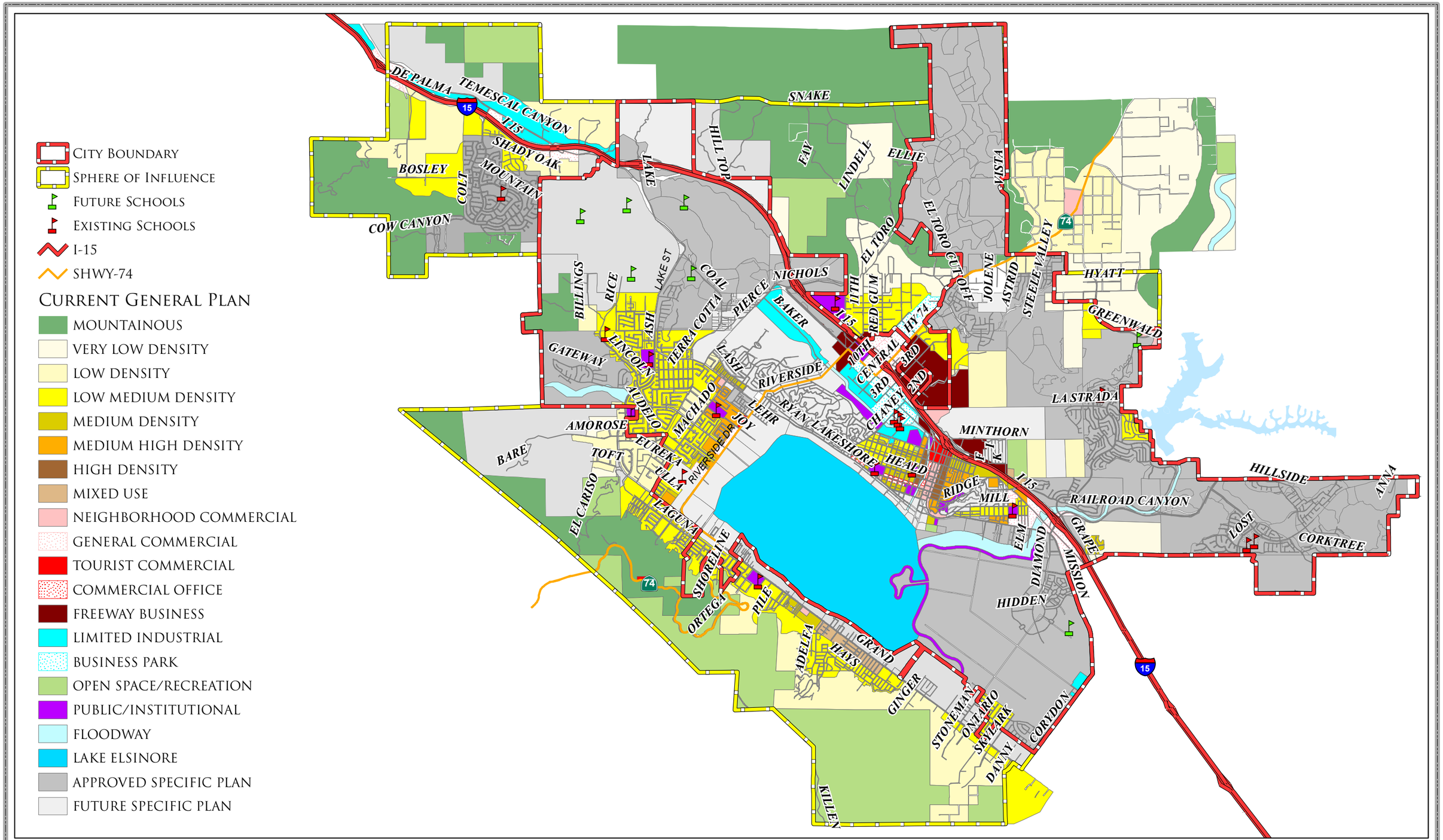

- City Boundary
- Sphere of Influence
- Future Schools
- Existing Schools
- I-15
- SHWY-74

Current General Plan

- Mountainous
- Very Low Density
- Low Density
- Low Medium Density
- Medium Density
- Medium High Density
- High Density
- Mixed Use
- Neighborhood Commercial
- General Commercial
- Tourist Commercial
- Commercial Office
- Freeway Business
- Limited Industrial
- Business Park
- Open Space/Recreation
- Public/Institutional
- Floodway
- Lake Elsinore
- Approved Specific Plan
- Future Specific Plan

Sources: City of Lake Elsinore, County of Riverside

City of Lake Elsinore — Dream Extreme

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City of Lake Elsinore
No Project Alternative/Existing General Plan
Figure 5.0-1

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Table 5.0-2, Low Density Alternative Land Uses

LAND USE DESIGNATION	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL LAND AREA
Business Professional	157.73	0.36%
Commercial Mixed Use	161.13	0.37%
Floodway	800.29	1.83%
General Commercial	1,018.82	2.33%
High Density Residential	221.49	0.51%
Hillside Residential	10,156.58	23.20%
Limited Industrial	596.21	1.36%
Low Density Residential	2,124.23	4.85%
Low-Medium Residential	10,883.54	24.86%
Medium Density Residential	612.66	1.40%
Neighborhood Commercial	38.99	0.09%
Open Space	10,453.91	23.88%
Public/Institutional	401.51	0.92%
Recreational	3,378.26	7.72%
Residential Mixed Use	287.41	0.66%
Tourist Commercial	177.57	0.41%
Interstate 15/SR-74/Roads	2,302.2	5.26%
Total	**43,772.5**[a]	**100%**

[a] The total acreage within City Limits (24,954.8 acres) and the total acreage with the addition of the Sphere of Influence areas (43,772.5 acres) are approximate net acreages. These figures do not include the Lake acreage (2,792 acres).

