

LANCASTER EAST SIDE PROJECT

PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT
PROGRAM ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

APRIL 2023

PREPARED FOR



PREPARED BY

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INTERNATIONAL

**PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT
PROGRAM ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT**

Lancaster East Side Project

SCH NO. 2022100641

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1.0 Executive Summary



1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 PROJECT LOCATION

The City of Lancaster (City) is located in the Antelope Valley in northern Los Angeles County (County), approximately 70 miles north of downtown Los Angeles. Unincorporated Los Angeles County surrounds the City on all sides. Additional surrounding jurisdictions include unincorporated Kern County further to the north and the City of Palmdale to the south.

The Antelope Valley Freeway (State Route 14) provides primary regional connectivity between the Antelope Valley and Greater Los Angeles area. Various arterials in the City also serve regional functions. Avenue D (State Route 138) extends west from SR-14, and connects to the Golden State Freeway (Interstate 5), and extends east from the City of Palmdale, connecting with Interstate 15. Sierra Highway links Lancaster with the community of Rosamond to the north and the City of Palmdale to the south.

The project site encompasses an approximately 5,841-acre area identified as the East Side Overlay Zone. The proposed overlay zone is generally bound by Avenue J to the north, 110th Street East to the east, Avenue L to the south, and 40th Street East to the west.

1.2 PROJECT SUMMARY

The City is proposing to establish an East Side Overlay Zone in the eastern portion of Lancaster. Specifically, the overlay zone would encompass approximately 5,841 acres generally bound by Avenue J to the north, 110th Street East to the east, Avenue L to the south, and 40th Street East to the west. An overlay zone is a zoning district which is applied over one or more previously established zoning districts, establishing additional or stricter standards and criteria for covered properties in addition to those of the underlying zoning district.

In addition to the permitted uses under the existing RR-2.5 (Rural Residential, 1 du/ac) and R-7,000 (Single Family Residential, minimum lot size 7,000 square feet) zones, the overlay zone would allow additional uses. Generally, the proposed overlay zone would permit new light industrial uses such as alcohol production, contractor storage yards, and research and development. Other new uses subject to conditional use permits include alternative energy uses; automobile repair; building trades and related uses; distribution; food manufacturing, processing, wholesale sales, and storage; light manufacturing; and warehousing. The overlay zone also provides development standards related to parking, height, noise, and other additional standards for the light industrial uses.

1.3 PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Pursuant to Section 15124(b) of the *CEQA Guidelines*, the EIR project description must include “[a] statement of objectives sought by the proposed project. The statement of objectives should include the underlying purpose of the project.” The proposed project objectives are outlined below:



1. Increase flexibility in allowed uses and development potential in the eastern portion of Lancaster beyond currently allowed uses under the RR-2.5 (Rural Residential, 1 du/ac) zone.
2. Incentivize new light industrial development to occur in the underutilized eastern portion of the City.
3. Encourage new development in Lancaster that provides economic benefits to the City and its residents.
4. Ensure that a variety of sites are available for a diversity of light industrial users.
5. Provide light industrial-based employment-generating lands which are highly accessible and compatible with other uses in the community.

1.4 ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES/MITIGATION SUMMARY

The following summarizes the impacts, mitigation measures, and significance after mitigation analyzed in Section 5.0, *Environmental Analysis*, of this EIR. Refer to the appropriate EIR Section for detailed information.

EIR Section	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
5.1	Land Use and Planning		
	LU-1: Project implementation could conflict with applicable General Plan policies.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	LU-2: Project implementation could conflict with Lancaster Municipal Code standards or regulations.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	LU-3: Project implementation could conflict with SCAG's 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy goals.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	Cumulative Impacts: The proposed project, combined with other related projects, could conflict with land use plans, policies or regulations adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
5.2	Aesthetics/Light and Glare		
	AES-1: Project implementation could have a substantial adverse impact on a scenic vista.	<p>AES-1 Prior to development of structures within the visual buffer area of Little Rock Wash, as illustrated on General Plan Master Environmental Assessment Figure 12-1, <i>Scenic Resources</i>, a site-specific visual impact assessment shall be prepared to determine specific design features to implement to maintain the visual integrity of Little Rock Wash. Specific design features can include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designing structures to blend in with the natural palette of Little Rock Wash; • Placing structures furthest away from Little Rock Wash or locating new 	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.



EIR Section	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
		<p>structures on portions of the site that do not interfere with existing views of Little Rock Wash; and/or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Including visual buffers such as landscaping between structures and Little Rock Wash. <p>The City of Lancaster Community Development Department shall ensure that design features and recommendations provided in the visual impact assessment shall be incorporated into the plans and specifications for future development within the Little Rock Wash visual buffer area.</p>	
	AES-2: Project implementation could substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings in non-urbanized areas and could conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality in urban areas.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	AES-3: Project implementation could create new sources of light and glare, which could adversely affect day or nighttime views.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	Cumulative Impacts: The project, combined with other cumulative projects, could result in significant impacts to scenic vistas.	Refer to Mitigation Measure AES-1.	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.
	Cumulative Impacts: The project, combined with other cumulative projects, could conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	Cumulative Impacts: The project, combined with other cumulative projects, could create a new source of substantial light or glare, which could adversely affect day or nighttime views in the City.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
5.3	Agriculture and Forestry Resources		
	AG-1: Project implementation could potentially result in the conversion of land mapped as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance to non-agricultural uses or other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest uses.	<p>AG-1 Development of a future light industrial use in accordance with the East Side Overlay Zone that converts land mapped as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency to non-agricultural use(s), shall mitigate such impacts through the permanent preservation of off-site agricultural land within the County of Los Angeles of equal or better agricultural quality, at a ratio of 1:1 for net acreage before conversion, through one of the following methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding and purchase of agricultural conservation easements (to be managed and maintained by an appropriate entity); 	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.



EIR Section	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase of credits from an established agricultural farmland mitigation bank; • Contribution of agricultural land or equivalent funding to an organization that provides for the preservation of farmland; • Participation in any agricultural land mitigation program that provides equal or more effective mitigation than the measures listed above; or • Evidence that all of the foregoing measures are infeasible. <p>Prior to issuance of a grading or building permit, the project Applicant shall provide to the City of Lancaster Community Development Department written evidence of the completion of the implemented off-site permanent preservation method(s) or that such preservation is infeasible.</p>	
	Cumulative Impacts: The proposed project, in conjunction with cumulative development, could result in cumulatively considerable impacts to agricultural resources.	Refer to Mitigation Measure AG-1.	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.
5.4	Biological Resources		
	BIO-1: The proposed project could potentially result in a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.	BIO-1 Each future development within the overlay zone subject to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review (meaning, subject to discretionary action and non-exempt from CEQA) shall be screened by the City of Lancaster Community Development Department to determine whether a Biological Resources Assessment is required. Screening shall consider the type of project and project site conditions. If the site is fully developed with no existing vegetation, then a Biological Resources Assessment shall not be required. If the site has existing vegetation on-site and/or is undeveloped and vacant, prior to issuance of any permits required to conduct ground disturbing activities, the City may require a Biological Resources Assessment be prepared by a qualified biologist for review and approval by the City of Lancaster Community Development Department. The assessment shall include biological field survey(s) of the project site to characterize the extent and quality of habitat that would be impacted by development. The potential presence of special-status species on-site may support conducting focused plant or wildlife species surveys. Surveys shall be conducted by qualified biologists and/or botanists in accordance with California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and/or United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) survey protocols for target species. If no special status/sensitive species, sensitive habitats/natural communities, or federally	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.



EIR Section	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
		<p>protected wetlands are observed during the field survey, then no further mitigation will be required. If biological resources are documented on the project site, the project proponent shall comply with the applicable requirements of the regulatory agencies and shall apply mitigation determined through the agency permitting process.</p> <p>BIO-2 Should a future project require the removal of western Joshua trees (<i>Yucca brevifolia brevifolia</i>; a State Candidate species for listing), an accurate census of the number of trees to be impacted shall be conducted by a qualified biologist in accordance with California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) protocols. The census report shall be submitted for review and approval by the City of Lancaster Community Development Department. An Incidental Take Permit shall also be obtained from the CDFW prior to any ground-disturbing activities that may adversely affect the western Joshua tree.</p> <p>BIO-3 If suitable habitat for burrowing owl is observed during the biological field survey conducted as part of Mitigation Measure BIO-1, two separate pre-construction burrowing owl clearance surveys shall be conducted prior to any vegetation removal or ground disturbing activities. One survey shall be conducted no less than 14 days prior to disturbance and the other survey within 24 hours prior to ground disturbance. The survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist and in accordance with the methods outlined in the <i>Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation</i> (California Department of Fish and Game 2012). Documentation of surveys and findings shall be submitted to the City of Lancaster Community Development Department for review and file. If no burrowing owls or occupied burrows are detected, project activities may begin, and no additional avoidance and minimization measures shall be required. If an occupied burrow is found outside, but within 500 feet, of the development footprint, the qualified biologist shall establish a “no-disturbance” buffer around the burrow location(s). The size of the “no-disturbance” buffer shall be determined in consultation with California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and be based on the species status (i.e., breeding, non-breeding) and proposed level of disturbance. If an occupied burrow is found within the development footprint and cannot be avoided, a burrowing owl exclusion and mitigation plan shall be prepared and submitted to CDFW for approval prior to initiating project activities.</p>	



EIR Section	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
	BIO-2: Project implementation could potentially have a substantial adverse effect on riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.	Refer to Mitigation Measure BIO-1.	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.
	BIO-3: The project could have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means.	BIO-4 Each future development within the overlay zone subject to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review (meaning, subject to discretionary action and non-exempt from CEQA) shall be screened by the City of Lancaster Community Development Department to determine whether a formal jurisdictional delineation is required. Screening shall consider the type of project and project site conditions. If there is no presence for any potential jurisdictional resource(s), then a formal jurisdictional delineation shall not be required. If the site has the potential for jurisdictional resources to occur on-site, prior to issuance of any permits required to conduct ground disturbing activities, the City may require a formal jurisdiction delineation to be conducted by a qualified biologist to confirm the presence or absence of any identified aquatic features, including features not visible via aerial imagery. The jurisdictional delineation shall determine the extent of State and Federal jurisdictional areas. The formal jurisdictional delineation shall be submitted for review, approval, and final determination of jurisdictional limits by the City of Lancaster Development Services Department, Community Development Division and applicable regulatory agency(ies) (i.e., U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Regional Water Quality Control Board, and/or California Department of Fish and Wildlife).	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.
	BIO-4: The project could interfere substantially with the movement of native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors or impede the use of wildlife nursery sites.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	Cumulative Impacts: The proposed project, in conjunction with cumulative development, could result in cumulatively considerable impacts to candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.	Refer to Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-3.	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.
	Cumulative Impacts: The project, in conjunction with cumulative projects, could result in cumulatively considerable impacts to riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California	Refer to Mitigation Measure BIO-1.	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.



EIR Section	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
	Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.		
	Cumulative Impacts: The project, in conjunction with cumulative projects, could result in cumulatively considerable impacts to federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means.	Refer to Mitigation Measure BIO-4.	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.
	Cumulative Impacts: The project, in conjunction with cumulative projects, could result in cumulatively considerable impacts to the movement of native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migrator wildlife corridors, or impede the use of wildlife nursery sites.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
5.5	Tribal and Cultural Resources		
	CUL-1: The project could cause significant impacts to historical resources.	CUL-1 Each future development within the overlay zone subject to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review (meaning, subject to discretionary action and non-exempt from CEQA) shall be screened by the City of Lancaster Community Development Department to determine whether a Phase I Cultural Resources Study is required. Screening shall consider the type of project and whether ground disturbances are proposed. Ground disturbances include activities such as grading, excavation, trenching, boring, or demolition that extend below the current grade. If there will be no ground disturbance, then a Phase I Cultural Resources Study shall not be required. If there will be ground disturbance, prior to issuance of any permits required to conduct ground disturbing activities, the City may require a Phase I Cultural Resources Study be prepared by a qualified archaeologist and/or architectural historian meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards for archaeology, architectural history, and/or history. The study shall include an identification effort including, at minimum, a South Central Coastal Information Center records search, literature review, field survey, interested parties consultation, and buried site sensitivity analysis. Any cultural resource greater than 45 years of age that may be impacted by the project shall be evaluated for their eligibility for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources and/or National Register of Historic Places. Additional mitigation measures may be developed depending on the results of the study.	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.
	CUL-2: The project could cause a significant impact to archaeological resources.	Refer to Mitigation Measure CUL-1.	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.



EIR Section	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
			Mitigation Incorporated.
	<p>CUL-3: The project could cause a significant impact to tribal cultural resources.</p>	<p>TCR-1 In the event that cultural resources are discovered during future light industrial developments in accordance with the East Side Overlay Zone, all work in the immediate vicinity of the find (within a 60-foot buffer) shall cease and a qualified archaeologist meeting Secretary of Interior standards shall be hired to assess the find. Work on the other portions of the project site outside of the buffered area may continue during this assessment period. Additionally, tribes in which the project site is within their ancestral region of occupation shall be contacted, as detailed within Mitigation Measure TCR-4, regarding any pre-contact and/or historic-era finds and be provided information after the archaeologist makes his/her initial assessment of the nature of the find, so as to provide tribal input with regards to significance and treatment.</p> <p>TCR-2 If significant pre-contact and/or historic-era cultural resources, as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (as amended, 2015), are discovered during implementation of future light industrial developments in accordance with the East Side Overlay Zone and avoidance cannot be ensured, the archaeologist shall develop a Monitoring and Treatment Plan, the drafts of which shall be provided to tribes in which the project site is within their ancestral region of occupation for review and comment, as detailed within Mitigation Measure TCR-4. The archaeologist shall monitor the remainder of the project and implement the Plan accordingly.</p> <p>TCR-3 If human remains or funerary objects are encountered during any activities associated with future light industrial projects associated with the East Side Overlay Zone, work in the immediate vicinity (within a 100-foot buffer of the find) shall cease and the County Coroner shall be contacted pursuant to State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 and that code enforced for the duration of the project.</p> <p>TCR-4 Tribes in which the project site is within their ancestral region of occupation shall be contacted, as detailed in Mitigation Measure TCR-1, of any pre-contact and/or historic-era cultural resources discovered during project implementation and be provided information regarding the nature of the find, so as to provide tribal input with regards to significance and treatment. Should the find be deemed significant, as defined by the California Environmental Quality</p>	<p>Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.</p>



EIR Section	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
		<p>Act (CEQA) (as amended, 2015), a cultural resources Monitoring and Treatment Plan (Plan) shall be created by the archaeologist, in coordination with tribes in which the project site is within their ancestral region of occupation, and all subsequent finds shall be subject to this Plan. This Plan shall allow for monitor(s) to be present that represent tribes in which the project site is within their ancestral region of occupation for the remainder of the project, should such tribes elect to place monitor(s) on-site.</p> <p>TCR-5 Any and all archaeological/cultural documents created as a part of the future development projects in accordance with the East Side Overlay Zone (e.g., isolate records, site records, survey reports, testing reports, etc.) shall be disseminated to tribes in which the project site is within their ancestral region of occupation. The City of Lancaster Community Development Department shall, in good faith, consult with such tribes throughout the life of the project.</p>	
	Cumulative Impacts: The proposed project, combined with other related projects, could result in cumulatively considerable impacts to historical resources.	Refer to Mitigation Measure CUL-1.	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.
	Cumulative Impacts: Project implementation in conjunction with other cumulative projects could result in cumulatively considerable impacts to archaeological resources.	Refer to Mitigation Measure CUL-1.	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.
	Cumulative Impacts: The proposed project, combined with other related projects, could result in cumulatively considerable impacts to a tribal cultural resource.	Refer to Mitigation Measures TCR-1 through TCR-5.	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.
5.6	Geology and Soils		
	GEO-1: Project implementation could expose people and structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving strong seismic ground shaking.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	GEO-2: Project implementation could expose people and structures to substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving liquefaction.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	GEO-3: Project implementation could result in substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	GEO-4: Project implementation could be located on unstable or expansive soils and potentially result in geologic hazards.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	GEO-5: Project implementation could occur on soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.



EIR Section	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
	<p>GEO-6: Project implementation could directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature.</p>	<p>GEO-1 To ensure identification and preservation of paleontological resources within a project site, each future development within the overlay zone subject to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review (meaning, subject to discretionary action and non-exempt from CEQA) shall be screened by the City of Lancaster Community Development Department to determine whether a Paleontological Resources Assessment is required. Screening shall consider the type of project and whether ground disturbances are proposed. Ground disturbances include activities such as grading, excavation, trenching, boring, or demolition that extend below the current grade. If there will be no ground disturbance, then a Paleontological Resources Assessment shall not be required. If there will be ground disturbance, prior to issuance of any permits required to conduct ground disturbing activities, the City may require a Paleontological Resources Assessment be prepared by a qualified paleontologist, defined as a paleontologist who meets the Society of Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP) standards for a Principal Investigator or Project Paleontologist.</p> <p>The Paleontological Resources Assessment shall include and take into account project-specific and local geologic mapping, geotechnical data, and paleontological records search. The Paleontological Resources Assessment shall adhere to and incorporate the performance standards and practices from the current SVP Standard procedures for the assessment and mitigation of adverse impacts to paleontological resources. The qualified paleontologist shall submit the Paleontological Resources Assessment to the City of Lancaster Community Development Department for review and approval before issuance of a grading permit.</p> <p>GEO-2 For projects with ground-disturbing activities at depths greater than four feet, the Applicant shall retain a Society of Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP) qualified paleontologist to provide or supervise a paleontological sensitivity training to all personnel planned to be involved with earth-moving activities, prior to the beginning of ground-disturbing activities. The training session shall focus on how to identify paleontological localities such as fossils that may be encountered and the procedures to follow if identified.</p> <p>GEO-3 Prior to grading or excavation in sedimentary rock material other than topsoil, the Applicant shall retain a Society of Society of</p>	<p>Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.</p>



EIR Section	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
		<p>Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP) qualified paleontologist to monitor these activities at depths of four feet below present grade or greater. In the event that fossils are discovered during grading at any depth, the on-site construction supervisor shall be notified and shall redirect work away from the location of the discovery. The recommendations of the paleontologist shall be implemented with respect to the evaluation and recovery of fossils, after which the on-site construction supervisor shall be notified and shall direct work to continue in the location of the fossil discovery.</p> <p>GEO-4 If discovered fossils are determined to be significant, the Society of Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP) qualified paleontologist shall prepare and implement a data recovery plan. The plan shall include, but not be limited to, the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The paleontologist shall ensure that all significant fossils collected are cleaned, identified, catalogued, and permanently curated with an appropriate institution with a research interest in the materials (which may include the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County); • The paleontologist shall ensure that specialty studies are completed, as appropriate, for any significant fossil collected; and • The paleontologist shall ensure that curation of fossils is completed in consultation with the City of Lancaster Community Development Department. A letter of acceptance from the curation institution shall be submitted to the City of Lancaster Community Development Department. <p>GEO-5 If any paleontological resources are encountered during construction or the course of any ground-disturbance activities, all such activities shall halt immediately. At this time, the Applicant shall notify the City of Lancaster Community Development Department and consult with a qualified paleontologist to assess the significance of the find. The assessment shall follow Society of Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP) standards as delineated in the <i>Standard Procedures for the Assessment and Mitigation of Adverse Impacts to Paleontological Resources</i> (2010). If any find is determined to be significant, appropriate avoidance measures recommended by the paleontologist and approved by City staff must be followed unless avoidance is</p>	



EIR Section	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
		determined to be infeasible by the City of Lancaster Community Development Department. If avoidance is infeasible, other appropriate measures (e.g., data recovery, excavation) shall be instituted.	
	Cumulative Impacts: The proposed project, in conjunction with cumulative development, could expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects involving geology and soils and could impact unknown paleontological resources.	Refer to Mitigation Measures GEO-1 through GEO-5.	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.
5.7	Hydrology and Water Quality		
	HWQ-1: Future development associated with the proposed project could violate water quality standards or waste discharge requirements, or otherwise substantially degrade water quality.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	HWQ-2: Future development associated with the proposed project could decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	HWQ-3: Future development associated with the proposed project could substantially alter the existing drainage patterns of the site or area, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff, in a manner that would result in substantial erosion, siltation, or flooding on- or off-site.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	HWQ-4: Future development associated with the proposed project could risk release of pollutants due to project inundation from flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	HWQ-5: Future development associated with the proposed project could conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	Cumulative Impacts: Future improvements, combined with other related cumulative projects, could violate water quality standards or waste discharge requirements, or otherwise substantially degrade water quality.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	Cumulative Impacts: Future development, combined with other related cumulative projects, could decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	Cumulative Impacts: Future development, combined with other related cumulative projects, could substantially alter the existing drainage patterns of the site or area, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff, in	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.



EIR Section	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
	a manner that would result in substantial erosion, siltation, or flooding on- or off-site.		
	Cumulative Impacts: Future development, combined with other related cumulative projects, could risk release of pollutants due to project inundation from flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	Cumulative Impacts: Future development, combined with other related cumulative projects, could conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
5.8	Hazards and Hazardous Materials		
	HAZ-1: Project implementation could create a significant hazard to the public or environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment, or through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials.	HAZ-1 Each future development within the overlay zone subject to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review (meaning, subject to discretionary action and non-exempt from CEQA) shall be screened by the City of Lancaster Community Development Department to determine whether surveys of asbestos-containing materials (ACM), lead-based paint (LBP), and/or universal waste is required. Screening shall consider whether demolition or disturbance of existing structures constructed between the 1940s and 1970s is required. If no existing structures constructed between the 1940s and 1970s are proposed for demolition or disturbance, then surveys shall not be required. If such structures exist on-site and are proposed for demolition or disturbance, prior to issuance of any demolition permits, the City may require future project Applicants to retain a qualified specialist or contractor to conduct surveys of ACM, LBP, and universal waste and submit the surveys to the Los Angeles County Fire Department Health Hazardous Materials Division (HHMD) for review and comment, and to the City of Lancaster Community Development Director for approval. If ACMs are located, asbestos abatement shall be completed prior to any activities that would disturb ACMs or create an airborne asbestos hazard. Asbestos removal shall be performed by a State-certified asbestos containment contractor in accordance with the Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District's (AVAQMD) Rule 1403. If LBPs are found, abatement shall be completed by a qualified lead specialist prior to any activities that would create lead dust or fume hazard. LBP removal and disposal shall be performed in accordance with California Code of Regulation Title 8, Section 1532.1, which specifies exposure limits, exposure monitoring and respiratory protection, and mandates good worker practices by workers exposed to lead. Specialists or contractors performing ACM, LBP, and/or universal waste	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.



EIR Section	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
		<p>removal shall provide evidence of abatement activities to the HHMD and Community Development Director. The project Applicant shall inform the Community Development Director, via monthly compliance reports, of the date when all ACMs, LBPs, and/or universal waste are removed from the project site.</p> <p>HAZ-2 If unknown wastes or suspect materials are discovered during construction activities associated with future development that are believed to involve hazardous waste or materials, the construction contractor shall implement the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediately cease work in the vicinity of the suspected contaminant, and remove workers and the public from the area; • Notify the City of Lancaster Community Development Director; • Secure the area as directed by the City of Lancaster Community Development Director; and • Notify the implementing agency's Hazardous Waste/Materials Coordinator (e.g., Los Angeles County Fire Department, Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board, and/or Department of Toxic Substances Control, as applicable). The Hazardous Waste/Materials Coordinator shall advise the responsible party of further actions that shall be taken, if required. 	
	HAZ-2: Project implementation could emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing school.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	HAZ-3: Future developments associated with implementation of the proposed project could be located on a hazardous material sites pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and create a significant hazard to the public or the environment.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	HAZ-4: Project implementation could create a significant hazard to the public or environment through interference with an adopted emergency response or evacuation plan.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	Cumulative Impacts: Project implementation, combined with other related projects, could create a significant hazard to the public or environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the	Refer to Mitigation Measures HAZ-1 and HAZ-2.	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.



EIR Section	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
	environment, or through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials.		
	Cumulative Impacts: The proposed project, combined with other related projects, could emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing school.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	Cumulative Impacts: The proposed project, combined with other related projects, could be located on a hazardous material sites pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and result in cumulatively considerable impacts to the public or the environment.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	Cumulative Impacts: The proposed project, combined with other related projects, could create a significant hazard to the public or environment through interference with an adopted emergency response or evacuation plan.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
5.9	Population and Housing		
	PH-1: Future development associated with the proposed project could potentially induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly or indirectly.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	Cumulative Impacts: Project implementation, combined with other related projects, could induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly or indirectly.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
5.10	Public Services and Recreation		
	PS-1: Future development associated with the proposed project could result in the need for additional fire protection facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	PS-2: Future development associated with the proposed project could result in the need for additional police protection facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	PS-3: Future development associated with the proposed project could potentially result in the need for additional school facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable performance objectives.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	PS-4: Future development associated with the proposed project could potentially result in the need for additional parks and recreational facilities and/or the increased use of existing neighborhood and regional parks such that	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.



EIR Section	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
	substantial physical deterioration could occur or be accelerated.		
	PS-5: Future development associated with the proposed project could potentially result in the need for additional public library facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable performance objectives.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	Cumulative Impacts: The proposed project, in conjunction with cumulative development, could create increased demand for fire protection services that could cause significant environmental impacts.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	Cumulative Impacts: The proposed project, in conjunction with cumulative development, could create increased demand for police protection services that could cause significant environmental impacts.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	Cumulative Impacts: The proposed project, in conjunction with cumulative development, could create increased demand for school services and facilities that could cause significant environmental impacts.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	Cumulative Impacts: The proposed project, in conjunction with cumulative development, could create increased demand for parks and recreational facilities that could cause significant environmental impacts.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	Cumulative Impacts: The proposed project, in conjunction with cumulative development, could create increased demand for other public facilities (i.e., library facilities) that could cause significant environmental impacts.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
5.11	Utilities and Service Systems		
	USS-1: Project implementation could have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years, and would not require or result in the construction of new water supply facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	USS-2: Project implementation could result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments, exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable regional water quality control board, or result in the construction of new wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.



EIR Section	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
	USS-3: Project implementation could require the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or the expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	USS-4: Project implementation could be served by existing landfills with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs and comply with federal, State, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	USS-5: Project implementation could result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded dry utility facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	Cumulative Impacts: Project implementation, in conjunction with cumulative development, could result in cumulatively considerable impacts to water supply and distribution.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	Cumulative Impacts: Project implementation, in conjunction with cumulative development, could result in cumulatively considerable impacts to wastewater treatment facilities.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	Cumulative Impacts: Project implementation, in conjunction with cumulative development, could increase demand for stormwater drainage facilities.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	Cumulative Impacts: Project implementation, in conjunction with cumulative development, could create increased demand for solid waste generation that could cause significant environmental impacts.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	Cumulative Impacts: Project implementation, in conjunction with cumulative development, could create increased demand for dry utility services that could cause significant environmental impacts.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
5.12	Transportation		
	TRA-1: Project implementation could conflict with a program plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	TRA-2: Project implementation could conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b).	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	TRA-3: Project implementation could substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment).	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	TRA-4: Project implementation could result in inadequate emergency access.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.



EIR Section	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
	Cumulative Impacts: The proposed project, in conjunction with cumulative development, could conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	Cumulative Impacts: The proposed project, in conjunction with cumulative development, could conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b).	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	Cumulative Impacts: The proposed project, in conjunction with cumulative development, could substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or introduce incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment).	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	Cumulative Impacts: The proposed project, in conjunction with cumulative development, could result in inadequate emergency access.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
5.13	Air Quality		
	AQ-1: Short-term construction activities associated with the proposed project could result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or State ambient air quality standard.	<p>AQ-1 Prior to issuance of any grading permit for future light industrial projects developed in accordance with the East Side Overlay Zone and subject to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review (meaning, subject to discretionary action and non-exempt under CEQA), the City of Lancaster Community Development Department shall confirm that the Grading Plan, Building Plans, and specifications require that ozone precursor emissions from construction equipment vehicles shall be controlled by maintaining equipment engines in good condition and in proper tune per manufacturer's specifications.</p> <p>AQ-2 Future light industrial projects developed in accordance with the East Side Overlay Zone and subject to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review (meaning, subject to discretionary action and non-exempt under CEQA) shall submit a Construction Management Plan to the City of Lancaster Public Works Director prior to the issuance of a grading permit. To reduce traffic congestion during temporary construction activities, a Traffic Control Plan shall include, as deemed necessary by the Public Works Director, the following: temporary traffic controls such as a flag person during all phases of construction to maintain smooth traffic flow, dedicated turn lanes for movement of construction trucks and equipment on- and off-site, scheduling of construction activities that affect traffic flow on the arterial system to off-peak hour, consolidating truck deliveries, rerouting of construction trucks away from congested streets or sensitive receptors, and/or signal synchronization</p>	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.



EIR Section	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
		to improve traffic flow. Traffic control devices included in the Traffic Control Plan shall be developed in compliance with the requirements of the most current standards. The Construction Management Plan shall also include construction phasing, personnel parking, and material storage areas that will all contribute to reducing traffic congestion.	
	AQ-2: Implementation of the proposed project could result in increased impacts pertaining to operational air emissions.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	AQ-3: Development associated with implementation of the proposed project could result in localized emissions impacts or expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.	Refer to Mitigation Measures AQ-1 and AQ-2, and: AQ-3 Prior to any ground disturbance activities associated with construction of future light industrial projects developed in accordance with the East Side Overlay Zone, the project operator shall provide evidence to the Director of Community Development that the project operator and/or construction manager has developed a "Valley Fever Training Handout" training and schedule of sessions for education to be provided to all construction personnel. All evidence of the training session materials, handout(s), and schedule shall be submitted to the Director of Community Development within 24 hours of the first training session. Multiple training sessions may be conducted if different work crews come to the site for different stages of construction; however, all construction personnel shall be provided training prior to beginning work. The evidence submitted to the Director of Community Development regarding the "Valley Fever Training Handout" and session(s) shall include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A sign-in sheet (to include the printed employee names, signature, and date) for all employees who attended the training session. • Distribution of a written flier or brochure that includes educational information regarding the health effects of exposure to criteria pollutant emissions and Valley Fever. • Training on methods that may help prevent Valley Fever infection. • A demonstration to employees on how to use personal protective equipment, such as respiratory equipment (masks), to reduce exposure to pollutants and facilitate recognition of symptoms and earlier treatment of Valley Fever. Where respirators are required, the equipment shall be readily available and shall be provided to employees for use during work. Proof that 	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.



