

4.10 Land Use

This section of the EIR addresses existing land uses within the proposed project area and analyzes potential land use conflicts of the proposed project in relation to the physical division of an established community, existing land use plans, and applicable habitat conservation plans (HCPs). The discussion of existing land uses and land use policies and regulations is based on the updated Land Use and Community Form Element.

A summary of the land use impacts identified in Section 4.10.3, Analysis of Project Impacts and Determination of Significance, is provided in the following table.

Land Use Summary of Impacts

Issue Number	Issue Topic	Project Direct Impact	Project Cumulative Impact	Impact After Mitigation
1	Physical Division of an Established Community	Less than Significant	Less than Significant	Less than Significant
2	Conflicts with Land Use Plans, Policies, and Regulations	Less than Significant	Less than Significant	Less than Significant
3	Conflicts with HCPs or NCCPs	Less than Significant	Less than Significant	Less than Significant

4.10.1 Existing Conditions

4.10.1.1 Existing Land Use Designations

Table 4.10-1, Existing and Proposed Land Use Designations, lists the land use designations in the existing General Plan, compared to the land use designations in the General Plan Update. Existing land use designations include residential land uses that range from low density rural to high-density urban, several types of commercial and industrial land uses with varying development intensity, office, public land uses, and specific planning areas. The distribution of these land uses within the General Plan Update boundary is described below.

4.10.1.2 Existing Land Uses

This section provides a brief discussion of growth trends and regional land use within the General Plan Update boundary. Population growth is discussed in greater detail in Section 4.12, Population and Housing.

Growth Trends

According to the U.S. Census, the City of Escondido's population in 2010 was 143,911, which is an increase from 108,635 in 1990 and 133,559 in 2000. Between 2000 and 2010, the City's population increased by approximately eight percent. During the same period, the population within the San Diego region increased by 10 percent. The City's population, as a proportion of the region's total population, decreased slightly from five percent in 2000 to 4.6 percent in 2010.

Table 4.10-1 Existing and Proposed Land Use Designations

Existing General Plan		Proposed General Plan	
Land Use	Allowable Density/Land Uses	Land Use	Allowable Density/Land Uses
Rural I	Minimum lot size of 1 dwelling unit per 4 acres	Rural I	Minimum lot size of 1 dwelling unit per 4 acres
Rural II	Minimum lot size of 1 dwelling unit per 2 acres	Rural II	Minimum lot size of 1 dwelling unit per 2 acres
Estate I	Minimum lot size of 1 dwelling unit per 1 acre	Estate I	Minimum lot size of 1 dwelling unit per 1 acre
Estate II	Up to 2 dwelling units per acre	Estate II	Up to 2 dwelling units per acre
Suburban	Up to 3.3 dwelling units per acre	Suburban	Up to 3.3 dwelling units per acre
Urban I	Up to 5.5 dwelling units per acre	Urban I	Up to 5.5 dwelling units per acre
Urban II	Up to 12.0 dwelling units per acre	Urban II	Up to 12.0 dwelling units per acre
Urban III	Up to 18 dwelling units per acre	Urban III	Up to 18 dwelling units per acre
Urban IV	Up to 24 dwelling units per acre	Urban IV	Up to 24 dwelling units per acre
--	--	Urban V	Up to 45 dwelling units per acre
Planned Neighborhood Commercial	Convenience commercial uses that provide retail goods and services to residents in the immediate vicinity	Planned Neighborhood Commercial	Small scale limited service uses
Planned Commercial	Allows a variety of commercial activities within a self contained, planned commercial center	Planned Commercial	Allows a variety of commercial activities within a unified planned commercial center
General Commercial	Characterized by a broad range of retail and service activities	General Commercial	Characterized by a broad range of retail and service activities
Office	Office complexes and related and support office uses	General Office	Administrative and professional offices with supportive commercial uses such as restaurants
		Planned Office	Office and related support office uses in a campus-like setting
General Industrial	Manufacturing, warehouse/distribution, assembling, and wholesaling	General Industrial	Manufacturing, warehouse, distribution, assembling, and wholesaling accommodating a wide range of heavier industrial activities
Light Industrial	Manufacturing, warehouse/distribution, assembling, and wholesaling in a more restrictive setting than the General Industrial land use designation	Light Industrial	Manufacturing, warehousing, distributing, assembling, and wholesaling in a setting more restrictive than the General Industrial land use designation
Industrial Office	Manufacturing, warehouse/distribution, assembling, wholesaling, and support type uses	Industrial Office	Manufacturing, warehouse/distribution, assembling, wholesaling, and support type uses
Public	Large publicly-owned lands, water treatment facilities, and other governmental structures other than schools, where such uses occupy more than two acres.	Public Facilities	Public facilities including, government facilities, libraries, community centers, and schools
		Parks and Open Space	Land for public recreational activity and habitat preservation

Table 4.10-1 continued

Existing General Plan		Proposed General Plan	
Land Use	Allowable Density/Land Uses	Land Use	Allowable Density/Land Uses
Specific Planning Areas	Areas which require submittal of specific plans prior to development	Specific Planning Areas	Areas which require submittal of Planned Development or Specific Plans prior to development
--	--	Vertical Mixed Use	Mixed use structures that vertically integrate housing above ground floor commercial, office, other pedestrian-active uses
--	--	Horizontal Mixed Use	Development that horizontally distributes a mix of land uses, which may include residential, commercial, office, and/or buildings that may include vertically integrated land uses

Source: City, 1990 and 2011

Citywide Land Uses

Growth over the past 125 years has transformed the City from a rural agricultural town to a bustling urban and suburban area offering a range of residential and employment opportunities. Development within the General Plan Update boundary is concentrated within the valley floor of Escondido, where Escondido's urbanized core surrounds the downtown area. The urban core and downtown include a variety of land uses including new and established single and multi-family neighborhoods and industrial and commercial developments offering a wide variety of employment opportunities. Western Escondido forms the community's primary employment area, paralleling State Route (SR) 78. Surrounding the City's urbanized core area are many established neighborhoods with vacant or underdeveloped properties available for growth. Around Escondido's perimeter, large areas of open space, such as Daley Ranch, San Dieguito River Valley, and Lake Wohlford, are adjacent to the community's urbanized areas and offer recreational activities with hiking and multi-use trails.

Currently, single and multi-family residential uses represent the dominate land use, occupying 36,145 acres and 71 percent of the General Plan Update planning area. The majority of homes in the City are single family residences (27,474 units) with other residences including apartments and condos (16,469 units) and mobile homes (3,736 units) (City 2011). The growth process has also brought master-planned neighborhoods and infill development; thoroughfares and freeways; major shopping centers; downtown revitalization including a new city hall, a joint police and fire headquarters; a regional medical center; employment centers; a main library; community centers; several neighborhood and community parks; a transit center with rail service; and a regional cultural and performing arts center.

Many current Escondido residents desire to work in the community but commute elsewhere due to insufficient local employment opportunities. Land use studies conducted for the General Plan Update revealed Escondido's low percentage of land area devoted for employment purposes compared with neighboring communities. This results in an 'out migration' of many residents who leave Escondido as part of their daily commuting pattern. As noted above, the City's employment opportunities are currently concentrated in the western area of the City along SR-78, including commercial and industrial centers. Palomar Hospital also offers an employment center in the City. However, several underutilized areas have been identified in the updated General Plan as "Opportunity Areas" that have the potential to accommodate employment growth. General Plan Opportunity Areas include Target Areas and Specific

Planning Areas such as: 1) Interstate 15 (I-15) at Felicita Road, 2) north and south of the Escondido Research and Technology Center (ERTC) Specific Planning Area (SPA #8), and 3) I-15 at El Norte Parkway. Additionally, as described below in the study area descriptions, underutilized vacant land is available in the study areas near existing commercial, office, and industrial land uses.

The existing land uses in each of the City's target areas and SPAs where land use changes are proposed are described below. See Figure 3-3, Study Areas, in Chapter 3, Project Description, for the locations of the 15 study areas described below.

Imperial Oakes SPA #13

The Imperial Oakes SPA #13 consists of the 18-acre Rod McLeod Community Park, visitor service and general retail uses, a church, offices, an RV park, a motel, and single family residences. Residences are generally less than 35 years old. Approximately 115 acres of vacant/underdeveloped land are available within the 163-acre SPA.

SR-78/Broadway Target Area

The SR-78/Broadway Target Area is developed with commercial and industrial land uses, including low intensity general and auto-related retail, restaurants, general and medical offices, and commercial services and supply. Auto dealerships are concentrated at SR-78 and Broadway. This is an established area that is almost completely developed. Approximately 25 acres of vacant/underdeveloped land are available in the 122-acre study area. Most buildings are between 15 to 25 years old. An existing senior housing development is located in the study area and is considered a non-conforming use.

Transit Station Target Area

The Transit Station Target Area is developed with low-intensity industrial and commercial land uses including general and auto-related retail, restaurants, manufacturing, building/landscaping/irrigation supply, and concrete/asphalt production. Similar to the SR-78/Broadway Target Area, this is an established area that is almost completely developed. Approximately 31 acres of 296 gross acres are vacant/underdeveloped in the study area. Most buildings are between 15 to 25 years old.

South Quince Street Target Area

The South Quince Street Target Area is located near the end of the SPRINTER rail line and is developed with multi-family and single family residences, low-intensity general retail, offices, restaurants, and small scale industrial, manufacturing, and supply services. This area is almost completely developed. Approximately 5 acres of the study area's 104 gross acres are vacant/underdeveloped. The industrial area is the oldest in the City. The residential area is also one of the most established in the City. Most buildings are between 15 to 25 years old, but some are as old as 50 years. An existing senior housing development is located in the study area and is considered a non-conforming use.

ERTC North SPA #8

ERTC North SPA #8 is mostly developed with industrial and commercial uses, a San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) power plant, the Palomar Medical Center hospital campus, and a ~~Sprinter~~SPRINTER station. Approximately 56 acres of the study area's 170 gross acres are vacant/underdeveloped. Some established single family homes are located in the northern area. Most buildings are between 15 to 25 years old.

ERTC South SPA #8

ERTC South SPA #8 is partially developed with established single family residences and a small storage facility. The residences range from new to 50 years old, with most units between 15 to 25 years old. Approximately 87 acres of the 121-acre study area are vacant/underdeveloped. This area is bisected by Escondido Creek and contains undulating topography.

I-15/Felicita Road Corporate Office Target Area

The I-15/Felicita Road Corporate Office Target Area is characterized by vacant properties dotted with low intensity medical offices, single family residences, churches, and agricultural uses, including groves and field crops. Approximately 56 acres of the 87 acre study area are vacant/underdeveloped. The target area contains an established neighborhood and residences are generally more than 35 years old.

Promenade Retail Center and Vicinity Target Area

The Promenade Retail Center and Vicinity Target Area is a retail shopping center with several anchor tenants, smaller shops, an auto dealership, a middle school, and multi-family development. This area is mostly developed. Approximately 19 acres of vacant/underdeveloped land are available in the 106-acre study area. The area contains relatively new development and most residences are less than 25 years old.

Nutmeg Street Study Area

The 7-acre Nutmeg Street Study Area is currently undeveloped, although the area south of Nutmeg Street was graded in the past.

Downtown SPA #9

The Downtown SPA #9 has an urban character and is divided into seven districts. It is partially developed and includes a historic, walkable retail and service core around Grand Avenue with suburban-style shopping centers on the western and northern ends. Land uses include retail and commercial developments, multi-family residences, and offices. A historic residential neighborhood borders the downtown on the south with office and retail to the east. Grape Day Park is also located within the SPA. Approximately 45 acres of vacant/underdeveloped land are available within the 457-acre SPA.

East Valley Parkway Target Area

The East Valley Parkway Target Area is a suburban shopping area developed with low intensity general retail, office, restaurants, and small-scale service businesses. Palomar Hospital is a unique feature in this area and is surrounded by medical support offices. Established single and multi-family residences located throughout the planning area are generally more than 30 years old. Approximately 93 acres of vacant/underdeveloped land are available in the 331-acre study area. The East Valley Parkway Area Plan has been adopted for this area.

South Escondido Boulevard/Centre City Parkway Target Area

The South Escondido Boulevard/Centre City Parkway Target Area is a suburban shopping area with single family and mid-range density multi-family housing and small scale commercial services. Convenient commercial development is concentrated along Felicita Road and serves a large surrounding population. This area includes a mix of newer mixed use development and established single family residences that are generally more than 30 years old. Approximately 10 acres are vacant/

underdeveloped within the 112-acre study area. The South Escondido Boulevard Neighborhood Plan has been adopted for this area.