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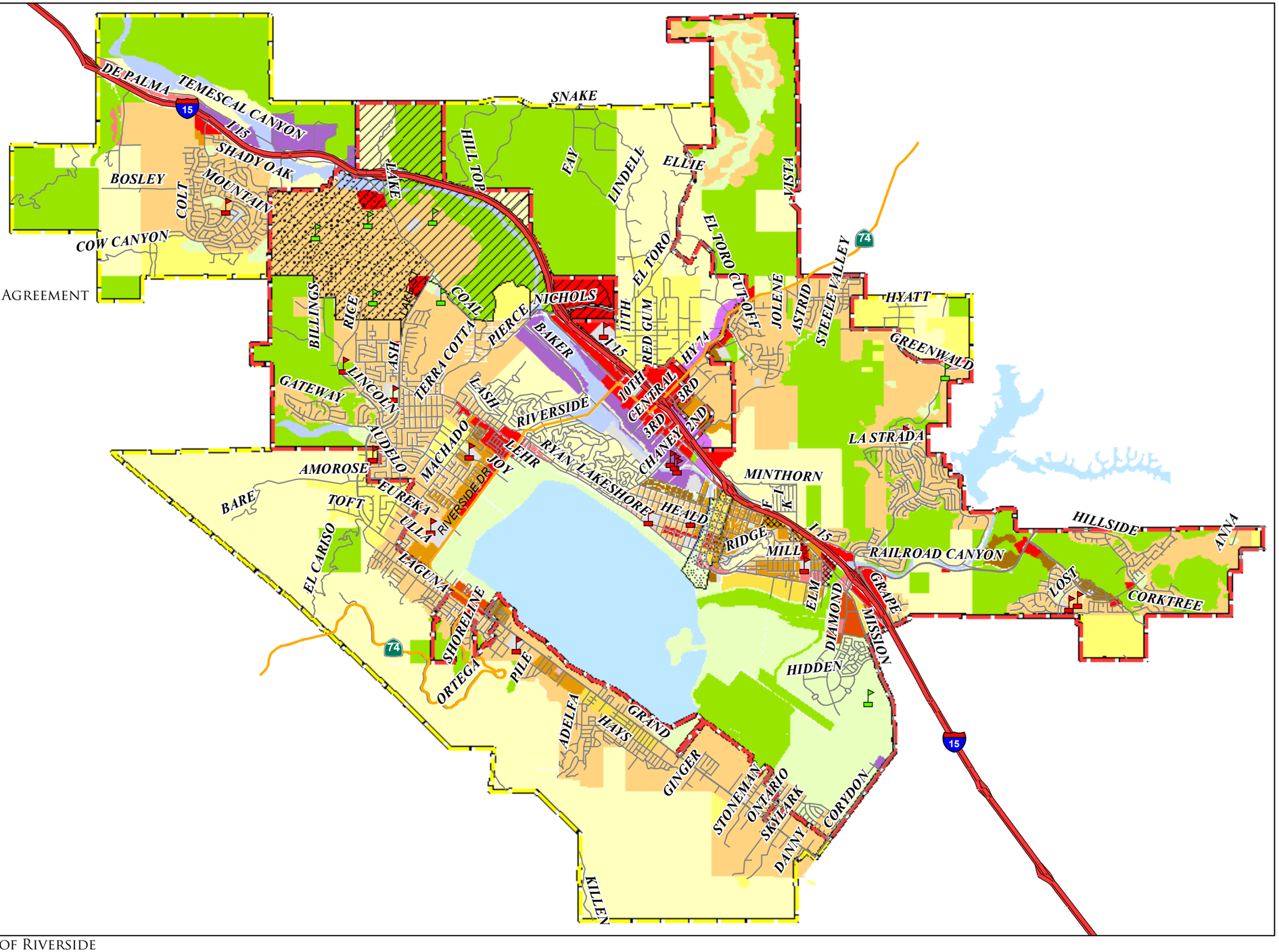
- Future Schools
- Existing Schools
- I-15
- SHWY-74
- Property Subject to Development Agreement
- City Boundary
- Sphere of Influence
- Extractive Overlay
- Auto Mall Overlay
- Main Street Overlay
- FLOODWAY
- BUSINESS PROFESSIONAL
- LIMITED INDUSTRIAL
- FREEWAY BUSINESS
- NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL
- TOURIST COMMERCIAL
- GENERAL COMMERCIAL
- COMMERCIAL MIXED USE
- RESIDENTIAL MIXED USE
- HILLSIDE RESIDENTIAL
- LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- LOW-MEDIUM RESIDENTIAL
- MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- RECREATION
- OPEN SPACE
- MSHCP CONSERVATION AREA
- PUBLIC/INSTITUTIONAL



Sources: City of Lake Elsinore, County of Riverside

City of Lake Elsinore — Dream Extreme

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0 1.25 2.5 Miles

City of Lake Elsinore
Alternative 1 - Low Density Alternative Land Use Plan
Figure 5.0-2

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5.4.3 HIGH DENSITY ALTERNATIVE

The High Density Alternative allows for a buildout that reflects the high end of the ranges of permitted density/intensity of use per acre in each land use designation described in **Section 2.3.3.** This alternative is different from the Proposed Land Use Plan in that the densities for land use designations are higher and would allow a larger number of dwelling units for those areas designated residential, including hillside, low, low-medium, medium, high, residential mixed use, and commercial mixed use. The High Density Alternative includes commercial, industrial, and other non-residential uses. (See **Table 5.0-3, High Density Alternative Land Uses**.) Under the High Density Alternative, there would be approximately 99,559 dwelling units and a population of 296,703 people at buildout.

The High Density Alternative includes various changes to the land use map as proposed for the GPU. **Figure 5.0-3, Alternative 2 – High Density Alternative Land Use Plan,** shows the differences, which are located in the following Districts: North Central Sphere, East Lake, Country Club Heights, Historic, Riverview, Lake Elsinore Hills, and Lake Edge. The difference in the North Central Sphere is minor and is located in the 3rd Street Annexation area. The High Density Alternative designates the southernmost corner as low-medium residential instead of hillside residential. The East Lake District includes more recreation in the floodplain than would be permitted under the Proposed Land Use Plan. The Proposed Land Use designates most of the East Lake floodplain as low-medium density residential. In the Country Club Heights District, the High Density Alternative proposes medium-density residential for the majority of the District. The Proposed Land Use Plan, however, intersperses low- and some low-medium density residential throughout the Country Club Heights District. The Historic District is shown on High Density Alternative maps with increased low-medium residential designations at the northern edge of the District. This same part of the Historic District, under the proposed land use, designates the area as high-density residential. In the Riverview District, the High Density Alternative proposes more commercial mixed use and recreation use in the southwestern part of the District than what is proposed in the Proposed Land Use Plan. The High Density Alternative proposes the large area in Lake Elsinore Hills, which is designated as hillside residential in the Proposed Land Use Plan as medium-density residential. For the Lake Edge District, the High Density Alternative proposes more residential mixed use than the Proposed Land Use Plan, which proposes recreation for the District.

Table 5.0-3, High Density Alternative Land Uses

LAND USE DESIGNATION	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL LAND AREA
Business Professional	207.10	0.47%
Commercial Mixed Use	221.72	0.51%
Floodway	784.80	1.79%
General Commercial	1,221.47	2.79%
High Density Residential	221.47	0.51%
Hillside Residential	8,533.64	19.50%
Limited Industrial	601.09	1.37%
Low Density Residential	2,240.84	5.12%
Low-Medium Residential	12,147.53	27.75%
Medium Density Residential	1,896.88	4.33%
Neighborhood Commercial	39.80	0.09%
Open Space	10,939.73	24.99%
Public/Institutional	398.92	0.91%
Recreational	2,267.84	5.18%
Residential Mixed Use	416.18	0.95%
Tourist Commercial	170.99	0.39%
Interstate 15/SR-74/Roads	1,462.5	3.34%
Total	**43,772.5**[a]	**100.0%**

[a] The total acreage within City Limits (24,954.8 acres) and the total acreage with the addition of the Sphere of Influence areas (43,772.5 acres) are approximate net acreages. These figures do not include the Lake acreage (2,792 acres).