EIR Section	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
		<p>the demonstration is included in the training shall be submitted to the Director of Community Development. This proof can be via printed training materials/agenda, DVD, digital media files, or photographs.</p> <p>The project operator also shall consult with the Los Angeles County Public Health to develop a Valley Fever Dust Management Plan (Plan) that addresses the potential presence of the Coccidioides spore and mitigates for the potential for Coccidioidomycosis (Valley Fever). Prior to issuance of permits, the project operator shall submit the Plan to the Los Angeles County Public Health for review and approval. The Plan shall include a program to evaluate the potential for exposure to Valley Fever from construction activities and to identify appropriate safety procedures that shall be implemented, as needed, to minimize personnel and public exposure to potential Coccidioides spores. Measures in the Plan shall include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide High Efficiency Particulate (HEP)-filters for heavy equipment equipped with factory enclosed cabs capable of accepting the filters. Require contractors utilizing applicable heavy equipment to furnish proof of worker training on proper use of applicable heavy equipment cabs (e.g., turning on the air conditioning prior to using the equipment). • Provide communication methods, such as two-way radios, for use in enclosed cabs. • Require National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)-approved half-face respirators equipped with minimum N-95 protection factor for use during worker collocation with surface disturbance activities, as required per the hazard assessment process. • Require employees to be medically evaluated, fit-tested, and properly trained on the use of the respirators, and implement a full respiratory protection program in accordance with the applicable Cal/OSHA Respiratory Protection Standard (8 CCR 5144). • Provide separate, clean eating areas with hand-washing facilities. • Install equipment inspection stations at each construction equipment access/egress point. Examine construction vehicles and equipment for excess soil material and 	



EIR Section	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
		<p>clean, as necessary, before equipment is moved off-site.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train workers to recognize the symptoms of Valley Fever, and to promptly report suspected symptoms of work-related Valley Fever to a supervisor. • Work with a medical professional to develop a protocol to medically evaluate employees who develop symptoms of Valley Fever. • Work with a medical professional, in consultation with the Los Angeles County Public Health, to develop an educational handout for on-site workers and surrounding residents within three miles of the project site and include the following information on Valley Fever: what are the potential sources/causes, what are the common symptoms, what are the options or remedies available should someone be experiencing these symptoms, and where testing for exposure is available. Prior to construction permit issuance, this handout shall have been created by the project operator and reviewed by the project operator and reviewed by the Director of Community Development. No less than 30 days prior to any work commencing, this handout shall be mailed to all existing residences within three miles of the project boundaries. • When possible, position workers upwind or crosswind when digging a trench or performing other soil-disturbing tasks. • Prohibit smoking at the worksite outside of designated smoking areas; designated smoking areas shall be equipped with handwashing facilities. • Post warnings on-site and consider limiting access to visitors, especially those without adequate training and respiratory protection. • Audit and enforce compliance with relevant Cal/OSHA health and safety standards on the job site. 	
	AQ-4: Implementation of the proposed project could conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan.	Refer to Mitigation Measures AQ-1 through AQ-3.	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.
	AQ-5: Implementation of the proposed project could create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	Cumulative Impacts: Short-term construction activities associated with the proposed project and other related cumulative projects, could result in increased air pollutant emission impacts or expose sensitive receptors to increased pollutant concentrations.	Refer to Mitigation Measures AQ-1 through AQ-3.	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.



EIR Section	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
	Cumulative Impacts: Implementation of the proposed project and other related cumulative projects could result in increased impacts pertaining to operational air emissions.	No mitigation measures are required.	No Impact.
	Cumulative Impacts: Implementation of the proposed project and cumulative projects could result in cumulatively considerable carbon monoxide hotspot impacts.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	Cumulative Impacts: Implementation of the proposed project and related projects could result in cumulatively considerable inconsistencies with the applicable air quality plan.	Refer to Mitigation Measures AQ-1 through AQ-3.	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.
	Cumulative Impacts: Implementation of the proposed project and related projects could result in cumulatively considerable odor impacts.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
5.14	Greenhouse Gas Emissions		
	GHG-1: Greenhouse gas emissions generated by the project could have a significant impact on global climate change.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	GHG-2: Implementation of the proposed project could conflict with an applicable greenhouse gas reduction plan, policy, or regulation.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	Cumulative Impacts: Greenhouse gas emissions generated by the project and other related cumulative projects could have a significant impact on global climate change.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	Cumulative Impacts: Implementation of the proposed project and other related cumulative projects could conflict with an applicable greenhouse gas reduction plan, policy, or regulation.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
5.15	Energy		
	EN-1: The project could result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	EN-2: The project could conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	Cumulative Impacts: Implementation of the project and other cumulative projects could result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	Cumulative Impacts: Implementation of the project and other cumulative projects could conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
5.16	Noise		
	NOI-1: Construction-related activities associated with project implementation could result in substantial temporary noise impacts to nearby noise sensitive receivers.	NOI-1 Future light industrial projects developed in accordance with the overlay zone and subject to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review (meaning, subject to discretionary action and non-exempt from CEQA) shall ensure, through contract specifications, that construction	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.



EIR Section	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
		<p>best management practices (BMPs) are implemented by construction contractors to reduce construction noise levels for construction activities that are capable of generating substantial construction noise to nearby sensitive receptors. Contract specifications shall be included in construction documents, which shall be reviewed and approved by the City of Lancaster Community Development Director prior to issuance of a grading or building permit (whichever is issued first). BMPs to reduce construction noise levels may include, but are not limited to, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that construction equipment is properly muffled according to industry standards and is in good working condition. • Place noise-generating construction equipment and construction staging areas away from sensitive uses. • Construction activities shall occur between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday, pursuant to Section 8.24.040, <i>Loud, unnecessary and unusual noises prohibited - Construction and building</i>, of the Lancaster Municipal Code. • Implement noise attenuation measures, as needed, which may include, but are not limited to, temporary noise barriers or noise blankets around stationary construction noise sources. • Use electric air compressors and similar power tools rather than diesel equipment, where feasible. • Construction-related equipment, including heavy-duty equipment, motor vehicles, and portable equipment, shall be turned off when not in use for more than five minutes. • The construction contractor shall limit haul truck deliveries to the same hours specified for construction equipment (between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday). The haul route exhibit shall design delivery routes to minimize the exposure of sensitive land uses or residential dwellings to delivery truck-related noise. • Construction hours, allowable workdays, and the phone number of the job superintendent shall be clearly posted at all construction entrances to allow surrounding owners and residents 	



EIR Section	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measure	Significance After Mitigation
		to contact the job superintendent. If the City or the job superintendent receives a complaint, the superintendent shall investigate, take appropriate corrective action, and report the action taken to the reporting party and the Community Development Director.	
	NOI-2: Future noise levels associated with implementation of the proposed project could result in a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity and expose persons to or generate noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	NOI-3: Project implementation could result in substantial vibration impacts to nearby sensitive receptors and structures.	NOI-2 Prior to issuance of a grading permit, each new development project associated with the proposed overlay zone and subject to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review (meaning, subject to discretionary action and non-exempt from CEQA) with construction activities requiring operation of groundborne vibration generating equipment (i.e., vibratory compactor/roller, large bulldozer, caisson drilling, loaded trucks, and jackhammer) within 25 feet of an existing structure shall be required to prepare a project-specific vibration impact analysis to evaluate potential construction vibration impacts associated with the project, and to determine any specific vibration control mechanisms that shall be incorporated into the project's construction bid documents to reduce such impacts. Contract specifications shall be included in construction documents, which shall be reviewed and approved by the City of Lancaster Public Works Director.	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.
	Cumulative Impacts: Construction-related activities within the project area could result in significant temporary noise impacts to nearby noise sensitive receivers.	Refer to Mitigation Measure NOI-1.	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.
	Cumulative Impacts: The proposed project could result in a significant increase in traffic and long-term stationary ambient noise levels.	No mitigation measures are required.	Less Than Significant Impact.
	Cumulative Impacts: Project implementation could result in significant vibration impacts to nearby sensitive receptors and structures.	Refer to Mitigation Measure NOI-2.	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.

1.5 SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

As detailed in [Section 5.1](#) through [Section 5.16](#) of this EIR, upon compliance with existing regulations and mitigation measures, project implementation would not result in any significant and unavoidable impacts.



1.6 SUMMARY OF PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

1.6.1 NO PROJECT/EXISTING ZONING ALTERNATIVE

In accordance with the *CEQA Guidelines*, “the no project analysis shall discuss the existing conditions . . . , as well as what would be reasonably expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the project were not approved, based on current plans and consistent with available infrastructure and community services.”¹ The *CEQA Guidelines* continue to state that “in certain instances, the no project alternative means ‘no build’ wherein the existing environmental setting is maintained.”² The No Project/Existing Zoning Alternative includes a discussion and analysis of the existing baseline conditions at the time the Notice of Preparation was published on October 28, 2022. The No Project scenario is described and analyzed to enable the decision-makers to compare the impacts of approving the proposed project with the impacts of not approving the proposed project.

Under the No Project/Existing Zoning Alternative, the East Side Overlay Zone would not be adopted. The current zoning of the project site (RR-2.5 [Rural Residential, 1 du/ac] and R-7,000 [Single Family Residential, minimum lot size 7,000 square feet]) would remain and no light industrial uses would be permitted on the project site. It is assumed that future residential development would continue to occur under the site’s existing RR-2.5 and R-7,000 zoning.

This alternative would reduce environmental impacts related to land use and planning, aesthetics/light and glare, agriculture and forestry resources, biological resources, tribal and cultural resources, geology and soils, hydrology and water quality, hazards and hazardous materials, utilities and service systems, air quality, GHG emissions, energy, and noise. Impacts would be greater with regards to population and housing, public services and recreation, and transportation.

The No Project/Existing Zoning Alternative would not achieve any of the project’s basic objectives. The East Side Overlay Zone would not be adopted under the No Project/Existing Zoning Alternative. Therefore, this alternative would not increase the flexibility in allowed uses and development potential in the project area; the underlying RR-2.5 and R-7,000 zoning would remain and only rural and single-family residential development would be permitted (Project Objective 1). Given that no overlay zone would be adopted, no light industrial uses would be permitted in the underutilized eastern portion of the City (Project Objective 2). Additionally, given that only rural and single-family residential development would be permitted, this alternative would not encourage new development that could provide economic benefits to the City (Project Objective 3). No industrial uses would be permitted in the project area under this alternative (Project Objective 4). Lastly, the No Project/Existing Zoning Alternative would not permit or construct any industrial-base employment-generating uses (Project Objective 5).

¹ *CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)(2)*.

² *CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)(3)(B)*.



1.6.2 LIGHT INDUSTRIAL REZONE ALTERNATIVE

The Light Industrial Rezone Alternative would not involve adopting an overlay zone. Rather, the project site would be entirely redesignated and rezoned to Light Industrial (LI). Specifically, the existing Non-Urban Residential (NU) and Urban Residential (UR) land use designations would be redesignated to the LI designation. The existing RR-2.5 (Rural Residential, 1 du/ac) and R-7,000 (Single Family Residential, minimum lot size 7,000 square feet) zoning would be rezoned to the LI zone.

According to the General Plan, the LI designation and zone is intended for clean, non-polluting industrial and office uses with support commercial with maximum floor area ratios of 0.5. Municipal Code Chapter 17.16, *Industrial Zones*, defines permitted uses and development standards for industrial zones within Lancaster. According to Section 17.16.040, *Permitted Uses – I Zones*, permitted LI zone uses include Automobile, Boat, Equipment, Motorcycle, Truck, Tractor, Service, Repair, Accessories and Parts; Building Trades and Related Uses; Communication Facilities and Services, Public and Private; Manufacturing; Public Safety Facilities and Services; Public Services and Utilities; Research and Development; and Warehousing, among others. Further, it is acknowledged that commercial cannabis uses (e.g., cultivation, manufacturing, distribution, retail sales, delivery, and testing laboratories) are permitted within LI zones in accordance with Municipal Code Chapter 17.43, *Commercial Cannabis Activity*. Anticipated City discretionary approvals for this alternative include a General Plan Amendment and Zone Change.

This alternative would result in similar environmental impacts to all topical areas with the exception of land use and planning which would be greater, and population and housing which would be reduced under this alternative.

The Light Industrial Rezone Alternative would achieve the project's basic objectives but not to the extent of the proposed project. Specifically, this alternative would redesignate and rezone the entire project site to Light Industrial and thus, would increase flexibility in allowed uses in the eastern portion of Lancaster. However, this alternative would remove the existing RR-2.5 zone on-site and thus, would eliminate the flexibility for future rural residential development to also occur in the area. Thus, this alternative would only partially meet Project Objective 1.

This alternative would incentivize new light industrial development to occur in the underutilized eastern portion of the City by redesignating and rezoning the site to Light Industrial (Project Objective 2), encourage new light industrial development to occur in the project area and provide economic benefits to the City and its residents (Project Objective 3), open the eastern portion of Lancaster to future light industrial development (Project Objective 4), and provide industrial-based employment-generating lands in the eastern portion of Lancaster (Project Objective 5).

1.6.3 ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

The No Project/Existing Zoning Alternative is the environmentally superior alternative, as it would avoid or lessen most of the project's environmental impacts. According to *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.6(e), "if the environmentally superior alternative is the 'no project' alternative, the EIR shall



also identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives.” Accordingly, the Light Industrial Rezone Alternative is considered environmentally superior to the proposed project. The Light Industrial Rezone Alternative would be environmentally superior to the proposed project with regards to population and housing, environmentally inferior to the project with regards to land use and planning, and result in similar environmental impacts to the remaining topical areas

The Light Industrial Rezone Alternative would achieve the project’s basic objectives but not to the extent of the proposed project. Specifically, this alternative would redesignate and rezone the entire project site to Light Industrial and thus, would increase flexibility in allowed uses in the eastern portion of Lancaster. However, this alternative would remove the existing RR-2.5 zone on-site and thus, would eliminate the flexibility for future rural residential development to also occur in the area. Thus, this alternative would only partially meet Project Objective 1.

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2.0 Introduction and Purpose



2.0 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

2.1 PURPOSE OF THE EIR

The purpose of this Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is to review the existing conditions, analyze potential environmental impacts, and identify feasible mitigation measures to avoid or lessen the project's potentially significant effects. This EIR addresses the project's environmental effects, in accordance with *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15161. As referenced in *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15121(a), the primary purposes of this EIR are to:

- Inform decision-makers and the public generally of the significant environmental effects of a project;
- Identify possible ways to minimize the significant effects of a project; and
- Describe reasonable alternatives to a project.

The mitigation measures that are specified shall be adopted as conditions of approval to minimize the significance of impacts resulting from the project. In addition, this EIR is the primary reference document in the formulation and implementation of a mitigation monitoring program for the project.

As Lead Agency, the City of Lancaster (which has the principal responsibility of processing and approving the project) and other public (i.e., responsible and trustee) agencies that may use this EIR in the decision-making or permit process will consider the information in this EIR, along with other information that may be presented during the CEQA process. Environmental impacts are not always mitigatable to a level considered less than significant; in those cases, impacts are considered significant unavoidable impacts. In accordance with *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15093(b), if a public agency approves a project that has significant impacts that are not substantially mitigated (i.e., significant unavoidable impacts), the agency must state in writing the specific reasons for approving the project, based on the Final EIR and any other information in the public record for the project. *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15093 requires a "statement of overriding considerations" where the Lead Agency specifies the findings and public benefits for the project that outweigh the impacts.

This EIR analyzes the project's environmental effects to the degree of specificity appropriate to the current proposed actions, as required by *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15146. The analysis considers the activities associated with the project to determine the short- and long-term effects associated with their implementation. This EIR discusses the project's direct and indirect impacts, as well as the cumulative impacts associated with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects at a programmatic level.

This EIR has been prepared as a Program EIR in accordance with *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15168, which states the following:

- a) General. A program EIR is an EIR which may be prepared on a series of actions that can be characterized as one large project and are related either:



- 1) Geographically,
 - 2) As logical parts in the chain of contemplated actions,
 - 3) In connection with issuance of rules, regulations, plans, or other general criteria to govern the conduct of a continuing program, or
 - 4) As individual activities carried out under the same authorizing statutory or regulatory authority and having generally similar environmental effects which can be mitigated in similar ways.
- b) Advantages. Use of a program EIR can provide the following advantages. The program EIR can:
- 1) Provide an occasion for a more exhaustive consideration of effects and alternatives than would be practical in an EIR on an individual action,
 - 2) Ensure consideration of cumulative impacts that might be slighted in a case-by-case analysis,
 - 3) Avoid duplicative reconsideration of basic policy considerations,
 - 4) Allow the Lead Agency to consider broad policy alternatives and program-wide mitigation measures at an early time when the agency has greater flexibility to deal with basic problems or cumulative impacts, and
 - 5) Allow reduction in paperwork.
- c) Use with Later Activities. Subsequent activities in the program must be examined in the light of the program EIR to determine whether an additional environmental document must be prepared.
- 1) If a later activity would have effects that were not examined in the Program EIR, a new Initial Study would need to be prepared leading to either an EIR or a Negative Declaration.
 - 2) If the agency finds that pursuant to Section 15162, no new effects could occur or no new mitigation measures would be required, the agency can approve the activity as being within the scope of the project covered by the program EIR, and no new environmental document would be required.
 - 3) An agency shall incorporate feasible mitigation measures and alternatives developed in the program EIR into subsequent actions in the program.
 - 4) Where the subsequent activities involve site-specific operations, the agency should use a written checklist or similar device to document the evaluation of the site and the activity to determine whether the environmental effects of the operations were covered in the program EIR.
 - 5) A program EIR will be most helpful in dealing with subsequent activities if it deals with the effects of the program as specifically and comprehensively as possible. With a good and detailed analysis of the program, many subsequent activities could be found to be within the scope of the project described in the program EIR, and no further environmental documents would be required.



- d) Use with Subsequent EIRs and Negative Declarations. A program EIR can be used to simplify the task of preparing environmental documents on later parts of the program. The program EIR can:
 - 1) Provide the basis in an Initial Study for determining whether the later activity may have any significant impacts.
 - 2) Be incorporated by reference to deal with regional influences, secondary effects, cumulative impacts, broad alternatives, and other factors that apply to the program as a whole.
 - 3) Focus an EIR on a subsequent project to permit discussion solely of new effects which had not been considered before.

INTENDED USES OF THIS PROGRAM EIR

The City of Lancaster will use this Program EIR analysis to focus later CEQA documents prepared for future projects through the use of tiering. Public Resources Code Section 21068.5 defines “tiering” as “the coverage of general matters and environmental impacts in an environmental impact report [EIR] prepared for a policy, plan, program, or ordinance followed by narrower or site-specific environmental impact reports [EIRs] which incorporate by reference the discussion in any prior environmental impact report [EIR] and which concentrate on the environmental impacts which (a) are capable of being mitigated, or (b) were not analyzed as a significant impact on the environment in the prior environmental impact report [EIR].” *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15152(c) states that when a lead agency is using the tiering process in connection with an EIR for a largescale planning approval, the development of detailed, site-specific information may not be feasible and can be deferred, in many instances, to a project-specific CEQA document. For future light industrial projects in accordance with the proposed Lancaster East Side Overlay, the City will determine the appropriate CEQA document (e.g., Negative Declaration, Mitigated Negative Declaration, or EIR) that would evaluate the environmental impacts of the project being proposed at that time. Future environmental documents analyzing the project being proposed will incorporate this Program EIR by reference and will concentrate on the site-specific issues related to the particular project (*CEQA Guidelines* Section 15152).

2.2 COMPLIANCE WITH CEQA

PUBLIC REVIEW OF THE DRAFT EIR

In accordance with *CEQA Guidelines* Sections 15087 and 15105, this Draft EIR will be circulated for a 45-day public review period. Interested agencies and members of the public are invited to comment in writing on the information contained in this document. Persons and agencies commenting are encouraged to provide information that they believe is missing from the Draft EIR and to identify where the information can be obtained. All comment letters received before the close of the public review period will be responded to in writing, and the comment letters, together with the responses to those comments, will be included in the Final EIR.



Comment letters should be sent to:

Cynthia Campana, Senior Planner
City of Lancaster
Community Development Department
44933 Fern Avenue
Lancaster, California 93534
ccampana@cityoflanasterca.gov

CERTIFICATION OF THE FINAL EIR

Pursuant to *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15132, *Contents of Final Environmental Impact Report*, the Final EIR will consist of:

- a) The Draft EIR or a revision of the Draft;
- b) Comments and recommendations received on the Draft EIR either verbatim or in summary;
- c) A list of persons, organizations, and public agencies commenting on the Draft EIR;
- d) The Lead Agency's responses to significant environmental points raised in the review and consultation process; and
- e) Any other information added by the Lead Agency.

Additionally, pursuant to *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15088, *Evaluation of and Response to Comments*, at least ten days prior to anticipated certification of the EIR, the City will provide responses to comments provided by all commenting agencies.

PROJECT CONSIDERATION

Upon Final EIR certification, the Lancaster City Council may consider approval of the proposed project. A decision to approve the project would be accompanied by specific, written findings, in accordance with *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15091, and if required, a specific written statement of overriding considerations, in accordance with *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15093.

2.3 NOTICE OF PREPARATION/ EARLY CONSULTATION (SCOPING)

In compliance with the *CEQA Guidelines*, the City has provided opportunities for various agencies and the public to participate in the environmental review process. During EIR preparation, efforts were made to contact various federal, State, regional, and local government agencies and other interested parties to solicit comments on the scope of the review in this document. This included the distribution of a Notice of Preparation (NOP) to various responsible agencies, trustee agencies, and interested parties. The purpose of the NOP was to formally announce the preparation of a Draft EIR for the proposed project, and that, as the Lead Agency, the City was soliciting input regarding the scope and content of the environmental information to be included in the Draft EIR. The NOP provided preliminary information regarding the anticipated range of impacts to be analyzed within the Draft



EIR. The NOP was distributed for a 30-day public review period from October 28, 2022 through November 28, 2022.

It should be noted that the project description provided in the NOP has been modified as part of this Draft EIR. The project description in the NOP included commercial cannabis activity as an allowed use under the proposed overlay zone and a project-specific cannabis facility proposed within the overlay zone. Many of the comments received during the NOP public review period were concerns related to the proposed cannabis facility and permitted cannabis activities under the proposed overlay zone. Acknowledging these concerns, the City removed the cannabis facility from the proposed project and removed cannabis uses and activities as permitted uses from the proposed overlay zone. As such, the project, as analyzed in this Draft EIR, does not contain any cannabis related development or permitted activities.

A public scoping meeting was conducted on November 16, 2022 at 5:00 p.m. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the scoping meeting was held virtually on Zoom. The scoping meeting's purpose was to:

- Inform the public of the proposed project and the City's intent to prepare an EIR;
- Present an overview of the CEQA EIR process;
- Review the topics to be addressed in the EIR; and
- Receive public comments on issues of concern and environmental topics to be addressed in the EIR.

As noted above, the majority of comments received at the public scoping meeting focused on concerns related to potential cannabis uses associated with the project at that time. All such cannabis uses have been eliminated from the project, and there are no cannabis uses proposed or allowed under the Lancaster East Side Project. Additional concerns received during the public scoping meeting included comments related to aesthetics, transportation, and noise due to potential industrial-related uses allowed under the overlay; these items are address in [Section 5.2, *Aesthetics/Light and Glare*](#), [Section 5.12, *Transportation*](#), and [Section 5.16, *Noise*](#), of the Draft EIR, respectively.

In addition, several agencies and interested parties submitted comment letters during the 30-day public review period; refer to [Appendix 11.1, *NOP and Comment Letters*](#).

Relevant CEQA issues raised in the NOP comments are summarized below:

- Potential land use compatibility issues of the proposed overlay zone on existing residential uses (refer to [Section 5.1, *Land Use and Planning*](#));
- Potential impacts to biological resources, including special-status species, jurisdictional resources, wetlands, sensitive communities, and nesting birds (refer to [Section 5.4, *Biological Resources*](#));
- Potential project impacts on sewer services in the project area (refer to [Section 5.11, *Utilities and Service Systems*](#)); and
- Potential air quality and noise impacts associated with future light industrial uses (refer to [Section 5.13, *Air Quality*](#), and [Section 5.16, *Noise*](#)).



Additional concerns raised in the NOP comment letters were related to the potential cannabis uses associated with the project at that time. As stated, all such cannabis uses have been eliminated from the project, and there are no cannabis uses proposed or allowed under the Lancaster East Side Project.

2.4 FORMAT OF THE EIR

The Draft EIR is organized into the following sections:

- Section 1.0, *Executive Summary*, provides a brief project description and summary of the environmental impacts and mitigation measures.
- Section 2.0, *Introduction and Purpose*, provides CEQA compliance information.
- Section 3.0, *Project Description*, provides a detailed project description indicating project location, background, and history; project characteristics and objectives; as well as associated discretionary actions required.
- Section 4.0, *Basis of Cumulative Analysis*, describes the approach and methodology for the cumulative analysis.
- Section 5.0, *Environmental Analysis*, contains a detailed environmental analysis of the existing conditions, existing regulatory setting, potential project impacts, potential cumulative impacts, recommended mitigation measures, and significant unavoidable impacts (if any) for the following environmental topic areas:
 - Land Use and Planning;
 - Aesthetics/Light and Glare;
 - Agriculture and Forestry Resources;
 - Biological Resources;
 - Tribal and Cultural Resources;
 - Geology and Soils;
 - Hydrology and Water Quality;
 - Hazards and Hazardous Materials;
 - Population and Housing;
 - Public Services and Recreation;
 - Transportation;
 - Air Quality;
 - Greenhouse Gas Emissions;
 - Energy; and
 - Noise.
- Section 6.0, *Other CEQA Considerations*, discusses long-term implications of the proposed action. Irreversible environmental changes that would be involved in the proposed action,



should it be implemented, are considered. The project's growth-inducing impacts, including the potential for population growth, is also discussed.

- Section 7.0, *Alternatives to the Proposed Project*, describes a reasonable range of alternatives to the project or its location that could avoid or substantially lessen the project's significant impact and still feasibly attain the basic project objectives.
- Section 8.0, *Effects Found Not To Be Significant*, explains potential impacts that have been determined not to be significant.
- Section 9.0, *Organizations and Persons Consulted*, identifies all federal, State, and local agencies, other organizations, and individuals consulted.
- Section 10.0, *Bibliography*, identifies reference sources for the EIR.
- Section 11.0, *Appendices*, contains the project's technical documentation.

2.5 RESPONSIBLE AND TRUSTEE AGENCIES

Certain projects or actions undertaken by a Lead Agency require subsequent oversight, approvals, or permits from other public agencies in order to be implemented. Such other agencies are referred to as Responsible Agencies and Trustee Agencies. Pursuant to *CEQA Guidelines* Sections 15381 and 15386, as amended, Responsible Agencies and Trustee Agencies are respectively defined as follows:

“Responsible Agency” means a public agency, which proposes to carry out or approve a project, for which [a] Lead Agency is preparing or has prepared an EIR or Negative Declaration. For the purposes of CEQA, the term “responsible agency” includes all public agencies other than the Lead Agency, which have discretionary approval power over the project. (Section 15381)

“Trustee Agency” means a state agency having jurisdiction by law over natural resources affected by a project, which are held in trust for the people of the State of California. Trustee Agencies include; The California Department of Fish and Game, The State Lands Commission; The State Department of Parks and Recreation and The University of California with regard to sites within the Natural Land and Water Reserves System. (Section 15386)

2.6 INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE

Pertinent documents relating to this EIR have been cited in accordance with *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15150, which encourages incorporation by reference as a means of reducing redundancy and the length of environmental reports. The following documents are hereby incorporated by reference into this EIR. Information contained within these documents has been utilized for each section of this EIR. These documents are available for review at the City of Lancaster Community Development Department, located at 44933 Fern Avenue, Lancaster, California 93534.



- *City of Lancaster General Plan 2030 (adopted July 14, 2009)*. The *City of Lancaster General Plan 2030* (General Plan) was adopted by the Lancaster City Council on July 14, 2009 and has a horizon year of 2030. The General Plan identifies the types of development that are allowed, and the general pattern of future development within Lancaster. Additionally, the General Plan contains goals, objectives, policies and specific actions that provide the framework for achieving the community's long-term vision. The General Plan consists of the following elements/plans: Natural Environment, Public Health and Safety, Active Living, Physical Mobility, Municipal Services and Facilities, Economic Development and Vitality, and Physical Development. The Housing Element is provided under separate cover and covers the 2021-2029 housing cycle.

Further, in June 2020, the City adopted vehicle miles traveled (VMT) baselines and thresholds as required by Senate Bill 743 and amended policies in the Plan for Physical Mobility of the General Plan relating to the identification of transportation impacts as part of CEQA compliance and modification to the methodology used to identify transportation-related significant issues associated with land development and infrastructure projects.

- *City of Lancaster General Plan 2030 Master Environmental Assessment (dated April 2009)*. The *City of Lancaster General Plan 2030 Master Environmental Assessment* (General Plan MEA) was prepared in conjunction with the General Plan and provides a description of existing environmental conditions within the General Plan study area. Physical, environmental, cultural, social, and economic conditions for the General Plan study area are identified in the MEA to establish existing conditions (in 2009) and help formulate goals and policies that will guide the City into the future. Topical areas included earth resources, biological resources, land use, population, transportation and circulation, air quality, noise, public services, utilities, cultural and paleontological resources, scenic resources, and fiscal resources. Additionally, information developed as part of the MEA was utilized and summarized for the existing conditions subsection of the *City of Lancaster General Plan 2030 Final Environmental Impact Report* described below.
- *City of Lancaster General Plan 2030 Final Environmental Impact Report (certified April 2009)*. The City of Lancaster General Plan 2030 Final Environmental Impact Report (General Plan EIR) evaluated the environmental impacts associated with buildout of the General Plan. The General Plan EIR concluded that environmental impacts would be reduced to less than significant levels with implementation of existing regulatory requirements and mitigation measures with the exception of traffic and circulation, short- and long-term air quality, short- and long-term noise, hydrology/water quality, and water supply.
- *Lancaster Municipal Code (current through Ordinance 1094, updated February 3, 2023)*. The *Lancaster Municipal Code* (Municipal Code) consists of all the regulatory and penal ordinances and administrative ordinances of the City of Lancaster. The Municipal Code is one of the City's primary tools to implement control of land uses, in accordance with General Plan goals and policies. The Lancaster Zoning Code, included as Municipal Code Title 17, *Zoning*, provides the legislative framework to implement and enhance the General Plan by classifying and regulating the uses of land and structures within the City.