South Escondido Boulevard/Felicita Road Target Area

The South Escondido Boulevard/Felicita Road Target Area is located just south of the downtown area and is developed with mid-range density multi-family residential development, low intensity suburban shopping, general retail, office, restaurants, and small scale services. This area serves as the primary north-south commercial corridor. The area contains established commercial and residential development, including historic single family homes. Most homes are at least 30 years old. A portion of the Old Escondido Historic District is located in this study area. Out of 80 gross acres in the study area, approximately 15 acres are vacant/underdeveloped. The South Escondido Boulevard Neighborhood Plan has been adopted for this area.

Centre City Parkway/Brotherton Road Target Area

The Centre City Parkway/Brotherton Road Target Area is developed with mid-range density mixed use development, low intensity suburban shopping, general retail, office, and small scale services. Homes are set back from Centre City Parkway and Escondido Boulevard. Approximately 24 acres of vacant/underdeveloped land are available within the 55-acre study area. The South Escondido Boulevard Neighborhood Plan has been adopted for this area.

Westfield Shoppingtown Target Area

The Westfield Shoppingtown Target Area consists of a multi-story regional shopping center with several anchor tenants, smaller shops and free-standing up-scale dining establishments. This study area is completely built-out with commercial, restaurant, retail and parking uses and does not contain any vacant land.

Sager Ranch SPA #2

A portion of the Sager Ranch SPA #2 is located within the City limits in the northeastern portion of the planning area, primarily accessed from Valley Center Road. It is currently undeveloped and no SPA has been adopted. This area contains open space, natural vegetation, and steep slopes. The remaining portion of the Sager Ranch SPA #2 is located outside the City's limits and is discussed in Section 4.10.1.5, Sphere of Influence and Remaining Planning Area.

4.10.1.3 Adopted Land Use Plans

Several specific plans and other land use plans have been adopted since the General Plan's last major update in 1990. These plans are described below.

Daley Ranch Master Plan

Daley Ranch is a 3,058-acre conservation area in northern Escondido acquired and managed in perpetuity by the City for the preservation of a biologically unique and diverse habitat area of regional importance, while providing a variety of recreational and educational opportunities and experiences for the enjoyment of the community. The Daley Ranch Master Plan describes anticipated land uses, design and development criteria, and procedures for implementation of the Daley Ranch Conservation Bank Implementation Agreement (Conservation Agreement). The Conservation Agreement is between the City, the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USWFS). This agreement established Daley

Ranch as a conservation area. The City agreed to preserve the majority of the property in perpetuity as an open space and conservation area, setting aside approximately 200 acres for passive park and recreation use.

In return, the wildlife agencies (CDFG and USFWS) agreed that the City could establish Daley Ranch as a conservation bank. The City could sell mitigation credits from the conservation bank to offset impacts from other development projects. The City's management responsibilities defined by the Master Plan include access control measures, trail and road maintenance, enforcement, fuel management for fire prevention, habitat monitoring and reporting, habitat restoration and enhancement, and procedures for monitoring conservation credit transactions.

Downtown Specific Plan (SPA #9)

The adopted Downtown SPA encompasses approximately 475 acres. The SPA is located in central Escondido, generally east of I-15, north of 6th Avenue, south of Mission Avenue and west of Fig Street. The Downtown SPA is divided into seven districts. The SPA includes a historic, walkable retail and service core area, located around Grand Avenue. Suburban-style shopping centers are located on the western and northern sides of the historical core area. A historic residential neighborhood borders the downtown area to the south, with office and retail uses located to the east. The adopted SPA establishes development standards and guidelines and allows up to 3,275 dwelling units.

Eagle Crest Specific Plan (SPA #3)

The Eagle Crest Specific Plan encompasses the area known as Rancho San Pasqual, which includes 872 acres in the eastern portion of the General Plan Update planning area, accessed from Cloverdale Road and Rockwood Road. The Eagle Crest Specific Plan establishes development standards and guidelines for this SPA. The project is a planned community with a mixture of residential land use densities, a golf course and club house. A 32-acre public community park located on the south side of Rockwood Road with hiking trails and a staging area is included as a feature of the SPA. The Specific Plan is currently developed with 580 single family homes.

East Grove Specific Plan (SPA #12)

The area known as Hidden Trails encompasses approximately 500 acres in the eastern portion of the General Plan Update planning area, accessed from Hidden Trails Road. The East Grove Specific Plan establishes development standards and guidelines for the Hidden Trails area. The project is a planned community with a mixture of residential land use densities clustered in the more level portion of the site and surrounded by steeper open space and agricultural areas. The Specific Plan is developed with 291 single family homes and six agricultural homesites (297 total dwelling units).

East Valley Parkway Area Plan

The East Valley Parkway Area Plan was adopted in 2004 and updated in May 2005. The plan boundary includes an approximately two-mile commercial district extending generally along East Valley Parkway from Hickory Avenue to Citrus Avenue. The mission of the Area Plan is to develop and implement a comprehensive strategy for the revitalization of the physical character and economic health of East Valley Parkway businesses and community. The plan supports mixed use development and a planned commercial area. The plan has several purposes, including the following:

- To attract office and professional uses, rehabilitate existing commercial centers, strengthen existing establishments through facade and streetscape improvements, and consolidate access points to improve traffic circulation;
- To develop strategies encouraging older developed properties to upgrade facades, parking areas and landscaping and maintain properties in a well-kept manner according to current Municipal Code requirements; and
- To provide guidelines for residential uses as part of mixed use development.

Harmony Grove Specific Plan (SPA #8)

The adopted Harmony Grove Specific Plan encompasses approximately 476 acres. The Specific Plan is located on the western side of the proposed project area, along Citracado Parkway between Auto Park Way and Avenida del Diablo. The Specific Plan is partially developed and the Specific Plan establishes development standards and guidelines for 201 acres, including employment land uses on lots ranging from one to 40 acres. The remaining properties within the Specific Plan require specific plan approval to establish development standards and guidelines.

Lomas Del Lago Specific Plan (SPA #6)

The Lomas Del Lago Specific Plan was revised in June 1990. It consists of approximately 300 acres in two distinct locations, the first on the west side of I-15 (on both sides of Via Rancho Parkway) and the second at the southeastern corner of Bear Valley Parkway and San Pasqual Road. The Specific Plan is currently built-out with 256 single family units and an 18-hole municipal golf course on the east side of I-15. A total of 178 single family units and a neighborhood shopping center with a park-and-ride facility are located on the west side of I-15.

Mercado Area Plan

The Mercado Area Plan was adopted in December 2001. The area defined as Mercado Escondido comprises 11 acres located along four blocks between Valley Parkway on the north, Pine Street on the east, Fourth Avenue on the south and Quince Street on the west. The Mercado Area is within the Downtown SPA. The purpose of this Area Plan is to identify goals and objectives for the Mercado; provide direction for the design of buildings, signs, landscaping and facilities; and encourage early-California design themes. It also identifies land uses for the Mercado that reflect its Area Plan goals, which include a pedestrian-oriented mixed use environment of restaurants, retail shops, artisan crafts and cultural activities celebrating Escondido's heritage. The Downtown SPA was amended prior to adoption of the Mercado Area Plan to reflect the goals of the plan.

Northeast Gateway Specific Plan (SPA #5)

The Northeast Gateway Specific Plan encompasses approximately 418 acres and is located in the northeastern portion of the General Plan Update planning area, accessed from East Valley Parkway. The specific plan for this area was adopted in March 2004 and revised in May 2007. It establishes lot sizes, development standards and guidelines for the entire area allowing a maximum of 517 dwelling units that may be transferred throughout the site, subject to City approval. The Specific Plan is partially built out and envisions an upscale, large lot single family residential development integrated with parks, trails and open space, and Ryan Community Park serving as a focal point.

Palos Vista Specific Plan (SPA #1)

The Palos Vista Specific Plan encompasses a 980-acre area. The Specific Plan is located in the northwestern portion of the project area at the terminus of Woodland Parkway, north of El Norte Parkway. The Palos Vista Specific Plan is currently developed with 692 single family homes. In the northern portion of the Specific Plan, 39 agricultural estate lots have been graded, with a portion of the units completed. The Palos Vista Specific Plan establishes development standards and guidelines for a mixture of residential land use densities and large open space areas. The Specific Plan is divided into three neighborhood planning areas.

Rancho Vistamonte Specific Plan (SPA #4)

A 133-acre portion of the Valley View SPA #4 is located within the City boundary, accessed from Rockwood Road. The specific plan for this area is the Rancho Vistamonte Specific Plan, which was adopted in May 2001. The Specific Plan is developed with 80 single family homes with 81 acres of the site preserved as open space. The remaining Specific Plan area is located outside of the City limits and is discussed below.

South Escondido Boulevard Neighborhood Plan

The South Escondido Boulevard Neighborhood Plan was adopted in July 1996 and revised in July 2010. The plan area is approximately 2.25 miles in length beginning at 5th Avenue and continuing south to the terminus of Escondido Boulevard at Centre City Parkway and Verda Avenue. The mission statement for the plan is to develop and implement strategies for the South Escondido Boulevard commercial corridor and Centre City Parkway residential area that will provide a wide range of opportunities for improving the physical, social and economic character of the area through ongoing public involvement and participation. The plan establishes neighborhood principles with which residents and business owners are expected to abide in order to promote a healthy neighborhood. The principles include maintaining clean residential appearances, supporting neighborhood businesses, and encouraging a pedestrian-friendly community. The commercial objective of the plan is to revitalize and renew the commercial sector of the neighborhood by strengthening the visual environment and establishing development incentive programs for property owners and businesses. Mixed use development is encouraged. The residential objective is to maximize housing choices and provide opportunities for a balanced mix of housing types through a variety of incentives and programs.

West Mission Avenue Specific Plan

The West Mission Avenue Specific Plan encompasses approximately 19 acres and is bound by SR-78 to the north, Mission Avenue to the south, Quince Street to the east and Rock Springs Road to the west. The goal of the West Mission Specific Plan is to facilitate revitalization efforts within the SPA by identifying appropriate land uses, development standards, and review procedures. The Specific Plan implements existing General Plan policies calling for the City to promote its position as an economic center, improve and develop its regional and sub-regional commercial shopping centers, and work to adaptively reuse existing retail space to a higher and better use.

4.10.1.4 Private Land Use Agreements

In addition to the adopted land use plans for the General Plan Update planning area, two SPAs have been purchased by private entities and dedicated for open space which would preclude future development in these areas.

Bernardo Mountain SPA (Formerly SPA #7)

The 317-acre Bernardo Mountain SPA is located on the northern shore of ~~Lake~~ Hodges Reservoir, west of I-15 and accessed from Via Rancho Parkway. The SPA is vacant and no plan has been adopted or is anticipated. The SPA was purchased by the San Dieguito River Park Joint Powers Authority as open space and integrated into the San Dieguito River Park system. No development is anticipated for the SPA and it is proposed for deletion in the updated General Plan and redesignated as “Public Land / Open Space”.

Montreaux SPA (Formerly SPA #11)

The Montreaux Specific Plan is located on the northern shore of ~~Lake~~ Hodges Reservoir, west of I-15 and accessed from Via Rancho Parkway. The approximately 345-acre SPA is vacant and no plan has been adopted or is anticipated. The SPA was purchased by the County of San Diego for open space and integrated into the regional open space system. No development is anticipated for the SPA and it is proposed for deletion in the updated General Plan and redesignated as “Public Land / Open Space”.