- Future Schools
- Existing Schools
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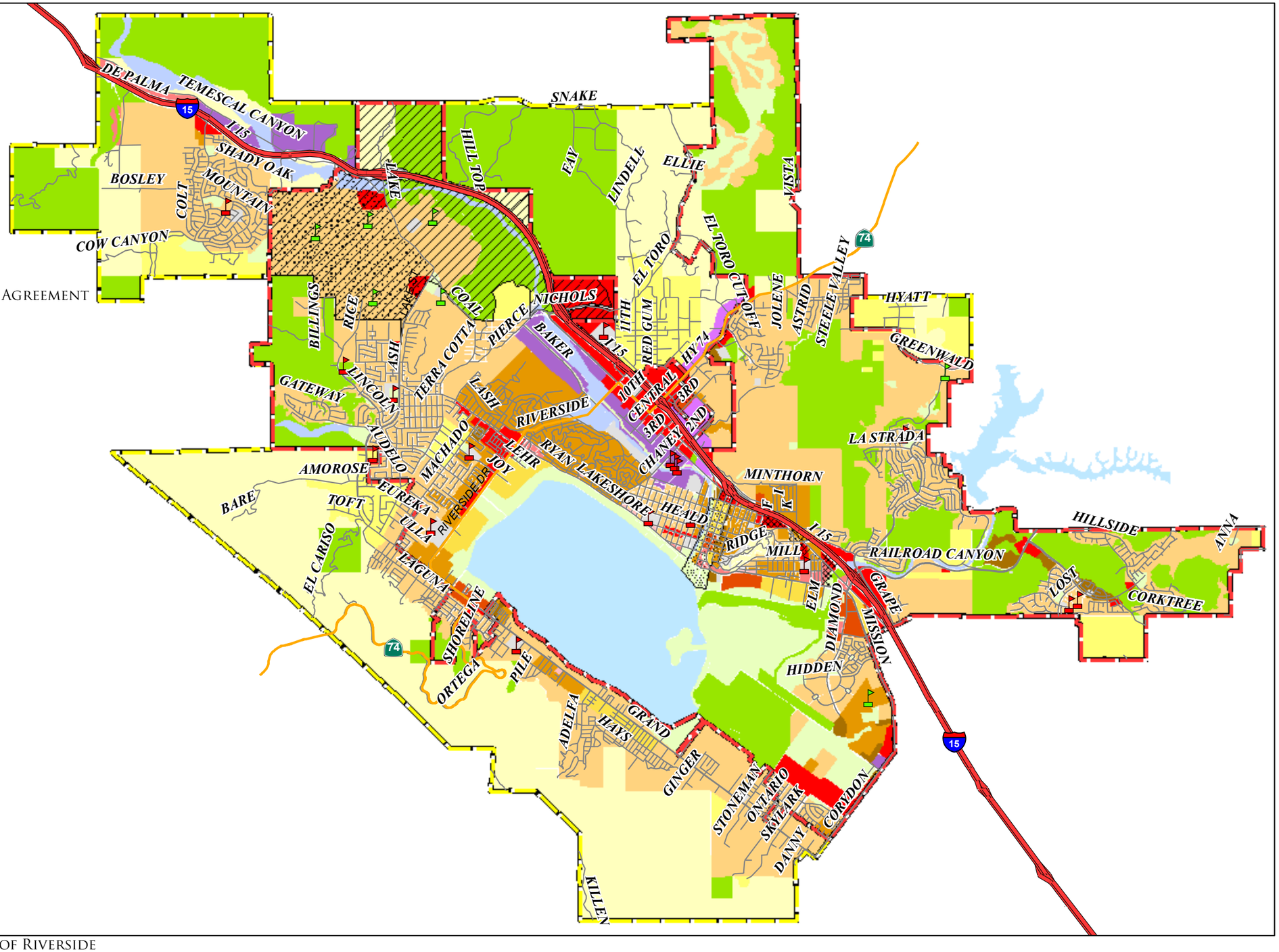
- TOURIST COMMERCIAL
- GENERAL COMMERCIAL
- COMMERCIAL MIXED USE
- RESIDENTIAL MIXED USE
- HILLSIDE RESIDENTIAL
- LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- LOW-MEDIUM RESIDENTIAL
- MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- RECREATION
- OPEN SPACE
- MSHCP CONSERVATION AREA
- PUBLIC/INSTITUTIONAL



Sources: City of Lake Elsinore, County of Riverside

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0 1.25 2.5 Miles

City of Lake Elsinore
Alternative 2 - High Density Alternative Land Use Plan
Figure 5.0-3

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5.4.4 COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES

Modifications to the land use designation acreage, total housing units and population from that of the Proposed Land Use Plan would occur with implementation of the Alternatives. Residential density factors were developed for three land use plan alternatives including the Proposed Land Use Plan, the High Density Alternative and the Low Density Alternative. The density factors combined with the acreage of proposed residential land use designations was used to determine the total number of residential units that could be developed within the City and the City's ultimate population capacity. The Proposed Land Use Plan was developed using the mid range of the General Plan residential land use designation density multipliers on a per acre basis multiplied by 3.37 (representing persons per household) residential uses. The High Density and Low Density Alternatives utilized the high and low density values for each designation range in accordance with **Table 2-1** of the proposed General Plan. Further, the High Density Alternative included a density maximum of four dwelling units per acre for the Low Medium Residential designation and 14 dwelling units per acre for the Medium Residential designation. The Low Density Alternative focuses on reducing Low Medium Residential density to two dwelling units per acre but leaving Residential and Commercial Mixed Use and Medium Residential designation densities the same as the Proposed Land Use Plan. This was done to assure affordable housing was achievable under all alternatives. **Table 5.0-4, Alternatives Comparison,** shows a comparison of the total number of dwelling units and the projected population at buildout of each of the alternatives.

Table 5.0-4, Alternatives Comparison

Socio-Economic Variable	Quantity Dwelling Units			
	Proposed Land Use Plan	No Project/ Existing General Plan Alternative[1]	Alternative 1 - Low Density Alternative[2]	Alternative 2 - High Density Alternative[2]
Total Dwelling Units	94,616	103,395	45,099	99,559
Projected Population	318,856	287,400	151,984	335,514

[1] Source: City of Lake Elsinore 1990 General Plan, page III-15

[2] Assumes 3.37 persons per dwelling unit.