3.0 Project Description



3.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

3.1 PROJECT LOCATION AND SETTING

3.1.1 PROJECT LOCATION

The City of Lancaster (City) is located in the Antelope Valley in northern Los Angeles County (County), approximately 70 miles north of downtown Los Angeles; refer to [Exhibit 3-1, *Regional Vicinity*](#). Unincorporated Los Angeles County surrounds the City on all sides. Additional surrounding jurisdictions include unincorporated Kern County further to the north and the City of Palmdale to the south.

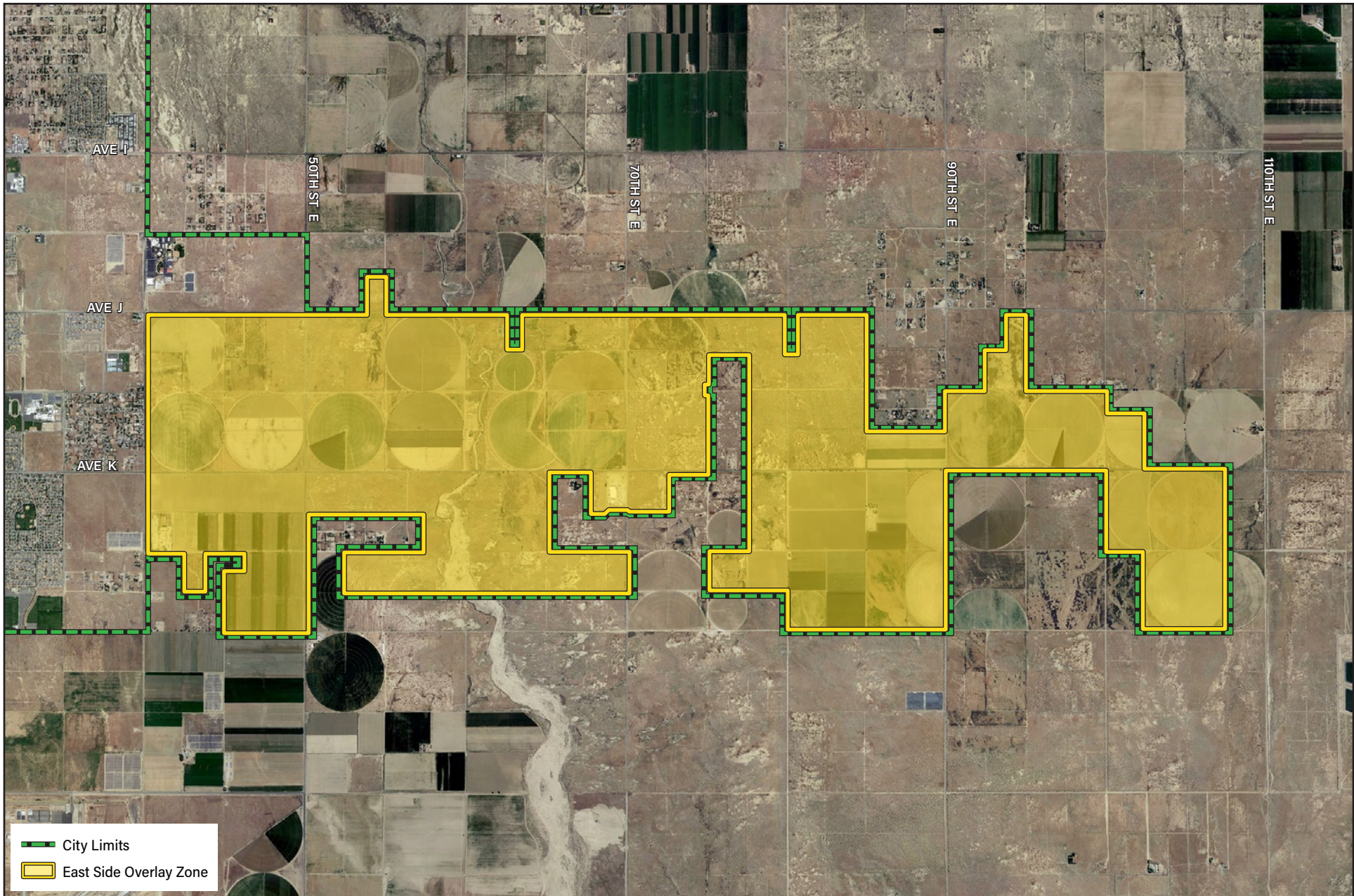
The Antelope Valley Freeway (State Route 14 [SR-14]) provides primary regional connectivity between the Antelope Valley and Greater Los Angeles area. Various arterials in the City also serve regional functions. Avenue D (State Route 138) extends west from SR-14, and connects to the Golden State Freeway (Interstate 5), and extends east from the City of Palmdale, connecting with Interstate 15. Sierra Highway links Lancaster with the community of Rosamond to the north and the City of Palmdale to the south.

As shown on [Exhibit 3-2, *Site Vicinity*](#), the project site encompasses an approximately 5,841-acre area identified as the East Side Overlay Zone. The proposed overlay zone is generally bound by Avenue J to the north, 110th Street East to the east, Avenue L to the south, and 40th Street East to the west.

3.1.2 PROJECT SETTING (EXISTING CONDITIONS)

The project site consists of scattered areas of rural development predominantly surrounded by agricultural use and vacant, undeveloped land. Based on the *Lancaster General Plan 2030* (General Plan) Land Use Map, the project site is nearly entirely designated Non-Urban Residential (NU; 0.4-2.0 dwelling units per acre [du/ac]); only the two westernmost parcels within the project site are designated Urban Residential (UR; .1-6.5 du/ac).

Based on the *Lancaster Municipal Code* (Municipal Code) and *Lancaster Zoning Map* (Zoning Map), the proposed overlay zone is nearly entirely zoned RR-2.5 (Rural Residential, 1 du/ac); only the two westernmost parcels within the overlay zone are zoned R-7,000 (Single Family Residential, minimum lot size 7,000 square feet).



Source: Google Earth Pro, June 2022





3.2 BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

The eastern portion of Lancaster is remote and predominantly agriculture and undeveloped, vacant lands. In response to interest in developing industrial uses in this area, the City is proposing to establish an East Side Overlay Zone over the predominantly RR-2.5 zoned project site. An overlay zone is a zoning district which is applied over one or more previously established zoning districts, establishing additional or stricter standards and criteria for covered properties in addition to those of the underlying zoning district. Communities often use overlay zones to protect special features such as historic buildings, wetlands, steep slopes, and waterfronts. Overlay zones can also be used to promote specific types of development projects, such as in the case of this project, light industrial development.

Anticipated allowable light industrial uses would include, but are not limited to, alternative energy, distribution, light manufacturing, research and development, and warehousing. The intent of the overlay zone is to allow more flexibility and development potential in the underutilized eastern portion of Lancaster.

3.3 PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

3.3.1 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The City is proposing to establish an East Side Overlay Zone in the eastern portion of Lancaster. Specifically, the overlay zone would encompass approximately 5,841 acres generally bound by Avenue J to the north, 110th Street East to the east, Avenue L to the south, and 40th Street East to the west; refer to [Exhibit 3-2](#). As noted above, an overlay zone is a zoning district which is applied over one or more previously established zoning districts, establishing additional or stricter standards and criteria for covered properties in addition to those of the underlying zoning district.

Permitted Uses

In addition to the permitted uses under the existing RR-2.5 (Rural Residential, 1 du/ac) and R-7,000 (Single Family Residential, minimum lot size 7,000 square feet) zones, the overlay zone would allow additional uses as listed in [Table 3-1, *East Side Overlay Zone Permitted Uses*](#), and described below.

Generally, the proposed overlay zone would permit new light industrial uses such as alcohol production, contractor storage yards, and research and development. Other new uses subject to conditional use permits include alternative energy uses; automobile repair; building trades and related uses; distribution; food manufacturing, processing, wholesale sales, and storage; light manufacturing; and warehousing.



**Table 3-1
East Side Overlay Zone Permitted Uses**

EAST SIDE OVERLAY ZONE – USES MATRIX	
A. Permitted Uses	
Uses shall include but are not limited to the uses within the RR-2.5 Zone Section 17.08.050, unless specifically addressed within the overlay.	
Alcohol Production – Brewery, Winery, or Distillery	P
Contractor Storage Yard – Indoor and Outdoor	P
Research and Development	P
B. Accessory Uses	
Uses shall include but are not limited to the uses within the RR-2.5 Zone Section 17.08.050, unless specifically addressed within the overlay.	
C. Temporary Uses	
Uses shall include but are not limited to the uses within the RR-2.5 Zone Section 17.08.050, unless specifically addressed within the overlay.	
D. Other Uses	
This category includes those uses which do not fall into any other category, and are not temporary or accessory uses, uses subject to the Development Services Director's Review, or uses subject to permit in this zone, which the Development Services Director deems the use consistent with the purpose and intent of this overlay and similar to other uses permitted herein.	To be determined by the Development Services Director
E. Uses Subject to Conditional Use Permits	
Alternative Energy Uses	C
Automobile, Boat, Equipment, Motorcycle, Truck, Tractor, Service, Repair, Accessories and Parts	C
Buildings and Structures Over 50 Feet in Height	C
Building Trades and Related Uses	C
Distribution	C
Food Manufacturing, Processing, Wholesale Sales and Storage	C
Light Manufacturing	C
Warehousing	C
F. Prohibited	
Commercial Cannabis Facilities	N/A
Notes: P = Permitted Use; C = Conditional Use; N/A = Prohibited	

Use Descriptions

The following new categories of uses are permitted or conditionally permitted in the proposed overlay.

Alcohol Production – Brewery, Winery, or Distillery

This category means an establishment where beer, wine, and other spirits are prepared bottled, stored, and sold for on- or off-site consumption. Tasting rooms or seating areas may be provided on-site. Tasting room/seating areas shall be limited up to 25 percent of the floor space area.



Alternative Energy Uses

This category includes both solar photovoltaic electric generation facility (solar farms) and hydrogen production and generation facilities and other similar uses. Solar uses in the overlay zone must comply with regulations set forth in Municipal Code Section 17.08.290, *Solar Farms*. All hydrogen production, storage, and transport activities must comply with federal and State regulations.

Automobile, Boat, Equipment, Motorcycle, Truck, Tractor, Service, Repair, Accessories and Parts

This category includes, but is not limited to, body and frame shops, auto upholstery shops, brake shops, muffler shops, radiator shops, repair shops. All activities shall be conducted within an enclosed building.

Building Trades and Related Uses

This category includes, but is not limited to, cabinet making, carpenter shop, engineers and surveyors, and landscape materials (including nurseries). This land use excludes batch plants and concrete transit mix uses.

Contractor Storage Yards

This category includes outdoor storage area used for the storage of the equipment, vehicles, or other materials when not in use. Contractor storage yards may include offices and other accessory uses directly related to the business on the property.

Distribution

This category includes facilities primarily engaged in the receipt, storage, and distribution of goods, products, cargo, and materials, including transshipment by air, rail or motor vehicle, but excludes truck terminals. All activities shall be conducted within an enclosed building.

Food Manufacturing, Processing, Wholesale Sales and Storage

This category includes, but is not limited to, breweries, coffee roasting, dairy products, fruit and produce, malt products, meat processing, oleomargarine, sodium glutamate, soft drinks, vitamin tablets, and similar uses. All such uses shall be conducted within an enclosed building. This category excludes dairies, lard manufacturing, pickles, sausage, sauerkraut, slaughterhouses, distillation of vinegar, or the canning of other fish or meats and similar uses. All such uses shall be conducted within an enclosed building.

Light Manufacturing

This category includes any kind of manufacturing, processing, or treating of products which are not obnoxious or offensive by reason of the emission of odor, dust, smoke, gas, noise or other causes.



Typical uses include, but are not limited to, cabinet/carpenter shops, garment manufacturing, machine shops, and textile manufacturing. All activities shall be conducted within an enclosed building.

Research and Development

This category includes, but is not limited to, laboratories and facilities for scientific research, development and testing, including administrative offices involving the use of hazardous materials. Agricultural and biological research involving sludge or biosolid material shall be conducted only within an enclosed building or suitable containment vessel.

Warehousing

This category includes facilities primarily engaged in the storage of goods and materials in a building and does not include the assembly or manufacturing of goods and materials.

Other Uses

This category includes those uses which do not fall into any other category, and are not temporary uses, uses subject to the Director's Review, or uses subject to permit in this zone, which the Director deems the use consistent with the purpose and intent of the overlay and similar to other uses permitted herein.

Development Standards

The following development standards related to parking, height, noise, and other additional standards are applicable to uses permitted in the East Side Overlay Zone.

Parking Requirement

Table 3-2, *East Side Overlay Zone Minimum Parking Requirements*, details minimum off-street parking requirements for permitted uses in the overlay zone.



**Table 3-2
East Side Overlay Zone Minimum Parking Requirement**

Permitted Use	Minimum Required Parking
Uses shall include, but are not limited to the uses within the RR-2.5 zone Section 17.08.050, unless specifically addressed within the overlay	Refer to Municipal Code Section 17.08.100
Alternative Energy Uses	To be determined by the Director
Automobile, Boat, Equipment, Motorcycle, Truck, Tractor, Service, Repair, Accessories and Parts	1 parking space per 400 square feet and 4 parking spaces for each service bay
Building Trades and Related Uses	1 parking space per 400 square feet
Distribution	A minimum of 5 parking spaces for warehouses with a gross floor area up to 25,000 square feet; and A minimum of 5 parking spaces plus one additional space per 5,000 square feet or fraction thereof over and above 25,000 square feet for warehouses with a gross floor area in excess of 25,000 square feet.
Food Manufacturing, Processing, Wholesale Sales and Storage	1 parking space per 400 square feet
Light Manufacturing	1 parking space per 400 square feet
Research and Development	1 parking space per 250 square feet of gross floor area
Warehousing	A minimum of 5 parking spaces for warehouses with a gross floor area up to 25,000 square feet; and A minimum of 5 parking spaces plus one additional space per 5,000 square feet or fraction thereof over and above 25,000 square feet for warehouses with a gross floor area in excess of 25,000 square feet.
Other Uses This category includes those uses which do not fall into any other category, and are not temporary uses, uses subject to Director's Review, or uses subject to permit in this zone, which the Development Services Director deems the use consistent with the purpose and intent of this overlay and similar to other uses permitted herein.	To be determined by the Director

A reduction in the number of required parking spaces may be permitted with approval of the Director. The developer, property owner, or authorized agent shall determine the number of parking spaces sufficient for the proposed use and provide justification acceptable to the Director and/or the Planning Commission to support the determination.

Development Standards

Properties within the overlay zone would be subject to the following general development standards; refer to Table 3-3, East Side Overlay Zone Development Standards.



**Table 3-3
East Side Overlay Zone Development Standards**

Development Standard	Requirement
Front Yard Setback	20 feet
Interior Side Yard Setback	10 feet
Street Side Yard Setback	20 feet
Rear Yard Setback	10 feet
Maximum Building Height (without a Conditional Use Permit)	50 feet
Maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	0.5

Additional development standards related to parking area paving, parking space size/marking, landscaping, walls and fences, signs, and noise are also defined for the overlay zone.

Additional Standards – Adjacent to Residential Use

When abutting or adjacent to a residential use, the following requirements shall also be applied:

1. Artificial lighting used to illuminate the premises shall be directed away from adjacent residential uses.
2. No signs shall be placed in a manner which visually intrudes into adjoining residential uses.
3. Trees shall be utilized as a means of improving the interface between commercial and residential uses, where appropriate.
4. A minimum 10-foot wide landscape setback shall be required along property lines abutting or adjacent to a residential use.
5. Where multi-story buildings or buildings taller than 35 feet are to be utilized on lots abutting an existing residential use property, such buildings shall be located or oriented in a manner which will minimize visual intrusion into neighboring residential use property.
6. Noise generating elements including loading docks shall be oriented away from residential uses and may require additional setbacks.
7. When abutting or adjacent to an existing residential use, the following additional setback requirements shall also be applied:
 - a. An additional 10-foot setback from the property line abutting or adjacent to residential uses;
 - b. Multi-story buildings or buildings taller than 35 feet along the property line abutting or adjacent to the residential uses shall include an additional five-foot setback for every story or every additional five feet in height.



All uses are also required to comply with the air quality standards of the Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District (AVAQMD) or the City, whichever is more restrictive. Further, light industrial uses within the East Side Overlay Zone are required to be compatible with adjacent existing uses through proper site planning, building design, and landscaping.

3.4 PHASING AND CONSTRUCTION

The proposed overlay zone would allow future development of light industrial uses within the overlay zone. No construction activities or development projects are currently proposed as part of this project.

3.5 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

CEQA Guidelines Section 15124(b) states that an EIR project description must include “[a] statement of objectives sought by the proposed project. The statement of objectives should include the underlying purpose of the project.” The proposed project objectives are outlined below.

1. Increase flexibility in allowed uses and development potential in the eastern portion of Lancaster beyond currently allowed uses under the RR-2.5 (Rural Residential, 1 du/ac) zone.
2. Incentivize new light industrial development to occur in the underutilized eastern portion of the City.
3. Encourage new development in Lancaster that provides economic benefits to the City and its residents.
4. Ensure that a variety of sites are available for a diversity of light industrial users.
5. Provide light industrial-based employment-generating lands which are highly accessible and compatible with other uses in the community.

3.6 DISCRETIONARY APPROVALS

Anticipated City discretionary approvals associated with the proposed project include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Certification of the EIR; and
- Adoption of the East Side Overlay Zone Ordinance.

The proposed East Side Overlay Project would provide a framework for future light industrial development within the project site; however, there is no construction or development associated with the project at this time. Future development occurring under the East Side Overlay Project would be subject to project-specific and site-specific discretionary approvals (including separate CEQA review) on a case-by-case basis.



4.0 Basis of Cumulative Analysis



4.0 BASIS OF CUMULATIVE ANALYSIS

CEQA Guidelines Section 15355 provides the following definition of cumulative impacts:

“Cumulative impacts” refer to two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts.

- (a) The individual effects may be changes resulting from a single project or a number of separate projects.*
- (b) The cumulative impact from several projects is the change in the environment which results from the incremental impact of the project when added to other closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable probable future projects. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant projects taking place over a period of time.*

CEQA Guidelines Section 15130 further addresses the discussion of cumulative impacts, as follows:

- (1) An EIR should not discuss impacts which do not result in part from the project evaluated in the EIR.*
- (2) If the combined cumulative impact associated with the project’s incremental effect and the effects of other projects is not significant, the EIR should briefly indicate why the cumulative impact is not significant and is not discussed in further detail in the EIR.*
- (3) If the combined cumulative impact associated with the project’s incremental effect and the effects of other projects is significant, the EIR must determine whether the project’s contribution is cumulatively considerable.*
- (4) The EIR may conclude the project’s contribution to a significant cumulative impact is less than cumulatively considerable and thus is not significant, if the project is required to implement or fund its fair share of a mitigation measure or measures designed to alleviate the cumulative impact.*

Section 5.0, *Environmental Analysis*, assesses the cumulative impacts for each applicable environmental issue, and does so to a degree that reflects each impact’s severity and likelihood of occurrence.

In accordance with *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15130(b), the discussion of cumulative impacts shall be guided by the standards of practicality and reasonableness, and should include the following elements in its discussion of significant cumulative impacts:

1. *Either:*
 - A. *A list of past, present and probable future projects producing related or cumulative impacts, including, if necessary, those projects outside the control of the Agency, or*



- B. *A summary of projections contained in an adopted local, regional or statewide plan, or related planning document, that describes or evaluates conditions contributing to the cumulative effect. Such plans may include: a general plan, regional transportation plan, or plans for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. A summary of projections may also be contained in an adopted or certified prior environmental document for such a plan. Such projects may be supplemented with additional information such as a regional modeling program. Any such document shall be referenced and made available to the public at a location specified by the lead agency.*
2. *When utilizing a list, as suggested in paragraph (1) of subdivision (b), factors to consider when determining whether to include a related project should include the nature of each environmental resource being examined, the location of the project and its type. Location may be important, for example, when water quality impacts are at issue since projects outside the watershed would probably not contribute to a cumulative effect. Project type may be important, for example, when the impact is specialized, such as a particular air pollutant or mode of traffic.*
 3. *Lead agencies should define the geographic scope of the area affected by the cumulative effect and provide a reasonable explanation for the geographic limitation used.*
 4. *A summary of the expected environmental effects to be produced by those projects with specific reference to additional information stating where that information is available.*
 5. *A reasonable analysis of the cumulative impacts of the relevant projects, including examination of reasonable, feasible options for mitigating or avoiding the project's contribution to any significant cumulative effects.*

This EIR evaluates the project's potential cumulative impacts using the summary of projections approach, specifically buildout of the *City of Lancaster General Plan 2030* (General Plan). The General Plan considered the following three land use alternatives:

- *No Project Alternative.* The No Project Alternative assumed buildout of the then current General Plan. Single-family residential and rural residential uses would continue to be the predominant land use within the City. Commercial development would continue to develop within the urban core and along the Antelope Valley Freeway. The majority of industrial growth would be located within Fox Field. Under the No Project Alternative, the predominant transportation mode would continue to be the automobile.
- *Balanced Growth Land Use Plan Alternative.* The Balanced Growth Land Use Plan Alternative would promote a balanced distribution of land uses throughout the City. Urban areas, currently served by existing infrastructure, would be expanded through infill development. Under this alternative, the land uses would be arranged with the goal of ensuring that no urban area of the City would be underserved with shopping and recreational opportunities and public services. Areas of the City designated for urban residential uses would also contain sufficient land use inventories for commercial retail and service uses as well as open space and other public land. Although single-family residential and rural residential uses would continue to be



the primary land uses within the City, the potential for some mixed-use development would also occur within the urban core. Commercial and recreational uses, as well as public services would be located in proximity to residential neighborhoods. The predominant mode of travel would continue to be the automobile, with some reduction in the amount and length of vehicle trips anticipated due to the balance distribution of land uses.

- *General Plan Citizens Advisory Committee (GPCAC) Preferred Land Use Plan Alternative.* The GPCAC Preferred Land Use Plan Alternative would focus on the utilization of available infill areas within the urban core, rather than emphasizing the outward expansion of low-density residential subdivisions. It promotes the development of localized community centers with compact mixed-uses that minimize the impact of the automobile. The GPCAC Preferred Land Use Plan Alternative also establishes a clear link between alternative transportation choices and land use encouraging the efficient use of infill parcels and urban revitalization to create neighborhoods that are pedestrian in scale and in easy walking distance to transit services and other uses. By placing an emphasis on infill development, the GPCAC Preferred Land Use Plan Alternative would promote the preservation of open space and rural residential land. The GPCAC Preferred Plan Alternative incorporates aspects of the Balanced Growth Land Use Plan Alternative in an effort to balance land uses in locations within the urbanizing area that are predominantly designated for single-family use.

Buildout of the GPCAC Preferred Land Use Plan Alternative was utilized in analyzing cumulative impacts associated with the proposed project. Table 4-1, General Plan 2030 – GPCAC Preferred Land Use Plan Alternative Buildout, provides a summary of the anticipated development conditions at General Plan buildout in year 2030 under the GPCAC Preferred Land Use Plan Alternative.

**Table 4-1
General Plan 2030 – GPCAC Preferred Land Use Plan Alternative Buildout**

Land Use Designation	2030 Acres ¹	Change in Acres ¹ (2006-2030)	Anticipated Development		Change in DU ² (2006-2030)	2030	
			du/acre	FAR/acre		Estimated DU ^{2,3}	Estimated SF ²
Residential Land Use Classification							
NU – Non-Urban Residential ⁴ (0.4 – 2.0 du/ac)	795 (RR-2.5) 788 (RR-1) 943 (SRR)	180 100 316	0.4 1.0 2.0	N/A	72 100 631	317 786 1,882	N/A
UR – Urban Residential (2.1 – 6.5 du/ac) ⁵	251 (R-15,000) 1,795 (R-10,000) 11,423 (R-7000)	111 1,156 4,686	2.5 3.0 4.0	N/A	278 3,469 18,745	627 5,381 45,713	N/A
MR1 – Multi-Residential (6.6 – 15.0 du/ac) ⁶	443 (MDR) 724 (HDR)	22 277	5.0 12.0	N/A	111 3,325	1,895 7,871	N/A
MR2 – High Density Residential	405	59	22	N/A	1,300	8,043	N/A
MU – Mixed Use	567	382	20	0.10:1	7,648	8,123	2,469,852
Downtown Specific Plan ⁷					1,301	1,301	N/A ⁸



Table 4-1 [cont'd]
General Plan 2030 – GPCAC Preferred Land Use Plan Alternative Buildout

Land Use Designation	2030 Acres ¹	Change in Acres ¹ (2006-2030)	Anticipated Development		Change in DU ² (2006-2030)	2030	
			du/acre	FAR/acre		Estimated DU ^{2,3}	Estimated SF ²
General Commercial Land Use Classification							
C – Commercial	1,660	--	N/A	0.23:1	N/A	N/A	16,631,208
OP – Office/Professional	72	--	N/A	0.23:1	N/A	N/A	721,354
Employment Land Use Classification							
Li – Light Industrial	2,028	--	N/A	0.20:1	N/A	N/A	17,667,936
Hi – Heavy Industrial	539	--	N/A	0.20:1	N/A	N/A	4,695,768
Public And Quasi-Public Land Use Classification							
P – Public Use	1,423	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	--	--
H – Health Care	149	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	--	--
O – Open Space	791	--	N/A	N/A	N/A	--	--
City of Lancaster Subtotal	24,796	--				81,939	42,186,118

Source: City of Lancaster, *City of Lancaster General Plan 2030 Draft Environmental Impact Report, Table 3-8, December 2008.*

Notes: du = dwelling units; FAR = floor area ratio; SF = square feet

1. Acreages rounded to the nearest whole number.
2. Density calculated from acreages rounded to the nearest hundredth and then rounded to the nearest whole number.
3. 2030 residential units were determined by adding the number of existing units to the number of potential units based on the increase in residential acreage and density allowed for the specific residential land use designation.
4. The NU – Non-Urban Residential land use designation corresponds with RR-2.5 (Rural Residential, 1 du/ac), RR-1 (Rural Residential 1 du/ac); and SRR (Semi-Rural Residential 1-2 du/ac) zoning districts.
5. The UR – Urban Residential land use designation corresponds with R-15,000 (Single Family Residential, minimum lot size 15,000 SF); R-10,000 (Single Family Residential, minimum lot size 10,000 SF); and R-7,000 (Single Family Residential, minimum lot size 7,000 SF) zoning districts.
6. The MR1 – Multi-Residential land use designation corresponds with High Density Residential (HDR; 15.1-30 du/ac) and Moderate Density Residential (MDR; 7.1-15 du/ac) zoning districts.
7. The Downtown Lancaster Specific Plan contains several land use designations. Anticipated residential growth is based on projections identified within the Downtown Lancaster Specific Plan.
8. Non-residential square footage anticipated in the Downtown Lancaster Specific Plan is considered within the non-residential land use designations.

It is acknowledged that the geographic area considered for cumulative impacts also varies depending on the environmental issue area. For example, aesthetics and light and glare impacts are local (addressed in [Section 5.2, *Aesthetics/Light and Glare*](#)), air quality impacts are both regional and local (addressed in [Section 5.13, *Air Quality*](#)), and greenhouse gas emission impacts are global in nature (addressed in [Section 5.14, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*](#)).



5.0 Environmental Analysis



5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

The following subsections of the EIR contain a detailed environmental analysis of the existing conditions, project impacts (including direct and indirect, short-term, long-term, and cumulative impacts), recommended mitigation measures, and any significant and unavoidable impacts. The EIR analyzes those environmental issue areas where potentially significant impacts may occur, as stated in Appendix 11.1, *Notice of Preparation and Comment Letters*.

The EIR examines environmental factors outlined in Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines, Environmental Checklist Form*, as follows:

- 5.1 Land Use and Planning;
- 5.2 Aesthetics/Light and Glare;
- 5.3 Agriculture and Forestry Resources;
- 5.4 Biological Resources;
- 5.5 Tribal and Cultural Resources;
- 5.6 Geology and Soils;
- 5.7 Hydrology and Water Quality;
- 5.8 Hazards and Hazardous Materials;
- 5.9 Population and Housing;
- 5.10 Public Services and Recreation;
- 5.11 Utilities and Service Systems;
- 5.12 Transportation;
- 5.13 Air Quality;
- 5.14 Greenhouse Gas Emissions;
- 5.15 Energy; and
- 5.16 Noise.

Other environmental topical areas are addressed in Section 8.0, *Effects Found Not To Be Significant*.

Each environmental issue is addressed in a separate section of the EIR and is organized into six sections, as follows:

- “Existing Setting” describes the physical conditions that exist at the present time and that may influence or affect the issue under investigation.
- “Regulatory Setting” lists and discusses the laws, ordinances, regulations, and standards that apply to the project.
- “Impact Thresholds and Significance Criteria” provides the thresholds that are the basis of conclusions of significance, which are primarily the criteria in Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines* (California Code of Regulations, Sections 15000 through 15387).



Primary sources used in identifying the criteria include the *CEQA Guidelines*; local, State, Federal, or other standards applicable to an impact category; and officially established significance thresholds. “. . . An ironclad definition of significant effect is not possible because the significance of any activity may vary with the setting” (*CEQA Guidelines* Section 15064[b]). Principally, “. . . a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any of the physical conditions within an area affected by the project including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise, and objects of historic and aesthetic significance” constitutes a significant impact (*CEQA Guidelines* Section 15382).