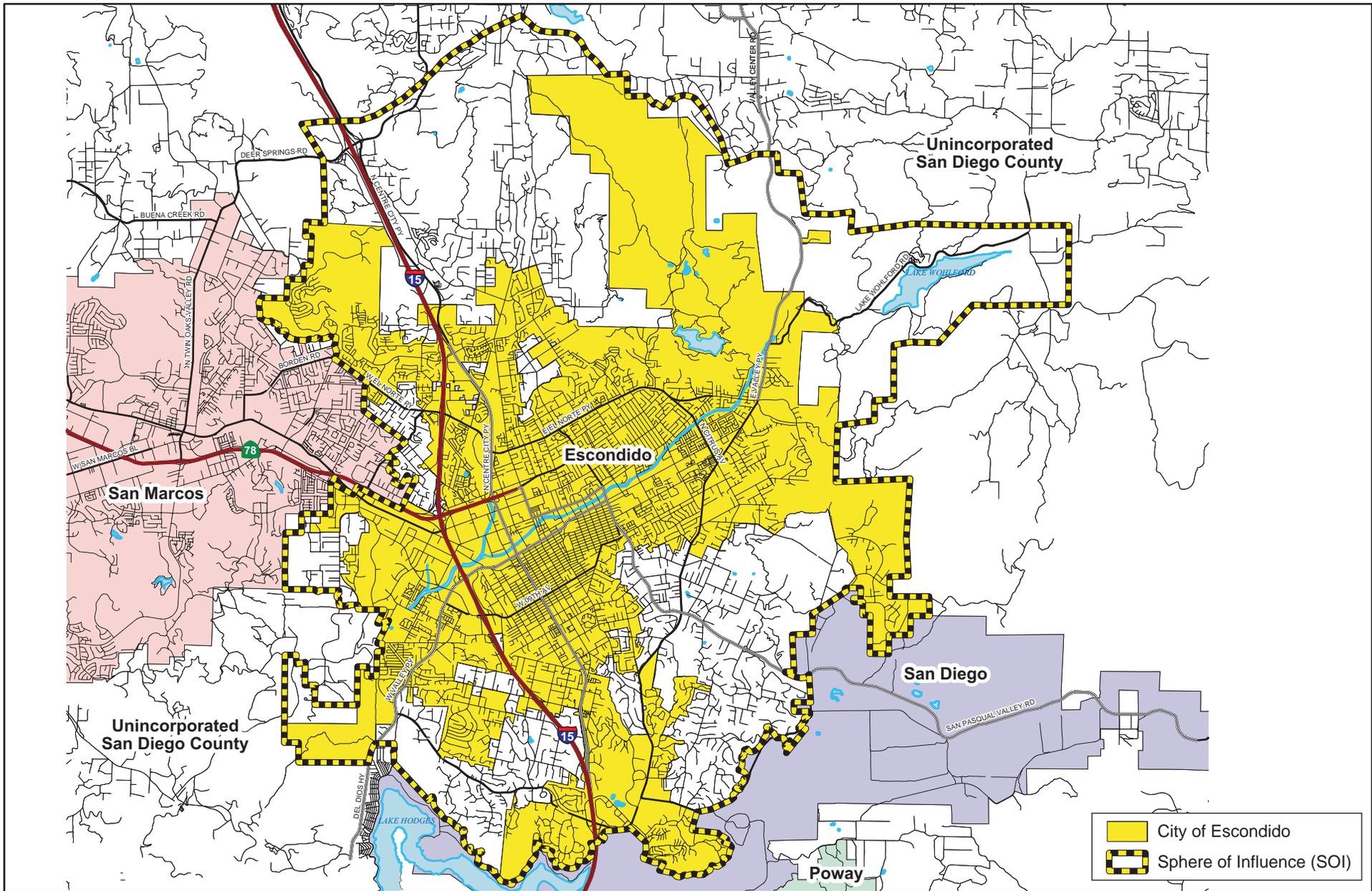
4.10.1.5 Sphere of Influence and Remaining Planning Area

Approximately one-half of the General Plan Update planning area involves territory that is located outside the city’s municipal boundaries and governed by San Diego County. Some of these areas are within the City’s sphere of influence (SOI) and may someday be annexed by the City. An SOI is a planning tool adopted and used by the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) to designate the probable physical future boundaries and service areas for a city or special district. The City’s SOI and planning area boundaries are provided in Figure 4.10-1, City of Escondido Sphere of Influence.

The proposed General Plan Update includes land use designations for the SOI and planning areas outside of the city limits. However, because these areas are not yet under the jurisdiction of the City, there is no direct requirement that the SOI comply with the City’s plans for these areas. The unincorporated areas within the City’s planning area, including its SOI, are located in the San Dieguito, North County Metropolitan (NC Metro) and Valley Center communities. Existing land uses in these communities are described below.

San Dieguito

The San Dieguito community is located outside of the City limits in the southeast portion of the General Plan Update planning area. The San Dieguito area includes the Elfin Forest-Harmony Grove SPA to the southwest of the City. The Elfin Forest-Harmony Grove SPA and surrounding areas within the General Plan Update planning area are sparsely developed with rural residences. The area is characterized by steep slopes and a dark night sky. There are many agricultural uses within the San Dieguito area, particularly the eastern portion near the City, such as orchards and row crop production. The Harmony Grove Village Specific Plan has been adopted for the area east of the City boundary at the intersection of Harmony Grove Road and Country Club Drive. The specific plan proposes a range of residential and mixed use commercial uses. However, the plan has not been implemented and this area is currently undeveloped.



Sources: San Diego LAFCO 2009; SanGIS 2009



CITY OF ESCONDIDO SPHERE OF INFLUENCE
FIGURE 4.10-1

NC Metro

The NC Metro community is located outside of the city limits in the northeast, west, south, and southeastern portions of the General Plan Update planning area. NC Metro includes the community of Hidden Meadows, located to the north of the City within the planning area. Despite its proximity to incorporated cities such as Escondido and major transportation routes such as I-15 and SR-78, rugged terrain and sensitive biological resources make many areas of NC Metro unsuitable for urbanization. The portion of the NC Metro community near Lake Wohlford contains mostly undeveloped land with slopes greater than 50 percent and sensitive biological resources. Low density residential development is found throughout the NC Metro area with large lots ranging from one to ten acres. The NC Metro community does not have significant amounts of commercial and industrial uses because these uses are generally found within the neighboring cities.

An approximately 1,460-acre portion of the Valley View SPA is located outside of the city boundary in the NC Metro community. The SPA is located within the General Plan Update planning area but outside of the SOI. The SPA extends from the eastern City boundary to the eastern planning area boundary. The southern boundary of the site is approximately two miles north of SR-78 and the northern boundary is approximately 1.5 miles south of Lake Wohlford. A specific plan has not been adopted for this area and it is currently undeveloped. This area is characterized by steep slopes and open space that connects to the San Dieguito River Valley Regional Open Space Park. The County General Plan Update (2011) designates this area for rural residential land uses with a density of one dwelling unit per 40 acres.

Valley Center

The Valley Center community is located north of the city limits. Valley Center Road serves as the main connection between the City and Valley Center. Valley Center's residential development pattern consists primarily of low density residential lots located on parcels that are two acres or larger. Commercial land uses are located at the intersection of Valley Center Road and Woods Valley Road, just north of the planning area. Agriculture within Valley Center is an important component to the local and regional economy. However, agricultural operations are concentrated in the northern and western portions of the community, outside of the General Plan Update planning area.

The 160-acre Sager Ranch SPA #2 is located generally between Daley Ranch and Lake Wohlford. This SPA is not within the City's land use jurisdiction. A specific plan has not been adopted for this area and it is currently undeveloped. The County General Plan Update designates this area for rural residential land uses with a density of one dwelling unit per 20 acres. The City Council initiated the annexation process for this SPA area in October 2011 and annexation is pending at time of this EIR document. Future development in the pending annexation area would not exceed the amount currently allowed in the General Plan.

4.10.2 Regulatory Framework

4.10.2.1 State

California Office of Planning and Research General Plan Guidelines

To assist local governments in meeting general plan requirements, the California Office of Planning and Research (OPR) is required to adopt and periodically revise guidelines for the preparation and content of general plans (Government Code Section 65040.2). These are advisory guidelines, not mandated requirements, and serve as a reference tool for cities and counties in the preparation of local general plans. The guidelines include information on the required contents of a general plan, sustainable development and environmental justice, formatting, public participation, and implementation. The most recent version of the OPR General Plan Guidelines was prepared in 2003. A December 2010 update to the 2003 General Plan Guidelines, entitled the *General Plan Guidelines: Complete Streets and the Circulation Element*, provides guidance on how cities and counties can modify the circulation element to plan for a balanced, multimodal transportation network that meets the needs of all users of the streets, roads, and highways for safe and convenient travel in a manner that is suitable to the rural, suburban, or urban context of the general plan.

California Planning and Zoning Law

The legal framework in which California cities and counties exercise local planning and land use functions is provided in the California Planning and Zoning Law (Government Code Sections 65000 through 66499.58). Under state planning law, each city and county must adopt a comprehensive, long-term general plan. State law gives cities and counties wide latitude in how a jurisdiction may create a general plan, but there are fundamental requirements that must be met. These requirements include the inclusion of seven mandatory elements described in the Government Code. Each of the elements must contain text and descriptions setting forth objectives, principles, standards, policies, and plan proposals; diagrams and maps that incorporate data and analysis; and mitigation measures.

Natural Community Conservation Planning Act of 1991

The Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP) Act is designed to conserve natural communities at the ecosystem scale while accommodating compatible land uses. The California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) is the principal state agency implementing the NCCP Program. The Act established a process to allow for comprehensive, regional multi-species planning in a manner that satisfies the requirements of the state and federal ESAs (through a companion regional habitat conservation plan). The NCCP program has provided the framework for the state, local governments, and private interests to plan for the protection of regional biodiversity and ecosystems. NCCPs seek to ensure the long-term conservation of multiple species, while allowing for compatible and appropriate economic activity to proceed.

Senate Bill 375

Senate Bill (SB) 375 was adopted in September 2008. SB-375 requires metropolitan planning organizations to develop a sustainable communities strategy to include in their regional transportation plans for the purposes of reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The purpose of the bill is to align planning for transportation and housing, and it creates specified incentives for the implementation of

the strategy. SB-375 consists of five aspects: 1) creation of regional targets for GHG emissions reduction tied to land use; 2) a requirement that regional planning agencies create a sustainable communities strategy to meet those targets, even if that plan is in conflict with local plans; 3) a requirement that regional transportation funding decisions be consistent with this new plan; 4) a requirement that the Regional Housing Needs Allocation numbers, established by the State Department of Housing and Community Development and allocated by SANDAG, must conform to the sustainable communities strategy; and (5) new CEQA exemptions and streamlining for projects that conform to the sustainable communities strategy (County 2011).

4.10.2.2 Regional/Local

City of Escondido Plans, Programs, Policies, and Regulations

The City of Escondido has numerous policies, programs, codes and ordinances that regulate land use development. In order to simplify the volume and complexity of these regulations, this inventory focuses on policies that affect land use designations and zoning. Policies and regulations that indirectly affect land use planning, such as aesthetics, cultural resources, noise, hazards and hazardous materials, geology and soils, hydrology and water quality, air quality, and utilities and service systems regulations, are included in other sections of Chapter 4 of this EIR.

Specific Plans

Specific plans provide an alternative to the Zoning Ordinance in that they are customized plans that delineate land uses, infrastructure, development standards and criteria, and mitigation measures for specific land areas. The adopted specific plans and area plans within the City are described in Section 4.10.1.3, Adopted Land Use Plans.

Master Plan for Parks, Trails, and Open Space

The Master Plan for Parks, Trails, and Open Space serves as a guide to developing a comprehensive and integrated open space system to achieve quality of life standards set forth in the General Plan. The plan identifies the potential locations of parks, trails, and open spaces, and establishes recommendations for obtaining land for new facilities and protecting existing resources (City 2001).

Zoning Ordinance

The City's Zoning Ordinance, provided in Chapter 33 of the Municipal Code, is the primary way that the City administers the General Plan. The General Plan identifies general land use designations, while the Zoning Ordinance identifies specific uses and development standards within these land use designations. The purpose of Zoning Ordinance is to serve the public health, safety, comfort, convenience and general welfare by:

- (a) Regulating the use of buildings, structures, and land uses as between agriculture, industry, business, residence and other purposes;
- (b) Regulating signs and billboards;
- (c) Regulating the location, height, bulk, number of stories and size of buildings and structures; the size and use of lots, yards, courts and other open spaces; the percentage of a lot which may be occupied by a building or structure; the intensity of land use;

- (d) Establishing requirements for off-street parking and loading;
- (e) Establishing and maintaining building setback lines;
- (f) Creation of civic districts around civic centers, public parks, public buildings or public grounds and establishing related regulations;
- (g) Establishment of general provisions and standards of development with the aim of preserving a wholesome, serviceable and attractive community; and
- (h) Establishing standards for landscaping and irrigation for commercial, industrial and residential development.

The Zoning Ordinance establishes development regulations for specific land uses, identified by zones, as well as overlay areas established in the General Plan, such as open space and floodplain areas. For example, Article 16, Commercial Zones, establishes the permitted land uses and development standards such as setbacks, building height maximum, landscaping, and parking requirements for areas zoned for commercial use. Additionally, some portions of the Zoning Ordinance apply to all areas of the City, regardless of zone, such as Article 55, the Grading and Erosion Control Ordinance. The purpose of this article is to assure that development occurs in a manner which protects the natural and topographic character and identity of the environment, the visual integrity of hillsides and ridgelines, sensitive species and unique geologic/geographic features, and the health, safety, and welfare of the general public by regulating grading on private and public property and providing standards and design criteria implementing best management practices (BMPs) to control stormwater and erosion during all construction activities for all development. Compliance with this ordinance is discussed in Section 4.6, Geology and Soils.