5.5 ALTERNATIVES IMPACT SUMMARY

5.5.1 AESTHETICS

NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

Under the No Project Alternative, the City would continue to function under the direction of the existing adopted General Plan policies that regulate aesthetics and scenic resources. Without the GPU, the District Plans would not be approved, and as a result there would be fewer policies and regulations to preserve scenic resources and guide future development. The No Project Alternative would not address impacts from development to views of scenic resources such as the lake and hillsides. This alternative would not include General Plan policies that would include improvements to the visual quality of the City or creation of well-defined public space. Overall, the impact upon aesthetics would be greater than the proposed project due to there being fewer policies to protect scenic resources.

LOW DENSITY ALTERNATIVE

Visual impacts could be less substantial than with the Proposed Land Use Plan due to the reduced level of density proposed by this alternative. However, even within the proposed reduction in density, future development of vacant or underutilized land could impact views from scenic vantage points of the lake and hillsides. Impacts would be slightly less than the proposed project due to the reduced density of development. Development of vacant or underutilized land under this alternative could also result in a potentially significant change to the visual character of the City. Light and glare impacts associated with development of vacant land would also be less than with the proposed GPU. The GPU policies that support improvements to the visual quality of the City would apply under this alternative.

HIGH DENSITY ALTERNATIVE

Visual impacts on aesthetics would be greater under the High Density Alternative than under the Proposed Land Use Plan. This alternative would allow for more development at a higher density, which would likely block more views because of height or proximity to adjacent development. Fewer view corridors would exist between buildings, which would impact views. Development of vacant or underutilized land under this alternative could also result in a significant change to the visual character of the City. Light and glare impacts associated with development of vacant land would be more than the proposed GPU. The GPU policies that support improvements to the visual quality of the City would apply under this alternative.

5.5.2 AIR QUALITY AND GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

The No Project Alternative would permit as much or more development than the Proposed Land Use Plan and would result in increased air quality impacts. The existing general plan buildout population would less than that of the Proposed Land Use Plan, however anticipated growth under the No Project Alternative could still exceed air quality standards, and there would be less General Plan policies to mitigate air quality impacts. Long-term operational emissions resulting from activities associated with future development under the No Project alternative would be more than the proposed project due to the current growth rate that would not be directed and regulated by the GPU. Absent the proposed Climate Action Plan, this alternative would have no strategies and measures that would reduce greenhouse gas emissions to below target levels. The No Project Alternative's contribution to cumulative levels of criteria pollutants and GHG emissions would be potentially significant and unavoidable.

LOW DENSITY ALTERNATIVE

The Low Density Alternative allows less development, which potentially would decrease construction and vehicle emissions. However, while the goals, policies and implementation programs set forth in the proposed GPU will mitigate air quality impacts, it is not possible to assure that they will result in a reduction of emissions impacts based on the current high pollutant concentrations in the region. All future development projects shall conduct a project-level air quality analysis with performance objectives to determine impacts and mitigation. Although air quality impacts of the Low Density Alternative would be less than those of the proposed project, they would continue to be significant and unavoidable. In addition, the proposed Climate Action Plan includes strategies and measures that will enable the City to reduce the potential level of greenhouse gases to below the identified target levels. Since the this alternative will generate a lower level of greenhouse gases than that of the proposed project; the Climate Action Plan would enable the City to more easily meet or exceed the overall service population target of 6.6 MT CO_2e/SP in 2020 and 4.4 MT CO_2e/SP in 2030.

HIGH DENSITY ALTERNATIVE

The High Density Alternative allows for more development than the Proposed Land Use Plan, which would increase construction and vehicle emissions into the air. The policies of the GPU apply under this alternative. However, while the goals, policies and implementation programs set forth in the proposed GPU will mitigate air quality impacts, it is not possible to assure that they will result in a reduction of emissions impacts based on the current high pollutant concentrations in the region. All future development projects shall conduct a project-level air quality analysis with performance objectives to determine impacts and mitigation. However, due to the greater level of development, the High Density Alternative would result in greater impacts on air quality than the proposed project and these impacts would be significant and unavoidable. The proposed Climate Action Plan includes strategies and measures that will

enable the City to reduce the potential level of greenhouse gases to below the identified target levels. Since the this alternative will generate a higher level of greenhouse gases than that of the proposed project; it would be more difficult for the City to meet or exceed the overall service population target of 6.6 MT CO_2e/SP in 2020 and 4.4 MT CO_2e/SP in 2030 through its implementation of the proposed Climate Action Plan. Therefore, although the potential impact related to greenhouse gas emissions may still be less than significant, the level of GHG emissions would be higher under this alternative.

5.5.3 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

The No Project Alternative would result in potentially greater biological impacts than the Proposed Land Use Plan. The proposed GPU has policies that implement the MSHCP, which protect biological resources in the region. Even though the MSHCP would still be implemented under the No Project Alternative, the general plan would not include specific policies regarding implementation of the MSHCP. In addition the proposed project includes open space within and outside of the MSHCP planning area, which would not be included in this alternative, leaving biological resources more vulnerable to disturbance. Project impacts would continue to be analyzed individually regarding biological impacts.

LOW DENSITY ALTERNATIVE

Impacts related to existing site-specific conditions, such as vegetation and wildlife, could be similar to those with the proposed project, depending on whether specific parcels were designated for substantially less density. As those impacts would be largely a function of whether a particular parcel was developed and would be less dependent on the nature of the development, a uniform reduction in permitted density would not in and of itself result in substantially different impacts compared to those anticipated under buildout of the Proposed Land Use Plan. If development on more environmentally sensitive parcels was more highly restricted, this alternative could have less impact than the proposed project on those parcels; however, these impacts would still be potentially significant. Because the City is a permittee under the MSHCP, all development throughout the City and SOI must conform to the regulations and procedures for habitat preservation and mitigation set forth in the MSHCP. Accordingly, each individual project undertaken pursuant to the GPU must take into account the MSHCP's existing conservation areas and mitigation requirements as project design progresses. Environmental review of each individual project must demonstrate conformance with the MSHCP, including goals for the preservation of certain types of habitat. The same policies proposed under the GPU would also apply to this alternative and would minimize these impacts.

HIGH DENSITY ALTERNATIVE

The High Density Alternative would allow increased development on largely undeveloped and vacant land. Implementation of this alternative would result in permanent impacts on the various habitats present throughout the City and SOI as a result of the clearing, grading, and development of previously undisturbed areas or placing new land uses in proximity to existing habitat areas, which in turn would affect plant and wildlife species residing within the area, including special status species. Quantified habitat impacts will be properly identified and considered as part of project-specific environmental analysis that will be required for individual developments proposed pursuant to this GPU. Because the City is a permittee under the MSHCP, all development throughout the City and SOI must conform to the regulations and procedures for habitat preservation and mitigation set forth in the MSHCP. Accordingly, each individual project undertaken pursuant to the GPU must take into account the MSHCP's existing conservation areas and mitigation requirements as project design progresses. Environmental review of each individual project must demonstrate conformance with the MSHCP, including goals for the preservation of certain types of habitat. The same policies proposed under the GPU would also apply to this alternative and would minimize these impacts. However, potential impacts from development in accordance with this alternative would still be potentially significant.