- “Impacts and Mitigation Measures” describes potential environmental changes to the existing physical conditions that may occur if the proposed project is implemented. Evidence, based on factual and scientific data, is presented to show the cause and effect relationship between the proposed project and the potential changes in the environment. The exact magnitude, duration, extent, frequency, range or other parameters of a potential impact are ascertained, to the extent possible, to determine whether impacts may be significant; all of the potential direct and reasonably foreseeable indirect effects are considered.

Impacts are generally classified as potentially significant impact, less than significant impact, or no impact. The “Level of Significance After Mitigation” identifies the impacts that would remain after application of mitigation measures, and whether the remaining impacts are or are not considered significant. When these impacts, even with the inclusion of mitigation measures, cannot be mitigated to a level considered less than significant, they are identified as “significant unavoidable impacts.”

“Mitigation Measures” are measures that would be required of the project to avoid a significant adverse impact; to minimize a significant adverse impact; to rectify a significant adverse impact by restoration; to reduce or eliminate a significant adverse impact over time by preservation and maintenance operations; or to compensate for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environment.

- “Cumulative Impacts” describes potential environmental changes to the existing physical conditions that may occur as a result of the proposed project together with all other reasonably foreseeable, planned, and approved future projects producing related or cumulative impacts.
- “Significant Unavoidable Impacts” describes impacts that would be significant and cannot be feasibly mitigated to less than significant, and thus would be unavoidable. To approve a project with significant unavoidable impacts, the lead agency must adopt a Statement of Overriding Considerations. In adopting such a statement, the lead agency is required to balance the benefits of a project against its unavoidable environmental impacts in determining whether to approve the project. If the benefits of a project are found to outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental effects, the adverse effects may be considered “acceptable” (*CEQA Guidelines* Section 15093[a]).



5.1 Land Use and Relevant Planning



5.1 LAND USE AND PLANNING

This section describes the existing on-site and surrounding land use conditions and evaluates the project's consistency with applicable land use plans, policies, and regulations, as well as the potential of the proposed project to physically divide an established community.

5.1.1 EXISTING SETTING

EXISTING ON-SITE LAND USES

The project site consists of an approximately 5,841-acre area occupying the eastern extent of the City boundary south of Avenue J and east of 40th Street East. Generally, the site is bounded by Avenue J to the north, 110th Street East to the east, Avenue L to the south, and 40th Street East to the west. The project site comprises scattered areas of rural development predominantly surrounded by agricultural use and vacant, undeveloped land.

EXISTING ON-SITE LAND USE AND ZONING DESIGNATIONS

Based on the General Plan Land Use Map, the project site is nearly entirely designated Non-Urban Residential (NU; 0.4-2.0 du/ac), with the two westernmost parcels designated as Urban Residential (UR; 2.1-6.5 du/ac).

Based on the City's Zoning Map, the project site is nearly entirely zoned RR-2.5 (Rural Residential, minimum lot size 100,000 square feet), only two westernmost parcels are zoned R-7,000 (Single Family Residential, minimum lot size 7,000 square feet).

SURROUNDING SETTING

The area immediately west of the project site includes a patchwork of low-density residential neighborhoods, school and park facilities, and vacant, undeveloped land within the City. Unincorporated Los Angeles County surrounds the project site to the north, east, and south. Similar to the project site, these areas predominantly contain undeveloped land with some rural development, including some low-density rural residential uses and agricultural uses.

Additional surrounding jurisdictions include unincorporated Kern County further to the north and the City of Palmdale to the south. The Palmdale Regional Airport is located approximately 1.4 miles southwest of the project site.

5.1.2 REGULATORY SETTING

Development within the project site is subject to the designations and regulations of several regional and local land use and zoning plans and policies. At the regional level, the project site is located within the planning area of the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), the region's



federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and State-designated Regional Transportation Planning Agency. The project site is also located within the City of Lancaster. Therefore, at the local level, the project site is subject to the development regulations and policies set forth in the General Plan and Municipal Code.

REGIONAL LEVEL

Southern California Association of Governments

Regional planning agencies, such as SCAG, recognize that planning issues extend beyond the boundaries of individual cities. Efforts to address regional planning issues such as affordable housing, transportation, and air pollution have resulted in the adoption of regional plans that affect the City of Lancaster.

SCAG has evolved as the largest council of governments in the United States, functioning as the MPO for six counties, including Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside, Ventura, and Imperial, and 191 cities. The region encompasses an area of more than 38,000 square miles. As the designated MPO, the federal government mandates SCAG to research and develop plans for transportation, growth management, hazardous waste management, and air quality. These mandates led SCAG to prepare comprehensive regional plans to address these concerns.

SCAG is responsible for the maintenance of a continuous, comprehensive, and coordinated planning process resulting in a Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and a Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP). SCAG is responsible for the development of demographic projections and is also responsible for development of the integrated land use, housing, employment, transportation programs, measures, and strategies for the Antelope Valley Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP).

CONNECT SOCAL: 2020-2045 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN/ SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES STRATEGY

The passage of Senate Bill 375 (SB 375) in 2008 requires that an MPO, such as SCAG, prepare and adopt a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) that sets forth a forecasted regional development pattern which, when integrated with the transportation network, measures, and policies, will reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from automobiles and light duty trucks (Government Code Section 65080(b)(2)(B)). The SCS outlines certain land use and transportation strategies that provide for more integrated land use and transportation planning and maximize transportation investments. The SCS is intended to provide a regional land use policy framework that local governments may consider and build upon.

SCAG's Regional Council adopted *Connect SoCal: 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy* (2020-2045 RTP/SCS) on September 3, 2020. The 2020-2045 RTP/SCS is a long-range visioning plan that balances future mobility and housing needs with economic, environmental, and public health goals. The 2020-2045 RTP/SCS closely integrates land use and transportation so that the region can grow smartly and sustainably. SCAG worked closely with local



jurisdictions to develop the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS, which incorporates local growth forecasts, projects and programs, and includes complementary regional policies and initiatives. The 2020-2045 RTP/SCS includes a financial plan that identifies revenues committed, available, or reasonably available to support the SCAG region's surface transportation investments. The 2020-2045 RTP/SCS also includes a sustainable communities strategy which sets forth a forecasted development pattern for the region which would reduce greenhouse gas emissions from automobiles and light trucks to the regional GHG targets set by California Air Resources Board (CARB) for the SCAG region.

The core vision of the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS is to build upon and expand land use and transportation strategies to increase mobility options and achieve a more sustainable growth pattern.¹ The 2020-2045 RTP/SCS lists ten goals that were used to develop the plan and its guiding policies. These goals include the following:

1. Encourage regional economic prosperity and global competitiveness.
2. Improve mobility, accessibility, reliability, and travel safety for people and goods.
3. Enhance the preservation, security, and resilience of the regional transportation system.
4. Increase person and goods movement and travel choices within the transportation system.
5. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality.
6. Support healthy and equitable communities.
7. Adapt to changing climate and support an integrated regional development pattern and transportation network.
8. Leverage new transportation technologies and data-driven solutions that result in more efficient travel.
9. Encourage development of diverse housing types in areas that are supported by multiple transportation options.
10. Promote conservation of natural and agricultural lands and restoration of habitats.

LOCAL LEVEL

City of Lancaster General Plan 2030

The General Plan, adopted on July 14, 2009, is the City's long-term blueprint for growth based on community values, ideals, and aspirations as to how its natural and man-made environments should be organized and managed. The General Plan identifies the types of development that are allowed,

¹ Southern California Association of Governments, *2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy*, <https://scag.ca.gov/read-plan-adopted-final-plan>, accessed June 10, 2022.



the spatial relationships among land uses, and the general pattern of future development. All subdivisions, public works, redevelopment projects, zoning decisions, and other various implementation tools must be consistent with the General Plan. Thus, the General Plan not only functions as a guide to the type of community that is desired, but also provides the means by which the community may achieve that desired future.

The General Plan presents seven separate plan documents that contain goals, objectives, policies, and specific actions guiding development throughout the City. Additionally, the Housing Element, which is included under separate cover and updated every eight years pursuant to State law, is considered the eighth component of the General Plan. A description of each of the eight plans comprising the General Plan is provided below.

PLAN FOR THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The Plan for the Natural Environment addresses the use and management of natural resources and open space lands within the City. This plan focuses on those resources suitable for certain levels of maintenance and protection, as well as their limitations for rural or urban use. The primary issues covered in the Plan for the Natural Environment include water resources, water consumption, air resources, biological resources, land resources, energy resources, mineral resources, and scenic resources.

PLAN FOR PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Plan for Public Health and Safety contains an evaluation of natural and manmade hazards faces by Lancaster residents and businesses and provide a program to reduce associated risks. The Plan for Public Health and Safety identifies constraints to urban and rural development which must be considered as part of overall and site-specific development strategies. The primary issues covered in the Plan for Public Health and Safety include geology and seismicity, flooding and drainage, noise, air installation land use compatibility, hazardous materials, crime prevention and protection services, fire prevention and suppression services, disaster preparedness, and emergency medical facilities.

PLAN FOR ACTIVE LIVING

The Plan for Active Living contains plans and programs for the provision of quality living environments. It also focuses on the manner in which those in need can be helped so that all may share in achieving a high quality of life. The primary issues covered in the Plan for Active Living include population and housing; provision of school sites/facilities; park land; pedestrian, equestrian, and bicycle facilities; cultural and art programs and facilities; historical, archaeological, and cultural resources; library facilities; and social service programs.

PLAN FOR PHYSICAL MOBILITY

The Plan for Physical Mobility focuses on transportation issues, such as how goods and people move throughout the City. The Plan recognizes that transportation affects land use, urban design, energy consumption, air quality, and the City's infrastructure. The primary issues covered in the Plan for



Physical Mobility include streets and highways; parking facilities; alternative transportation modes; commodity movement; and air transportation.

PLAN FOR MUNICIPAL SERVICES AND FACILITIES

The Plan for Municipal Services and Facilities addresses the services and facilities needed to support existing and future development within the City. The Plan for Municipal Services and Facilities sets forth policies and programs for the rational and cost-efficient provision and extension of public services, infrastructure, and facilities to serve the existing community and support planned development and protect natural resources. The primary issues covered in the Plan for Municipal Services and Facilities include levels of service; water facilities; flood control and drainage; wastewater facilities; solid waste management; and coordination of development and public services.

PLAN FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND VITALITY

The Plan for Economic Development and Vitality outlines the ways in which the community is striving for economic self-sufficiency and presents a program to facilitate those efforts. It also contains the implementation structure for the Lancaster Economic Development/Redevelopment Strategic Plan. The primary issues covered in the Plan for Economic Development and Vitality include creation and retention of local employment; provision of municipal revenue-generating land uses; role of downtown Lancaster in future of the City; establishment of Lancaster as a center for regional activities; and financing public services and facilities.

PLAN FOR PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

The Plan for Physical Development serves as the State mandated Land Use Element and focuses on the organization of the City's physical environment and outlines policies and programs to guide physical development throughout the City. This plan meets the California Government Code land use element mandate to designate the proposed general distribution, general location, and extent of the uses of land for housing, business, industry, and open space. Beyond that requirement, the Plan for Physical Development is also a summary of the manner in which other General Plan issues affect the arrangement and design of development within the City. The major sections within the Plan for Physical Development include land use category definitions; land use patterns; community design, and interagency land use coordination.

The Plan for Physical Development also contains a Community Design subsection, which focuses on strengthening the City's physical identity and image. The Community Design subsection provides direction in the form of policies and action programs that call for the development and implementation of comprehensive community design guidelines that will provide guidance for the creation of an attractive and enduring physical environment.

The General Plan defines thirteen land use designations, which are illustrated on the General Plan Land Use Map. The project site is nearly entirely designated Non-Urban Residential (NU) on the General Plan Land Use Map, with two westernmost parcels designated as Urban Residential (UR). The NU land use designation allows for lower density residential development ranging from one



dwelling unit per 2.5 acres to two dwelling units per acre. The UR land use designation allows for residential development with density ranges from 2.1 to 6.5 dwelling units per acre.

HOUSING ELEMENT

The Housing Element presents the overall goals, objectives, policies, and action programs the City intends to implement in order to facilitate the provision of housing for existing and future residents of Lancaster. The City prepares the Housing Element to also meet the requirements of State law and achieve certification by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). State law requires jurisdictions to adequately plan to meet its existing and projected housing needs, including its share of the regional housing need. HCD allocates the region's share of the Statewide housing need to the Councils of Governments based on population projections and forecasts. SCAG develops the Regional Housing Needs Assessment, allocating the region's share to the cities and counties within the region. Housing elements are required to be updated every eight years.

Lancaster Municipal Code

Municipal Code Title 17, *Zoning*, referred to as the City's Zoning Ordinance, provides the legislative framework to implement the adopted General Plan and pertinent goals, objectives, policies, and programs. Title 17 protects the public health, safety, and general welfare of the visitors to and residents of the City by regulating the use of buildings, structures, and land for residential, commercial, industrial and institutional purposes; regulating location, height, bulk, and area covered by buildings and structures; and controlling lot size, yards, intensity of land use, signs and off-street parking.

The City is divided into zoning districts to implement the General Plan in accordance with the Zoning Map. The zoning districts determine which land uses are permitted within each zoning district, steps required to establish each use, and the basic development standards that apply.

Based on the Municipal Code and Zoning Map, the project site is nearly entirely zoned RR-2.5 (Rural Residential), only two westernmost parcels are zoned R-7,000 (Single Family Residential). The RR-2.5 zone implements the "non-urban residential, rural residential" designation. The RR-2.5 zone is intended for rural single-family residential use, allowing one dwelling unit per minimum net area of 100,000 square feet. The R-7000 zone implements the "urban residential, low density" land use designation. This zone is intended for single-family dwellings, allowing one dwelling unit per minimum net area of 7,000 square feet.

5.1.3 IMPACT THRESHOLDS AND SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines* contains the Environmental Checklist form that was used during the preparation of this EIR. Accordingly, a project may create a significant adverse environmental impact if it would:

- a) Physically divide an established community (refer to Section 8.0, *Effects Found Not To Be Significant*); and/or



- b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect (refer to Impact Statements LU-1 through LU-3).

Based on these standards/criteria, the effects of the proposed project have been categorized as either a “less than significant impact” or “potentially significant impact.” Mitigation measures are recommended for potentially significant impacts. If a potentially significant impact cannot be reduced to a less than significant level through the application of mitigation, it is categorized as a significant and unavoidable impact.

5.1.4 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

LANCASTER GENERAL PLAN

LU-1 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION COULD CONFLICT WITH APPLICABLE GENERAL PLAN POLICIES.

Impact Analysis: The General Plan Land Use Map currently designates the parcels within the proposed overlay zone as NU and UR. Implementation of the proposed overlay zone would not change the existing land use designations on-site. Rather, the new overlay zone would permit new light industrial land uses detailed in [Table 3-1, *East Side Overlay Zone Permitted Uses*](#), in addition to those land uses already permitted under the existing NU and UR land use designations. The proposed East Side Overlay Zone would not directly involve the construction of new development. Any future development allowed within the overlay zone would be required to be consistent with the permitted uses under the General Plan land use designations applicable at the time of development. With adoption of the proposed East Side Overlay Zone, future light industrial uses would be consistent with the site’s land use designations.

[Table 5.1-1, *General Plan Consistency Analysis*](#), provides an analysis of the consistency of the proposed project with relevant General Plan policies. As shown in [Table 5.1-1](#), the proposed project would be consistent with relevant General Plan policies. Impacts would be less than significant in this regard.



Table 5.1-1
General Plan Consistency Analysis

Applicable General Plan Policy	Project Consistency Analysis
Plan for the Natural Environment	
Policy 3.1.1: Ensure that development does not adversely affect the groundwater basin.	<u>Consistent.</u> Potential impacts to water supply, including groundwater supply, from future light industrial development associated with the proposed overlay zone are assessed in <u>Section 5.11, Utilities and Service Systems</u> . As discussed in <u>Section 5.11</u> , future light industrial development would be required to comply with all applicable State and local regulations pertaining to water supply, including Title 20 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR), Senate Bill (SB) 610, and Municipal Code Section 15.64.070, <i>Water Improvements Fee</i> . With adherence to existing regulations, potential impacts to water supply and infrastructure would be reduced to less than significant levels.
Policy 3.2.2: Consider the potential impact of new development projects on the existing water supply.	<u>Consistent.</u> Refer to response to Plan for the Natural Environment Policy 3.1.1.
Policy 3.3.1: Minimize the amount of vehicular miles traveled.	<u>Consistent.</u> As detailed in <u>Section 5.12, Transportation</u> , the vehicle miles traveled (VMT) analysis demonstrates that the total VMT per service population for the overlay zone shows a decrease of over 25 percent compared to the General Plan VMT per service population under existing (2020) and future forecast year (2040) conditions. Thus, the project would result in less than significant VMT impacts.
Policy 3.3.3: Minimize air pollutant emissions generated by new and existing development.	<u>Consistent.</u> No development is proposed as part of the overlay zone. However, future light industrial development would require project-specific environmental review under CEQA pursuant to City guidelines and compliance with existing Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District regulations to ensure construction and operational air emissions are reduced and mitigated, as needed.
Policy 3.3.4: Protect sensitive uses such as homes, schools, and medical facilities from the impacts of air pollution.	<u>Consistent.</u> Refer to response to Plan for the Natural Environment Policy 3.3.4.
Policy 3.4.2: Preserve significant desert wash areas to protect sensitive species that utilize these habitat areas.	<u>Consistent.</u> As discussed in <u>Section 5.4, Biological Resources</u> , desert wash habitat is present within the boundaries of the proposed overlay zone. Mitigation Measure BIO-1 would require preparation of site-specific Biological Resources Assessments and/or focused plant surveys for all future development projects within the overlay zone. The assessments would outline specific regulatory requirements and mitigation to avoid impacts to sensitive habitat and species. With implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-1, impacts to sensitive species within desert wash areas would be reduced to less than significant levels.
Policy 3.4.4: Ensure that development proposals, including City sponsored projects, are analyzed for short- and long-term impacts to biological resources and that appropriate mitigation measures are implemented.	<u>Consistent.</u> Potential impacts to biological resources resulting from future light industrial development associated with the proposed overlay zone are assessed in <u>Section 5.4</u> . With implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-3, impacts to biological resources associated with future development in the overlay zone would be less than significant.
Policy 3.5.1: Minimize erosion problems resulting from development activities.	<u>Consistent.</u> As discussed in <u>Section 5.6, Geology and Soils</u> , construction activities associated with future light industrial development within the proposed overlay zone would likely require grading activities, which would result in potential soil erosion. Any future development projects within the overlay zone would be required to comply with Municipal Code Section 8.16.030, <i>Disturbing Surface of Land or Causing Wind Erosion Prohibited</i> . Additionally, development projects that



Table 5.1-1 [cont'd]
General Plan Consistency Analysis

Applicable General Plan Policy	Project Consistency Analysis
	disturb one or more acres of land would be required to prepare and implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and associated erosion control best management practices (BMPs) pursuant to the Construction General Permit requirements under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program. Further, all future development projects would be required to undergo separate CEQA environmental review and identify site-specific mitigation measures, as applicable. Adherence to existing regulations would minimize erosion issues associated with new development activities.
Policy 3.5.2: Since certain soils in the Lancaster study area have exhibited shrink-swell behavior and a potential for fissuring, and subsidence may exist in other areas, minimize the potential for damage resulting from the occurrence of soils movement.	<u>Consistent.</u> As discussed in Section 5.6, a portion in the eastern end of the overlay zone contains soils classified as moderately expansive. All future development projects within the proposed overlay zone would be required to undergo separate CEQA environmental review to evaluate site-specific impacts related to expansive soils and identify any required mitigation measures. Additionally, future improvements would be required to comply with the California Building Standards Code (CBCS) and Municipal Code requirements related to building safety to reduce potential geologic hazards. Adherence to existing regulations would minimize the potential for damage resulting from the occurrence of soils movement.
Policy 3.5.3: Protect lands currently in agricultural production from the negative impacts created when urban and rural land uses exist in close proximity, while recognizing the possibility of their long-term conversion to urban or rural uses.	<u>Consistent.</u> As discussed in Section 5.3, <i>Agriculture and Forestry Resources</i> , some areas within the proposed overlay zone are designated Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Unique Farmland; refer to Exhibit 5.3-1, <i>Important Farmland within the Project Site</i> . Future light industrial uses implemented in accordance with the proposed overlay zone could result in the conversion of mapped important farmlands to non-agricultural uses. As such, Mitigation Measure AG-1 would require future light industrial development to mitigate impacts to land mapped as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance through the permanent preservation of off-site agricultural land within the County of equal or better agricultural quality. Implementation of Mitigation Measure AG-1 would preserve lands for agricultural production.
Policy 3.6.1: Reduce energy consumption by establishing land use pattern which would decrease automobile travel and increase the use of energy efficient modes of transportation.	<u>Consistent.</u> The proposed overlay zone would allow for light industrial development in an area of the City currently zoned only for rural residential. Thus, the project would provide more flexible land use development in the eastern portion of the City. Further, as detailed in Section 5.12, the VMT analysis demonstrated that the total VMT per service population for the overlay zone shows a decrease of over 25 percent compared to the General Plan VMT per service population under existing (2020) and future forecast year (2040) conditions.
Policy 3.6.3: Encourage the incorporation of energy conservation measures in existing and new structures.	<u>Consistent.</u> Future development associated with the overlay zone would be required to comply with Title 24 standards and CALGreen Code requirements.
Policy 3.6.4: Support State and federal legislation that would eliminate wasteful energy consumption in an appropriate manner.	<u>Consistent.</u> Future light industrial development would be required to comply with local, State, and federal requirements related to renewable energy and energy efficiency.



Table 5.1-1 [cont'd]
General Plan Consistency Analysis

Applicable General Plan Policy	Project Consistency Analysis
<p>Policy 3.8.1: Preserve and enhance important views within the City, and significant visual features which are visible from the City of Lancaster.</p>	<p><u>Consistent.</u> As discussed in Section 5.2, <i>Aesthetics/Light and Glare</i>, scenic visual resources within the City and project site include long distance panoramas of the San Gabriel Mountains and Sierra Pelona Mountains to the south and southwest; Tehachapi Mountains to the northwest; local views of the surrounding buttes such as Saddleback Butte to the east and Little Buttes to the northwest; and panoramic desert expanses which include views of Joshua tree and other desert plant communities. Little Rock Wash, which bisects the proposed overlay zone, is an officially designated scenic resource. The development standards of the proposed overlay zone would not allow any high-profile components that would substantially affect scenic views within the overlay zone boundaries. However, future development of structures within the visual buffer area of Little Rock Wash could have the potential to impact views of this scenic resource. Mitigation Measure AES-1 requires that a site-specific visual impact assessment be prepared prior to future development of structures within the visual buffer area of Little Rock Wash. With implementation of Mitigation Measure AES-1, important views and visual features within the City would be preserved.</p>
<p>Plan for Public Health and Safety</p>	
<p>Policy 4.1.1: Manage potential seismic hazards resulting from fault rupture and strong ground motion to facilitate rapid physical and economic recovery following an earthquake through the identification and recognition of potentially hazardous conditions and implementation of effective standards for seismic design features.</p>	<p><u>Consistent.</u> As discussed in Section 5.6, the proposed overlay zone is not considered to be at risk for fault rupture. Additionally, future light industrial development projects within the proposed overlay zone would be required to undergo separate CEQA environmental review to evaluate site-specific impacts related to seismic ground shaking and/or fault rupture and identify any required mitigation measures. Additionally, future developments would be required to comply with existing regulations to minimize potential impacts from seismic ground shaking (e.g., the Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act, Seismic Hazard Mapping Act, CBSC, and Municipal Code Chapter 15.08, <i>Building Code</i>). Adherence to existing regulations would minimize potential seismic hazards resulting from fault rupture and strong ground motion.</p>
<p>Policy 4.3.1: Ensure that noise-sensitive land uses and noise generators are located and designed in such a manner that City noise objectives will be achieved.</p>	<p><u>Consistent.</u> No development is proposed as part of the overlay zone. Therefore, the location of future light industrial development in the overlay zone and proximity to existing sensitive uses is unknown at this time. However, as discussed in Section 5.16, <i>Noise</i>, all future new development projects capable of generating substantial mobile and/or stationary noises would be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA to evaluate project-specific impacts on a project-by-project basis. Detailed noise studies may be required to ensure anticipate noise levels do not exceed the City's established noise thresholds and mitigation may be required.</p>
<p>Policy 4.5.1: Ensure that activities within the City of Lancaster transport, use, store, and dispose of hazardous materials in a responsible manner which protects the public health and safety.</p>	<p><u>Consistent.</u> As discussed in Section 5.8, <i>Hazards and Hazardous Materials</i>, should a future project developed in accordance with the East Side Overlay Zone require the demolition of existing buildings, the project would be required to comply with Mitigation Measure HAZ-1, which would require asbestos containing materials (ACM) and lead based paint (LBP) surveys be conducted by a qualified specialist or contractor and be submitted to the County Health Hazardous Materials Division (HHMD) for review and to the Community Development Department for approval prior to demolition of existing structures. Additionally, all future construction and operations activities would be required to demonstrate</p>



**Table 5.1-1 [cont'd]
General Plan Consistency Analysis**

Applicable General Plan Policy	Project Consistency Analysis
	compliance with applicable laws and regulations governing the use, storage, and transportation of hazardous materials, ensuring that all potentially hazardous materials are used and handled in an appropriate manner. Adherence to existing regulations and implementation of Mitigation Measure HAZ-1 would ensure that transport, use, storage, and disposal of any hazardous materials would be conducted in a responsible manner which protects the public health and safety.
Policy 4.6.2: Ensure that the design of new development discourages opportunities for criminal activities to the maximum extent possible.	<u>Consistent.</u> As discussed in Section 5.10, <i>Public Services and Recreation</i> , future development in accordance with the proposed East Side Overlay Zone could result in the increase in demand for police protection services and facilities. Future developments would be reviewed by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD) as part of the site plan and development review process. The LASD generally encourages Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) design, which reduce opportunities for criminal activities by implementing physical design features that encourage proper defensible spaces, territoriality, surveillance, physical security, and strategically located lighting and landscaping. Compliance with local regulations would discourage opportunities for criminal activities.
Policy 4.7.2: Ensure that the design of new development minimizes the potential for fire.	<u>Consistent.</u> As discussed in Section 5.10, future developments would be required to adhere to the general building standards, fire safety standards, and fire safety provisions outlined in Title 24 of the CCR and Municipal Code Chapter 15.32, <i>Fire Code</i> . Per Title 24 of the CCR, future structures would be required to install applicable fire suppression design features (i.e., fire sprinklers, fire hydrants, emergency access), and would require Los Angeles County Fire Department (LACFD) site plan review and approval. Compliance with existing regulations would ensure that the design of new development minimizes the potential for fire hazards.
Plan for Active Living	
Policy 9.1.1: Work with area school districts to identify funding programs for school site acquisition and facilities construction which recognize chronic shortfalls in traditional funding programs, and to ensure that schools are appropriately located.	<u>Consistent.</u> As discussed in Section 5.10, future light industrial developments would be required to pay a standard development impact fee of \$0.414 per square foot of industrial use to the Eastside Union School District (EUSD) and \$0.20 per square foot of industrial use to the Antelope Valley Union High School District (AVUSHD) pursuant to SB 50. Funding from impact fees would be utilized for school site acquisition, facilities construction, and other resource improvements.
Policy 12.1.1: Preserve features and sites of significant historical and cultural value consistent with their intrinsic and scientific values.	<u>Consistent.</u> As analyzed in Section 5.5, <i>Tribal and Cultural Resources</i> , the overlay zone has the potential for historic-aged buildings that may require evaluation for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places and/or California Register of Historical Resources if affected by future development in accordance with the proposed overlay zone. Generally, the sensitivity for potential undocumented historic period buildings, structures, and archaeological sites is high. Therefore, future light industrial projects developed in accordance with the overlay zone would be required to undergo project-level environmental review under CEQA on a case-by-case basis to evaluate site-specific archaeological impacts and may be required to prepare a Phase I cultural resources study (Mitigation Measure CUL-1) to ensure previously undiscovered cultural resources are not adversely impacted.



**Table 5.1-1 [cont'd]
General Plan Consistency Analysis**

Applicable General Plan Policy	Project Consistency Analysis
Policy 12.2.1: Promote the construction of libraries or expansion of existing libraries as required to meet the needs of existing and future residents.	<u>Consistent.</u> As discussed in Section 5.10 , future light industrial developments would be required to pay a library facilities fee to the City to offset any increase in demand for library services and facilities pursuant to Municipal Code Section 15.64.140, <i>Library Facilities Fee</i> . The library facilities fee would be used to finance land acquisition, design, construction, equipping, and related capital costs for local library facilities.
Plan for Municipal Services and Facilities	
Policy 15.1.4: Ensure that mitigation is provided for all development in recognized flood prone areas. Any mitigation of flood hazard in one area shall not exacerbate flooding problems in other areas.	<u>Consistent.</u> As analyzed in Section 5.7, Hydrology and Water Quality , portions of the proposed overlay zone are within flood hazard zones. The southwestern area of the overlay zone is located within areas of 0.2-percent annual chance of flood hazard, and the area surrounding Little Rock Wash is identified as an area of one percent annual chance flood hazard. Nevertheless, all future projects would be required to comply with applicable federal, State, and local regulations related to flood control, which may include preparation of hydrology and/or drainage studies per Municipal Code Section 16.24.140, <i>Hydrology Study</i> ; installation of drainage structures such as culverts, storm drains, or other improvements in accordance with Municipal Code Section 16.24.150, <i>Mitigation of Storm and Nuisance Water Runoff</i> ; implementation of stormwater management practices for proposed landscaping per Municipal Code Section 8.50.200, <i>Stormwater Management And Rainwater Retention</i> ; payment of drainage/flood control improvement fees per Municipal Code Section 15.64.060, <i>Drainage/Flood Control Improvements Fee</i> ; and/or preparation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan and/or Water Quality Management Plan and associated best management practices.
Policy 15.1.5: Ensure sufficient infrastructure is built and maintained to handle and treat wastewater discharge.	<u>Consistent.</u> As discussed in Section 5.11, Utilities and Service Systems , the proposed overlay zone area is not connected to the City's sewer network and wastewater generated by existing uses in the project area is currently treated by private septic systems. Nonetheless, future project Applicants would still be required to pay a sewage treatment improvement fee per Municipal Code Section 15.64.080, <i>Sewage Treatment Improvements Fee</i> , to offset impacts on the City's existing sewage treatment systems and fund sewer-related capital improvements, such as acquisition, design, and construction of sewage treatment plant improvement and expansions, wastewater interceptors, and other related improvements. Additionally, future light industrial developments would be required to demonstrate compliance with Municipal Code Section 16.24.210, <i>Use of septic tanks</i> , and Appendix H, <i>Private Sewage Disposal System</i> , of the 2019 California Plumbing Code (CPC) pertaining to septic system design criteria related to suitable soils, construction, operation, quality of materials, distance requirements, and capacity. Compliance with existing regulations would ensure sufficient infrastructure is built and maintained to handle and treat wastewater discharge.
Policy 15.2.2: Minimize the generation of solid wastes as required by State law (Assembly Bill 939) through an integrated program of public education, source reduction, and recycling.	<u>Consistent.</u> As discussed in Section 5.11 , future light industrial developments within the proposed overlay zone would be required to demonstrate compliance with AB 939, which requires that at least 50 percent of waste produced is recycled, reduced, or composted.