Specific Zoning Ordinances that are related to the land use development process are listed below. Zoning Ordinance sections that pertain to specific environmental issues such as aesthetics, air quality, geology and soils, and hydrology and water quality are included in other sections of Chapter 4 of this EIR.

Article 47, Environmental Quality

Article 47, Environmental Quality, implements the requirements of CEQA by applying the provisions and procedures contained in CEQA to development projects proposed within the City. The ordinance lists the criteria that would exempt a project from CEQA, establishes mitigation and reporting requirements, and establishes criteria that coordinate CEQA requirements with the City's quality of life standards to clarify how impacts identified for a project would affect its CEQA significance determinations. These criteria include air quality screening level thresholds for criteria pollutants, traffic level of service standards, and limits on allowable noise increases.

Article 64, Design Review

Article 64, Design Review, requires design review of new development and modifications to existing development in order to preserve the natural charm, integrity and quality of the built environment in the City. Article 64 also ensures that development is consistent with or exceeds the high quality of projects built in the City. Both the City's Planning Commission and Planning Division staff are responsible for reviewing plans for commercial, industrial, multi-family residential, certain signs, and other projects, both public and private. Collectively, the Planning Commission and Planning Division staff determine if a project is consistent with the citywide design guidelines, as well as design guidelines for applicable SPAs

and overlay districts. The Planning Commission is responsible for reviewing the design elements of projects requiring public hearings while the Planning Division staff reviews administrative projects.

County of San Diego Plans, Programs, Policies, and Regulations

County of San Diego regulations apply only to the portions of the General Plan Update planning area that are under the jurisdiction of the County, including the City's SOI and other unincorporated areas. This section is based on the EIR prepared for the County of San Diego General Plan Update (County 2011).

County of San Diego General Plan

The County of San Diego General Plan was recently updated and adopted on August 3, 2011. The General Plan establishes future growth and development patterns for the unincorporated areas of the county, including the communities of San Dieguito, NC Metro, and Valley Center. The plan focuses population growth in the western areas of the county where infrastructure and services are available. The General Plan Update improved the previous plan by balancing the need to accommodate growth with the needs to control traffic congestion, protect environmental habitat, and ease the strain on essential services such as water supplies and fire protection. The General Plan contains numerous goals and policies aimed at respecting community character, climate change, infrastructure planning and environmental preservation. The General Plan's Land Use Element consists of maps, goals, and policies that guide the future pattern of development for the unincorporated County. The land use framework contains regional categories that broadly define land use designations that describe in greater detail land use types, housing densities, and development intensities. The General Plan Update land use framework includes three regional categories: village, semirural, and rural lands. These categories broadly reflect the different character and land use development goals of the County's developed areas, from lower density residential and agricultural areas, to very low density or undeveloped rural lands. Higher density land use designations are concentrated in the western areas near the incorporated cities, including Escondido.

Community and Subregional Plans

Each planning area in the unincorporated county has a community or subregional plan, including San Dieguito, NC Metro, and Valley Center. Each community plan or subregional plan supplements the County General Plan by focusing on a particular planning area. Community and subregional plans contain information and policies concerning land use, housing, circulation, conservation, public facilities and services, recreation, and community character. Other issues may be addressed depending on the circumstances in a particular community.

San Diego County Multiple Species Conservation Program

The San Diego County Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) is a long-term regional conservation plan designed to establish a connected preserve system that ensures the long-term survival of sensitive plant and animal species and protects the native vegetation found throughout San Diego County. The MSCP addresses the potential impacts of urban growth, natural habitat loss, and species endangerment and creates a plan to mitigate for the potential loss of sensitive species and their habitats. The MSCP covers 582,243 acres over 12 jurisdictions. Individual jurisdictions prepare subarea plans to implement the MSCP within their boundaries. The County has one adopted subarea plan under this program, the South County MSCP Subarea Plan, which was adopted in 1997. This subarea plan covers 252,132 acres in the southwestern portion of the unincorporated area. The County is currently

developing a new ~~subregional~~ plan for North County. A public review draft of the North County MSCP ~~Subarea Plan~~ was released in February 2009. The draft plan covers 63 plant and animal species in a 294,849-acre area in northern San Diego County ranging from Camp Pendleton and the Riverside County line on the north to the community of Ramona on the south (County 2009).

Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans

Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans (ALUCPs) are plans that guide property owners and local jurisdictions in determining what types of proposed new land uses are appropriate around airports. They are intended to protect the safety of people, property and aircraft on the ground and in the air in the vicinity of an airport. ALUCPs are based on a defined area around an airport known as the Airport Influence Area (AIA). ALUCPs include policies that address noise compatibility issues associated with airports and their respective AIAs. The San Diego County Regional Airport Authority adopted an amended ALUCP for the Ramona Airport in 2008, and the McClellan-Palomar Airport in 2010, which are the two public airports closest to the project area.

Multiple Habitat Conservation Program

The Multiple Habitat Conservation Program (MHCP), adopted in March 2003 by SANDAG, is a comprehensive, multiple jurisdictional planning program designed to create, manage, and monitor an ecosystem preserve in northwestern San Diego County. The MHCP preserve system is intended to protect viable populations of native plant and animal species and their habitats in perpetuity, while accommodating continued economic development and quality of life for residents of North County. The MHCP subregion encompasses the seven incorporated cities of northwestern San Diego County (Carlsbad, Encinitas, Escondido, Oceanside, San Marcos, Solana Beach, and Vista). These jurisdictions are required implement their portions of the MHCP plan through citywide “subarea” plans, which describe the specific policies each city will institute for the MHCP. The City of Escondido is the easternmost incorporated city within the MHCP. The City is currently preparing the Escondido Subarea Plan, which includes the incorporated city limits plus approximately 3,000 acres owned by the city in the unincorporated areas near Lake Wohlford, Valley Center Road, and isolated parcels with existing or planned utility improvements.

San Diego Association of Governments Plans and Programs

Regional Transportation Plan

The 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) was adopted by SANDAG on October 28, 2011. At the time of this EIR, the 2050 RTP EIR had been legally challenged by environmental groups. The 2050 RTP maps out a system designed to maximize transit enhancements, integrate biking and walking elements, and promote programs to reduce demand and increase efficiency. The RTP also identifies the plan for investing in local, state and federal transportation facilities in the region over the next 40 years. The SCS integrates land use and housing planning within the transportation plan. The SCS also addresses how the transportation system will be developed in such a way that the region is able to reduce per-capita GHG emissions to state-mandated levels.

Congestion Management Program

State Proposition 111, passed by voters in 1990, established a requirement that urbanized areas prepare and regularly update a Congestion Management Program (CMP). The purpose of the CMP is to monitor the performance of the region’s transportation system, develop programs to address near-term and

long-term congestion, and better integrate transportation and land use planning. SANDAG, as the designated Congestion Management Agency for San Diego region, must develop, adopt and update the CMP in response to specific legislative requirements. SANDAG, local jurisdictions, and transportation operators such as Caltrans and North County Transit District (NCTD) are responsible for implementing and monitoring the CMP.

Regional Comprehensive Plan

The Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP), prepared by the SANDAG, serves as the strategic planning framework for the San Diego region. It creates a regional vision and provides a broad context in which local and regional decisions can be made that foster a healthy environment, a vibrant economy, and a high quality of life for all residents. The RCP balances regional population, housing, and employment growth with habitat preservation, agriculture, open space, and infrastructure needs. The RCP considers the general plans of all the jurisdictions in the region, examines regional growth patterns and provides a blueprint for growth in San Diego, including where and how growth would occur.

4.10.3 Analysis of Project Impacts and Determination of Significance

4.10.3.1 Issue 1: Physical Division of an Established Community

Guidelines for Determination of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines and existing City policies and regulations, the proposed project would result in a potentially significant impact if it would physically divide an established community, create a new land use barrier, disrupt the physical arrangement of the surrounding community, impact the existing street and sidewalk pattern of the neighborhood, or preclude the development of parcels surrounding the proposed land use.

Impact Analysis

General Plan Update

Growth under the General Plan Update would be concentrated in study areas within the City's urban core. With the exception of the Nutmeg Street Study Area, which is undeveloped, these study areas include established residential, commercial, and industrial neighborhoods.

Physical Division of an Established Community

If new roadways proposed in the General Plan Update circulation system would traverse an established community, the roadway would have the potential to physically divide the community. New roadways proposed in the Mobility and Infrastructure Element include an extension of Citracado Parkway from Andreasen Drive to Avenida del Diablo, the new Lariat Drive from Country Club Lane to Citracado Parkway, and an extension of Mountain Meadow Road from Broadway to Valley Center Road. These proposed roadways would be located in areas that are currently undeveloped. Some sparse rural residential development is located in the proximity of the Mountain Meadow Road extension but does

not comprise an established community. Therefore, the new circulation element roadways would not physically divide an established community.

New Land Use Barriers

Growth under the General Plan Update would create a new land use barrier if it would result in new development that would block existing connections within an established community. New development would occur on the vacant lands within the study areas; however, vacant lots do not provide connections within communities. New development would be required to connect to the existing community circulation system, or provide new connections where none currently exist. As discussed below under Existing Street and Sidewalk Pattern Impacts, new circulation connections developed under the General Plan Update would be designed to promote pedestrian and bicycle travel in addition to vehicular traffic, including urban trails within communities. Thus, new development would provide connectivity within communities rather than hinder it. Existing areas of open space within the established communities that provide connections within the community would remain with implementation of the General Plan Update, including Rod McLeod Community Park in the Imperial Oakes SPA, and Escondido Creek in the ERTC South SPA. New development would promote connections within the study areas and would not result in significant land use barriers.

Disruption of Physical Arrangement

Redevelopment accommodated by the General Plan Update would potentially disrupt the physical arrangement of existing communities by shifting existing development from one land use to another. As discussed under Section 4.1.3.3, Issue 3: Visual Character or Quality in Section 4.1, Aesthetics, the land uses proposed under the General Plan Update are generally consistent with existing development and would not substantially disrupt the existing physical arrangement of land uses. However, land use changes are proposed in several study areas. These study areas include the Imperial Oakes SPA, Transit Station Target Area, I-15/Felicita Road Corporate Office Target Area, and the ERTC South SPA. Potential land use shifts in these communities are discussed below.

Imperial Oakes SPA #13. The Imperial Oakes SPA #13 is mostly undeveloped, with approximately 115 acres of vacant/underdeveloped land available for development within the 163-acre SPA. Existing development includes the 18-acre Rod McLeod Community Park, and general retail uses and single family residences scattered throughout the SPA. Under the General Plan Update, this area would be redeveloped with new office and industrial uses. The existing residences in the SPA would be phased out by new development. Over time, the existing residential developments on site do not provide connections to residential development surrounding the SPA. Residences are located in clusters throughout the SPA and do not represent a cohesive established community. Additionally, increased building heights and intensities would be focused along I-15 and in areas more distanced from surrounding residential neighborhoods to ensure compatibility. Specific attention would be given to achieving compatibility with semi-rural residential areas near Iris Lane by incorporating lower intensity land uses, building materials, heights, orientation, colors, screening, lighting and signage. Therefore, replacement of existing residences with office and industrial uses over time in this SPA would not disrupt the physical arrangement of an established neighborhood. A significant impact would not occur.

Transit Station Target Area. The Transit Station Target Area is almost completely developed with industrial and commercial land uses. The General Plan Update envisions redevelopment in this area, including a phase-out of some incompatible land uses. The General Plan Update would allow existing uses west of Reidy Creek to keep operating, including construction material manufacturing, a trash transfer

station, and agricultural supply facilities. However, similar new uses would be prohibited. Redevelopment would include commercial and office uses, as well as a regional destination shopping area that would include a residential component. The General Plan Update would increase the development intensity in this area; however, new commercial, office, and industrial land uses would be consistent with existing development. The residential component would be incorporated into a regional commercial attraction and would not result in a separate residential neighborhood. Therefore, the existing physical arrangement of the neighborhood would continue to focus primarily on commercial and industrial land uses. A significant impact would not occur.