5.5.4 CULTURAL AND PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

Under the No Project Alternative, impacts related to cultural resources would largely be a function of the location and not the nature or density of development. Development projects have the potential to affect archeological and other cultural resources (including those known and unknown) by disturbing earth in which the resources lie. Disturbance of a cultural resource that is considered significant pursuant to state guidelines would be a significant impact. Impacts from future development on cultural resources would continue to be subject to the existing General Plan goals and policies as well as state and county policies such as Senate Bill (SB) 18 that protect cultural and historic resources.

LOW DENSITY ALTERNATIVE

Impacts related to cultural resources would largely be a function of the location and not the nature or density of development; therefore, impacts would be similar to those of the Proposed Land Use Plan. Projects conducted under the Low Density Alternative have the potential to affect cultural resources (including those known and unknown) by disturbing earth in which the resources lie. Disturbance of archeological or other cultural resources that is considered significant pursuant to state guidelines would be a significant impact. The same policies proposed under the GPU would also apply under this alternative. It is the intent of the GPU that development conducted pursuant to the plan will mitigate all significant impacts on cultural resources.

HIGH DENSITY ALTERNATIVE

Impacts related to cultural resources would largely be a function of the location and not the nature or density of development; therefore, impacts would be similar to those of the Proposed Land Use Plan. However, with a higher density, more sites with potential resources could be developed, which would increase the possibility of project specific impacts. Projects conducted under the High Density Alternative have the potential to affect cultural resources (including those known and unknown) by disturbing earth in which the resources lie. Disturbance of archeological and other cultural resources that is considered significant pursuant to state guidelines would be a significant impact. The same policies proposed under the GPU would also apply under this alternative. It is the intent of the GPU that development conducted pursuant to the plan will mitigate all significant impacts on archeological resources.

5.5.5 GEOLOGY AND SOILS, AND MINERAL RESOURCES

NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

Like all of southern California, the City and SOI will continue to be subject to ground shaking resulting from activity on regional faults. Future development permitted by the proposed No Project Alternative may increase the potential for property loss, injury, or death resulting from this ground-shaking hazard. Future development may increase the potential for property loss, injury, or death resulting from expansive and corrosive soils hazards, slope failure hazards, and subsidence hazards. Development would be subject to existing regulations associated with geologic conditions.

Considering geothermal resources are not currently being developed or capable of causing potential hazards to property loss, injury, or death, impacts would be considered less than significant. Since geological resources have already been approved to be phased out in the future and changed to residential and commercial land uses, potential hazards to property loss, injury, or death are not expected to impact people or property under the No Project Alternative.

The policies within the proposed GPU pertaining to mineral resources would not be implemented under the No Project Alternative; although the existing General Plan does include implementation measures that address the compatibility of mineral resource excavation with other land uses. Implementation of the No Project Alternative would still ensure that future development in the City and its SOI would not have any significant adverse impacts on mineral resources nor would future mineral resource extraction have any significant adverse impacts on future development.

LOW DENSITY ALTERNATIVE

Impacts related to existing site-specific conditions, such as geology and soils, could be less than those with the proposed project, depending on whether specific parcels were designated for substantially less development intensity. As those impacts would be largely a function of

whether a particular parcel was developed and would be less dependent on the nature of development, a uniform reduction in permitted intensity would not itself result in substantially different impacts compared to the proposed project.

Future development may increase the potential for property loss, injury, or death resulting from ground shaking, expansive and corrosive soils hazards, slope failure hazards, and subsidence hazards. Considering geothermal resources are not currently being developed or capable of causing potential hazards to property loss, injury, or death, impacts would be considered less than significant. Geological resources have already been approved as phased out in the future and will be changed to residential and commercial land uses. Potential hazards to property loss, injury, or death are not expected to impact people or property under the Low Density Alternative. However, the same policies of the GPU that apply to the Proposed Land Use Plan are necessary to mitigate impacts of this alternative to a less-than-significant level.

The policies within the proposed General Plan pertaining to mineral resources which seek to conserve areas identified as containing significant mineral deposits for potential use would still be implemented under the Low Density Alternative. These policies would maintain the availability of mineral resources while continuing to encourage proper reclamation and enhancement of areas impacted by extractive/mining activities for the public's health, safety and welfare. Therefore, implementation of this alternative would also ensure that future development in the City and its SOI would not have any significant adverse impacts on mineral resources nor would future mineral resource extraction have any significant adverse impacts on future development.

HIGH DENSITY ALTERNATIVE

Impacts related to geology and soils could be greater under the High Density Alternative than the Proposed Land Use Plan because of increased density and development. Hillside development would need to take building design and grading precautions to ensure that development is compatible with the topography of the environment and would not contribute to an increase in potential hazards to property loss, injury, or death from landslides. Future development may increase the potential for property loss, injury, or death resulting from ground shaking, expansive and corrosive soils hazards, slope failure hazards, and subsidence hazards. Since geothermal resources are not currently being developed or capable of causing potential hazards to property loss, injury, or death, impacts would be considered less than significant. Since geological resources have already been approved to be phased out in the future and changed to residential and commercial land uses, and potential hazards to property loss, injury, or death are not expected to impact people or property under the High Density Alternative. However, the same policies of the GPU that apply to the Proposed Land Use Plan are necessary to mitigate impacts of this alternative to a less-than-significant level.

Because this alternative proposes a higher level of development than does the proposed project, there is a greater potential for impacts between mineral resource excavation uses and other land uses developed under this alternative. However, the policies within the proposed General Plan

pertaining to mineral resources which seek to conserve areas identified as containing significant mineral deposits for potential use would still be implemented under the Low Density Alternative. These policies would maintain the availability of mineral resources while continuing to encourage proper reclamation and enhancement of areas impacted by extractive/mining activities for the public's health, safety and welfare. Therefore, implementation of this alternative would also ensure that future development in the City and its SOI would not have any significant adverse impacts on mineral resources nor would future mineral resource extraction have any significant adverse impacts on future development.

5.5.6 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

Under the No Project Alternative existing General Plan goals and policies apply to development and impacts associated with hazards and hazardous materials. Impacts would be similar to those of the Proposed Land Use Plan.

LOW DENSITY ALTERNATIVE

The risk of exposure to hazards under the Low Density Alternative may be less than those described for the Proposed Land Use Plan. There may be less potential for hazardous materials exposure with less development. The same goals and policies under the Hazards and Hazardous Materials section of the Public Safety and Welfare chapter of the proposed GPU apply to the Low Density Alternative. These include measures to keep all hazardous materials generators within the City and SOI in compliance with regulations and continue to avoid any public health and safety impacts. With implementation of these policies at the project level, impacts would be mitigated to be less than significant.