Table 5.1-1 [cont'd]
General Plan Consistency Analysis

Applicable General Plan Policy	Project Consistency Analysis
Policy 15.3.1: Direct growth to areas with adequate existing facilities and services, areas which have adequate facilities and services committed, or areas where public services and facilities can be economically extended.	<u>Consistent.</u> As discussed in Section 5.10 , all future light industrial development projects within the proposed overlay zone would be required to undergo separate CEQA environmental review to evaluate project-specific impacts related to increased demand for public services. Additionally, future developments would be required to pay standard development impact fees to offset any increase in demand for public services.
Plan for Economic Development and Vitality	
Policy 16.2.6: Ensure that a variety of sites are available for a diversity of industrial and commercial users.	<u>Consistent.</u> The proposed East Side Overlay Zone would permit new light industrial uses, in addition to uses currently permitted within the RR-2.5 and R-7,000 zoning districts for those parcels within the overlay zone boundaries, thereby expanding the types of uses allowed within the overlay zone.
Policy 16.3.2: Provide sufficient amounts of land zoned for each type of major revenue generating land use to allow for competitive development opportunities among many potential sites with a broad range of site features and land uses.	<u>Consistent.</u> Refer to response to Plan for Economic Development and Vitality Policy 16.2.6.
Plan for Physical Development	
Policy 17.1.1: Maintain an adequate inventory of land for residential, commercial, employment, quasi-public, public, and open space uses.	<u>Consistent.</u> Refer to response to Plan for Economic Development and Vitality Policy 16.2.6.
Policy 17.1.4: Provide for office and industrial-based employment-generating lands which are highly accessible and compatible with other uses in the community.	<u>Consistent.</u> The proposed East Side Overlay Zone would permit new light industrial uses, in addition to uses currently permitted within the RR-2.5 and R-7,000 zoning districts for those parcels within the overlay zone boundaries. The future light industrial uses within the East Side Overlay Zone would be required to be compatible with adjacent existing uses through proper site planning, building design, and landscaping.
Policy 18.1.2: Encourage development that is compatible with the City's designated rural and non-urban areas.	<u>Consistent.</u> The overlay zone is nearly entirely designated NU (Non-Urban Residential), with the two westernmost parcels designated as UR (Urban Residential). Refer to response to Plan for Physical Development Policy 17.1.4 regarding compatibility with adjacent land uses.
Policy 19.3.4: Preserve and protect important areas of historic and cultural interest that serve as visible reminders of the City's social and architectural history.	<u>Consistent.</u> Refer to response to Plan for Active Living Policy 12.1.1.
Source: City of Lancaster, <i>City of Lancaster General Plan 2030</i> , July 14, 2009.	



Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

LANCASTER MUNICIPAL CODE

LU-2 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION COULD CONFLICT WITH LANCASTER MUNICIPAL CODE STANDARDS OR REGULATIONS.

Impact Analysis: As discussed in Section 5.1.2, *Regulatory Setting*, the zoning districts within the City implement the General Plan land use designations by establishing permitted land uses and associated development standards applicable within each zone. Within the boundaries of the proposed East Side Overlay Zone, nearly all parcels are currently zoned RR-2.5 (Rural Residential), with the two westernmost parcels zoned R-7,000 (Single Family Residential). Current permitted uses within the RR-2.5 zone include single-family housing; community care facilities of 6 or fewer beds; accessory structures, such as sheds or gazebos; swimming pools and pool equipment; guest houses; garage conversions; small family daycares of up to seven children; home occupation/home office; electric vehicle charging stations; non-commercial solar energy systems; cargo containers; light agricultural uses; commercial crop production; and water reservoirs, pumping stations, tanks, and wells. Current permitted uses within the R-7,000 zone includes those uses listed for the RR-2.5 zone except cargo containers; light agricultural uses; and commercial crop production. The R-7,000 zone also allows for the development of duplexes.

The proposed East Side Overlay Zone would not change the existing zoning districts, rather it would permit new light industrial uses, such as alcohol production, contractor storage yard and research and development, in addition to those uses currently permitted within the RR-2.5 and R-7,000 zoning districts for those parcels within the overlay zone boundaries. Other new uses such as alternative energy uses; automobile repair; building trades and related uses; distribution; food manufacturing, processing, wholesale sales, and storage; light manufacturing; and warehousing would be allowed within the overlay zone subject to conditional use permits. Additionally, the proposed East Side Overlay Zone would establish use descriptions and development standards for the new allowable uses within the overlay zone boundaries. Any future development within the overlay zone would be subject to the updated allowable uses and development standards. With adoption of the proposed East Side Overlay Zone, future light industrial land uses would be consistent with the applicable zoning at the time of development. Thus, impacts would be less than significant in this regard.



Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

LU-3 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION COULD CONFLICT WITH SCAG'S 2020-2045 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN/SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES STRATEGY GOALS.

Impact Analysis: The proposed East Side Overlay Zone would permit new light industrial uses, such as alcohol production, contractor storage yard and research and development, in addition to the uses currently permitted within the RR-2.5 and R-7,000 zoning districts for those parcels within the overlay zone boundaries. Other new uses such as alternative energy uses; automobile repair; building trades and related uses; distribution; food manufacturing, processing, wholesale sales, and storage; light manufacturing; and warehousing would be allowed within the overlay zone subject to conditional use permits. The new uses permitted within the overlay zone would enhance development opportunities within the underutilized eastern portion of the City. As previously discussed, future light industrial uses within the East Side Overlay Zone would be required to be compatible with adjacent existing uses through implementation of the proposed development standards, proper site planning, building design, and landscaping.

The proposed overlay zone is reviewed for consistency with the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS goals as detailed in [Table 5.1-2, SCAG 2020-2045 RTP/SCS Consistency Analysis](#).

**Table 5.1-2
SCAG 2020-2045 RTP/SCS Consistency Analysis**

Goal	Consistency Statement
Goal 1. Encourage regional economic prosperity and global competitiveness.	<u>Not Applicable</u> . Specifically, Goal 1 of the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS is not adopted for the “purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect” per Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines. Nevertheless, the proposed overlay zone would increase flexibility in allowed uses and development potential in the eastern portion of Lancaster; incentivize new light industrial development to occur in the underutilized eastern portion of the City; and encourage new development in Lancaster that provides economic benefits to the City and its residents. Thus, the project would encourage regional economic prosperity of Lancaster and the Antelope Valley.
Goal 2. Improve mobility, accessibility, reliability, and travel safety for people and goods.	<u>Consistent</u> : No land use development would occur as part of the project. However, the project would allow for light industrial development in the overlay zone, which may result in improved roadway infrastructure in the eastern portion of Lancaster that is currently mostly vacant and undeveloped. As such, the project may indirectly improve mobility, accessibility, reliability, and travel safety in the project area.



Table 5.1-2 [cont'd]
SCAG 2020-2045 RTP/SCS Consistency Analysis

Goal	Consistency Statement
Goal 3. Enhance the preservation, security, and resilience of the regional transportation system.	<u>Not Applicable</u> . Specifically, Goal 3 of the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS is not adopted for the “purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect” per Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines. Nevertheless, as noted in Section 5.12, <i>Transportation</i> , the VMT analysis demonstrates that the total VMT per service population for the overlay zone shows a decrease of over 25 percent compared to the General Plan VMT per service population under existing (2020) and future forecast year (2040) conditions. Additionally, the overlay zone would not substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature or incompatible uses. Thus, the project would indirectly ensure the resiliency, security, and safety of the City’s transportation network.
Goal 4. Increase person and goods throughput and travel choices within the transportation system.	<u>Not Applicable</u> . Specifically, Goal 4 of the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS is not adopted for the “purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect” per Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines. Nonetheless, as discussed in response to Goal 2, the project would allow for light industrial development in the overlay zone, which may result in improved roadway infrastructure in the eastern portion of Lancaster that is currently mostly vacant and undeveloped.
Goal 5. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality.	<p><u>Consistent</u>. As detailed in Section 5.13, <i>Air Quality</i>, and 5.14, <i>Greenhouse Gas Emissions</i>, no specific development is being proposed. Therefore, the proposed overlay zone itself would not involve any building construction or land uses that may generate construction or operational emissions. Future development within the East Side Overlay Zone would occur incrementally over time, based largely on funding availability, economic considerations, market demand, and other planning considerations. Future development within the East Side Overlay Zone area would be analyzed at a detailed level and be reviewed by the City on a case-by-case basis to ensure that development occurs in a logical manner consistent with the General Plan, Municipal Code, and that additional environmental review is conducted under CEQA, as needed. Future project-specific environmental review under CEQA would be conducted pursuant to City guidelines and in compliance with existing Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District (AVAQMD) regulations.</p> <p>Additionally, future development projects would be required to comply with all applicable AVAQMD rules and regulations as well as other control measures to reduce construction emissions; refer to Mitigation Measures AQ-1 and AQ-2. Specifically, Mitigation Measure AQ-1 would require future projects within the City to utilize construction equipment vehicles in proper condition and in tune per manufacturer’s specifications to ensure ozone precursor emissions are reduced. Additionally, Mitigation Measure AQ-2 would require a Construction Management Plan and Traffic Control Plan be prepared and implemented to reduce traffic congestion during future temporary construction activities, thus reducing construction-related air quality emissions.</p>
Goal 6. Support healthy and equitable communities.	<u>Not Applicable</u> . Specifically, Goal 6 of the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS is not adopted for the “purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect” per Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines.
Goal 7. Adapt to a changing climate and support an integrated regional development pattern and transportation network.	<u>Not Applicable</u> . Specifically, Goal 7 of the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS is not adopted for the “purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect” per Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines.



**Table 5.1-2 [cont'd]
SCAG 2020-2045 RTP/SCS Consistency Analysis**

Goal	Consistency Statement
Goal 8. Leverage new transportation technologies and data-driven solutions that result in more efficient travel.	<u>Not Applicable</u> . Specifically, Goal 8 of the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS is not adopted for the “purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect” per Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines.
Goal 9. Encourage development of diverse housing types in areas well supported by multiple transportation options.	<u>Not Applicable</u> . The proposed overlay zone would allow for light industrial development in the eastern portion of the City and is not related to housing. Nonetheless, the project site is currently zoned for residential development and the proposed overlay zone would not impede on future housing development in accordance with the underlying residential zoning.
Goal 10. Promote conservation of natural and agricultural lands and restoration of critical habitats.	<u>Consistent</u> . As discussed in <u>Section 5.3, <i>Agriculture and Forestry Resources</i></u> , and <u>Section 5.4, <i>Biological Resources</i></u> , the project would not have significant impacts on agricultural lands or adversely impact critical biological habitats. Should development occur on designated farmland, Mitigation Measure AG-1 would require future light industrial development to mitigate impacts to land mapped as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance through the permanent preservation of off-site agricultural land within the County of equal or better agricultural quality. Additionally, Mitigation Measure BIO-1 would require, as determined by the City, a Biological Resources Assessment be conducted to evaluate potential impacts to on-site biological resources.
Source: Southern California Association of Governments, <i>Connect SoCal: 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy</i> , September 3, 2020.	

As detailed in Table 5.1-2, the proposed project would be consistent with all applicable goals of the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS. As such, the proposed project would not conflict with SCAG’s 2020-2045 RTP/SCS, and impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

5.1.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

CEQA Guidelines Section 15355 requires an analysis of cumulative impacts, which are defined as, “two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable, or which compound or increase other environmental impacts.” The cumulative analysis below considers the proposed project’s impacts in conjunction with future buildout of the General Plan; refer to Table 4-1, *General Plan 2030 – GPCAC Preferred Land Use Plan Alternative Buildout*.



- **THE PROPOSED PROJECT, COMBINED WITH OTHER RELATED PROJECTS, COULD CONFLICT WITH LAND USE PLANS, POLICIES OR REGULATIONS ADOPTED FOR THE PURPOSE OF AVOIDING OR MITIGATING AN ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECT.**

Impact Analysis: The proposed East Side Overlay Zone would be consistent with the relevant General Plan policies, Municipal Code, and SCAG's 2020-2045 RTP/SCS. Additionally, with approval of the proposed East Side Overlay Zone, future light industrial development implemented in accordance with the overlay zone would be consistent with the applicable General Plan land use designations and zoning at the time of development. Similar to future development projects within the overlay zone, cumulative development projects would be required to undergo separate CEQA environmental reviews to determine potential conflicts with applicable land use policies, plans, and regulations. As part of the review process, each cumulative project would be required to demonstrate compliance with the provisions of the applicable land use designations and zoning districts. As the proposed East Side Overlay Zone would be consistent with applicable land use policies under the General Plan, Municipal Code, and SCAG's 2020-2045 RTP/SCS, the proposed overlay zone would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact to land use and planning. Impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

5.1.6 SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

No significant unavoidable impacts related to land use and planning have been identified.



5.2 Aesthetics/Light and Glare



5.2 AESTHETICS/LIGHT AND GLARE

This section evaluates the visual quality of the project area and assesses the potential for visual impacts associated with implementation of the proposed project.

5.2.1 EXISTING SETTING

The City of Lancaster is located within the central portion of the Antelope Valley, and the City and its surrounding areas are part of the Mojave Desert Basin. According to the General Plan, scenic resources include unique visual features that provide attractive views. The City has long distance panoramas of the San Gabriel Mountains and Sierra Pelona Mountains to the south and southwest, and Tehachapi Mountains to the northwest. Major visual resources within the City include the local views of the surrounding buttes, such as Saddleback Butte to the east and Little Buttes to the northwest, and panoramic desert expanses. Additionally, a prominent local topographic feature within the City is Quartz Hill, located in the south-central portion of the City. Quartz Hill rises over 200 feet above the nearby unincorporated community of Quartz Hill, immediately south of the City. However, Quartz Hill is not visible from the project site due to its distance and intervening development. Additionally, the Little Rock Wash, located in the eastern portion of the City, is an officially designated scenic resource and includes a visual buffer area that spans from approximately 50th Street to 70th Street. Generally, the City's visual character can be described as suburban due to its land use patterns.

Scenic views of the desert are available throughout much of the City's undeveloped areas, including the project area. The desert scene of Lancaster is directly associated with Joshua trees (*Yucca brevifolia*) and juniper shrubs, which are most plentiful in the eastern and southern portions of the City. The Prime Desert Woodland Preserve, located approximately 7.5 miles west of the project area, also includes numerous Joshua trees.

There are no officially designated or eligible State scenic highways within the City. The nearest designated State scenic highway is State Route 2 in the San Gabriel Mountains, located approximately 22 miles south of the City.¹ The County of Los Angeles' *Antelope Valley Community Plan* identifies priority scenic drives in the Antelope Valley; however, none are located within or adjacent to the project site.²

PROJECT SITE

The project site is relatively flat and consists of an approximately 5,841-acre area occupying the eastern extent of the City. The project site is comprised of scattered areas of rural development predominantly surrounded by agricultural use and vacant, undeveloped land. As with much of the City, the project

¹ California Department of Transportation, *Scenic Highways*, <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/design/lap-landscape-architecture-and-community-livability/lap-liv-i-scenic-highways>, accessed June 14, 2022.

² Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, *Antelope Valley Area Plan, Map 4.2 Antelope Valley Scenic Drives*, <https://planning.lacounty.gov/tnc/documents/>, accessed June 14, 2022.



site offers long distance panoramas of the San Gabriel Mountains and Sierra Pelonas to the south and southwest, and Tehachapi Mountains to the northwest, as well as panoramic views of the desert landscape. Little Rock Wash, which is in the eastern portion of the City, bisects the proposed overlay zone and is an officially designated scenic resource.

LIGHT AND GLARE

Lighting effects are associated with the use of artificial light during the evening and nighttime hours. There are two primary sources of light: light emanating from building interiors passing through windows, and light from exterior sources (i.e., street lighting, building illumination, security lighting, parking lot lighting, and landscape lighting). Light introduction can be a nuisance to adjacent residential areas, diminish the view of the clear night sky, and if uncontrolled, can cause disturbances. Uses such as residences are considered light sensitive because occupants have expectations of privacy during evening hours and may be subject to disturbance by bright light sources. Within the City, developed areas produce ambient light during the night.

Glare is primarily a daytime occurrence caused by the reflection of sunlight or artificial light by highly polished surfaces such as window glass or reflective materials, and to a lesser degree, from broad expanses of light-colored surfaces. Perceived glare is the unwanted and potentially objectionable sensation as observed by a person as they look directly into the light source of a luminaire (or a lighting unit). Daytime glare generation is common in urban areas and is typically associated with buildings with exterior facades largely or entirely comprised of highly reflective glass. Glare can also be produced during evening and nighttime hours by the reflection of artificial light sources such as automobile headlights. Glare-sensitive uses include residences, transportation corridors, and aircraft landing corridors.

Exterior light sources in the project site are primarily associated with the existing rural residences and from vehicular headlights during the evening. Some areas along the edges of the project site also generate light and glare from surrounding development.

5.2.2 REGULATORY SETTING

LOCAL LEVEL

City of Lancaster General Plan 2030

Plan for the Natural Environment

The General Plan includes the Plan for the Natural Environment, which identifies natural resources suitable for certain levels of protection, provides a management program for those resources consistent with community values, and ensures the City as an active participant in the management of the Antelope Valley's resources. The following objective and policies related to scenic resources are relevant to the proposed project:



- Objective 3.8: Preserve and enhance important views within the City, and significant visual features which are visible from the City of Lancaster.
- Policy 3.8.1: Preserve views of surrounding ridgelines, slope areas and hilltops, as well as other scenic vistas.
- Policy 3.8.2: Explore the potential for establishing scenic corridors within the Study Area.

Lancaster Municipal Code

Title 15, Chapter 15.08, *Building Code*, of the Municipal Code is the presiding building code within the City for purposes of regulating construction, demolition, occupancy, height, and area maintenance of all structures, all contributors to aesthetic quality and scenic character.

Municipal Code Title 17, *Zoning*, provides the legislative framework to implement and enhance the General Plan by classifying and regulating the uses of land and structures within the City. Specific chapters within Title 17 provide development standards for each of the City's land use zones, including permitted uses, setbacks, landscaping, off-street parking, outdoor lighting, signs, and design requirements, among others.

Municipal Code Chapter 17.16, *Industrial Zones*, regulates height of buildings in industrial zones and requires site plan review which shall demonstrate conformance with height regulations, property development regulations, sign regulations or a sign program required by the City for multiple-tenant projects, off-street parking requirements, the adopted City of Lancaster Design Guidelines, any other requirements established for the adopted zoning designation in which the property(ies) is (are) located, and any other applicable city ordinances, standards, guidelines or policies. Additionally, where industrial zones abut or are adjacent to residentially zoned property, artificial lighting used to illuminate the premises shall be directed away from adjacent residentially zoned properties.

5.2.3 IMPACT THRESHOLDS AND SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines* contains the Environmental Checklist form used during preparation of this EIR. Accordingly, a project may create a significant adverse environmental impact if it would:

- Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista (refer to Impact Statement AES-1);
- Substantially damage scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State scenic highway (refer to [Section 8.0, *Effects Found Not To Be Significant*](#));
- In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project



conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality? (refer to Impact Statement AES-2); and/or

- Create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area (refer to Impact Statement AES-3).

Based on these standards/criteria, the effects of the proposed project have been categorized as either a “less than significant impact” or “potentially significant impact.” Mitigation measures are recommended for potentially significant impacts. If a potentially significant impact cannot be reduced to a less than significant level through the application of mitigation, it is categorized as a significant and unavoidable impact.

5.2.4 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

SCENIC VISTAS

AES-1 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION COULD HAVE A SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE IMPACT ON A SCENIC VISTA.

Impact Analysis: A scenic vista is generally defined as a view of undisturbed natural lands exhibiting a unique or unusual feature that comprises an important or dominant portion of the viewshed.³ Scenic vistas may also be represented by a particular distant view that provides visual relief from less attractive views of nearby features. Local open space or recreational areas may also offer scenic vistas if they represent a valued aesthetic view within the surrounding landscape of nearby features.

As discussed in [Section 5.2.1, *Existing Setting*](#), scenic visual resources within the City and project area include long distance panoramas of the San Gabriel Mountains and Sierra Pelona Mountains to the south and southwest; Tehachapi Mountains to the northwest; local views of the surrounding buttes such as Saddleback Butte to the east and Little Buttes to the northwest; and panoramic desert expanses which include views of Joshua tree and other desert plant communities. Little Rock Wash, which bisects the proposed overlay zone, is an officially designated scenic resource within the project site.

CONSTRUCTION

Future construction activities associated with development within the proposed overlay zone would require the use of construction equipment, staging areas, vehicles, and construction workers, which would alter the aesthetic character of the environment. However, these construction activities would be temporary in nature, and any potential changes to scenic vistas during construction for individual development projects would cease upon completion of construction. Additionally, construction of future light industrial projects developed in accordance with the overlay zone would be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA and implement project-level mitigation measures, as needed. As such, impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

³ A viewshed is the geographical area which is visible from a particular location.



OPERATIONS

Potential viewers of scenic vistas in the overlay zone are those on public lands, public rights-of-way and facilities, and adjacent properties, specifically existing residential uses. Future development associated with the proposed overlay zone would have the potential to intermittently obscure distant views of the mountains, buttes, and desert for motorists and pedestrians traveling through the overlay zone as well as for existing residents. However, views of upper elevations of the mountains and buttes would not be blocked from public vantage points along roadways within the overlay zone and panoramic views of desert expanses, Joshua trees, and other plant communities are available throughout the City.

The project site is currently predominantly zoned RR-2.5, which allows for rural residential uses. The proposed overlay zone would allow for new light industrial uses within the overlay zone. Although the types of uses would be different than what is currently approved for the project site, the scale of the potential future development would be similar to existing conditions, specifically related to the height of development. Under the current RR-2.5 zoning, the maximum building height within the project site is 40 feet while with the proposed overlay zone, it would be 50 feet (without a Conditional Use Permit). Additionally, minimum setbacks for the proposed overlay zone would serve to provide a visual buffer of distance between the roadways and future structures within the project site.

As discussed, Little Rock Wash is an officially designated scenic resource within the project site. Future development of structures within the visual buffer area of Little Rock Wash, as defined and illustrated in General Plan MEA Figure 12-1, *Scenic Resources*, could have the potential to impact the scenic area. As such, Mitigation Measure AES-1 requires that a site-specific visual impact assessment be prepared prior to future development of structures within the visual buffer area of Little Rock Wash. The visual impact assessment shall take into account line-of-sight, topography, intervening physical features, vegetation, and potential for buffering between the future proposed development and Little Rock Wash. With implementation of Mitigation Measure AES-1, potential impacts related to scenic vistas would be reduced to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures:

AES-1 Prior to development of structures within the visual buffer area of Little Rock Wash, as illustrated on General Plan Master Environmental Assessment Figure 12-1, *Scenic Resources*, a site-specific visual impact assessment shall be prepared to determine specific design features to implement to maintain the visual integrity of Little Rock Wash. Specific design features can include, but are not limited to:

- Designing structures to blend in with the natural palette of Little Rock Wash;
- Placing structures furthest away from Little Rock Wash or locating new structures on portions of the site that do not interfere with existing views of Little Rock Wash; and/or



- Including visual buffers such as landscaping between structures and Little Rock Wash.

The City of Lancaster Community Development Department shall ensure that design features and recommendations provided in the visual impact assessment shall be incorporated into the plans and specifications for future development within the Little Rock Wash visual buffer area.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.

SCENIC QUALITY REGULATIONS

AES-2 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION COULD SUBSTANTIALLY DEGRADE THE EXISTING VISUAL CHARACTER OR QUALITY OF PUBLIC VIEWS OF THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS IN NON-URBANIZED AREAS AND COULD CONFLICT WITH APPLICABLE ZONING AND OTHER REGULATIONS GOVERNING SCENIC QUALITY IN URBAN AREAS.

Impact Analysis: The City includes both urbanized and non-urbanized areas. The overlay zone is considered a non-urban area as it comprises scattered areas of rural development predominantly surrounded by agricultural use and vacant, undeveloped land. However, the intent of the proposed overlay zone is to allow more flexibility and development potential in the underutilized eastern portion of Lancaster. Thus, as the project site is developed with the uses of the proposed overlay zone, its visual character would more closely align with those of urbanized areas of Lancaster. Given the nature and location of the proposed project, this analysis evaluates the proposed project's potential to conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

Once the proposed project is approved, the City's zoning code would be updated with the development standards of the East Side Overlay Zone. As previously discussed, although the type of uses would be different than what is currently permitted for the project site, the scale of potential future light industrial development would be similar to existing conditions, specifically related to the height of development. Under the current RR-2.5 zoning, the maximum building height within the project site is 40 feet while with the proposed overlay zone, it would be 50 feet (without a Conditional Use Permit). Additionally, future development projects would be required to comply with zoning-specific development standards governing scenic quality, including setbacks, landscaping, outdoor lighting, and signage per Municipal Code Title 17, *Zoning*, and the proposed East Side Overlay Zone development standards detailed in *Table 3-3, East Side Overlay Zone Development Standards*. The overlay zone development standards include front and street side yard setbacks of 20 feet, interior side and rear yard setbacks of 10 feet, a maximum floor area ratio of 0.5, and additional standards related to landscaping, walls and fences, artificial lighting, and signs. All future development projects would also be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA and implement project-level mitigation measures, as needed. Overall, future development projects would be required to comply with existing zoning regulations governing scenic quality and would be ensured as part of the City's plan review process, and impacts would be less than significant.



Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

LIGHT AND GLARE

AES-3 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION COULD CREATE NEW SOURCES OF LIGHT AND GLARE, WHICH COULD ADVERSELY AFFECT DAY OR NIGHTTIME VIEWS.

Impact Analysis: A significant impact may occur if lighting, as part of the proposed project, exceeds adopted thresholds for light and glare, including exterior lighting or light spillover,⁴ or if the proposed project creates a substantial new source of light or glare. The project site comprises scattered areas of rural development predominantly surrounded by agricultural use and vacant, undeveloped land. Existing sources of light in the project site are primarily associated with the existing rural residences and from vehicular headlights during the evening. Some areas along the edges of the project site also generate light and glare from surrounding development. Additionally, developed areas of the City produce ambient light during the night.

CONSTRUCTION

Future construction activities associated with development within the proposed overlay zone could involve temporary light and glare impacts as a result of construction equipment and materials. However, these impacts would be site-specific during construction activities only, and would cease after construction is complete. Additionally, construction activities within the City are limited to the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. from Monday through Saturday per Municipal Code Section 8.24.040, *Loud, unnecessary and unusual noises prohibited – Construction and building*, no construction activities are allowed on Sundays or holidays. Thus, as no construction activities would be permitted after 8:00 p.m. from Monday through Saturday, or on Sundays/holidays, short-term construction-related impacts pertaining to nighttime lighting are not anticipated. It should also be noted that all development proposed within the overlay zone would be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA and would be evaluated on a project-specific level with regards to light and glare construction impacts.

OPERATIONS

Vacant, undeveloped portions of the project site do not currently produce sources of light or glare. As implementation of the proposed overlay zone would allow for additional development throughout the project site, new sources of light and glare would result in the project site and its surroundings. Anticipated exterior building lighting would be comprised of perimeter or security lighting, which are typically directed and down-shielded to prevent light spillover or trespass. Additionally, Municipal Code Chapter 17.16, *Industrial Zones*, and development standards for the overlay zone would require

⁴ Light spillover is typically defined as the presence of unwanted light on properties adjacent to the property being illuminated. With respect to lighting, the degree of illumination may vary widely depending on the amount of light generated, height of the light source, presence of barriers or obstructions, type of light source, and weather conditions.



regulation of artificial lighting where industrial zones abut or are adjacent to residentially zoned property and lighting be directed away from adjacent residentially zoned properties. Therefore, light and glare associated with future light industrial development projects that abut residentially zoned properties would be designed such that any potential light and glare impacts on existing residences are minimized. Glare may also be generated by vehicular headlights associated with new light industrial development in the project area. However, such glare effects would be temporary as vehicles drive by and would not result in longstanding glare impacts on other uses in the area. Vehicular traffic associated with future light industrial developments would also more likely occur during daytime business hours and thus, result in minimal nighttime glare impacts. Further, future development projects within the proposed overlay zone would be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA to evaluate project-level impacts with regards to operational light and glare and implement mitigation, as needed. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

5.2.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

CEQA Guidelines Section 15355 requires an analysis of cumulative impacts, which are defined as, “two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable, or which compound or increase other environmental impacts.”

SCENIC VISTAS

● THE PROJECT, COMBINED WITH OTHER CUMULATIVE PROJECTS, COULD RESULT IN SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS TO SCENIC VISTAS.

Impact Analysis: Future cumulative projects developed pursuant to the General Plan could result in adverse impacts to scenic vistas in the City. However, cumulative projects would be required to undergo project-specific environmental review under CEQA to evaluate project-level impacts to scenic vistas and to determine any required mitigation.