I-15/Felicita Road Corporate Office Target Area. The I-15/Felicita Road Corporate Office Target Area is characterized by vacant properties dotted with low intensity medical offices, single family residences, churches, and agriculture, including groves and field crops. The General Plan Update identifies this area as a new employment-focused area, including commercial and medical offices, research and development offices, and professional services. Therefore, the General Plan Update would accommodate land uses similar to existing land uses, but would increase the development intensity of the area. Due to the availability of vacant land in this SPA, development would be focused on infill rather than redevelopment. New development of vacant land would promote connections within the community rather than divide the community. Over time, existing residences would be phased out of this study area. Similar to the Imperial Oaks SPA, the existing residential developments on site do not connect to residential development surrounding the SPA. Residences are scattered throughout the SPA and do not represent a cohesive established community. Replacement of the residences with employment-related uses over time would not disrupt the physical arrangement of an established neighborhood. Additionally, appropriate height limits and setbacks would ensure that new development is compatible with existing residential land uses until they are phased out. Therefore, the General Plan Update would not significantly disrupt the physical arrangement of an established neighborhood in this study area. A significant impact would not occur.

ERTC South SPA #8. The ERTC South SPA is partially developed with established single family residences that are scattered throughout the SPA. This SPA is bisected by Escondido Creek. Under the General Plan Update, development would include trail connections to Escondido Creek and the creek would remain a prominent feature of the area. Increased building heights and intensities would be focused along Citracado Parkway and in areas more distanced from existing residences to ensure compatibility. Specific attention would be given to achieving compatibility with semi-rural residential areas along the edges of the SPA by incorporating lower intensity land uses, building materials, heights, orientation, colors, screening, lighting and signage. Over time, the single family residences within the SPA would be phased out with implementation of the General Plan Update. Similar to the Imperial Oaks SPA and I-15/Felicita Road Corporate Office Target Area, the existing residential developments on site do not connect to residential development surrounding the SPA. Residences are scattered throughout the SPA and do not represent a cohesive established community. Replacement of the residences with commercial, office, and industrial uses over time would not disrupt the physical arrangement of an established neighborhood. Therefore, the General Plan Update would not significantly disrupt the physical arrangement of an established neighborhood in this study area. A significant impact would not occur.

Existing Street and Sidewalk Pattern Impact

New development under the General Plan Update and implementation of the Mobility and Infrastructure Element circulation network would have the potential to alter the existing street and sidewalk patterns of existing neighborhoods. The proposed circulation network would result in

modifications to existing roadways and sidewalks and implementation of new circulation facilities. These improvements would generally be implemented as part of new development and redevelopment, which would require connections to the circulation system. However, the General Plan Update circulation network is intended to improve connections throughout the General Plan Update area for all modes of transportation, including within established neighborhoods. The General Plan Update encourages complete streets, which are streets that are designed with safety and accessibility of all users in mind, including bicyclists, transit vehicles and riders, and pedestrians of all ages and abilities. Appendix I3 to this EIR provides a Complete Streets Assessment (LLG 2011c) that establishes goals and guiding policies for implementing the complete streets improvements necessary to serve existing and future residents accommodated by the proposed project. A strategic principle of the assessment is to develop a well-balanced, connected, safe, and convenient multi-modal transportation network that is designed and constructed to serve all users of streets, roads, and highways, regardless of their age or ability, or whether they are driving, walking, bicycling, or taking transit. Creating complete streets involves instituting smart growth policies that ensure roads function as a truly multimodal transportation network. Components of complete streets may include sidewalks, bike lanes, special bus lanes, comfortable and accessible transit stops, frequent crossing opportunities, median islands, accessible pedestrian signals, or curb extensions. The Complete Streets Assessment (LLG 2011c) is described in greater detail in Section 4.16, Transportation and Traffic.

The General Plan Update also proposes traffic calming measures for Escondido's circulation system to make streets more enjoyable, and reduce traffic speeds and volumes to more acceptable levels. Additionally, the General Plan Update envisions off-street trails and paths to provide safe pedestrian and bicycle facilities. These improvements would alter the existing street and sidewalk patterns in existing communities, but would provide additional accessibility within the community rather than divide it. Widening of roadways to accommodate increases in vehicular traffic would not result in a new physical division of a community. Additionally, improved roadways would be required to comply with General Plan Update policies described below to ensure that improved roadways improve accessibility in surrounding communities. Therefore, the General Plan Update would not result in alterations to the existing street and sidewalk patterns of existing neighborhoods such that it would divide an established community. A significant impact would not occur.

Preclude Development of Surrounding Parcels

The General Plan Update would preclude the development of parcels surrounding proposed land uses if the land use pattern proposed by the General Plan Update would locate incompatible land uses in close proximity to each other. Escondido's General Plan Land Use and Community Form Element arranges major land uses in order to preserve and enhance the integrity and amenities of established residential neighborhoods, provide opportunities for future growth that meets the community's vision, and strengthen the economic viability of employment areas and commercial activity centers. As discussed under Section 4.1.3.3, Issue 3: Visual Character or Quality in Section 4.1, Aesthetics, land uses proposed under the General Plan Update would maintain the existing overall land use pattern of the existing plan area. The General Plan Update land use plan is designed to minimize land use conflicts and incompatible land uses. For example, the most intensive industrial land uses are proposed near I-15 and SR-78 and surrounded by lower intensity light industrial, industrial office, and commercial land use designations to buffer the industrial area from incompatible land uses such as residences. Development would be concentrated in study areas where new growth would be most appropriate and beneficial. Land uses proposed within each study area are compatible with each other and are intended to create cohesive, walkable communities within the study areas. The General Plan Update includes development

guidelines for each land use category that requires compatibility with surrounding land uses. Therefore, development consistent with the General Plan Update would not preclude future development as long as it is consistent with the proposed land use plan. Impacts would be less than significant.

Downtown Specific Plan #9 Update

The existing Downtown SPA is partially developed with a historic, walkable retail and service core, single family and multi-family residences, shopping centers on the western and northern ends, and office and retail to the east. The Downtown Specific Plan Update envisions a compact, walkable downtown, with high quality architecture and landscaping, and access to transit and urban trails. The plan would accommodate retail, mixed use multi-family, commercial, and office land uses, similar to existing conditions. As shown in Table 3-7, Downtown Specific Plan Update Proposed Changes in Development Standards, in Chapter 3, Project Description, infill development and redevelopment would intensify development in the downtown area by accommodating taller buildings and higher density housing. However, land uses are consistent with existing land uses in each downtown district and would not substantially alter the physical arrangement of the downtown area. The update does not propose any changes to other design guidelines and development standards that ensure compatible development within the SPA. Therefore, the Downtown Specific Plan Update does not propose new land use designations or development standards that would preclude development by proposing incompatible land uses. The vision, goals, principles and guidelines of the Downtown Specific Plan Update promote a balance of uses, sensitive design techniques, and enhanced pedestrian opportunities. The Downtown Specific Plan Update does not propose any new roadways or other development features that would physically divide the downtown area. The Specific Plan Update does envision an extension of Grape Day Park to the north; however, extension of the park would provide urban trails connecting existing and future shopping areas in the City. These improvements would improve access within the downtown area. Similar to the General Plan Update, roadway improvements within the downtown area would incorporate smart growth and complete streets principles that would provide additional accessibility throughout the SPA. Therefore, the Downtown Specific Plan Update would improve connectivity in the downtown area and would not create a new land use barrier or disrupt the existing street and sidewalk pattern of the neighborhood. Impacts would be less than significant.

Escondido Climate Action Plan

Implementation of the E-CAP would not result in development within the proposed project area beyond the land uses that would be accommodated under the General Plan Update and Downtown Specific Plan Update. The E-CAP identifies GHG reduction measures would be implemented as part of future development consistent with the General Plan Update in order to reduce GHG emissions. E-CAP measures encourage smart growth principles to promote compact walkable communities, complete streets, mixed use projects, transit-oriented development, and bicycle lanes to reduce vehicle miles travelled. These measures would provide additional accessibility within communities by providing safe and efficient pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and making public transit more convenient. Mixed use and transit-oriented development would promote the use of alternative transportation methods and would be subject to all of the development standards of the General Plan Update. The E-CAP measures would promote connectivity rather than divide communities. The E-CAP measures would be implemented as part of development consistent with the General Plan Update. Therefore, the E-CAP would not result in any additional impacts to established communities beyond the impacts identified for development allowed under the General Plan Update and Downtown Specific Plan Update. Impacts related to the E-CAP would be less than significant.

Federal, State and Local Regulations and Existing Regulatory Processes

There are no relevant codes or regulations related specifically to the division of an established community, creation of a new land use barrier, disruption of the physical arrangement of a surrounding community, impacts to the existing street and sidewalk pattern of the neighborhood, or preclude the development of parcels surrounding the proposed land use. However, California Planning and Zoning Law and SB 375 guide land use planning in California. These regulations are intended to ensure long-term plans, such as the proposed General Plan Update, accommodate compatible land uses that support high-quality development.

Proposed General Plan Update Policies

While the proposed General Plan Update does not contain policies that specifically prohibit the construction of features that would physically divide an established community, it does contain several policies requiring future circulation improvements and developments to be consistent with the development patterns of established communities which would promote connectivity.

Several policies from the Land Use and Community Form Element are related to avoiding the division of established communities. Community Character Policies 1.1, 1.2, and 1.9 require development under the General Plan Update to reinforce the City's present development pattern, base densities and intensities; achieve effective transitions that avoid abrupt changes in scale and intensity; and accommodate a mix of uses to promote walkability, bicycling, and transit uses. Neighborhood Maintenance and Preservation Policies 4.2, 4.3, and 4.6 protect residential neighborhoods from encroachment of incompatible activities or land uses; require integration of pedestrian-friendly features, promote walkability, and work with residents to enhance existing neighborhood character and aesthetics; and encourage establishment of residential neighborhood area plans to conserve recognized historic districts orient development towards pedestrian activities and discourage replacement of single family dwellings with high-density multi-family units. Office Land Use Policy 9.4 requires that office buildings be located and designed to assure compatibility and transitions with adjoining neighborhoods. Industrial Land Use Policy 10.3 requires that projects located within the Industrial Office land use classification be designed to be aesthetically attractive and compatible with adjoining land uses. Additionally, Environmental Review Policies 18.1 through 18.4 require project conformance with CEQA, the General Plan, facilities plans, and quality of life standards; mitigation of environmental impacts; and an update of environmental thresholds in sensitive areas.

Proposed Downtown Specific Plan #9 Update Policies

The proposed Downtown Specific Plan Update does not include any policies related to physical division of an established community, creation of a new land use barrier, disruption of the physical arrangement of a surrounding community, impacts to the existing street and sidewalk pattern of the neighborhood, or preclude the development of parcels surrounding the proposed land use.

Proposed Escondido Climate Action Plan Reduction Measures

The proposed E-CAP does not include any measures related to physical division of an established community, creation of a new land use barrier, disruption of the physical arrangement of a surrounding community, impacts to the existing street and sidewalk pattern of the neighborhood, or preclude the development of parcels surrounding the proposed land use.

Summary

The General Plan Update and Downtown Specific Plan Update do not propose any new roadways or other specific features that would divide an established community. Growth under the General Plan Update would be concentrated in the 15 study areas and would not substantially change physical development patterns in established communities. Additionally, changes to the circulation system within established communities would enhance accessibility within the community. Development standards in the General Plan Update would ensure that new development would not preclude future development as long as it is consistent with the proposed land use plan. Additionally, General Plan Update policies promote connectivity and compatibility with existing neighborhoods. Therefore, impacts associated with the physical division of an established community would be less than significant.

4.10.3.2 Issue 2: Conflicts with Land Use Plans, Policies, and Regulations

Guidelines for Determination of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines and existing City policies and regulations, the proposed project would result in a significant impact if it would conflict with an applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the plan area adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental impact.

Impact Analysis

Growth under the proposed Downtown Specific Plan Update would be consistent with the growth identified for the General Plan Update; therefore, the following analysis pertains to both the General Plan Update and the Downtown Specific Plan Update. Impacts related to implementation of the E-CAP are discussed separately below.

General Plan Update and Downtown Specific Plan #9 Update

The proposed General Plan Update would serve as the comprehensive land use plan for the City, if it were adopted by the City Council. However, the City, the City's SOI, and remaining area within the General Plan Update boundary are also addressed in regional planning documents including the RCP, RTP, and CMP. In addition, the proposed General Plan Update would be required to be consistent with several adopted land use plans for the region, including ALUCPs. Other land use plans that apply to the planning area are being updated as part of the proposed General Plan Update to ensure consistency, such as the Zoning Ordinance. The General Plan Update's consistency with these plans is discussed below. General Plan Update compliance with the MHCP and MSCP are discussed below in Section 4.10.3.3, Issue 3: Habitat Conservation Plans and NCCPs.