Goals and policies under the Wildfire Hazards section of the Public Safety and Welfare chapter of the GPU apply to the Low Density Alternative, and include measures to prevent and be sufficiently prepared for wildfire occurrences in the City and SOI. Therefore, although development will spread into wildfire risk zones, the proper precautions set forth in the GPU will allow potentially significant impacts to be mitigated to a less-than-significant level.

HIGH DENSITY ALTERNATIVE

The risk of exposure to hazards under the High Density Alternative may be greater than those described for the Proposed Land Use Plan. There may be greater potential for hazardous materials exposure with more dense development. The same goals and policies under the Hazards and Hazardous Materials section of the Public Safety and Welfare chapter of the GPU apply to the High Density Alternative. These include measures to keep all hazardous materials generators within the City and SOI in compliance with regulations and continue to avoid any public health and safety impacts. With implementation of these policies at the project level, impacts would be mitigated to be less than significant.

Goals and policies under the Wildfire Hazards section of the Public Safety and Welfare chapter of the GPU apply to the High Density Alternative, and include measures to prevent and be sufficiently prepared for wildfire occurrences in the City and SOI. Therefore, although development will spread into wildfire risk zones, the proper precautions set forth in the GPU will allow potentially significant impacts to be mitigated to a less-than-significant level.

5.5.7 POPULATION AND HOUSING

NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

The No Project Alternative would result in similar though slightly lower impacts than those of the Proposed Land Use Plan. Under the existing General Plan, population would continue to increase, to approximately 287,400 people at buildout, but with no growth management strategy such as that described in the proposed GPU. Population increase is not in and of itself an environmental impact. The result of the increased population would be the need for housing, which would lead to the physical impact of construction; jobs, which would lead to the physical impact of commercial development; and impacts from that development affecting air quality, traffic and noise. There would also be impacts upon parks, public services, and street capacity. In addition, under this alternative, existing land uses would remain until land use changes would occur through voluntary means and through private redevelopment efforts; therefore, the No Project Alternative would not result in the displacement of a substantial number of people or existing homes.

LOW DENSITY ALTERNATIVE

Population and housing would not increase as much under the Low Density Alternative as it would under the Proposed Land Use Plan. This alternative allows for the development of up to 45,099 dwelling units with a projected population of 135,159; this is 49,607 fewer dwelling units than the Proposed Land Use Plan, with a projected population that would have 166,872 fewer people than the Proposed Land Use Plan. Although this alternative would result in an increase in population and in housing the impact of that development would be substantially less than the Proposed Land Use Plan. The growth management strategy of the General Plan would still apply under this alternative. Population increase is not in and of itself an environmental impact. The result of the increased population would be the need for housing, which would lead to the physical impact of construction; jobs, which would lead to the physical impact of commercial development; and impacts from that development affecting air quality, traffic and noise. There would also be impacts upon parks, public services, and street capacity. As discussed in previous sections of the PEIR, with the exception of air quality and noise, impacts associated with the Proposed Land Use Plan in these areas would be mitigated to less than significant levels by the GPU goals and policies and the mitigation measures set forth in this PEIR, which would also apply to the Low Density Alternative.

HIGH DENSITY ALTERNATIVE

The High Density Alternative would result in a greater increase in development and population than under the Proposed Land Use Plan. This alternative allows for the development of 99,559 units with a projected population of 335,514; this is 4,943 more dwelling units and 16,658 more people than the Proposed Land Use Plan. The growth management strategy of the General Plan would still apply under this alternative. Population increase is not in and of itself an environmental impact. The result of the increased population would be the need for housing, which would lead to the physical impact of construction; jobs, which would lead to the physical impact of commercial development; and impacts from that development affecting air quality, traffic and noise. There would also be impacts upon parks, public services, and street capacity. These impacts would be slightly greater under this alternative than under the proposed project. With the exception of air quality and noise, impacts associated with the Proposed Land Use Plan in these areas would be mitigated to less than significant levels by the GPU goals and policies and the mitigation measures set forth in this PEIR, which apply to the High Density Alternative and are discussed in previous sections.

5.5.8 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

The No Project Alternative would increase offsite runoff due to increased surface coverage by pavements and structures, and the increase could be greater due to unregulated growth in the City. This alternative could also result in the degradation of surface runoff quality due to increased levels of pollutants from additional development. Similar to the Proposed Land Use Plan, new development would also result in increased amounts of impervious surface, reducing the ability for stormwater to percolate and recharge the groundwater basin. Development consistent with the No Project Alternative could result in increased non–point source and point source contamination from common urban sources, construction activity, and vehicle use. In general, increased development and population growth in the City and SOI may be expected to result in increased generation of urban water contaminants. In addition to increased sediment related to construction activities, development of the City could increase other types of non–point source pollution. Overall, hydrology and water quality impacts would be greater than for the Proposed Land Use Plan. Existing General Plan policies as well as City regulations and ordinances apply to water quality and hydrology under the No Project Alternative.

LOW DENSITY ALTERNATIVE

Impacts related to potential contamination of surface waters due to point-source pollution could be somewhat less than with the project due to the lesser level of development resulting from this alternative; however, actual effects would depend on the nature of the development approved. Development on currently vacant land as well as increased development on hillsides would potentially result in altered drainage patterns. Because of the nature of the topography of the City there is a potential for increased erosion due to altered drainage patterns through

development of these areas. Therefore, implementation of the Low Density Alternative would result in less but potentially significant water quality, drainage pattern, and erosion impacts. The same GPU goals and policies apply with this alternative and would mitigate any impacts to a less-than-significant level.

HIGH DENSITY ALTERNATIVE

The High Density Alternative would increase the amount of impervious surfaces and sources of water quality pollution more than the Proposed Land Use Plan because of greater density and development. This alternative allows for a greater amount of hillside development increasing the potential for erosion due to altered drainage patterns on steep topography. Therefore, implementation of the High Density Alternative would result in a higher level of potentially significant impacts on water quality, drainage patterns, and erosion. The GPU goals and policies apply under the High Density Alternative, which would mitigate any impacts to a less-than-significant level.

5.5.9 LAND USE AND PLANNING (INCLUDING AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES)

NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

Under the No Project Alternative the City would continue to function under the direction of the existing ordinances and in accordance with the land use designations of the existing General Plan. Additional housing would be constructed in accordance with the existing General Plan. As a result, potential impacts on land use may occur in terms of incompatible land uses. However, as with the proposed GPU, with implementation of the goals and policies of the existing General Plan land use element it is not anticipated that significant land use incompatibility issues would occur.