As analyzed above, future development projects implemented in accordance with the East Side Overlay Zone are not anticipated to contribute to a cumulative impact with regards to scenic vistas, as these future structures would not be large enough in scale and height to block or obstruct views compared to existing zoning. Further, future light industrial projects would also be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA. However, given that the details of future development projects are unknown, any future development projects within the visual buffer area of Little Rock Wash would be required to implement Mitigation Measure AES-1, which would require a site-specific visual impact assessment. With implementation of Mitigation Measure AES-1, the proposed overlay zone would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact and impacts in this regard would be reduced to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures: Refer to Mitigation Measure AES-1.



Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.

SCENIC QUALITY REGULATIONS

- **THE PROJECT, COMBINED WITH OTHER CUMULATIVE PROJECTS, COULD CONFLICT WITH APPLICABLE ZONING AND OTHER REGULATIONS GOVERNING SCENIC QUALITY.**

Impact Analysis: Cumulative projects developed in accordance with the General Plan would be required to undergo project-specific environmental review under CEQA to evaluate project-level impacts and to determine any required mitigation. As part of the City's plan review process, the City would review each cumulative project for consistency with applicable General Plan policies and site development standards included in the Municipal Code that aid in governing scenic quality.

As stated, future light industrial development projects pursuant to the East Side Overlay Zone would be required to comply with the development standards of the overlay zone as well as to existing City requirements. Thus, the proposed project would not significantly contribute to cumulative impacts to scenic quality regulations and impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

LIGHT AND GLARE

- **THE PROJECT, COMBINED WITH OTHER CUMULATIVE PROJECTS, COULD CREATE A NEW SOURCE OF SUBSTANTIAL LIGHT OR GLARE, WHICH COULD ADVERSELY AFFECT DAY OR NIGHTTIME VIEWS IN THE CITY.**

Impact Analysis: Development of cumulative projects could result in increased light and glare in the City during construction and operational activities. However, all cumulative development would be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA to evaluate project-level impacts associated with light and glare. Additionally, cumulative projects would be required to comply with outdoor lighting requirements specific to each zoning district as detailed in Municipal Code Title 17, *Zoning*. Specifically, Municipal Code Chapter 17.16, *Industrial Zones*, and development standards for the overlay zone would require regulation of artificial lighting where industrial zones abut or are adjacent to residentially zoned property and require lighting be directed away from adjacent residentially zoned properties. With adherence to existing regulations governing light and glare, the project would not cumulatively contribute to the creation of substantial new lighting or glare and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.



5.2.6 SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

No significant unavoidable impacts related to aesthetics/light and glare have been identified.



5.3 Agriculture and Forestry Resources



5.3 AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

This section identifies agriculture and forestry resources within the project site and evaluates the potential impacts to such resources that could result from implementation of the proposed project.

5.3.1 EXISTING SETTING

AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

According to the General Plan MEA, approximately 3,800 acres or six percent of land within the City limits is under cultivation. The largest portions of agricultural land are located within the western portion of the City west of 70th Street West, between Avenue J and Avenue F, and within the eastern portion of the City east of 40th Street East (i.e., the project site).

According to the California Department of Conservation, there are five main categories of important agricultural land. These include Prime Farmland; Farmland of Statewide Importance; Unique Farmland; Farmland of Local Importance; and Grazing Land. As shown on Exhibit 5.3-1, *Important Farmlands within the Project Site*, some areas within the project site are designated either Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, or Grazing Land.¹ Specifically, Prime Farmland and Grazing Land are located throughout the overlay zone; Farmland of Statewide Importance is in the central portion of the overlay zone; and a small area of Unique Farmland is in the most eastern portion of the overlay zone.

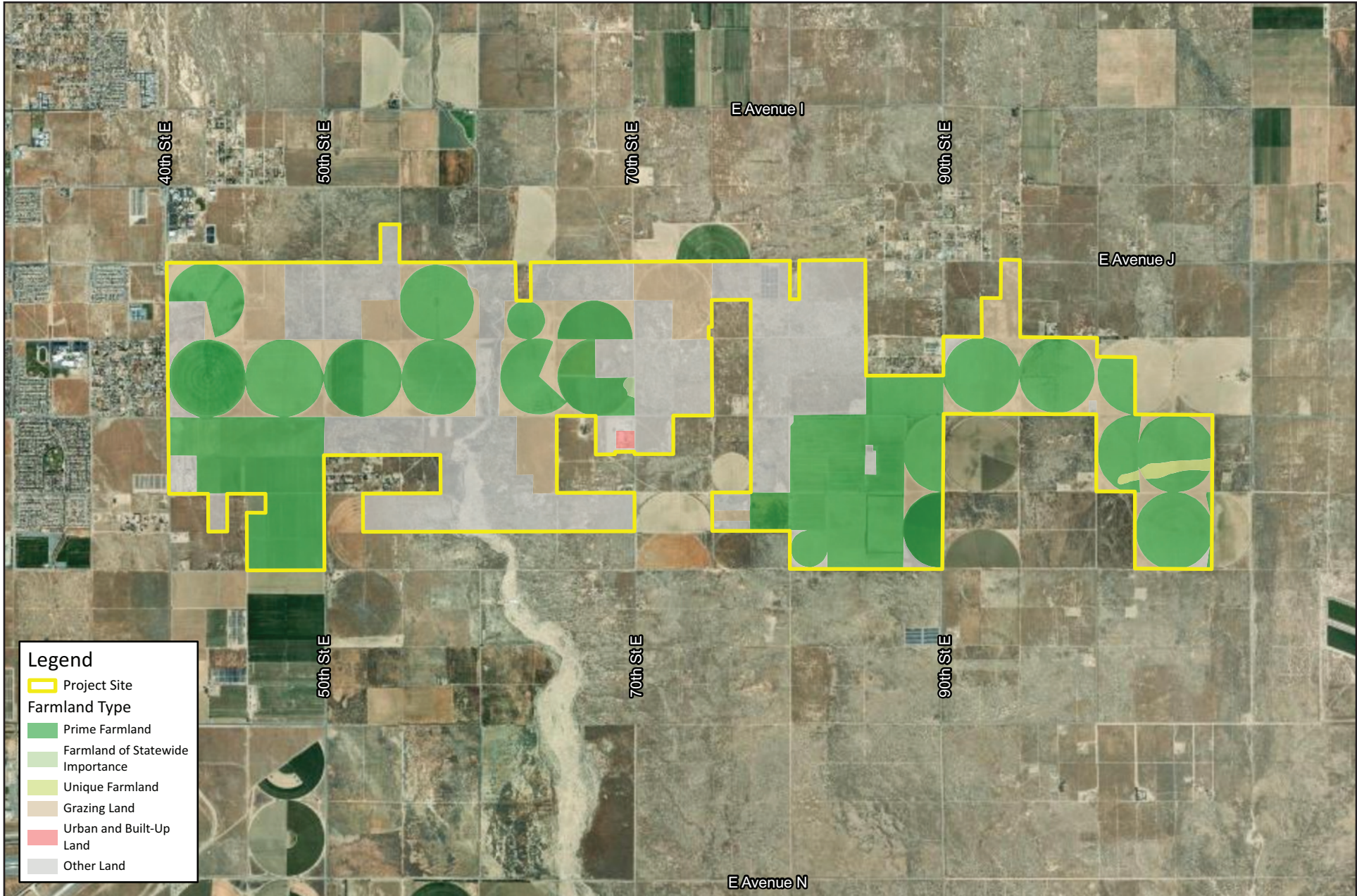
5.3.2 REGULATORY SETTING

STATE LEVEL

Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program

Maps of important farmlands are prepared by the California Department of Conservation as part of its Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP). Important farmland maps are prepared periodically for most of the State's agricultural areas based on information from the California Natural Resource Conservation Service's soil survey maps, land inventory and monitoring criteria developed by the California Natural Resource Conservation Service and land use information mapped by the California Department of Water Resources. These criteria generally are expressed as definitions that characterize the land's suitability for agricultural production, including physical and chemical characteristics of the soil and actual land use. Important farmland maps are generally updated every two years. The California Department of Conservation categorizes important farmland into the following five farmland categories:

¹ California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, *California Important Farmland Finder*, <https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/DLRP/CIFF/>, accessed June 22, 2022.



Legend

- Project Site
- Farmland Type**
- Prime Farmland
- Farmland of Statewide Importance
- Unique Farmland
- Grazing Land
- Urban and Built-Up Land
- Other Land

Important Farmlands within the Project Site



- *Prime Farmland:* Lands with the combination of physical and chemical features best able to sustain long-term production of agricultural crops. The land must be supported by a developed irrigation water supply that is dependable and of adequate quality during the growing season. It also must have been used for production of irrigated crops at some time during the four years before mapping data was collected.
- *Farmland of Statewide Importance:* Lands with agricultural land use characteristics, irrigation water supplies and physical characteristic similar to those of Prime Farmland but with minor shortcomings, such as a steeper slope or less ability to retain moisture.
- *Unique Farmland:* Lands with lesser-quality soils used for the production of California’s leading agricultural cash crops. These lands usually are irrigated but may include non- irrigated orchards or vineyards, as found in some of the State’s climatic zones.
- *Farmland of Local Importance:* Lands of importance to the local agricultural economy, as determined by each county’s board of supervisors and a local advisory committee.
- *Grazing Land:* Lands in which the existing vegetation is suited to the grazing of livestock.

LOCAL LEVEL

City of Lancaster General Plan 2030

Plan for the Natural Environment

The Plan for the Natural Environment evaluates the natural and human-induced environments within the City. The plan focuses on those resources suitable for certain levels of maintenance and protection, as well as their limitations for rural or urban use. Overall, the Plan for the Natural Environment provides a management program for those resources consistent with community values, and ensures the City is an active participant in the management of the Antelope Valley’s resources. The management program outlined in the Plan for the Natural Environment is aimed at balancing demands for new urban and rural development within Lancaster, with the desire of residents to protect natural resources and retain the open character of the City. The following policies pertaining to agricultural resources apply to the proposed project:

- Objective 3.5 Preserve land resources through the application of appropriate soils management techniques and the protection and enhancement of surrounding landforms and open space.
- Policy 3.5.3: Protect lands in agricultural production from the negative impacts created when urban and rural land uses exist in close proximity, while recognizing the possibility of their long-term conversion to urban or rural uses.



5.3.3 IMPACT THRESHOLDS AND SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines* contains the Environmental Checklist form that was used during the preparation of this EIR. Accordingly, a project may create a significant adverse environmental impact to agriculture and forestry resources if it would:

- Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use (refer to Impact Statement AG-1);
- Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract (refer to [Section 8.0, *Effects Found Not To Be Significant*](#));
- Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g)) (refer to [Section 8.0, *Effects Found Not To Be Significant*](#));
- Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use (refer to [Section 8.0, *Effects Found Not To Be Significant*](#)); and/or
- Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use (refer to Impact Statement AG-1).

Based on these standards/criteria, the effects of the proposed program have been categorized as either a “less than significant impact” or “significant and unavoidable impact.” If a potentially significant impact cannot be reduced to a less than significant level through the application of mitigation, it is categorized as a significant and unavoidable impact.



5.3.4 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

CONVERSION OF LAND TO NON-AGRICULTURAL USES

AG-1 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION COULD POTENTIALLY RESULT IN THE CONVERSION OF LAND MAPPED AS PRIME FARMLAND, UNIQUE FARMLAND, OR FARMLAND OF STATEWIDE IMPORTANCE TO NON-AGRICULTURAL USES OR OTHER CHANGES IN THE EXISTING ENVIRONMENT WHICH, DUE TO THEIR LOCATION OR NATURE, COULD RESULT IN CONVERSION OF FARMLAND, TO NON-AGRICULTURAL USE OR CONVERSION OF FOREST LAND TO NON-FOREST USES.

Impact Analysis: As shown on [Exhibit 5.3-1](#), some areas within the proposed overlay zone are designated Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Unique Farmland. Specifically, Prime Farmland is mapped throughout the overlay zone; Farmland of Statewide Importance is mapped primarily in the central portion of the overlay zone; and a small area of Unique Farmland is mapped in the easternmost portion of the overlay zone.

Anticipated allowed light industrial uses under the proposed overlay zone would include, but are not limited to, alternative energy, distribution, light manufacturing, research and development, and warehousing. The proposed overlay zone would not directly involve the construction of any new developments or structures and thus, would not in and of itself result in the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural uses. Nevertheless, future light industrial uses implemented in accordance with the proposed overlay zone could result in the conversion of mapped important farmlands to non-agricultural uses.

Future light industrial development would be required to undergo project-level environmental review under CEQA on a case-by-case basis. Similarly, future development projects would be required to comply with existing applicable State and local laws related to agricultural resources. Nevertheless, given that the exact location of future light industrial development is unknown at this time, implementation of Mitigation Measure AG-1 would establish procedures to minimize potential impacts to mapped important farmland resulting from the conversion of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance to non-agricultural use. Specifically, Mitigation Measure AG-1 would require future light industrial development to mitigate impacts to land mapped as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance through the permanent preservation of off-site agricultural land within the County of equal or better agricultural quality. With implementation of Mitigation Measure AG-1, impacts related to the conversion of mapped important farmland to non-agricultural uses would be reduced to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures:

AG-1 Development of a future light industrial use in accordance with the East Side Overlay Zone that converts land mapped as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the



California Resources Agency to non-agricultural use(s), shall mitigate such impacts through the permanent preservation of off-site agricultural land within the County of Los Angeles of equal or better agricultural quality, at a ratio of 1:1 for net acreage before conversion, through one of the following methods:

- Funding and purchase of agricultural conservation easements (to be managed and maintained by an appropriate entity);
- Purchase of credits from an established agricultural farmland mitigation bank;
- Contribution of agricultural land or equivalent funding to an organization that provides for the preservation of farmland;
- Participation in any agricultural land mitigation program that provides equal or more effective mitigation than the measures listed above; or
- Evidence that all of the foregoing measures are infeasible.

Prior to issuance of a grading or building permit, the project Applicant shall provide to the City of Lancaster Community Development Department written evidence of the completion of the implemented off-site permanent preservation method(s) or that such preservation is infeasible.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.

5.3.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

CEQA Guidelines Section 15355 requires an analysis of cumulative impacts, which are defined as, “two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable, or which compound or increase other environmental impacts.”

● **THE PROPOSED PROJECT, IN CONJUNCTION WITH CUMULATIVE DEVELOPMENT, COULD RESULT IN CUMULATIVELY CONSIDERABLE IMPACTS TO AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES.**

Impact Analysis: Cumulative projects developed in accordance with the General Plan could result in a significant impact to agricultural resources through the conversion of land mapped as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance to non-agricultural uses. Given that mapped important farmland is site specific, future cumulative projects would be required to undergo separate environmental review to evaluate site-specific impacts to mapped important farmland and mitigate such impacts, if any, as needed.

Future light industrial projects developed in accordance with the East Side Overlay Zone would similarly be required to undergo project-level environmental review under CEQA on a case-by-case basis. Given that the exact location of future light industrial development within the overlay zone is unknown at this time, implementation of Mitigation Measure AG-1 would establish procedures to



minimize potential risks to mapped important farmland resulting from the conversion of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance to non-agricultural use. Specifically, Mitigation Measure AG-1 would require future light industrial development to mitigate impacts to land mapped as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance through the permanent preservation of off-site agricultural land within the County of equal or better agricultural quality. With implementation of Mitigation Measure AG-1, the proposed overlay zone would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact. Cumulative impacts in this regard would be reduced to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures: Refer to Mitigation Measure AG-1.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.

5.3.6 SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

No significant unavoidable impacts related to agriculture and forestry resources have been identified.



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5.4 Biological Resources



5.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

This section identifies existing biological resources in the City and provides an analysis of potential impacts that may result from project implementation. Existing baseline biological conditions and characteristics, an analysis of the potential direct and indirect impacts on sensitive resources, and appropriate mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts to the extent feasible for those impacts determined to be significant, if any, are described throughout the analysis. This section is primarily based upon the following technical studies (refer to [Appendix 11.2, *Biological Report/Jurisdictional Delineation*](#)):

- *Results of a Biological Resources Due Diligence Assessment for the Lancaster East Side Project – Light Industrial Overlay Zone – City of Lancaster, County of Los Angeles, California* (Overlay Zone Bio Memo), prepared by Michael Baker International (Michael Baker), dated June 7, 2022; and
- *Preliminary Desktop Analysis of Potential State and Federal Jurisdictional Waters Within the Lancaster East Side Project – Light Industrial Overlay Zone, City of Lancaster, California* (Overlay Zone JD Memo), prepared by Michael Baker, dated June 10, 2022.

5.4.1 EXISTING SETTING

Generally, the project site is flat with an approximate elevation range of 2,427 to 2,457 feet above mean sea level. Based on a review of historic aerial imagery, most of the project site has remained undeveloped since at least the 1980s. The undeveloped portions of the project site can be described as areas that are relatively undisturbed and undeveloped, and areas that are generally used for agricultural purposes. In the surrounding vicinity, there is additional agricultural land and some rural residential land uses.

VEGETATION COMMUNITIES

Vegetation mapping from the General Plan MEA indicates that the project site is a mixture of desert wash, desert woodland, ruderal areas, agricultural land, and developed areas. General descriptions of each community are provided below.

- *Desert Wash*. Natural runoff from nearby mountains has created various washes and channels, primarily in the southwestern and southeastern portions of Lancaster. Specifically, Little Rock Wash has channels with steep sides and bisects the proposed overlay zone. Desert wash communities support a variety of desert scrub plants, such as burro-weed (*Ambrosia dumosa*), Parry's saltbush (*Atriplex parryi*), arrowscale (*Atriplex phyllostegia*), rabbitbrush (*Chrysothamnus* sp.), and burrobrush (*Hymenoclea* sp.). Some of the better-defined channels support species such as jimson weed (*Datura wrightii*) and desert buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum* ssp. *polifolium*).



- *Desert Woodland.* Joshua tree woodland consists of open woodland with Joshua tree typically as the only arborescent species (up to 40 ft high) and numerous shrub species between three and-a-half and 13 feet tall. In many areas of the Antelope Valley, Joshua tree woodland habitat intergrades (merges in a series of stages) with creosote scrub habitat. This community supports little to no herbaceous understory during most of the year.

At lower elevations, Joshua tree woodland intergrades with Mojave creosote bush scrub. Common associate species include California buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), cholla (*Opuntia echinocarpa*), beavertail cactus (*Opuntia basilaris*), cotton-thorn (*Tetradymia axillaris*), Mojave yucca (*Yucca schidigera*), Great Basin sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*), burrobrush, desert needlegrass (*Achnatherum speciosum*) and bladder sage (*Salazaria mexicana*). California juniper (*Juniperus californica*) is occasionally found in this habitat.

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) considers the Joshua tree woodland as a threatened habitat within California. It is also recognized as a sensitive habitat by the City of Lancaster. It is endemic to the Mojave and northwest Sonoran deserts and is adapted to harsh desert conditions, requiring high light, well-drained soils, and limited precipitation. Joshua trees exhibit slow growth rates; new seedlings may grow an average of three inches annually for the first 10 years, then growth slows to 1.5 inches per year thereafter. The trunk of a Joshua tree consists of thousands of small fibers and lacks annual growth rings, making it difficult to determine the tree's age, though it is estimated to grow for up to 200 years. This species is considered very susceptible to disturbance by human activity; it does not tolerate soil compaction, nor is it easily relocated. This may be partially due to its shallow root area and top-heavy branch system.

Joshua tree woodland habitat can be best preserved in large, well-populated stands, with its associated understory plants, that are isolated from human disturbances. Historically, some areas of Joshua tree woodland were cleared for agricultural use, but recently, there has been a progressive loss of Joshua trees to new development in the Antelope Valley, particularly around the Lancaster area. While many individual trees can be found in the Antelope Valley, including the project area, most trees are isolated, and actual Joshua tree woodlands are limited.

- *Agriculture.* Many existing and abandoned farms and vacant, open lands support extensive grasslands in the project area. Non-native grasses have supplanted the original native grasses so that only introduced grasses, such as cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*), barley (*Hordeum* spp.), and fescue (*Vulpia* spp.) remain. Other common weedy species on fallow agricultural lands include Russian thistle or tumbleweed (*Salsola tragus*), curly dock (*Rumex crispus*), and varieties of mustard (*Brassica* spp.), including black mustard.
- *Developed.* Developed areas support a variety of weedy or introduced species included many areas of paved or compacted gravel roads; rural residences with associated infrastructure and planted, ornamental plant species; vacant lots; and undeveloped parcels. Little native or other natural vegetation grows in these areas due to regular weed abatement.



WILDLIFE SPECIES

This section provides a general discussion of common wildlife species that have been detected on-site by Michael Baker or other biologists based on published biological reports, or that are expected to occur based on existing site conditions.

FISH

According to the Overlay Zone Bio Memo, no fish or hydrogeomorphic features (i.e., perennial creeks, ponds, lakes, and reservoirs) that would support populations of fish are known to occur within the project site. Little Rock Wash is present within the project site; however, it is not a perennial feature and is not expected to have any fish or aquatic life under typical conditions.

AMPHIBIANS

No amphibians or hydrogeomorphic features that would provide suitable breeding habitat for amphibians are known to occur within the project site. Little Rock Wash is present within the project site; however, it is not a perennial feature and is not expected to have any amphibians or aquatic life under typical conditions.

REPTILES

No reptile species have been observed within the project site during previous project-specific field surveys. Habitat for reptilian species that are acclimated to edge or urban environments are expected to be present on-site. Common reptilian species that may be present within the project site include western side-blotched lizard (*Uta stansburiana elegans*), Great Basin whiptail (*Aspidoscelis tigris tigris*), red racer (*Coluber flagellum piceus*), northern Mojave rattlesnake (*Crotalus scutulatus scutulatus*), and Mohave desert sidewinder (*Crotalus cerastes cerastes*).

BIRDS

Several avian species have been detected within the project site during various previous project-specific field surveys. Avian species previously detected include mourning dove (*Zenaidura macroura*), rock pigeon (*Columba livia*), Eurasian collared-dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*), red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*), great horned owl (*Bubo virginianus*), common raven (*Corvus corax*), California quail (*Callipepla californica*), northern mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*), California horned lark (*Eremophila alpestris actia*), yellow-headed blackbird (*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*), house finch (*Haemorhous mexicanus*), and white-crowned sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*). Avian species that may occur on-site include killdeer (*Charadrius vociferus*), American kestrel (*Falco sparverius*), Say's phoebe (*Sayornis saya*), American pipit (*Anthus rubescens*), long-billed curlew (*Numenius americanus*), mountain bluebird (*Sialia currucoides*), European starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*), savannah sparrow (*Passerculus sandwichensis*), western meadowlark (*Sturnella neglecta*), and Brewer's blackbird (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*). Although the project site provides suitable nesting habitat for various year-round and seasonal bird species, no active nests or birds displaying overt nesting behavior were observed during previous field surveys.



MAMMALS

The project site provides marginal habitat for a limited number of mammalian species adapted to living in edge or urban environments. Mammalian species detected within the project site during previous project-specific field surveys include California ground squirrel (*Otospermophilus beecheyi*), white-tailed antelope ground squirrel (*Ammospermophilus leucurus*), desert cottontail (*Sylvilagus audubonii*), and black-tailed jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus*). Mammalian species that may occur on-site include opossum (*Didelphis virginiana*), raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), domestic dog (*Canis lupus familiaris*), and coyote (*Canis latrans*). It is acknowledged that bats occur throughout most of California. Bats may forage throughout much of the project site, particularly around areas where insects accumulate (i.e., over agricultural fields). Additionally, roosting habitat may occur on-site if there are hollow tree trunks/limbs, tress with particularly dense foliage, or abandoned buildings.

MIGRATORY CORRIDORS AND LINKAGES

Wildlife corridors and linkages are key features for wildlife movement between habitat patches. Wildlife corridors are generally defined as those areas that provide opportunities for individuals or local populations to conduct seasonal migrations, permanent dispersals, or daily commutes. Linkages generally refer to broader areas that provide movement opportunities (often between areas of conserved land) for multiple keystone/focal species or allow for propagation of ecological processes (i.e., for movement of pollinators).

The most prominent natural corridor within the project site is Little Rock Wash, which crosses from south to north in the western portion of the project site. Little Rock Wash originates in the San Gabriel Mountains as Little Rock Creek, which terminates approximately two miles north of the project site. Little Rock Wash is not recognized as a corridor in the General Plan or the *South Coast Missing Linkages: A Wildland Network for the South Coast Ecoregion*; however, Little Rock Wash is recognized by the County as part of the Antelope Valley Significant Ecological Area (SEA), which provides dispersal and migration opportunities between the San Gabriel Mountains and the play lakes of Edwards Air Force Base (EAFB). Other potential migratory pathways would generally be opportunistic across open space areas between agricultural fields, or possibly through agricultural fields but generally would likely be reduced by the presence of surrounding roadways and existing agricultural, commercial, and residential developments within the project site. These developments have fragmented the connection between the project site and surrounding naturally occurring vegetation communities. Elevated noise levels, vehicle roadway/traffic, lighting, and presence of humans and domestic pets are also expected to further decrease the suitability of the project site to be used as a wildlife movement corridor or linkage.

SPECIAL-STATUS BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Special-Status Plants

Based on the Overlay Zone Bio Memo, a total of 23 special-status plant species have been recorded in the United States Geological Survey (USGS) *Lancaster East, Alpine Butte, Rosamond, Rosamond Lake, Redman, Rogers Lake South, Hi Vista, Lovejoy Buttes, Littlerock, Palmdale, Ritter Ridge, and Lancaster West,*



California 7.5-minute quadrangles by the CDFW California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) and California Native Plant Society Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants of California (CIRP).

The only special-status plant species that has been identified within the project site is the western Joshua tree (*Yucca brevifolia brevifolia*; a State Candidate [SC] species for listing). This species is known to occur in scattered locations within the project site.

No other special-status plant species are known to occur within the project site. Most of the special-status plant records within the search radius are located more than five miles away from the project site and because of the distance, habitat fragmentation, and general habitat conditions of the project site, are less likely to occur within the project site. The closest known occurrence of a special-status plant species other than Joshua tree to the project site is a 2005 record of alkali mariposa lily (*Calochortus striatus*; California Rare Plant Rank [CRPR] 1B.2) approximately 2.2 miles to the northwest. Other special-status plant species have been recorded within five miles of the project site, including Mojave spineflower (*Chorizanthe spinosa*; CRPR 4.2), sagebrush loeflingia (*Loeflingia squarrosa* var. *artemisiarum*; CRPR 2B.2), crowned muilla (*Muilla coronata*; CRPR 4.2), Lancaster milk-vetch (*Astragalus preussii* var. *laxiflorus*; CRPR 1B.1), white pygmy-poppy (*Canbya candida*; CRPR 4.2), Mojave Indian paintbrush (*Castilleja plagiotoma*; CRPR 4.3), Parry's spineflower (*Chorizanthe parryi* var. *parryi*; CRPR 1B.1), Rosamond eriastrum (*Eriastrum rosamondense*; CRPR 1B.1), and golden goodmania (*Goodmania luteola*; CRPR 4.2). It should be noted that known records of the last six species were all recorded closer to five miles from the project site, most of the records are over 40 years old (some over 100 years old), and some of these may now be extirpated due to development in the surrounding region.

Special-Status Wildlife

A total of 30 special-status wildlife species have been recorded in the USGS *Lancaster East, Alpine Butte, Rosamond, Rosamond Lake, Redman, Rogers Lake South, Hi Vista, Lovejoy Buttes, Littlerock, Palmdale, Ritter Ridge, and Lancaster West, California* 7.5-minute quadrangles by the CNDDDB and project region by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Information for Planning and Consultation Project Planning Tool (IPaC).

According to the Overlay Zone Bio Memo, the following four special-status wildlife species were observed during a field survey conducted in 2022 by Michael Baker within a portion of the project site: Swainson's hawk (a State Threatened [ST] species), California horned lark (a State Watch List [WL] species), loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*; a State Species of Special Concern [SSC]), and yellow-headed blackbird (a State SSC). Additionally, other special-status wildlife species that have been previously recorded within the project site including Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*; a State WL species), tricolor blackbird (*Agelaius tricolor*; a ST species), burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*; a State SSC), short-eared owl (*Aseo flammeus*; a State SSC), ferruginous hawk (*Buteo regalis*; a State WL species), mountain plover (*Charadrius montanus*; a State SSC), northern harrier (*Circus hudsonius*; a State SSC), merlin (*Falco columbarius*; a State WL species), prairie falcon (*Falco mexicanus*; a State WL species), and white-faced ibis (*Plegadis chibi*; a State WL species). Further, signs of desert kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis arsipus*; a CDFW furbearing mammal) and American badger (*Taxidea taxus*; a State SSC) have been previously observed on-site; however, no live animals have been observed. Further, although not documented within the project site, according to the records that were consulted, desert tortoise



(*Gopherus agassizii*; a ST and federally threatened [FT]) and Mohave ground squirrel (*Xerospermophilus mohavensis*; a ST species) are both known to occur in the region and suitable habitat may be present on-site, particularly in areas that are contiguous with undeveloped open space.

CRITICAL HABITAT

Critical Habitat refers to specific areas within the geographical range of a species that were occupied at the time it was listed that contain the physical or biological features that are essential to the survival and eventual recovery of that species. Areas of Critical Habitat may require special management considerations or protection, regardless of whether the species is still extant in the area. Areas that were not known to be occupied at the time a species was listed can also be designated Critical Habitat if they contain one or more of the physical or biological features that are essential to that species' conservation and if the other areas that are occupied are inadequate to ensure the species' recovery.

The project site is not located within any USFWS-designated Critical Habitat for federally listed species; refer to Overlay Zone Bio Memo Figure 6, *Critical Habitat*.

SIGNIFICANT ECOLOGICAL AREAS

According to Overlay Zone Bio Memo Figure 7, *Significant Ecological Areas*, the Antelope Valley SEA crosses through portions of the central and eastern areas of the overlay zone. The SEA extends from the Angeles National Forest to the playa lakes within EAFB, encompassing the whole of the two largest drainages exiting the northern slope of the San Gabriel Mountain range, and its geographical features serve as a major habitat linkage and movement corridor for all wildlife species within its vicinity. Ecologically "generalist" species have the ability to move across such vast areas and through changing habitat types. For such species, the SEA may serve as an important system for long-term inter-population genetic exchange. For smaller or less-mobile species, or taxa which are more narrowly restricted in their habitat needs, the SEA can serve as a broad linkage zone, in which individual movement can take place during seasonal or population dispersal. This provides essential genetic exchange within and between metapopulations. The two drainages, combined with the upland terrestrial desert-montane transect portion of the SEA, ensure linkage values and direct movement zones for all of the wildlife species present within the County portion of the Antelope Valley.