County of San Diego General Plan

The County of San Diego General Plan establishes future growth and development patterns for the unincorporated areas of the county, including the communities of San Dieguito, NC Metro and Valley Center, of which portions are also included in the Escondido General Plan Update planning area. The proposed project would result in a conflict with the County of San Diego General Plan if it would propose land use designations for the unincorporated areas within the General Plan Update boundary that

conflict with the County’s land use designations. The community plans for the San Dieguito, NC Metro, and Valley Center communities have recently been updated to reflect the updated County General Plan. Therefore, if the Escondido General Plan Update would conflict with the County’s General Plan, it would also result in a conflict with one or more of the three applicable community plans. The County General Plan and Escondido General Plan Update land use designations are compared in Table 4.10-2, Comparison of Planning Area Land Use Designations. As shown in this table, the proposed Escondido General Plan Update land use designations differ from the County General Plan land use designations.

Table 4.10-2 Comparison of Planning Area Land Use Designations

Unincorporated Area	County General Plan Designation	Proposed General Plan Update Designations
San Dieguito		
West of Valley Parkway, south of SR-78	Open Space, Semi-Rural Residential – max 1du/0.5, I, 2, 4, 10 acre, Rural Residential – max 1 du/20 acres, Specific Plan Area The Elfin Forest-Harmony Grove SPA, located on the southwest edge of the planning area, proposes development of rural residences with a maximum density of 1 du/2 acres. One third of the SPA is proposed for open space.	Specific Plan Area, Rural I /II and Estate I/II – 1 du/0.5, 1, 2, 4, 8, 20 The ERTC North and South SPAs, located along the City’s western limit, envisions a high quality business park, encouraging research and development, medical office with limited low-scale residential uses and industrial park uses to expand Escondido’s employment base.
North County Metropolitan		
Eastern island within northwest City limit, east of I-15	Semi-Rural Residential - max 1 du/acre	Rural II – 1 du/2, 4, 20 acre
Western islands within northwest City limit, east of I-15	Village Residential – max 24 du/acre	Specific Plan Area - The Imperial Oaks SPA would establish provisions for a comprehensively planned development focused on high paying, high employee density employment opportunities.
West of I-15 and north of SR-78	Village Residential – 2.9 to 15 du/acre	Rural II and Estate II – 1 du/0.5, 1, 2, 4, 20 acre
East of Valley Parkway and west of Centre City Parkway	Open Space, Rural Residential – 1 du/20 acre, Semi-Rural Residential – 1 du/acre, and Village Residential – 2.9 du/acre	Public Land/Open Space, Rural I and Estate I/II – 1 du/0.5, 1, 2, 4, 8, 20 acre
Island east of I-15 and south of Felicita Road	Village residential – 2 to 2.9 du/acre	Estate II – 1 du/0.5, 1, 20 acre
East of Juniper Street to eastern planning area boundary	Village Residential – 2 to 4.3 du/acre, Semi-Rural Residential – 1 du/ 1, 2 acre, Rural Commercial	Rural I and Estate I/II – 1 du/0.5, 1, 2, 4, 8, 20 acre, Planned Commercial
East of City limit, north of San Pasqual Valley Road	Open space, Semi-Rural Residential – 1 du/2 acres, Rural Residential – 1 du/20 to 40 acres	Open Space, Specific Plan Area, Rural I – 1 du/4, 8, 20 acres The General Plan Update vision for the Valley View SPA in this area is an upscale, large lot single family residential community, organized around a comprehensively planned open space system. The development may include a golf course and luxury resort hotel with extensive amenities in exchange for residential units determined to have the same impact.

Table 4.10-2 continued

Unincorporated Area	County General Plan Designation	Proposed General Plan Update Designations
North of City limit and west of Daley Ranch	Specific Plan Area, Semi-Rural Residential – 1 du/1, 2, 4 acre, Rural Residential – 1 du/40 acres The Rubel Specific Plan Area is an agricultural preserve. The Specific Plan proposes residential land uses that do not exceed an overall density of 0.23 du/acre, with a minimum lot size of one acre.	Rural I and Estate I/II – 1 du/0.5, 1, 2, 4, 8, 20 acre
Valley Center		
North and east of Daley Ranch	Semi-Rural Residential – 1 du/2, 4 acre, Rural Residential – 1 du/20 acre	Open Space, Specific Plan Area, Rural I – 1 du/4, 8, 20 acres A portion of the Sager Ranch SPA is within the Valley Center community. The General Plan Update envisions an ultimate density for the SPA of Rural I (1 unit per 4, 8 and 20 acres) to Estate I (1 unit per 1, 2, 4 and 20 acres). Development of the property may also include a rural resort/equestrian facility.

du = dwelling unit

Sources: City 2011, City 1990, County of San Diego 2011a, County of San Diego 2011b

In NC Metro, the proposed Escondido General Plan Update land use designations propose residential development, similar the County's plan, but at a lower density. These areas include the northeastern island of NC Metro, the areas west of I-15, the southwest island, and the area east of Juniper Street. Along I-15, the County proposes industrial land uses and higher densities at the I-15 and Deer Springs Road interchange. The Escondido General Plan Update land use designations reflect existing conditions; however, the lower-density designations conflict with the County's goal to increase development intensity in the western areas of the County near the incorporated cities, including Escondido.

Additionally, some of the unincorporated SPA areas within the General Plan Update planning area are inconsistent with the County's land use designations. The ERTC North and South SPAs propose new commercial, office, and industrial land uses in two small areas of the San Dieguito community along the City's western edge. The Imperial Oakes SPA encourages new employment opportunities near the I-15, including the northwestern NC Metro islands. The County does not propose any commercial, office, or industrial use for these areas. The Valley View SPA in the NC Metro community and the Sager Ranch SPA in the Valley Center community propose residential land uses, although at higher development densities compared to the County's General Plan. These SPAs would also potentially accommodate rural resorts, which are not proposed by the County.

Therefore, the proposed project would conflict with the land use designations identified in the County of San Diego General Plan Update and the community plans for San Dieguito, NC Metro, and Valley Center. However, the City does not currently have land use jurisdiction in these areas; therefore, the City's land use designations would not apply to these areas unless the unincorporated area was annexed into the City. In the event of annexation, the proposed project would be the applicable land use plan for the area. Additionally, proposed Community Character Policy 1.15, listed below under Proposed General Plan Update Goals and Policies, requires the City to recognize the community plans approved by the County Board of Supervisors and collaborate with annexing property owners to retain desired

components of their community plans. The community plans are consistent with the County's General Plan; therefore, since the development of annexed properties in these areas of the General Plan Update planning area would retain the desired components of the existing community plan, future development occurring under the proposed project would also be consistent with the County General Plan. With implementation of Community Character Policy 1.15, impacts related to conflicts with applicable land use plans would be less than significant.

Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans

ALUCPs are plans that guide property owners and local jurisdictions in determining what types of proposed new land uses are appropriate around airports. They are intended to protect the safety of people, property and aircraft on the ground and in the air in the vicinity of an airport. The two public airports closest to the proposed project area are the Ramona Airport in the unincorporated community of Ramona and McClellan-Palomar Airport in the City of Carlsbad. The San Diego County Regional Airport Authority adopted an amended ALUCP for the Ramona Airport in 2008, and the McClellan-Palomar Airport in 2010. ALUCPs are discussed in greater detail in Section 4.8, Hazards and Hazardous Materials. As stated in Section 4.7.3.5, Issue 5: Public Airports, some portions of the proposed project area at the southeastern edge of the planning area are located within the Ramona AIA Review Area 2, which defines the airport's airspace protection and/or overflight notification areas. Additionally, portions of the proposed project area, west of I-15, are within the McClellan-Palomar Airport's AIA Review Area 2. Limits on the heights of structures, particularly in areas of high terrain, are the only restrictions on land uses within Review Area 2. In general, the proposed General Plan Update would propose low density residential land uses (Estate I, Estate II, Rural I, Rural II) or public land/open space within the AIA areas for Ramona and McClellan-Palomar Airport. These land uses generally have low concentrations of persons and would be consistent with the restrictions imposed by the ALUCPs. Therefore, a significant impact would not occur. Additionally, as discussed in Section 4.12, Noise, the General Plan Update planning area is not located within the 65 dBA CNEL noise contour of either airport. Therefore, incompatibilities related to noise would not occur. The proposed project would not result in conflicts with any applicable ALUCP.

Regional Transportation Plan

The 2050 RTP requires that jurisdictions incorporate the planned highway network identified in the RTP into their general plans. The 2050 RTP contains a robust transportation network, with a diversity of projects that will provide residents and visitors with a variety of travel choices. The regional transportation network, in conjunction with how local jurisdictions develop land, will provide additional opportunities for walking, biking, getting to work, going to school, shopping, and playing. The 2050 RTP, more than previous RTPs, focuses on improving the San Diego region's network for public transit. The RTP provides more transit choices by improving the existing transit system and by introducing new access to other areas. The SCS component of the RTP shows how the region will meet the goals established by Assembly Bill (AB) 32 for reducing GHG emissions from automobiles and light trucks. The 2050 RTP and its SCS show that the San Diego region will meet or exceed the AB 32 targets by using land in ways that make developments more compact, conserving open space, and investing in a transportation network that gives residents alternatives to driving alone. The General Plan Update implements the 2050 RTP through the goals and policies listed below that require coordination for regional transportation planning and encourage multi-modal transportation through complete street, pedestrian network, bicycle network, transit system, street network, and traffic calming policies that ensure safe and efficient circulation. The policies also include requirements for obtaining and allocating funding for transportation-related improvement projects. The General Plan Update proposes a circulation network that

is consistent with the growth that would be accommodated by the proposed land use designations. The E-CAP implements the SCS component of the RTP by providing the City with reduction measures that would assist the City in meeting the goals established by AB 32. Therefore, the General Plan Update implements the RTP guidelines and is consistent with the 2050 RTP. The proposed project would not result in a conflict with the RTP.

Congestion Management Program

The Congestion Management Program (CMP) is a part of SANDAG's RTP and monitors the performance of the region's transportation system, develops programs to address near-term and long-term congestion, and better integrates transportation and land use planning. The CMP requires local jurisdictions to prepare and implement a deficiency plan for any deficient CMP roadway. The purpose of a deficiency plan is to evaluate the cause of the existing roadway deficiency and to propose remedial actions necessary to address the deficiency. The CMP roadways within the General Plan Update boundary are SR-78, I-15, and Centre City Parkway. SR-78 and Centre City Parkway are not designated as deficient segments. As discussed above, the General Plan Update is consistent with the RTP guidelines to reduce vehicular traffic. Additionally, the CMP identifies a minimally acceptable level of service (LOS) E for the regional transportation network. The proposed quality of life standards establish a LOS standard for the proposed General Plan Update road network. The quality of life standard strives for LOS C on the City's roadway network outside of the urban core, and an LOS D inside the urban core. This is higher than the LOS E standard identified in the CMP. Therefore, the General Plan Update would not conflict with the CMP.

Regional Comprehensive Plan

The Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP), prepared by SANDAG, is the strategic planning framework for the San Diego region. The plan takes into account build out of the existing general plans prepared for each of the incorporated cities and the unincorporated County and forecasts future population and number of housing units for the entire region. As stated in the RCP, the RCP document was not designed as a regulatory plan, but rather as a guidance plan. SANDAG suggests that agencies incorporate the recommendations of the RCP into their local and regional plans as they update those plans. The General Plan Update is not required to comply with the recommendations in the RCP; however, the RCP goals were implemented to the extent feasible during the General Plan Update planning process.

The RCP identifies existing and planned Smart Growth Opportunity Areas (SGOA), which are compact, mixed use, pedestrian-oriented developments where a higher priority is placed on providing transportation facility improvements. Eight SGOAs are identified in the Escondido: ES-1 - Downtown Specific Plan and Mercado Area; ES-2 - Mission Road from I-15 to Escondido Boulevard; ES-3 - East Valley Parkway from Fig Street to Midway Drive; ES-4 - South Escondido Boulevard from 5th Avenue to Vermont Avenue; ES-5 - Felicita Road and Centre City Parkway; ES-6 - Citracado Parkway and Centre City Parkway; ES-7 - Bear Valley Parkway and I-15; and ES-8 - Nordahl ~~Sprinter~~ SPRINTER Station at Nordahl Road and Mission Road.