The No Project Alternative would have comparable impacts on those that would result from the Proposed Land Use Plan, which does not include policies that address agricultural resources because of the limited amount of agricultural land in the City. Therefore, this alternative would not result in any impacts on agriculture and farmland.

LOW DENSITY ALTERNATIVE

At its maximum, the Low Density Alternative allows for up to 18 dwelling units per acre. This alternative includes the low end of the ranges of dwelling units per acre in each land use designation. The Low Density Alternative differs from the Proposed Land Use Plan because the residential land use densities are lower than the mid-range densities than the Proposed Land Use Plan. As a result there would be substantially less housing units than that proposed by the Proposed Land Use Plan. Overall, the community character of the area would not significantly change with the implementation of the Low Density Alternative Land Use Plan, but rather would be enhanced, updated, and improved. Established communities will not be divided or changed significantly in a negative way with the implementation of the Low Density

Alternative. The potential impacts resulting from incompatibility of Low Density Alternative land use designations would be mitigated to a less-than-significant level with implementation of relevant goals and policies. Land use incompatibility impacts related to proximity of residential uses and motocross facilities to the relocated airport would still occur under this alternative.

Implementation of this alternative would not avoid impacts of the GPU and Proposed Land Use Plan identified in Section 3.1.6 of this PEIR Land Uses and land use distribution would be similar to the Proposed Land Use Plan, and population decrease would not be substantial enough to avoid the need for implementation of GPU goals and policies related to Growth Management, Community Form, Community Character, and Public Safety and Welfare at the individual project level.

The Low Density Alternative would result in impacts comparable to those that would result from the Proposed Land Use Plan, which does not include policies that address agricultural resource because of the limited amount of agricultural land in the City. Although this alternative calls for less development than the Proposed Land Use Plan, due to the small percentage of land currently dedicated to agriculture the conversion of this land will result in a less-than-significant impact.

HIGH DENSITY ALTERNATIVE

The High Density Alternative allows for up to 35 dwelling units per acre, increased hillside development, and increased residential development. This alternative would allow for a substantially greater number of units to be built throughout the City, and the projected population is almost double that projected from buildout of the Proposed Land Use Plan. The High Density Alternative assumes that the majority of proposed land uses would be consistent with the GPU land use designations with the exception of the differences outlined in Section 5.4.3, above. Overall, the community character of the area may change with the implementation of the High Density Alternative. The risk of established communities being divided or changed significantly in a negative way is also higher with the implementation of this alternative considering that a substantial increase in the intensity of residential development could occur in some areas where this use would be incompatible with the existing character of the area. As a result implementation of the High Density Alternative could result in significant land use compatibility impacts not identified for the Proposed Land Use Plan.

The High Density Alternative would result in impacts comparable to those that would result from the Proposed Land Use Plan, which does not include policies that address agricultural resource because of the limited amount of agricultural land in the City. Although this alternative calls for more development than the Proposed Land Use Plan, due to the small percentage of land currently dedicated to agriculture the conversion of this land will result in a less-than-significant impact under this alternative.

5.5.10 NOISE

NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

Under the No Project Alternative, existing land uses would remain in effect. Noise related to vehicle traffic would continue to contribute most significantly to the local noise environment. Increased development has the potential to result in temporary construction noise received by nearby residents, schools, commercial areas, and other receptors that could exceed acceptable levels set forth in the Zoning Code. The generation of noise levels exceeding relevant standards would be considered a significant impact.

An increased traffic volume throughout the local and regional circulation system as a result of increased development has the potential to generate noise levels along roadway corridors that would exceed standards set forth in the Zoning Code (including the Land Use Noise Compatibility Matrix and the Interior/Exterior Noise Standards). The corridors of I-15, SR-74, and Railroad Canyon Road are particularly sensitive to additional traffic noise due to the substantial noise levels currently generated along these routes. Generation of traffic volumes that would cause noise levels exceeding relevant standards would be considered a significant impact. However, the new noise sources would be controlled through existing regulations, and noise impacts would otherwise be mitigated to meet specific threshold requirements.

LOW DENSITY ALTERNATIVE

Development under the Low Density Alternative would occur at a density lower than that assumed for the Proposed Land Use Plan. Less residential development would occur and as a result a smaller portion of residents would be exposed to traffic noise impacts. However, this alternative would still create potentially significant impacts from construction noise and traffic noise. The same policies as those in the proposed General Plan would apply under this alternative, requiring that new noise sources be controlled and noise impacts otherwise mitigated to meet specific threshold requirements. Overall, noise impacts of the Low Density Alternative would be slightly less than for the Proposed Land Use Plan. In accordance with the goals, policies and implementation programs of the proposed GPU, projects will be required to demonstrate their compliance with the relevant noise standards, but where projects do not comply; specific mitigation measures will be required. Due to the programmatic nature of noise analysis on this project, such impacts and mitigation measures cannot be identified at this time.

HIGH DENSITY ALTERNATIVE

The High Density Alternative would allow for a greater amount of density than that assumed for the Proposed Land Use Plan. Increased development has the potential to result in temporary construction noise received by nearby residents, schools, commercial areas, and other receptors that could exceed acceptable levels set forth in the Zoning Code. The generation of noise levels exceeding relevant standards would be considered a significant impact.

An increased traffic volume throughout the local and regional circulation system as a result of increased development has the potential to generate noise levels along roadway corridors that would exceed standards set forth in the Zoning Code (including the Land Use Noise Compatibility Matrix and the Interior/Exterior Noise Standards). The corridors of I-15, SR-74, and Railroad Canyon Road are particularly sensitive to additional traffic noise due to the substantial noise levels currently generated along these routes. Generation of traffic volumes that would cause noise levels exceeding relevant standards would be considered a significant impact. Overall, noise impacts of the High Density Alternative would be greater than for the Proposed Land Use Plan. The same policies as the GPU would apply under this alternative, requiring that new noise sources be controlled and noise impacts otherwise mitigated meet specific threshold requirements. In accordance with the goals, policies and implementation programs of the proposed GPU, projects will be required to demonstrate their compliance with the relevant noise standards, but where projects do not comply; specific mitigation measures will be required. Due to the programmatic nature of noise analysis on this project, such impacts and mitigation measures cannot be identified at this time.

5.5.11 PUBLIC SERVICES, PARKS AND RECREATION, AND UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

Under the No Project Alternative, existing General Plan policies would apply and development would continue to increase, putting additional demand on public services, parks and recreation, and utilities and service systems. There may be a slightly lower demand than for the Proposed Land Use Plan with this alternative, considering the projected population buildout is lower than that projected for the proposed project.