The County's SEA program and the SEA ordinance only apply to adopted SEAs located within unincorporated areas. SEAs that are designated within incorporated areas in the County are not subject to the restrictions of the SEA ordinance. Within the project site, the Antelope Valley SEA is located within the incorporated boundaries of the City, and thus is not subject to any development restrictions associated with the County's SEA program, SEA ordinance, or Los Angeles County Code Chapter 22.102.

STATE AND FEDERAL JURISDICTIONAL RESOURCES

There are three key agencies that regulate activities within streams, wetlands, and riparian areas in California. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Regulatory Division regulates activities pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) and Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act.



Of the State agencies, the CDFW regulates activities under Sections 1600 et seq. of the California Fish and Game Code (CFGC), and the Regional Board regulates activities pursuant to Section 401 of the CWA and Section 13263 of the California Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (Porter-Cologne Act).

The Overlay Zone JD Memo included a review of the USFWS National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) Mapper. The predominant wetland mapped in the project site is Little Rock Wash, classified as Riverine habitat. Other features located throughout the project site were mapped as the following wetland types: Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland, Freshwater Pond, and Lake.

LITTLE ROCK WASH

The central portion of the overlay zone is bisected by Little Rock Wash which generally flows in a south to north direction. Little Rock Wash originates in the San Gabriel Mountains located south of the project site and conveys flow north towards Rosamond Lake. Little Rock Wash is an intermittent stream/wash and enters the project site from the south as a natural earthen drainage. The wash continues to flow north through the project site as an earthen channel, crossing underneath East Avenue K and East Avenue J within the project site, and continuing north off-site as an earthen channel; refer to Overlay Zone JD Memo Figure 4, *Potential Jurisdictional Resources Map*.

Based on a desktop review of aerial imagery, no surface flows were identified in association with Little Rock Wash. However, visual indicators of ordinary flows and an ordinary high water mark (OHWM) are apparent and include surface color/tone, including a lighter toned substrate within Little Rock Wash as compared to the darker surface color of the surrounding upland areas, a break in bank slope, visible benches, and a change in vegetation community from sparsely vegetated within the channel to upland species beyond top of bank.

OTHER POTENTIAL AQUATIC RESOURCES MAPPED BY THE NATIONAL WETLANDS INVENTORY

As stated, multiple potential aquatic features including Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland, Freshwater Pond, and Lake mapped in the USFWS NWI Mapper occur within the project site. These mapped features are located in the central portion of the project site to the east of Little Rock Wash. These mapped features appear as areas of potential ponding, natural surface depressions, and stock ponds or ditches associated with agricultural activities. No surface water was identified in association with any of the NWI mapped features.

UNNAMED POTENTIAL AQUATIC RESOURCES

Aerial imagery from 1985 to 2022 was utilized to identify multiple potential aquatic features that are not mapped in the NWI. The boundaries of these potential aquatic features were delineated via visual indicators of surface water (i.e., ponding), a change in plant community and vegetation cover, break in bank slope, and surface depressions. Based on a review of aerial imagery, these potential aquatic features appear to be stock ponds or ditches associated with agricultural activities; refer to Overlay Zone JD Memo Figure 4, *Potential Jurisdictional Resources Map*.



5.4.2 REGULATORY SETTING

FEDERAL LEVEL

Endangered Species Act

As defined within the FESA, an endangered species is any animal or plant listed by regulation as being in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its geographical range. A threatened species is any animal or plant that is likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its geographical range. Without a special permit, federal law prohibits the “take” of any individuals or habitat of federally listed species. Under Section 9 of the FESA, take is defined as “harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect or attempt to engage in any such conduct.” The term “harm” has been clarified to include “any act which actually kills or injures fish or wildlife and emphasizes that such acts may include significant habitat modification or degradation that significantly impairs essential behavioral patterns of fish or wildlife.” Enforcement of FESA is administered by the USFWS.

Under the definition used by the FESA, Critical Habitat refers to specific areas within the geographical range of a species that were occupied at the time it was listed that contain the physical or biological features that are essential to the survival and eventual recovery of that species and that may require special management considerations or protection, regardless of whether the species is still extant in the area. Areas that were not known to be occupied at the time a species was listed can also be designated as Critical Habitat if they contain one or more of the physical or biological features that are essential to that species’ conservation and if the occupied areas are inadequate to ensure the species’ recovery. If a project may result in take or adverse modification to a species’ designated Critical Habitat and the project has a federal nexus, the project proponent may be required to provide suitable mitigation. Projects with a federal nexus may include projects that occur on federal lands, require federal permits (e.g., federal CWA Section 404 permit), or receive any federal oversight or funding. If there is a federal nexus, then the federal agency that is responsible for providing funds or permits would be required to consult with the USFWS under the FESA.

Whenever federal agencies authorize, fund, or carry out actions that may adversely modify or destroy Critical Habitat, they must consult with USFWS under Section 7 of the FESA. The designation of Critical Habitat does not affect private landowners, unless a project they are proposing uses federal funds, or requires federal authorization or permits (i.e., funding from the federal Highway Administration or a permit from the USACE).

Migratory Bird Treaty Act

Pursuant to the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) (16 U.S. Government Code [USC] 703) of 1918, as amended in 1972, federal law prohibits the taking of migratory birds or their nests or eggs (16 USC 703; 50 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 10, 21). The MBTA covers the taking of any nests or eggs of migratory birds, except as allowed by permit pursuant to 50 CFR, Part 21. Disturbances causing nest abandonment and/or loss of reproductive effort (i.e., killing or



abandonment of eggs or young) may also be considered a “take.” This regulation seeks to protect migratory birds and active nests.

In 1972, the MBTA was amended to include protection for migratory birds of prey (i.e., raptors). Six families of raptors occurring in North America were included in the amendment: Accipitridae (kites, hawks, and eagles); Cathartidae (New World vultures); Falconidae (falcons and caracaras); Pandionidae (ospreys); Strigidae (typical owls); and Tytonidae (barn owls). The provisions of the 1972 amendment to the MBTA protects all species and subspecies of the families listed above. The MBTA protects over 800 species including geese, ducks, shorebirds, raptors, songbirds and many relatively common species.

Clean Water Act

Since 1972, the USACE and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) jointly regulate discharges of dredged or fill material into WoUS, including wetland and non-wetland aquatic features, pursuant to Section 404 of the CWA. Section 404 is founded on the findings of a significant nexus (or connection) between the aquatic or other hydrological features in question and interstate commerce via Relatively Permanent Waters (RPW), and ultimately Traditional Navigable Waters (TNW), through direct or indirect connection as defined by USACE regulations. However, the limits to which this is applied have changed over time as discussed below.

SWANCC and Rapanos

In 1984, the Migratory Bird Rule enabled the USACE to expand jurisdiction over isolated waters, and in 1985, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the inclusion of adjacent wetlands in the regulatory definition of WoUS. Nevertheless, in 2001, the USACE’s jurisdiction was narrowly limited following the *Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County v. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers* (SWANCC) in which the U.S. Supreme Court held that the use of “isolated” non-navigable intrastate ponds by migratory birds was not, by itself, sufficient basis for the exercise of federal regulatory authority under the CWA. In 2006, a majority of the U.S. Supreme Court overturned two Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals decisions in the consolidated cases of *Rapanos v. United States* and *Carabell v. United States* (collectively referred to as Rapanos), concluding that wetlands isolated by surface connection are WoUS nonetheless if they significantly affect the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of other covered waters (significant nexus). The Navigable Waters Protection Rule (NWPR) eliminated the case specific application of the significant nexus test articulated in the Rapanos decision.

2015 Clean Water Rule

In 2015, the USACE and EPA published the “Clean Water Rule” clarifying the scope of coverage of the CWA. Upon issuance however, numerous lawsuits were filed and consolidated in the Sixth Circuit, immediately putting a “stay” on its implementation. In January 2018, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the Sixth Circuit did not have jurisdiction over the case, and in February 2018, dismissed it and dissolved the stay. In August 2018, a federal judge found that the suspension failed to give an adequate public notice and therefore violated the Administrative Procedure Act. The 2015 Clean Water Rule



remained in effect in 22 states, including California, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. territories until December 23, 2019.

Repeal of 2015 Clean Water Rule

On October 22, 2019, the EPA and the USACE published a final rule to repeal the 2015 Clean Water Rule and restore the regulatory methodology that existed prior to the 2015 Rule. Under this rule, which became effective on December 23, 2019, jurisdictional WoUS were defined by the 1986/1988 regulatory definition of WoUS under CWA regulations 40 CFR 230.3(s).

Navigable Waters Protection Rule

On January 23, 2020, the EPA and the USACE finalized the NWPR to define WoUS. On April 21, 2020, the EPA and the USACE published the NWPR in the Federal Register. On June 22, 2020, 60 days after publication in the Federal Register, the NWPR became effective across the nation, including California.

Remand and Vacatur of the Navigable Waters Protection Rule

On August 30, 2021, the NWPR was remanded and immediately vacated by the United States District Court For The District Of Arizona. In light of this order, the EPA and the USACE halted implementation of the NWPR nationwide and reinstated the pre-2015 definition of WoUS. Under the pre-2015 definition of the WoUS, the USACE and EPA require the case specific application of the significant nexus test, as articulated in the Rapanos decision, to determine WoUS.

STATE LEVEL

California Endangered Species Act

In addition to federal laws, the State of California has its own California Endangered Species Act (CESA), enforced by the CDFW. The CESA program maintains a separate listing of species beyond the FESA, although the provisions of each act are similar.

State-listed threatened and endangered species are protected under provisions of the CESA. Activities that may result in “take” of individuals (defined in CESA as; “hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill, or attempt to hunt, pursue, catch, capture, or kill”) are regulated by CDFW. Habitat degradation or modification is not included in the definition of “take” under CESA. Nonetheless, CDFW has interpreted “take” to include the destruction of nesting, denning, or foraging habitat necessary to maintain a viable breeding population of protected species.

The State of California considers an endangered species as one whose prospects of survival and reproduction are in immediate jeopardy. A threatened species is considered as one present in such small numbers throughout its range that it is likely to become an endangered species in the near future in the absence of special protection or management. A candidate species is one that potentially qualifies for listing under CESA, pending a formal review and assessment of available data; these species are afforded all of the same legal protections as if they were already listed. A rare species is



one that is considered present in such small numbers throughout its range that it may become endangered if its present environment worsens. State threatened, endangered, and candidate species are fully protected against take, as defined above.

The CDFW has also produced a species of special concern list to serve as a species watch list. Species on this list are either of limited distribution or their habitats have been reduced substantially, such that a threat to their populations may be imminent. Species of special concern may receive special attention during environmental review, but they do not have formal statutory protection. At the federal level, USFWS also uses the label “species of concern” as an informal term that refers to species which might be in need of concentrated conservation actions.

As the species of concern designated by USFWS do not receive formal legal protection, the use of the term does not necessarily ensure that the species will be proposed for listing as a threatened or endangered species.

California Fish and Game Code

Sections 3503, 3503.5, 3511, and 3513

The CDFW administers the CFGC. There are particular sections of the CFGC that are applicable to natural resource management. For example, Section 3503 makes it unlawful to destroy any birds’ nest or any birds’ eggs that are protected under the MBTA. Further, any birds in the orders Falconiformes or Strigiformes (Birds of Prey), such as hawks, eagles, and owls, are protected under Section 3503.5 which makes it unlawful to take, possess, or destroy their nest or eggs. A consultation with CDFW may be required prior to the removal of any bird of prey nest that may occur on a project site. Section 3511 lists fully protected bird species, where the CDFW is unable to authorize the issuance of permits or licenses to take these species. Pertinent species that are State fully protected include golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) and white-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*). In addition, Section 3513 makes it unlawful to take or possess any migratory nongame bird as designated in the MBTA or any part of such migratory nongame bird except as provided by rules and regulations adopted by the Secretary of the Interior under provisions of the MBTA.

Sections 1600 *et seq.*

Sections 1600 *et seq.* of the CFGC establishes a fee-based process to ensure that projects conducted in and around lakes, rivers, or streams do not adversely affect fish and wildlife resources, or when adverse impacts cannot be avoided, ensures that adequate mitigation and/or compensation is provided.

Section 1602 of the CFGC requires any person, State, or local governmental agency or public utility to notify CDFW before beginning any activity that will do one or more of the following:

1. substantially obstruct or divert the natural flow of a river, stream, or lake;
2. substantially change or use any material from the bed, channel, or bank of a river, stream, or lake; or



3. deposit or dispose of debris, waste, or other material containing crumbled, flaked, or ground pavement where it can pass into a river, stream, or lake.

This applies to all perennial, intermittent, and ephemeral rivers, streams, and lakes in the State, including the maintenance of existing drain culverts, outfalls, and other structures. To avoid the need for a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement (LSAA) from CDFW, all proposed impacts should remain outside of the top of active banks and the canopy/dripline of any associated riparian vegetation, whichever is greater.

Native Plant Protection Act

Sections 1900-1913 of the CFGC were developed to preserve, protect, and enhance rare and endangered plants in the State of California. The Native Plant Protection Act requires all State agencies to use their authority to carry out programs to conserve endangered and rare native plants. Provisions of the Native Plant Protection Act prohibit the taking of listed plants from the wild and require notification of the CDFW at least ten days in advance of any change in land use which would adversely impact listed plants. This allows the CDFW to salvage listed plant species that would otherwise be destroyed.

Porter-Cologne Act

Applicants for a federal license or permit for activities that may discharge to WoUS must seek a Water Quality Certification (WQC) from the State or Indian tribe with jurisdiction. In California, there are nine RWQCB that issue or deny certification for discharges within their geographical jurisdiction. Such certification is based on a finding that the discharge will meet water quality standards, which are defined as numeric and narrative objectives in each RWQCB's Basin Plan, and other applicable requirements. The State Water Resources Control Board has this responsibility for projects affecting waters within multiple RWQCBs. The RWQCB's jurisdiction extends to all WoUS, including wetlands and to waters of the State.

The Porter-Cologne Act gives the State very broad authority to regulate waters of the State, which are defined as any surface water or groundwater, including saline waters. The Porter-Cologne Act has become an important tool for the regulatory environment following the SWANCC and Rapanos court cases, with respect to the state's authority over isolated and otherwise insignificant waters. Generally, in the event that there is no nexus to a TNW, any person proposing to discharge waste into waters of the State that could affect its water quality must file a Report of Waste Discharge. Although "waste" is partially defined as any waste substance associated with human habitation, the RWQCB also interprets this to include fill discharged into water bodies.

On April 2, 2019, the State Water Resources Control Board adopted a State Wetland Definition and Procedures for Discharges of Dredged or Fill Material to Waters of the State (Procedures), for inclusion in the forthcoming Water Quality Control Plan for Inland Surface Waters and Enclosed Bays and Estuaries and Ocean Waters of California. The Procedures consist of four major elements: 1) a wetland definition; 2) a framework for determining if a feature that meets the wetland definition is a water of the state; 3) wetland delineation procedures; and 4) procedures for the submittal, review, and approval of applications for WQCs and Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) for dredge or



fill activities. The Procedures were approved by the Office of Administrative Law on August 28, 2019 and became effective May 28, 2020.

LOCAL LEVEL

City of Lancaster General Plan 2030

Plan for the Natural Environment

The General Plan includes the Plan for the Natural Environment, which identifies natural resources suitable for certain levels of protection, provides a management program for those resources consistent with community values, and ensures the City as an active participant in the management of the Antelope Valley's resources. The General Plan recognizes the Antelope Valley as a unique biological environment on the edge of the Mojave Desert and adjacent to the San Gabriel Mountains whose biological resources face ongoing and increased pressures from existing and increasing urbanization. The following objective and policies are applicable to the project:

- Objective 3.4: Identify, preserve and maintain important biological systems within the Lancaster sphere of influence, and educate the general public about these resources, which include the Joshua Tree - California Juniper Woodlands, areas that support endangered or sensitive species, and other natural areas of regional significance.
- Policy 3.4.1: Ensure the comprehensive management of programs for significant biological resources that remain within the Lancaster sphere of influence.
- Policy 3.4.2: Preserve significant desert wash areas to protect sensitive species that utilize these habitat areas.
- Policy 3.4.4: Ensure that development proposals, including City sponsored projects, are analyzed for short- and long-term impacts to biological resources and that appropriate mitigation measures are implemented.

Lancaster Municipal Code

Municipal Code Chapter 15.66, *Biological Impact Fee*, establishes a biological impact fee to mitigate long-term incremental impacts of new development on biological resources on a regional basis. The fee is based upon expected regional effects from new development and fees necessary to contribute to the City's "fair share" to mitigate impacts on a regional basis. The fee applies to all new development on vacant land which has not been previously developed. This includes land subdivisions and new development approvals. The current Biological Impact Fee as of March 23, 2021 is \$770 per acre of new development on vacant land. Future development projects within the project site on vacant land are subject to the biological impact fee established in Chapter 15.66 of the Municipal Code.



5.4.3 IMPACT THRESHOLDS AND SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines* contains the Environmental Checklist form that was used during the preparation of this EIR. Accordingly, a project may create a significant adverse environmental impact to biological resources if it would:

- Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (refer to Impact Statement BIO-1);
- Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (refer to Impact Statement BIO-2);
- Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 4040 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, march, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means (refer to Impact Statement BIO-3);
- Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites (refer to Impact Statement BIO-4);
- Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance (refer to Section 8.0, *Effects Found Not To Be Significant*);
- Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan (refer to Section 8.0, *Effects Found Not To Be Significant*).

Based on these standards/criteria, the effects of the proposed program have been categorized as either a “less than significant impact” or “significant and unavoidable impact.” If a potentially significant impact cannot be reduced to a less than significant level through the application of mitigation, it is categorized as a significant and unavoidable impact.



5.4.4 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

SPECIAL-STATUS SPECIES

BIO-1 THE PROPOSED PROJECT COULD POTENTIALLY RESULT IN A SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE EFFECT, EITHER DIRECTLY OR THROUGH HABITAT MODIFICATIONS, ON ANY SPECIES IDENTIFIED AS A CANDIDATE, SENSITIVE, OR SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES IN LOCAL OR REGIONAL PLANS, POLICIES, OR REGULATIONS, OR BY THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME OR U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE.

Impact Analysis:

SPECIAL-STATUS PLANT SPECIES

As stated above, a total of 23 special-status plant species have been recorded in the USGS *Alpine Butte, Rosamond, Rosamond Lake, Redman, Rogers Lake South, Hi Vista, Lovejoy Buttes, Littlerock, Palmdale, Ritter Ridge, and Lancaster West, California* 7.5-minute quadrangles by the CNDDDB and CIRP. The only special-status plant species that is known to occur within the project site is western Joshua tree. As a candidate for listing under CESA, western Joshua trees are protected from take without an Incidental Take Permit. Other special-status plant species that have been recorded in the project site vicinity include alkali mariposa lily (CRPR 1B.2), Mojave spineflower (CRPR 4.2), sagebrush loeflingia (CRPR 2B.2), crowned muilla (CRPR 4.2), Lancaster milk-vetch (CRPR 1B.1), white pygmy-poppy (CRPR 4.2), Mojave Indian paintbrush (CRPR 4.3), Parry's spineflower (CRPR 1B.1), Rosamond eriastrum (CRPR 1B.1), and golden goodmania (CRPR 4.2). As such, future development in accordance with the overlay zone could impact special-status plant species. Given that the exact location of future development projects within the proposed East Side Overlay Zone is unknown at this time, Mitigation Measure BIO-1 would require, as determined by the City, a Biological Resources Assessment be prepared to evaluate potential impacts to on-site biological resources, including sensitive or special-status plant species. Focused plant surveys may also be required as a result of the Biological Resources Assessment findings. Should a future project require the removal of western Joshua trees, the project would also be required to comply with Mitigation Measure BIO-2 which would require a census of the number of western Joshua trees to be impacted. An Incidental Take Permit would also be required from the CDFW prior to any ground-disturbing activities that may adversely affect western Joshua trees. Additionally, future light industrial projects proposed in accordance with the overlay zone would require separate environmental review under CEQA to evaluate project- and site-specific impacts and additional mitigation measures would be identified, as needed. With implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1 and BIO-2, the proposed project would not result in significant impacts to sensitive special-status plant species.

SPECIAL-STATUS WILDLIFE SPECIES

According to the Overlay Zone Bio Memo, 30 special-status wildlife species have been recorded in the USGS *Alpine Butte, Lancaster East, Rosamond, Rosamond Lake, Redman, Rogers Lake South, Hi Vista,*



Lovejoy Buttes, Ritter Ridge, Lancaster West, Littlerock, and Palmdale, California 7.5-minute quadrangles by the CNDDDB and project region by the USFWS IPaC. As mentioned above, a field survey was not conducted as part of the Overlay Zone Bio Memo; however, based on a 2022 field survey conducted by Michael Baker for a portion of the project site, four special-status bird species were identified within the project site, including Swainson's hawk, California horned lark, loggerhead strike, and yellow-headed blackbird. Additional special-status bird species have been previously recorded within the project site, including Cooper's hawk, tricolored blackbird, burrowing owl, short-eared owl, ferruginous hawk, mountain plover, northern harrier, merlin, prairie falcon, and white-faced ibis. Nesting birds are protected pursuant to the MBTA and CFGC. Specifically, the MBTA governs the taking, killing, possession, transportation, and importation of migratory birds, their eggs, parts, and nests.

Additionally, signs of special-status mammal species, including Desert kit fox and American badger, have been observed within the project site during prior field surveys conducted for other development projects in the area. However, the project site provides only marginal habitat for a limited number of common mammalian species, such as Mohave ground squirrel. Specifically, Mohave ground squirrel is known to occur in the region and suitable habitat may be present within the project site, particularly in areas that are contiguous with undeveloped open space.

To reduce potential impacts to special-status species, Mitigation Measure BIO-1 would require, as determined by the City, a Biological Resources Assessment be conducted to evaluate potential impacts to on-site biological resources, including sensitive or special-status species. Should suitable habitat for burrowing owl be observed as part of the Biological Resources Assessment conducted under Mitigation Measure BIO-1, Mitigation Measure BIO-3 would require pre-construction burrowing owl clearance surveys be conducted prior to any vegetation removal or ground disturbing activities. Additionally, future light industrial projects proposed in accordance with the overlay zone would require separate environmental review under CEQA to evaluate project- and site-specific impacts and additional mitigation measures would be identified, as needed. With implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1 and BIO-3, the proposed project would not result in significant impacts to sensitive special-status wildlife species.

Mitigation Measures:

BIO-1 Each future development within the overlay zone subject to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review (meaning, subject to discretionary action and non-exempt from CEQA) shall be screened by the City of Lancaster Community Development Department to determine whether a Biological Resources Assessment is required. Screening shall consider the type of project and project site conditions. If the site is fully developed with no existing vegetation, then a Biological Resources Assessment shall not be required. If the site has existing vegetation on-site and/or is undeveloped and vacant, prior to issuance of any permits required to conduct ground disturbing activities, the City may require a Biological Resources Assessment be prepared by a qualified biologist for review and approval by the City of Lancaster Community Development Department. The assessment shall include biological field survey(s) of the project site to characterize the extent and quality of habitat that would be impacted by development. The potential



presence of special-status species on-site may support conducting focused plant or wildlife species surveys. Surveys shall be conducted by qualified biologists and/or botanists in accordance with California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and/or United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) survey protocols for target species. If no special status/sensitive species, sensitive habitats/natural communities, or federally protected wetlands are observed during the field survey, then no further mitigation will be required. If biological resources are documented on the project site, the project proponent shall comply with the applicable requirements of the regulatory agencies and shall apply mitigation determined through the agency permitting process.

- BIO-2 Should a future project require the removal of western Joshua trees (*Yucca brevifolia brevifolia*; a State Candidate species for listing), an accurate census of the number of trees to be impacted shall be conducted by a qualified biologist in accordance with California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) protocols. The census report shall be submitted for review and approval by the City of Lancaster Community Development Department. An Incidental Take Permit shall also be obtained from the CDFW prior to any ground-disturbing activities that may adversely affect the western Joshua tree.
- BIO-3 If suitable habitat for burrowing owl is observed during the biological field survey conducted as part of Mitigation Measure BIO-1, two separate pre-construction burrowing owl clearance surveys shall be conducted prior to any vegetation removal or ground disturbing activities. One survey shall be conducted no less than 14 days prior to disturbance and the other survey within 24 hours prior to ground disturbance. The survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist and in accordance with the methods outlined in the *Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation* (California Department of Fish and Game 2012). Documentation of surveys and findings shall be submitted to the City of Lancaster Community Development Department for review and file. If no burrowing owls or occupied burrows are detected, project activities may begin, and no additional avoidance and minimization measures shall be required. If an occupied burrow is found outside, but within 500 feet, of the development footprint, the qualified biologist shall establish a “no-disturbance” buffer around the burrow location(s). The size of the “no-disturbance” buffer shall be determined in consultation with California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and be based on the species status (i.e., breeding, non-breeding) and proposed level of disturbance. If an occupied burrow is found within the development footprint and cannot be avoided, a burrowing owl exclusion and mitigation plan shall be prepared and submitted to CDFW for approval prior to initiating project activities.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.



BIO-2 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION COULD POTENTIALLY HAVE A SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE EFFECT ON RIPARIAN HABITAT OR OTHER SENSITIVE NATURAL COMMUNITY IDENTIFIED IN LOCAL OR REGIONAL PLANS, POLICIES, AND REGULATIONS OR BY THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE OR U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE.

Impact Analysis: According to the Overlay Zone Bio Memo, there are no USFWS-designated Critical Habitat for any federally listed species within the project site. A field survey of the entire project site was not conducted as part of the Overlay Zone Bio Memo and thus, specific vegetation mapping is not available. However, vegetation mapping from the General Plan indicates that the overlay zone contains a mixture of desert wash, desert woodland, ruderal areas, agricultural land, and developed areas. Additionally, multiple potential aquatic features including freshwater forested/shrub wetland, freshwater pond, and lake occur within the project site. These mapped features appear as areas of potential ponding, natural surface depressions, and stock ponds or ditches associated with agricultural activities.

To reduce potential impacts to riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities, Mitigation Measure BIO-1 requires a Biological Resources Assessment, as determined by the City, to evaluate potential impacts to on-site biological resources, including sensitive natural communities. Additionally, future light industrial projects developed in accordance with the overlay zone would be required to conduct separate environmental review under CEQA. Future development projects would be evaluated on a project-specific level with site-specific analysis and additional mitigation measures would be identified, as needed. With implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-1, the proposed project would not result in significant impacts to riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities.

Mitigation Measures: Refer to Mitigation Measure BIO-1.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.

BIO-3 THE PROJECT COULD HAVE A SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE EFFECT ON FEDERALLY PROTECTED WETLANDS AS DEFINED BY SECTION 404 OF THE CLEAN WATER ACT (INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, MARSH, VERNAL POOL, COASTAL, ETC.) THROUGH DIRECT REMOVAL, FILLING, HYDROLOGICAL INTERRUPTION, OR OTHER MEANS.

Impact Analysis: According to the Overlay Zone JD Memo, numerous potential jurisdictional features may be located within the project site. Specifically, Little Rock Wash is the most prominent potential jurisdictional feature within the project site and may qualify as “waters of the United States or wetlands” and/or water of the State regulated by the USACE, RWQCB, and/or CDFW. Little Rock Wash enters the project site from the south as a natural earthen drainage, continues to flow north as an earthen channel, crosses underneath East Avenue K and East Avenue J within the project site, and continues north off-site as an earthen channel. Additionally, multiple aquatic features including freshwater forested/shrub wetland, freshwater pond, and lake occur within the project site.



These aquatic features include areas of potential ponding, natural surface depressions, and stock ponds or ditches associated with agricultural activities.

As such, prior to future development within the overlay zone and as determined appropriate by the City, Mitigation Measure BIO-4 would require a formal jurisdictional delineation for future development within the project be conducted to document the presence or absence of potential jurisdictional features and the potential permit requirements from the USACE, RWQCB, and/or CDFW. Additionally, future development would also be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA (i.e., preparation of a Categorical Exemption, Mitigated Negative Declaration, or Environmental Impact Report) to evaluate project-level impacts with regards to federally protected wetlands. Thus, with implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-4, the proposed project would not have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands, including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, or coastal. Impacts in this regard would be reduced to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures:

BIO-4 Each future development within the overlay zone subject to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review (meaning, subject to discretionary action and non-exempt from CEQA) shall be screened by the City of Lancaster Community Development Department to determine whether a formal jurisdictional delineation is required. Screening shall consider the type of project and project site conditions. If there is no presence for any potential jurisdictional resource(s), then a formal jurisdictional delineation shall not be required. If the site has the potential for jurisdictional resources to occur on-site, prior to issuance of any permits required to conduct ground disturbing activities, the City may require a formal jurisdiction delineation to be conducted by a qualified biologist to confirm the presence or absence of any identified aquatic features, including features not visible via aerial imagery. The jurisdictional delineation shall determine the extent of State and Federal jurisdictional areas. The formal jurisdictional delineation shall be submitted for review, approval, and final determination of jurisdictional limits by the City of Lancaster Development Services Department, Community Development Division and applicable regulatory agency(ies) (i.e., U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Regional Water Quality Control Board, and/or California Department of Fish and Wildlife).

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.

BIO-4 THE PROJECT COULD INTERFERE SUBSTANTIALLY WITH THE MOVEMENT OF NATIVE RESIDENT OR MIGRATORY FISH OR WILDLIFE SPECIES OR WITH ESTABLISHED NATIVE RESIDENT OR MIGRATORY WILDLIFE CORRIDORS OR IMPEDE THE USE OF WILDLIFE NURSERY SITES.