The proposed Land Use and Community Form Element establishes smart growth principles to guide future development patterns, population growth, and infrastructure investments primarily toward downtown and urbanized sectors along key transportation corridors, including the SGOAs identified by SANDAG. The strategy's aim is to preserve single family residential densities and development patterns in established and outlying neighborhoods, provide opportunities for achieving Escondido's vision, and accommodate long term growth. The smart growth principles would be encouraged for all

development. Transit-oriented, mixed use development is specifically promoted in mixed use overlays in the Downtown SPA (ES-1), Centre City Parkway at Brotherton Avenue (ES-6), and East Valley Parkway at Ash Street (ES-3). Mixed use overlay areas are transit-oriented in nature by incorporating features such as bus stops and multi-modal connections that promote the use of alternative transportation. In addition, mixed use overlay areas are pedestrian friendly environments that incorporate trails, pathways, bikeways, and safe crosswalks to connect neighboring uses. ES-2 is located with the Transit Station Target Area, which proposes a mixed use regional attraction in close proximity to the existing transit station that involves entertainment, employment, commercial and residential uses to provide strong pedestrian connections to downtown. ES-4 is located within the South Escondido Boulevard/Felicita Road Target Area, which is proposed to include smart growth principles including mixed use development, strong connections to transit, and integration of recreational space. ES-5 is located within the South Escondido Boulevard/Center City Parkway Target Area. The General Plan Update encourages smart growth principles including mixed use development, strong connections to transit, and integration of recreational space in this target area.

Smart growth does not always include mixed use development. SANDAG has goals for two SGOAs in Escondido that do not include mixed use development. SANDAG encourages improved access to transit in ES-7, which is located within the Westfield Shoppingtown Target Area, and proposed for improved transit access and increased employment densities. SANDAG encourages high-density employment in ES-8, which located in ERTC North SPA, and proposed for pedestrian-friendly, transit-focused commercial, office, and industrial development in close proximity to the existing transit station. Therefore, the General Plan Update encourages compact, pedestrian and transit-oriented developments that would provide a variety of mixed use and employment opportunities in the SGOAs identified by SANDAG. The General Plan Update would be consistent with the SANDAG goals for the SGOAs in the RCP.

The RCP endorses a land use pattern that channels much of the region's future growth into existing urban communities, preserving and protecting the lifestyle and sensitive environment of the rural unincorporated areas. As stated above in Section 4.10.3.1, Issue 1: Physical Division of an Established Community, the General Plan Update would be consistent with this land use pattern by concentrating new development within study areas near and within the City's urban core and along existing transportation corridors. The City's proposed land use pattern would maintain the established semi-rural, single family communities outside of the urban core.

In addition to being consistent with the goals of the RCP, the General Plan Update is also consistent with the SANDAG regional growth projections that are identified in the RCP, as discussed in Section 4.13, Population and Housing. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in a conflict with the RCP.

Specific and Area Plans

With the exception of the Downtown SPA #9, the General Plan Update does not propose any changes to adopted specific plans; therefore, no conflicts with these plans would occur. Adoption of future specific plans would be required to comply with the General Plan Update, if adopted. As discussed under Section 4.10.3.1, Issue 1: Physical Division of an Established Community, the land uses proposed under the Downtown SPA are consistent with the existing land use designations for the SPA, although some development standards would be updated to reflect new taller building height limits and higher allowable development intensity. The Downtown SPA would retain the development standards that ensure compatibility with the character and vision for the downtown area, including each of the individual downtown districts. If adopted, the Downtown Specific Plan Update would be the applicable

planning document for the SPA. Therefore, the General Plan Update would not result in conflicts with the existing Downtown Specific Plan.

Three area plans have been adopted for the General Plan Update Area including the South Escondido Boulevard Neighborhood Plan, East Valley Parkway Area Plan, and Mercado Area Plan. The South Escondido Boulevard Neighborhood Plan includes areas within the South Escondido Boulevard/Centre City Parkway Target Area, South Escondido Boulevard/Felicita Road Target Area, and Centre City Parkway/Brotherton Road Target Area. The commercial objective of the existing plan is to revitalize and renew the commercial sector of the neighborhood by strengthening the visual environment and establishing development incentive programs for property owners and businesses. Mixed use development is encouraged. The residential objective is to maximize housing choices and provide a balanced mix of housing types through a variety of incentives and programs. The General Plan Update proposes mixed use residential and intensification of commercial uses in the South Escondido Boulevard/Centre City Parkway Target Area. The South Escondido Boulevard/Felicita Road Target Area and Centre City Parkway/Brotherton Road Target Area, covered by the South Escondido Boulevard Neighborhood Plan, are proposed for a mixed use overlay with increased density and intensity of uses in close proximity to transit and services. The General Plan Update would ensure compatibility with adjacent lower-density residential uses with appropriate building heights, intensities, and buffers. The design goals for this study area are high-quality architecture and landscaping. Therefore, the General Plan Update is consistent with the South Escondido Boulevard Neighborhood Plan's overall goals to provide new economic and housing opportunities, including mixed use development. The General Plan Update would update the neighborhood plan to include smart growth principles, a gateway element for the City, aesthetic enhancements along Centre City Parkway, strong connections to transit, integration of public/private recreational space, and features to ensure pedestrian safety. The update would support the existing neighborhood plan's goals to revitalize and strengthen the visual environment of the area. Therefore, the General Plan Update would not conflict with the South Escondido Boulevard Neighborhood Plan.

The East Valley Parkway Area Plan includes the East Valley Parkway Target Area. The existing plan supports mixed use development and a planned commercial area. The plan seeks to attract office and professional uses, rehabilitate existing commercial centers, strengthen existing establishments through facade and streetscape improvements, and improve traffic circulation, as well as other aesthetic improvements. The General Plan Update proposes intensified retail, commercial, general office, and professional services for the study area along East Valley Parkway. The General Plan Update would establish a mixed use overlay between Palomar Hospital and Ash Street to focus residential growth, with increased building heights and intensities distanced from lower density residential and appropriate buffers to ensure compatibility. Therefore, the General Plan Update would be consistent with the land use goals in the area plan. The design goals for the area include high quality architecture and landscaping, and transit-focused, pedestrian-friendly streets. The General Plan Update would update the area plan to include smart growth principles, enhance Escondido Creek path connections, aesthetically improve the streetscape along Lincoln Avenue and Ash Street, and integrate public/private recreational spaces. These updates would be consistent with the existing area plan goals to improve aesthetics and traffic circulation. Therefore, the General Plan Update would not conflict with the East Valley Parkway Area Plan.

The Downtown Specific Plan document was previously amended to reflect the goal of the Mercado Area Plan, which is a pedestrian-oriented mixed use environment of restaurants, retail shops, artisan crafts and cultural activities celebrating Escondido's heritage. The Downtown Specific Plan allows mixed use

development in the Mercado District, including eating and drinking establishments and retail shops, which may include dancing, cabarets, and live entertainment. The development standards for the district encourage mixed use development and require development to be consistent with or complementary to early-California architecture. The proposed Downtown Specific Plan Update would change development standards in the Mercado District to allow building heights up to 85 feet north of Grand Avenue, compared to 55 feet under the existing plan, and residential densities up to 60 and 75 dwelling units per acre, compared to 45 dwelling units per acre under the existing plan. However, the Specific Plan Update proposes land use types that would be similar to existing land use designations and would not affect standards for the design of buildings, signs, landscaping and facilities. It would continue to require early-California design themes and encourage a pedestrian-oriented, mixed use environment of restaurants, retail shops, artisan crafts and cultural activities celebrating Escondido's heritage. Therefore, the General Plan Update would not conflict with the Mercado Area Plan.

Zoning Ordinance

As mandated by the state, the City's Zoning Ordinance must be consistent with the General Plan Update. Therefore, the Zoning Ordinance would be updated as part of the proposed project. As shown in Table 4.10-1, Existing and Proposed Land Use Designations, the land use designations proposed by the General Plan Update are similar to the land use designations that are currently implemented by the Zoning Ordinance. Therefore, the proposed General Plan Update would not conflict with the Zoning Ordinance.

City of Escondido Master Plan for Parks, Trails, and Open Space

The Master Plan for Parks, Trails, and Open Space serves as a guide to developing a comprehensive and integrated open space system to the achieve quality of life standards set forth in the General Plan. The Master Plan identifies the potential locations of parks, trails, and open spaces, and establishes recommendations for obtaining land for new facilities and protecting existing resources. The Master Plan's goal for parks is 0.5 acres of neighborhood parks per 1,000 residents, and 1.75 acres of community parkland per 1,000 residents. The General Plan Update quality of life standards establish a parkland goal of a minimum of 5.9 acres of developed active neighborhood, community, and urban parks in addition to 5.9 acres of passive park land and/or open space for habitat preservation and additional recreational opportunities, totaling 11.8 active and passive acres per 1,000 dwelling units. Assuming an occupancy rate of 3.2 residents in the General Plan Update horizon year 2035, based on SANDAG population and housing projections, the quality of life standard proposes approximately 1.8 acres of neighborhood parks and 1.8 acres of passive parkland/open space per 1,000 residents. Therefore, the General Plan Update standard exceeds the Master Plan goal for parkland and is consistent with this plan.

The Master Plan identifies an approximately 115-mile trail system including urban and rural trails throughout the planning area, including connections to the Escondido Creek Trail, public parks, and San Dieguito Regional Park. The General Plan Update encourages trails to be included in new developments and integrated into existing development. Specifically, the General Plan Update encourages trail connections to Escondido Creek, public parks including Grape Day Park, and connections to open space areas, including coordination with the San Dieguito River Valley Regional Park. Therefore, the General Plan Update would support the Master Plan goals for the trail system.

The General Plan Update's consistency with the Master Plan's open space goals is addressed in Section 4.4.3.5, Issue 5: Local Policies and Ordinances, in Section 4.4, Biological Resources. As discussed in this section, the primary intent of this open space component of the Master Plan is to establish a conceptual

program aimed at preserving natural areas. Key habitat areas would continue to be protected under the General Plan Update by existing regulations; the EQRs, which require mitigation for impacts to biological resources including habitat fragmentation; preservation agreements; and the proposed land use plan, which concentrates new development in the urban core and designates the areas surrounding Lake Wohlford, Daley Ranch/Lake Dixon, Kit Carson Park, and ~~Lake~~ Hodges Reservoir for open space. Therefore, the General Plan Update would not conflict with the City's Master Plan for Parks, Trails, and Open Space.

Escondido Climate Action Plan

Implementation of the E-CAP would not result in development within the proposed project area beyond the land uses that would be accommodated under the General Plan Update and Downtown Specific Plan Update. The E-CAP measures would be implemented as part of development consistent with the General Plan Update. The E-CAP measures do not include any features that would conflict with existing land use plans. The transportation measures proposed in the E-CAP would assist the General Plan Update in complying with the 2050 RTP and SCS and RCP by reducing vehicular trips and encouraging a multi-modal transportation network. Therefore, the E-CAP would not result in any additional impacts to established communities beyond the impacts identified for development allowed under the General Plan Update and Downtown Specific Plan Update. Impacts related to the E-CAP would be less than significant.

Federal, State and Local Regulations and Existing Regulatory Processes

The relevant policies of local plans that apply to the proposed project are discussed individually in the impact analysis above.

Proposed General Plan Update Policies

Proposed General Plan Update goals and policies in several elements are intended to avoid conflicts with other applicable land use plans including the County's General Plan Update and the City's Zoning Ordinance. In the Land Use and Community Form Element, Community Character Policies 1.15 and 1.16 require the City to recognize community plans approved by the County Board of Supervisors within Escondido's General Plan Update planning area, coordinate land use and design guidelines to minimize impacts in areas where City/County lands transition, collaborate with annexing property owners to retain desired components of their community plans, and notify and coordinate with surrounding property owners and resident groups when conducting land use studies affecting residents of unincorporated communities. Land Use Zoning Policies 2.1 and 2.3 require the City to update and revise City ordinances to reflect the goals, objectives and policies in the adopted General Plan and establish new zoning categories in areas where the City's existing zoning will not adequately implement the goals and objectives of the General Plan. This element also includes Environmental Review Policies 18.1 through 18.4, which require project conformance with CEQA, the General Plan, facilities plans, and quality of life standards; mitigation of environmental impacts; and an update of environmental thresholds in sensitive areas.

In the Mobility and Infrastructure Element, Regional Transportation Planning Policies 1.1 through 1.3 require cooperation with SANDAG, NCTD, adjacent communities and other appropriate agencies to prepare, adopt, and implement a RTP, efficiently allocate funding resources for transit and transportation improvements and operations, and implement traffic management efforts that provide connectivity with adopted circulation plans in the region and regional transportation planning efforts.

Transit System Policies 5.1 and 5.5 require collaboration with NCTD on their transit system and cooperation with NCTD, Caltrans, SANDAG, and other appropriate agencies to expand the commuter rail system. Aviation Policy 11.2 requires all development located within the AIA for McClellan-Palomar Airport be located and constructed in conformance with the ALUCP.