LOW DENSITY ALTERNATIVE

Demand for public services, parks and recreation, and utilities and service systems under the Low Density Alternative would be less than for the Proposed Land Use Plan due to the reduced amount of development proposed by this Alternative. Demand for police and fire protection, wastewater services, solid waste, gas and electric utilities, schools, and library facilities would increase, but less than for the Proposed Land Use Plan. Considering the need for facilities would increase from existing conditions, with implementation of the Low Density Alternative, the same goals and policies as the Proposed Land Use Plan would be required to mitigate impacts on public services and utilities to a less-than-significant level.

HIGH DENSITY ALTERNATIVE

The High Density Alternative would allow for a greater amount of development, creating a greater demand for public services, parks and recreation, and utilities and service systems. Demand would increase for police and fire protection, wastewater services, solid waste, gas and

electric utilities, schools, and library facilities. Considering the need for facilities would increase from existing conditions, with implementation of the High Density Alternative, the same goals and policies as the Proposed Land Use Plan would be required to mitigate impacts on public services and utilities to less-than-significant levels.

5.5.12 TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION

NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

Buildout of the City in accordance with the existing General Plan would result in greater impacts on traffic compared with the Proposed Land Use Plan. As shown in **Table 5.0-4**, the existing General Plan's total number of housing units at buildout is higher than the Proposed Land Use Plan. The traffic levels anticipated under the existing General Plan would be higher than the Proposed Land Use Plan. With implementation of the circulation network improvements and policies contained in the existing General Plan Circulation Element, the roadway and intersections within the City would operate at acceptable levels of service at buildout of the existing General Plan. As a result, although the existing General Plan Circulation Element and roadway network differs from that of the Proposed Land Use Plan, both the existing General Plan and proposed GPU include Circulation Elements that when implemented would reduce impacts related to traffic to a less-than-significant level.

LOW DENSITY ALTERNATIVE

This analysis tested the effect that a lower density land use plan, as described under the Low Density Alternative, would have on traffic conditions, assuming construction of the recommended infrastructure improvements identified in the GPU.

The Traffic Study performed by Urban Crossroads in 2006 and updated in 2007 (Urban Crossroads 2006) and attached as Appendix D of this PEIR summarizes peak hour intersection LOS projected under buildout conditions resulting from implementing this alternative. Intersections that were projected to experience deficient traffic operations without improvements in the Proposed Land Use Plan are also deficient in the Low Density Alternative operations analysis. All intersections are anticipated to operate at acceptable levels of service with implementation of improvements included in the Circulation Element.

Traffic signal warrant analysis has been conducted for the unsignalized intersections under Low Density Alternative conditions. The same intersections that warrant traffic signals in the Proposed Land Use Plan also warrant a traffic signal under this alternative, except for the intersection of Cambern Avenue at 3rd Street. The intersection of Cambern at 3rd Street will operate at LOS "F" during PM peak hour under the Low Density Alternative. Although it will not warrant a traffic signal, the traffic signal may be installed per the City's request or based on the environmental concerns.

The General Plan roadway lane configurations have been incorporated into the intersection improvements analysis. All study area intersections are projected to operate at acceptable levels of service during peak hours with improvements that are consistent with the proposed roadway system.

The recommended intersection improvements at most of the intersections are expected to be constructed within the standard roadway cross-sections. Additional right of way/roadway width may be required at the following locations:

- Lakeshore Drive (NS) at Riverside Drive (EW)—East/West direction
- Collier Avenue (NS) at Central Avenue (EW)—North/South and East/West direction
- Riverside Street (NS) at State Route 74 (EW)—North/South and East/West direction
- Cambern Avenue (NS) at State Route 74 (EW)—North/South and East/West direction
- Summerhill Drive/Grape Street (NS) at Railroad Canyon Road—North/South and East/West direction

In 2007 updated land use data from the latest Low Density Alternative was used by Urban Crossroads to prepare an updated trip generation evaluation. This analysis is included in Appendix D of this document. The revisions to the Low Density Alternative would result in a decrease of approximately 283,410 daily trips. Compared to the previously published trip generation for the planning area, this is a decrease of approximately 15.2%. The roadway system presented in the previously published traffic study report will be adequate with respect to the updated land use data.

HIGH DENSITY ALTERNATIVE

The effect that a higher density land use plan, as described under the High Density Alternative, would have on traffic conditions (assuming construction of the recommended infrastructure improvements identified in the GPU) is presented below.

The Traffic Study performed by Urban Crossroads in 2006 and updated in 2007 (Urban Crossroads 2006) and attached as Appendix D of this PEIR summarizes peak hour intersection LOS projected under buildout conditions resulting from implementing this alternative. Intersections that were projected to experience deficient traffic operations without improvements in the Proposed Land Use Plan are also deficient in the High Density Alternative operations analysis.

In 2007 updated land use data from the latest High Density Alternative was used by Urban Crossroads to prepare an updated trip generation evaluation. This analysis is included in Appendix D to this document. The revisions to the High Density Alternative result in an increase of 726,186 daily trips. As compared to the previous trip generation for the planning area, this is an increase of approximately 45.4%. Accommodating nearly 50% more trips would require widening the entire arterial roadway system by 50%(e.g., 4 lane roads would now

require widening to 9–10 lane roads, while 8 lane roads would require widening to 12 lane roads). Based on the substantial increase in the land use intensity for all types of use (residential and non-residential) and the lack of available right of way in many parts of the City, for a 50% widening of roadways beyond the currently proposed roadway system it is concluded that the impact of this alternative would be significant and unavoidable. Many, if not all, study area roadway intersections would be expected to operate at unacceptable levels of service.

Traffic signal warrant analysis was conducted for the unsignalized intersection under this alternative. The same intersections that warrant traffic signals in the Proposed Land Use Plan scenario also warrant a traffic signal under High Density Alternative conditions.

The recommended intersection improvements at most of the intersections are expected to be constructed within the standard roadway cross-sections. Additional right-of-way/roadway width may be required at the following locations:

- Lakeshore Drive (NS) at Riverside Drive (EW)—East/West direction
- Collier Avenue (NS) at Central Avenue (EW)—North/South and East/West direction
- Riverside Street (NS) at State Route 74 (EW)—North/South and East/West direction
- Cambern Avenue (NS) at State Route 74 (EW)—North/South and East/West direction
- Summerhill Drive/Grape Street (NS) at Railroad Canyon Road—North/South and East/West direction

5.6 ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

Section 15126.6(e)(2) of the State CEQA Guidelines requires the identification of the environmentally superior alternative. Of the alternatives evaluated above, the No Project (Existing General Plan) Alternative would result in minimal or substantially reduced environmental impacts. The State CEQA Guidelines also require the identification of another environmentally superior alternative if the No Project Alternative is the environmentally superior alternative. Of the remaining alternatives, the Low Density Alternative is considered to be the environmentally superior alternative for the overall project. Of the alternatives evaluated, the Low Density Alternative results in the least substantial impacts. Therefore, it can be considered environmentally superior to any alternative that proposes to change the proposed project.

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