Noise Policy 5.15 in the Community Protection Element requires coordination with McClellan-Palomar Airport to distribute property disclosure statements for areas within the ALUCP. Minimizing Infrastructure Impediments Policy 9.2 in the Economic Prosperity Element requires the City to work with regional agencies to develop and implement public improvements that benefit Escondido and northern San Diego County, including roadways, transit, energy, and telecommunications infrastructure.

Additionally, goals and policies from several elements implement guidelines from applicable plans, such as the RTP, RCP, and existing area plans. In the Land Use and Community Form Element, Neighborhood Maintenance & Preservation Policy 4.3 requires development to integrate pedestrian-friendly features, promote walkability, and work with residents to enhance existing neighborhood character and aesthetics. Mixed Use Overlay Policy 7.2 requires the City to establish guidelines and standards for mixed use development through area plans.

The Mobility and Infrastructure Element includes Complete Streets Policies 2.1 through 2.4 and 2.9, which require new development to ensure that the existing and future transportation system is interconnected and serves multiple modes of travel; the transportation network is safe, efficient and accessible; integrated transportation and land use decisions are promoted that enhance human-scale smart growth development served by complete streets; access, safety, and convenience of various transportation modes are evaluated; and traffic impact fees are regularly reviewed, updated, and collected to ensure the efficient allocation of state and regional funding for the development and maintenance of local transit and transportation improvements. Pedestrian Network Policies 3.3, 3.4, and 3.8 require the City to maintain a pedestrian environment accessible to all that is safe, attractive, and encourages walking; preserve and enhance pedestrian connectivity within existing neighborhoods; provide an efficient, connected and well-designed pedestrian network in new developments ; and repair sidewalk and pedestrian paths in the public right-of-way that impede pedestrian travel. Bicycle Network Policy 4.1 requires the City to maintain and implement a Bicycle Master Plan that enhances existing bicycle routes and facilities; define gaps and needed improvements; prescribe an appropriate Level of Service standard; outline standards for their design and safety; describe funding resources; and involve the community. Transit System Policy 5.10 requires the City to provide safe and efficient multimodal access to and within transit stations, complying with ADA standards. Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Policy 6.1 is to develop and implement TDM and complete street programs to reduce automobile travel demand. Street Network Policies 7.3 through 7.5 and 7.8 require the City to strive to maintain LOS C or better throughout the City except for within the urban core; strive to maintain LOS D or better within the urban core; provide adequate traffic safety measures on all new and existing roadways; prioritize funding of capital improvement projects that complete links or improve the circulation system; and require new development projects to analyze traffic impacts and pay a fair-share contribution to regional transportation improvements.

The Community Health and Services Element includes Parks and Recreation Policies 2.3, 2.4, 2.16, and 2.7, which establish minimum standards for provision of developed and passive park land and/or open space; require new residential development to contribute fees to development of park and recreational facilities; require the City to assist in the coordinated planning, development, and maintenance of unique regional amenities, including Kit Carson Park, Daley Ranch, Lake Wohlford Regional Park, Lake Dixon

Regional Park, San Dieguito River Valley Regional Park and Felicita County Park; and require the City to improve the Escondido Creek Trail as a linear park with amenities.

The Resource Conservation Element includes Biological and Open Space Resources Policy 1.1, which requires the City to establish and maintain an interconnected system of open space corridors, easements, trails, public/quasi-public land, and natural areas that preserve sensitive lands, permanent bodies of water, floodways, and slopes over 35 percent and provides for wildlife movement. Trail Network Policies 2.1 through 2.4 require the City to maintain and periodically update a master plan of trails in coordination with adjacent jurisdictions; expand and improve the Escondido Creek Trail; integrate trails into new and existing developments; and establish a continuous network of landscaped pedestrian and bicycle pathways within urbanized areas that provides internal circulation and links Escondido's districts and neighborhoods.

The Growth Management Element includes Public Facility Financing Policies 3.1 and 3.2, which require the City to maintain and periodically update development impact fees and major infrastructure financing programs and require larger developments to prepare a fiscal impact analysis and a public facilities financing plan. The Economic Prosperity Element includes Wage and Jobs/Housing Policies 2.2 through 2.4 which require the City to facilitate increased employment densities in the downtown area, near transit stations, and along transit routes; provide opportunities for a balance of local job and housing opportunities offering a diverse supply of housing types; and provide economic development incentives to businesses that offer high quality job opportunities that result in raising the median income level for Escondido residents. Existing Economic Districts Policies 6.1 and 6.3 would revitalize the Downtown, East Valley Parkway, Centre City Parkway, and Escondido Boulevard commercial areas and coordinate appropriate transportation linkages that facilitate the flow of vehicular, transit, pedestrian, and bicycle traffic between Escondido's commercial and business centers to facilitate access and customer activity.

Proposed Downtown Specific Plan Update Policies

The proposed Downtown Specific Plan Update does not include any policies related to conflicts with applicable land use plans, policies, and regulations.

Proposed Escondido Climate Action Plan Reduction Measures

The proposed E-CAP does not include any measures related to conflicts with applicable land use plans, policies, and regulations.

Summary

The proposed project would not result in conflicts with applicable land use plans, policies, and regulations. Impacts related to the General Plan Update, Downtown Specific Plan Update, and E-CAP would be less than significant.

4.10.3.3 Issue 3: Conflicts with HCPs or NCCPs

Guidelines for Determination of Significance

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines and existing City policies and regulations, the proposed project would be considered to have a significant impact if it would conflict with any applicable HCP, NCCP or the adopted County of San Diego MSCP.

Impact Analysis

Growth under the proposed Downtown Specific Plan Update would be consistent with the growth identified for the General Plan Update; therefore, the following analysis pertains to both the General Plan Update and the Downtown Specific Plan Update. Impacts related to implementation of the E-CAP are discussed separately below.

General Plan Update and Downtown Specific Plan #9 Update

Refer to Section 4.4.3.6, Issue 6: Habitat Conservation Plans and NCCPs, in Section 4.4, Biological Resources, for detailed discussions of the project's consistency with applicable adopted HCPs and NCCPs. As discussed in this section, the MSCP South County Subarea Plan is the only adopted habitat plan that applies to the Escondido General Plan Update planning area. Future development in the southwest area of the General Plan Update planning area within the South County MSCP Subarea Plan would be required to comply with the mitigation requirements of this plan. Drafts of the Escondido MHCP Subarea Plan and North County MSCP Subarea Plan have been prepared which pertain to areas under the General Plan Update. However, neither of these plans has been adopted.

Escondido Climate Action Plan

Implementation of the E-CAP would not result in development within the proposed project boundary beyond the land uses that would be accommodated under the General Plan Update and Downtown Specific Plan Update. The E-CAP measures would be implemented as part of development consistent with the General Plan Update. Development would be required to comply with the applicable MSCP or MHCP, if adopted. Therefore, E-CAP would not result in any conflicts with HCPs and NCCPs beyond those identified for physical development under the General Plan Update and Downtown Specific Plan Update. E-CAP impacts related to HCPs and NCCPs would be less than significant.

Federal, State, and Local Regulations and Existing Regulatory Processes

There are no state and/or federal regulations that apply to this issue. The local MHCP and MSCP that are relevant to this issue are discussed above. Additionally, the City's EQRs require that appropriate mitigation measures are implemented for projects that would potentially impact sensitive biological resources. Once adopted, MHCP or MSCP subarea plan mitigation ratios would apply.

Proposed General Plan Update Policies

The proposed Resource Conservation Element includes Biological and Open Space Resources Policies 1.7 and 1.8, which requires the preparation of a biological survey for development projects that would have a potentially significant impact to biological resources. In the event that significant biological resources are adversely affected by a proposed development project, appropriate state and federal agencies must be consulted to determine adequate mitigation for replacement of the resource. The South County MSCP Subarea Plan mitigation requirements have been approved by state and federal agencies and are the applicable mitigation ratios for projects within the plan area. Once adopted, the Escondido MHCP Subarea Plan or North County MSCP Subarea Plan would identify mitigation ratios approved by state and federal agencies and would be considered the appropriate mitigation ratios for projects within these plan areas. Additionally, within the Land Use and Community Form Element, Environmental Review Policies 18.1 through 18.4 require project conformance with CEQA, the General Plan, facilities plans, and quality of life standards; mitigation of environmental impacts; and an update of environmental thresholds in sensitive areas.

Proposed Downtown Specific Plan #9 Update Policies

The proposed Downtown Specific Plan Update does not include any policies related to conflicts with adopted HCPs and NCCPs.

Proposed Escondido Climate Action Plan Reduction Measures

The proposed E-CAP does not include any measures related to conflicts with adopted HCPs and NCCPs.

Summary

Future development projects proposed under the General Plan Update and Downtown Specific Plan would comply with all applicable, adopted HCPs and NCCPs. The E-CAP would not result in development within the proposed project boundary beyond the land uses that would be accommodated under the General Plan Update and Downtown Specific Plan Update. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

4.10.4 Cumulative Impacts

The geographic scope of cumulative impact analysis for land use is the northern San Diego County region, including jurisdictions adjacent to the General Plan Update boundary.

Issue 1: Physical Division of an Established Community

Cumulative projects would include the construction of new or widened roadways, airports, railroad tracks, open space areas, or other features that would individually have the potential to physically divide an established community. In addition to these larger projects, smaller cumulative projects could have the effect of providing a barrier to access that would physically divide a community. Such impacts would generally be limited to an individual community and would not be cumulative in nature. Multiple projects in the same community could combine to result in a cumulative effect to the division of that community. Cumulative projects in adjacent cities and the County would be required to comply with applicable land use plans. The proposed project does not propose any new land uses or infrastructure projects that would divide established communities, including roadways. Therefore, in combination with other cumulative projects, the proposed project would result in a less than significant cumulative impact.

Issue 2: Conflicts with Land Use Plans, Policies, and Regulations

The cumulative projects in the San Diego region would have the potential to result in a cumulative impact if they would, in combination, conflict with existing land use plans, policies, and regulations adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental impact. Similar to the proposed project, cumulative projects in the northern San Diego County region would utilize regional planning documents such as the RCP and RTP during planning, and the general plans of adjacent jurisdictions and counties would be consistent with the regional plans, to the extent that they are applicable. Cumulative projects in these jurisdictions would be required to comply with the applicable land use plan or they would not be approved. As discussed above, implementation of the proposed project would not conflict with existing land use plans, policies, or regulations of agencies with jurisdiction over the project adopted. Therefore, the proposed project would not contribute to a significant cumulative impact.

Issue 3: Conflicts with HCPs or NCCPs

As described in Section 4.4.4, Issue 6: Habitat Conservation Plans and NCCPs, in Section 4.4, Biological Resources, cumulative projects in the region would not result in a significant cumulative impact associated with conflicts with applicable HCPs or NCCPs. Therefore, the proposed project would not contribute to a significant cumulative impact. See Section 4.4.4 for a more detailed discussion.

4.10.5 Significance of Impact Prior to Mitigation

The proposed project would not result in potentially significant impacts associated with the physical division of an established community or conflicts with local plans, policies, regulations, or applicable HCPs and NCCPs.

4.10.6 Mitigation

Issue 1: Physical Division of an Established Community

Impacts associated with the physical division of an established community would be less than significant; therefore, no mitigation is necessary.

Issue 2: Conflict with Land Use Plans, Policies, and Regulations

Impacts associated with conflicts with applicable land use plans, policies, or regulations would be less than significant; therefore, no mitigation is necessary.

Issue 3: Conflict with HCPs or NCCPs

Impacts associated with conflicts with adopted HCPs and NCCPs would be less than significant; therefore, no mitigation is necessary.

4.10.7 Conclusion

The discussion below provides a synopsis of the conclusion reached in each of the above impact analyses, and the level of impact that would occur after mitigation measures are implemented.

Issue 1: Physical Division of an Established Community

Implementation of the proposed project would not physically divide an established community. Therefore, a potentially significant impact would not occur. In addition, the proposed project would not contribute to a significant cumulative impact associated with physical division of established communities.

Issue 2: Conflicts with Land Use Plans, Policies, and Regulations

Implementation of the proposed project would not conflict with applicable land use plans, policies, and regulations. Therefore, a potentially significant impact would not occur. In addition, the proposed

project would not contribute to a significant cumulative impact associated with conflicts with land use plans, policies or regulations.

Issue 3: Conflicts with HCPs or NCCPs

Implementation of the proposed project would conflict with any applicable HCP or NCCP. Therefore, a potentially significant impact would not occur. Additionally, the proposed project would not contribute to a significant cumulative impact associated with conflicts with HCPs or NCCPs.