Impact Analysis: As stated, the main natural corridor within the project site is Little Rock Wash, which crosses from south to north in the western half of the project site, originating in the San Gabriel Mountains as Little Rock Creek. Little Rock Wash is not recognized as a corridor by the General Plan or the *South Coast Missing Linkages: A Wildland Network for the South Coast Ecoregion*. However, Little



Rock Wash is recognized by the County as part of the Antelope Valley SEA, which provides dispersal and migration opportunities between the San Gabriel Mountains and the playa lakes on EAFB. Other potential migratory pathways within the project site would generally be opportunistic across open space areas between or through agricultural fields; however, these potential migratory pathways would likely be reduced by the presence of surrounding roadways and existing agricultural, commercial, and residential developments within the project site. These developments have fragmented the connection between the project site and surrounding naturally occurring vegetation communities. Elevated noise levels, vehicle roadway/traffic, lighting, and presence of humans and domestic pets are also expected to further decrease the suitability of the project site to be used as a wildlife movement corridor or linkage. As such, the proposed project would not substantially interfere with the movement of native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors. Impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

5.4.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

CEQA Guidelines Section 15355 requires an analysis of cumulative impacts, which are defined as, “two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable, or which compound or increase other environmental impacts.” The cumulative analysis below considers the proposed project’s impacts in conjunction with future buildout of the General Plan; refer to Table 4-1, General Plan 2030 – GPCAC Preferred Land Use Plan Alternative Buildout.

- **THE PROPOSED PROJECT, IN CONJUNCTION WITH CUMULATIVE DEVELOPMENT, COULD RESULT IN CUMULATIVELY CONSIDERABLE IMPACTS TO CANDIDATE, SENSITIVE, OR SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES IN LOCAL OR REGIONAL PLANS, POLICIES, OR REGULATIONS, OR BY THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME OR U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE.**

Impact Analysis: Future cumulative development projects developed in accordance with the General Plan would be required to undergo project-specific environmental review under CEQA and the City’s discretionary review process to determine potential impacts to sensitive special-status species and any required mitigation.

As stated, all future development projects would similarly require separate environmental review under CEQA. Additionally, per Mitigation Measure BIO-1, a Biological Resources Assessment and additional focused plant survey(s) may be required, as determined by the City, to evaluate potential impacts to on-site biological resources, including sensitive or special-status species. Mitigation Measure BIO-2 would require any future project requiring removal of western Joshua trees to compile a census of the quantity of western Joshua trees to be impacted by development. Further, should burrowing owls be located on-site, Mitigation Measure BIO-3 would require pre-construction burrowing owl clearance surveys be conducted prior to vegetation removal or ground disturbing



activities. Thus, with implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-3, the proposed overlay zone would not result in cumulatively considerable impacts to sensitive special-status species. Impacts in this regard would be reduced to less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: Refer to Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-3.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.

- **THE PROJECT, IN CONJUNCTION WITH CUMULATIVE PROJECTS, COULD RESULT IN CUMULATIVELY CONSIDERABLE IMPACTS TO RIPARIAN HABITAT OR OTHER SENSITIVE NATURAL COMMUNITY IDENTIFIED IN LOCAL OR REGIONAL PLANS, POLICIES, AND REGULATIONS OR BY THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE OR U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE.**

Impact Analysis: Future cumulative development projects developed in accordance with the General Plan would be required to undergo project-specific environmental review under CEQA and the City's discretionary review process to determine potential impacts to riparian habitat and sensitive natural communities and any required mitigation.

As stated, all future development projects would similarly require separate environmental review under CEQA. Additionally, per Mitigation Measure BIO-1, a Biological Resources Assessment may be required, as determined by the City, to evaluate potential impacts to on-site biological resources, including riparian habitat and sensitive natural communities. Thus, the proposed overlay zone itself would not result in cumulatively considerable impacts to riparian habitat and sensitive natural communities. Impacts in this regard would be reduced to less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: Refer to Mitigation Measure BIO-1.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.

- **THE PROJECT, IN CONJUNCTION WITH CUMULATIVE PROJECTS, COULD RESULT IN CUMULATIVELY CONSIDERABLE IMPACTS TO FEDERALLY PROTECTED WETLANDS AS DEFINED BY SECTION 404 OF THE CLEAN WATER ACT (INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, MARSH, VERNAL POOL, COASTAL, ETC.) THROUGH DIRECT REMOVAL, FILLING, HYDROLOGICAL INTERRUPTION, OR OTHER MEANS.**

Impact Analysis: As stated above, numerous potential jurisdictional features are located within the overlay zone. Specifically, Little Rock Wash is the most prominent potential jurisdictional feature within the overlay zone and may qualify as "waters of the United States or wetlands" and/or water of the State regulated by the USACE, RWQCB, and/or CDFW. As such, prior to future development within the overlay zone, Mitigation Measure BIO-4 would require future projects to conduct a jurisdictional delineation, as determined by the City, to document the presence or absence of potential jurisdictional features and potential permit requirements from the regulatory agencies. Future



development would also be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA (i.e., preparation of a Categorical Exemption, Mitigated Negative Declaration, or Environmental Impact Report) to evaluate project-level impacts with regards to federally protected wetlands. Thus, the proposed project would not result in cumulatively considerable impacts to federally protected wetlands and impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: Refer to Mitigation Measure BIO-4.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.

- **THE PROJECT, IN CONJUNCTION WITH CUMULATIVE PROJECTS, COULD RESULT IN CUMULATIVELY CONSIDERABLE IMPACTS TO THE MOVEMENT OF NATIVE RESIDENT OR MIGRATORY FISH OR WILDLIFE SPECIES OR WITH ESTABLISHED NATIVE RESIDENT OR MIGRATOR WILDLIFE CORRIDORS, OR IMPEDE THE USE OF WILDLIFE NURSERY SITES.**

Impact Analysis: Future cumulative development projects developed in accordance with the General Plan would be required to undergo project-specific environmental review under CEQA and the City's discretionary review process to determine potential impacts to the movement of native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species and any required mitigation. Future projects would also be required to comply with existing regulation requirements, including the MBTA.

As stated, the proposed overlay zone itself would not result in cumulatively considerable impacts regarding the movement of native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species. Impacts in this regard would be reduced to less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

5.4.6 SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

No significant unavoidable impacts related to biological resources have been identified.



5.5 Tribal and Cultural Resources



5.5 TRIBAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

The purpose of this section is to identify existing cultural and tribal cultural resources within and around the project site and to assess the significance of such resources. Mitigation measures are recommended, as necessary, to minimize impacts as a result of project implementation. This section is primarily based upon the *Cultural and Paleontological Resources Assessment for Lancaster Eastside Project, Lancaster, Los Angeles County, California* (Cultural and Paleo Report), prepared by Michael Baker International (Michael Baker) and dated July 2022, as well as tribal consultation conducted by the City of Lancaster pursuant to Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52); refer to [Appendix 11.3, *Cultural and Paleontological Resources Assessment/AB 52 Documentation*](#).

5.5.1 EXISTING SETTING

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The project site is located in the western Antelope Valley. Surrounded by the Tehachapi, Sierra Paloma, and San Gabriel Mountains, the Antelope Valley is the western tip of the Mojave Desert. The project site is located on a relatively flat alluvial plain, overlain in places with aeolian deposits. Summers are hot, arid, and clear, and winters are cold and partly cloudy. Average annual rainfall is approximately 7.7 inches.

At an altitude of approximately 2,359 feet above mean sea level (amsl), the City is located in C. Hart Merriam's Lower Sonoran Life Zone. This low elevation, hot desert life zone is dominated by plants that can survive the arid environment, including creosote bush, desert shrubs, Joshua trees, and other succulents. Animals found in the Antelope Valley include the pronghorn antelope, jackrabbits, pocket gophers, and various reptile species.

The natural surface water in the project site is limited to seasonal creeks, streams, and washes. Little Rock Wash runs in a north-south direction bisecting the eastern portion of the project site.

CULTURAL SETTING

Prehistoric Period

Paleoindian (12,000 to 10,000 before present [BP]) and Lake Mojave (10,000 to 7,000 BP) Periods

Climatic warming characterizes the transition from the Paleoindian period to the Lake Mojave period. This transition also marked the end of the Pleistocene epoch and ushered in the Holocene. The Paleoindian period has been loosely defined by isolated fluted projectile points, dated by their association with similar artifacts discovered in situ in the Great Plains. Some fluted bifaces have been found in association with fossil remains of Rancholabrean mammals near China Lake in the northern Mojave Desert and dated 13,300-10,800 BP. The Lake Mojave period has been associated with cultural



adaptations to moist conditions, and resource allocation pointing to water environments. Artifacts that characterize this period include stemmed points, flake and core scrapers, choppers, hammerstones, and crescentics. Projectile points associated with the period include the Silver Lake and Lake Mojave styles. Lake Mojave sites commonly occur on shorelines of Pleistocene lakes and streams, where geological surfaces of that epoch have been identified.

Pinto Period (7,000 to 4,000 BP)

The Pinto period has been largely characterized by desiccation of the Mojave. As formerly rich water environments began to disappear, the artifact record reveals more sporadic occupation of the Mojave, indicating occupants' recession into the cooler, moister fringes. Pinto period sites are rare, characterized by surface manifestations that usually lack significant in situ remains. Artifacts from this era include Pinto projectile points and a flake industry similar to the Lake Mojave tool complex, though use of Pinto projectile points as an index artifact for the era has been disputed. Milling stones have also occasionally been associated with sites of this period.

Gypsum Period (4,000 to 1,500 BP)

A temporary return to moister conditions during the Gypsum period is postulated to have encouraged technological diversification afforded by the relative abundance of resources. Water environments reappear and begin to be exploited during this era. Concurrently, a more diverse artifact assemblage reflects intensified reliance on plant resources. The new artifacts include milling stones, mortars, pestles, and a proliferation of Humboldt Concave Base, Gypsum Cave, Elko Eared, and Elko Corner-notched dart points. Other artifacts include leaf-shaped projectile points, rectangular-based knives, drills, large scraper planes, choppers, hammer stones, shaft straighteners, incised stone pendants, and drilled slate tubes. The bow and arrow appear around 2,000 BP, evidenced by the presence of a smaller type of projectile point, the Rose Spring point.

Saratoga Springs Period (1,500 to 800 BP)

During the Saratoga Springs period, regional cultural diversifications of Gypsum period developments are evident within the Mojave. Basketmaker III (Anasazi) pottery appears during this period and has been associated with turquoise mining in the eastern Mojave Desert. Influences from Patayan/Yuman assemblages are apparent in the southern Mojave, including the appearance of buff and brown wares often associated with Cottonwood and Desert Side-notched projectile points. Obsidian becomes more commonly used throughout the Mojave and characteristic artifacts of the period include milling stones, mortars, pestles, ceramics, and ornamental and ritual objects. More structured settlement patterns are evidenced by the presence of large villages, and three types of identifiable archaeological sites (major habitation, temporary camps, and processing stations) emerge. Diversity of resource exploitation continues to expand, indicating a much more generalized, somewhat less mobile subsistence strategy.

Shoshonean Period (800 BP to Contact)

The Shoshonean period is the first to benefit from contact-era ethnography, as well as being subject to its inherent biases. Interviews of living informants allowed anthropologists to match artifact



assemblages and particular traditions with linguistic groups and plot them geographically. During the Shoshonean period, continued diversification of site assemblages and reduced Anasazi influence both coincide with the expansion of Numic (Uto-Aztecan language family) speakers across the Great Basin, Takic (Uto-Aztecan language family) speakers into southern California, and the Hopi across the southwest. Hunting and gathering continued to diversify, and the diagnostic arrow points include Desert Side-notched and Cottonwood Triangular varieties. Ceramics continue to proliferate, though are more common in the southern Mojave during this period. Trade routes have become well established across the Mojave, particularly the Mojave Trail, which transported goods and news across the desert via the Mojave River. Trade in the western Mojave was more closely related to coastal groups.

Historic Period

Historic-era California is generally divided into three periods: the Spanish or Mission period (1769 to 1821), the Mexican or Rancho period (1821 to 1848), and the American period (1848 to present).

Spanish Period (1769-1821)

The Spanish period is characterized by exploration and settlement of the area by Europeans. In 1772, Pedro Fages became the first known European explorer to enter the Antelope Valley when he traveled through the Cajon Pass and into the Mojave Desert to pursue deserting soldiers. Fages most likely followed the Mojave Trail, a Native American trail predating European exploration of the area, which followed the Mojave River from Soda Lake to the San Bernardino Mountains, and then down the Cajon Pass into the coastal region. The earliest known contact of native inhabitants in Serrano territory came in 1776 when Francisco Garces visited Native American villages along the upper Mojave River. Garces later traveled the Mojave Trail again when he visited Mission San Gabriel.

As the Spanish developed commerce between their outposts in Santa Fe and Los Angeles, they further developed a series of trails following the Mojave River, known collectively as the Old Spanish Trail. The trail was utilized for trading goods from Santa Fe and Mexican horses from Los Angeles. After an attack on Mission San Gabriel in 1810 by local Mojave Native Americans, the Spanish used this new trail to raid the deserts, leading to a significant decrease in the native population in the region.

Mexican Period (1821-1848)

The Mexican period is marked by the inland settlement on large land grants (ranchos) and by the opening of Alta California to American explorers. One such explorer from New York, Jedediah Strong Smith, crossed the Mojave River in 1826, calling it the “Inconstant River” because of its sporadic and partially underground flow. Later, in 1844, General Fremont recorded the Mojave River as the “Mohave River” while in search of the Old Spanish Trail. The route would later be utilized and improved by the Mormon Battalion as they were stationed there between 1847 and 1848 to guard the Cajon Pass during the Mexican-American War. The Mormons used the route to return to Salt Lake City following the war in 1848.



American Period (1848-Present)

The American period is distinguished by the influx of American and European settlers into the area. In 1848, gold was discovered at Sutter's Mill near Coloma on the south fork of the American River, thereby kicking off the California Gold Rush and spurring a mass migration into the state from all over the country.

Lancaster (1876-Present)

In 1876, the Southern Pacific Railroad (SPRR) completed a new track passing through the western Antelope Valley, connecting Los Angeles and Bakersfield. Approximately 3,000 workers, half of them Chinese, labored on the track. Soon thereafter, the SPRR constructed a siding, roundhouse for locomotive repairs, and shacks for railroad workers. The siding and small railroad settlement was named Lancaster. This was the future City's first non-indigenous settlement.

In 1883, an artisanal well was drilled at Lancaster, meeting the settlement's most important need. That same year, developer Moses Langley Wicks built a lumberyard in Lancaster, the first commercial structure there. In 1884, Wicks purchased 60 sections (38,400 acres) from the SPRR, marked out lots and streets, and began development of a town.

With access to distant markets via a new transcontinental railroad, combined with a climate that provided enough rainfall for dry farming, many homesteaders established farms in the area during the 1880s, cultivating alfalfa, barley, wheat, and tree fruits. The profitability of farming decreased substantially, however, between 1894 and 1904 due to a severe drought that decimated the region's economy and forced many farmers to abandon their homesteads.

In the early twentieth century, agriculture revived in the Antelope Valley with increased irrigation, made possible by electricity. By the 1930s, much of the Antelope Valley was under cultivation for alfalfa, and downtown Lancaster served as the local commercial hub.

The decade-long drought also hurt cattle ranches in the Lancaster area. Cattle ranches had been established in the Antelope Valley as early as the 1840s. With the discovery of gold in California and the rising demand for beef, cattle ranching became increasingly important to the local economy. However, during the second decade of the twentieth century, land disputes between ranchers and farmers led to the fencing of land by farmers and alfalfa growers to protect their crops from damage by livestock. This restriction, combined with a population increase in the Antelope Valley, contributed to a substantial decline in the local cattle industry during the 1920s.

For farmers, however, the first half of the twentieth century was a productive period overall. With advancements in irrigation methods and electrical water pumps, farmers could access underground water with relative ease. The new, modern pumps provided a more reliable source of water than the free-flowing artesian wells and contributed to a resurgence in local farming beginning in 1905. In addition to reestablishing crops and orchards that had previously thrived, farmers were able to utilize these modern irrigation methods to cultivate crops, particularly alfalfa, on a large, commercial scale. By 1920, alfalfa had emerged as the Antelope Valley's major crop, with up to 100,000 tons produced annually by the early 1930s. Other important agricultural products included pears, grapes, and poultry.



After World War II, the economy of the Antelope Valley shifted largely from agriculture to the defense and aerospace industries. The area around the subject property, however, still retains its rural, agricultural character.

Increased demand for onions as greater Los Angeles boomed in the post-World War II years led to a sizable increase in onion production in Lancaster and the surrounding Antelope Valley. At the height of onion production in the Antelope Valley, 29 onion farms worked 5,000 acres. The Calandri family is the last onion grower in the Antelope Valley. In 1946, Pacoima-born John Calandri moved to the Antelope Valley east of Lancaster and began growing cantaloupes. He continued growing melons, later experimenting with carrots, before specializing in onions. Early on, the primary Calandri farm was located on B Street between 90th and 110th Streets but was expanded by both Calandri and his family. In the 1980s, John Calandri Jr. purchased additional acreage and began farming onions. The two farms were merged after the senior Calandri's death. Today, John Calandri Jr.'s son Brandon Calandri manages the sprawling Calandri family operations.

PROJECT SITE

The project site is located within the traditional ancestral territory of the Serrano. This ethnic group was given the name Serrano, meaning mountaineers, by the Spanish who encountered them in the San Bernardino Mountains east of Cajon Pass, but their territory continued east onto the desert floor of the Mojave. The Serrano were organized into small villages and hamlets. Most of these settlements were located in the Upper Sonoran Life Zone, ranging in elevation from approximately 3,500 feet amsl to 7,000 feet amsl, from which seasonal parties would depart to exploit the diverse ecologic areas in the desert, mountains, and passes that made up their territory. Some permanent villages were located around permanent water sources on the desert floor. It is acknowledged that the ethnogeography of the western Antelope Valley is little documented. The project site does not appear in comprehensive maps of Native American sites in Southern California or maps focused on the Serrano and Desert Serrano. No hamlets, villages, or named locations are identified within the proposed project site.

Middle nineteenth century General Land Office maps depict a completely unsettled area, devoid not only of buildings but also of roads and trails. No human-made features are visible in these maps.

By the late nineteenth century, Lancaster had been founded along the SPRR line west of the proposed project site. The project site itself remained undeveloped.

Development of what is now eastern Lancaster began in earnest in the early twentieth century. Only the western part of the project site is exhibited in the 1915 and 1917 USGS topographic maps. These maps show the project site as a very sparsely settled area with Little Rock Wash passing through.

The project site remained sparsely developed into the early 1930s. More wells were developed, especially in the eastern part of the project site, suggesting increased agriculture.

Over the rest of the twentieth century, the project site continued to slowly develop. The area remains very sparsely developed, with a radio station tower, roads, buildings, wells, and stock or irrigation tanks added across its broad extent. Urban Lancaster remains far to the west of the project site. No named communities are mapped on USGS maps within the project site at any time in its history.



CULTURAL RESOURCES

As part of the Cultural and Paleo Report, Michael Baker conducted background research to identify previously recorded cultural resources and cultural resource studies within the project site. The research consisted of records searches for paleontological, archaeological, and historical resources; literature, map, and aerial photograph reviews; local historical group consultation; field surveys; and California Register evaluations.

Records Search

Literature searches of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) at the South Coastal Central Information Center (SCCIC) located at California State University, Fullerton were conducted on May 18, 2022. As part of the records search, the following federal and State inventories were reviewed:

- California Inventory of Historic Resources;
- California Point of Historical Interest;
- California Historical Landmarks;
- Archaeological Determinations of Eligibility. The directory includes determinations for eligibility for archaeological resources in the County; and
- Built Environment Resources Directory. The directory includes the listing of the National Register of Historic Places (National Register), National Historic Landmarks, California Register of Historical Resources (California Register), California Historical Landmarks, and California Points of Historical Interest within the County.

Previous Cultural Resources Studies

The SCCIC records search identified 28 previously conducted cultural resources studies within a 0.25-mile radius of the project site. Of those, 13 studies overlap the project site; refer to Cultural and Paleo Report Table 3, *Previous Studies Within Project Site and Search Area*. However, these studies did not all include pedestrian survey. Approximately 25 percent of the project site has been subject to pedestrian survey.

Previously Recorded Cultural Resources

The SCCIC records search also identified 20 previously recorded cultural resources within a 0.25-mile radius of the project site. Of those, six resources are located within the project site (P-19-003696, P-19-003817, P-19-004157, P-19-120054, P-19-120056, P-19-120057). The six resources are described below and detailed in Cultural and Paleo Report Table 4, *Resources Previously Recorded in the Project Site and Search Area*.



P-19-003696/CA-LAN-3696

This resource consists of a historic refuse deposit consisting of bottles and cans scattered across an area measuring approximately 8 feet by 14 feet. Diagnostic artifacts were observed ranging from the 1940s to the 1970s but not described in detail. Only a cursory examination was made of the material at the time of recordation. This resource has not been evaluated for inclusion in the California Register.

P-19-003817/CA-LAN-003817H

This resource consists of a multi-episode refuse dump and an associated borrow pit. A minimum of four refuse deposits encompass the dump site. Each refuse deposit includes cans and glass fragments. A smaller amount of ceramic fragments and other artifacts such as oil filters, chicken wire, and faunal bones were also noted in one or more of the deposits. All of the refuse appears to date to the middle of the twentieth century. The borrow pit measures 130 feet north-south and 29 feet east-west and is approximately five feet deep with irregular sloping sides. Additional metal and glass refuse are scattered within the borrow pit. This resource has not been evaluated for inclusion in the California Register.

P-19-004157/CA-LAN-004157H

This resource consists of an abandoned twentieth century farmstead. Surviving elements of the built environment include foundation slabs, irrigation standpipes, a wellhouse in poor condition, fence lines, non-native trees, and fallow agricultural fields. One refuse deposit consisting of plastic, building materials, and modern cans along with one paneled glass medicine bottle fragment is also located at the site. A two-foot-thick earthen mound was also noted and believed to be capping another refuse deposit. This resource has not been evaluated for inclusion in the California Register.

P-19-120054

This resource consists of a well and irrigation system, at least four discrete refuse scatters, and additional refuse scattered throughout an assessor parcel, all of which date to the twentieth century. The well and irrigation system consist of a wellhead and concrete piping which, though abandoned, had been continuously maintained until a relatively recent date and included both historic-in-age and recent elements. The refuse scatters consist primarily of glass fragments with some ceramic and metal fragments mixed in; the four scatters range from approximately 10 meters to 100 meters in diameter. The majority of the artifacts appear to date to the middle of the twentieth century, with a few older artifacts on the property dating from approximately the pre-1920s (i.e., the late nineteenth or earliest twentieth centuries). This resource has not been evaluated for inclusion in the California Register.

P-19-120056

This resource consists of one very small obsidian flake and fragments of clam shell. This resource has not been evaluated for inclusion in the California Register.



P-19-120057

This resource consists of a “historic complex.” The majority of the complex extended outside the recorder’s project area and therefore was not documented. One small refuse scatter including glass and ceramics was noted, possibly including artifacts dating to the 1920s. This resource has not been evaluated for inclusion in the California Register.

Parcels with Buildings Over 45 Years of Age

Six parcels of historic age (i.e., greater than 45 years old) were identified within the project site; refer to Cultural and Paleo Report Table 5, *Historic-Aged Buildings Documented by the Los Angeles County Assessor*, and Figure 4, *Parcels Over 45 Years of Age*. Based on historic aerial photographs, very limited development occurred in the project area prior to the late nineteenth century, suggesting that the number of historic-aged buildings in the project site is low. However, the entire project site has the potential for historic-aged buildings that may require evaluation to the California Register if affected by future development.

Interested Parties Consultation

NATIVE AMERICAN CONSULTATION

On April 20, 2022, Michael Baker sent a letter describing the project to the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) requesting the NAHC to review its Sacred Lands File for any Native American cultural resources that might be impacted by the project. The NAHC responded with a letter sent via email dated May 25, 2022 stating that the results of the SLF search were negative.

On May 31, 2022, the City sent notification letters to AB 52-specific tribes inviting them to consult on the proposed project in accordance with AB 52; refer to [Appendix 11.3](#). The Fernandeano Tataviam Band of Mission Indians (FTBMI) responded on June 22, 2022 requesting tribal consultation and additional project information. Additionally, the Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation (YSMN; formerly known as the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians) responded on June 30, 2022 stating that YSMN does not have any concerns with the project as planned but also provided requested specific cultural and tribal cultural resources mitigation measures be included as a project condition.

5.5.2 REGULATORY SETTING

FEDERAL LEVEL

National Historic Preservation Act

Federal undertakings are subject to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). The NHPA dictates that it is necessary to identify, evaluate, and mitigate effects to historic properties within the area of potential effects (APE) of proposed undertakings as defined by 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 800.16(y). The NHPA defines a historic property as any “prehistoric or historic district, site, building, structure, or object included in, or eligible for inclusion on, the National



Register, including artifacts, records, and material remains related to such a property or resource” (54 United States Code Section 300308).

National Register of Historic Places

The National Register is the official register of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects determined to be worth special protections due to their historic or artistic significance. The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association and:

- that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- that are associated with the lives of person significant in our past; or
- that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

All resources or properties nominated for listing in the National Register must retain integrity, which is the authenticity of a historic resource’s physical identity evidenced by the survival of characteristics that existed during the resource’s period of significance. Resources, therefore, must retain enough of their historic character or appearance to be recognizable as historic resources and to convey the reasons for their significance. Integrity is evaluated with regard to the retention of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. It must also be judged with reference to the particular criteria under which a resource is proposed for nomination.

STATE LEVEL

California Register of Historical Resources

The California Register is a guide to cultural resources that must be considered when a government agency undertakes a discretionary action subject to CEQA. The California Register helps government agencies identify and evaluate California’s historical resources and indicates which properties are to be protected, to the extent prudent and feasible, from substantial adverse change. Any resource listed in, or eligible for listing in, the California Register is to be considered during the CEQA process.

A cultural resource is evaluated under four California Register criteria to determine its historical significance. A resource must be significant in accordance with one or more of the following criteria:

- *Criterion 1:* Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of California’s history and cultural heritage.



- *Criterion 2:* Is associated with the lives of persons important to our past.
- *Criterion 3:* Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values.
- *Criterion 4:* Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

AGE

In addition to meeting one or more of the above criteria, the California Register requires that sufficient time must have passed to allow a “scholarly perspective on the events or individuals associated with the resource.” Fifty years is used as a general estimate of the time needed to understand the historical importance of a resource. The OHP recommends documenting, and taking into consideration in the planning process, any cultural resource that is 45 years or older.

PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE

The period of significance for a property is “the length of time when a property was associated with important events, activities, persons, or attained the characteristics which qualify it for National Register listing.” The period of significance begins with the date of the earliest important land use or activity that is reflected by historic characteristics tangible today. The period closes with the date when events having historical importance ended. The period of significance for an archaeological property is “the broad span of time about which the site or district is likely to provide information.” Archaeological properties may have more than one period of significance.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

The significance of cultural resources is generally evaluated using a historic context that groups information about related historical resources based on theme, geographic limits, and chronological period.

INTEGRITY

The California Register also requires a resource to possess integrity, which is defined as “the authenticity of a historical resource’s physical identity evidenced by the survival of characteristics that existed during the resource’s period of significance. Integrity is evaluated with regard to the retention of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.” Archaeologists use the term “integrity” to describe the level of preservation or quality of information contained within a district, site, or excavated assemblage. Integrity is relative to the specific significance that the resource conveys. Although it is possible to correlate the seven aspects of integrity with standard archaeological site characteristics, those aspects are often unclear for evaluating the ability of an archaeological resource to convey significance under Criterion 4. The integrity of archaeological resources is judged according to the site’s ability to yield scientific and cultural information that can be used to address important research questions.



ELIGIBILITY

Resources that are significant, meet the age guidelines, and possess integrity are considered eligible for listing in the California Register.

Assembly Bill 52

On September 25, 2014, Governor Brown signed AB 52. In recognition of California Native American tribal sovereignty and the unique relationship of California local governments and public agencies with California Native American tribal governments, and respecting the interests and roles of project proponents, it is the intent of AB 52 to accomplish all of the following:

1. Recognize that California Native American prehistoric, historic, archaeological, cultural, and sacred places are essential elements in tribal cultural traditions, heritages, and identities.
2. Establish a new category of resources in CEQA called “tribal cultural resources” that considers the tribal cultural values in addition to the scientific and archaeological values when determining impacts and mitigation.
3. Establish examples of mitigation measures for tribal cultural resources that uphold the existing mitigation preference for historical and archaeological resources of preservation in place, if feasible.
4. Recognize that California Native American tribes may have expertise with regard to their tribal history and practices, which concern the tribal cultural resources with which they are traditionally and culturally affiliated. Because CEQA calls for a sufficient degree of analysis, tribal knowledge about the land and tribal cultural resources at issue should be included in environmental assessments for projects that may have a significant impact on those resources.
5. In recognition of their governmental status, establish a meaningful consultation process between California Native American tribal governments and lead agencies, respecting the interests and roles of all California Native American tribes and project proponents, and the level of required confidentiality concerning tribal cultural resources, at the earliest possible point in CEQA environmental review process, so that tribal cultural resources can be identified, and culturally appropriate mitigation and mitigation monitoring programs can be considered by the decision making body of the lead agency.
6. Recognize the unique history of California Native American tribes and uphold existing rights of all California Native American tribes to participate in, and contribute their knowledge to, the environmental review process pursuant to CEQA.
7. Ensure that local and tribal governments, public agencies, and project proponents have information available, early in CEQA environmental review process, for purposes of identifying and addressing potential adverse impacts to tribal cultural resources, and to reduce the potential for delay and conflicts in the environmental review process.



8. Enable California Native American tribes to manage and accept conveyances of, and act as caretakers of, tribal cultural resources.
9. Establish that a substantial adverse change to a tribal cultural resource has a significant effect on the environment.

LOCAL LEVEL

City of Lancaster General Plan 2030

PLAN FOR ACTIVE LIVING

The Plan for Active Living in the General Plan identifies measure for the protection of historical, archaeological and cultural resources. The General Plan recognizes the importance of the unique history of the Antelope Valley and the City by promoting community involvement in the protection, preservation, and restoration of the area's significant cultural, historical, or architectural features. The following objective and policies are applicable to the project:

- Objective 12.1: Identify and preserve and/or restore those features of cultural, historical, or architectural significance.
- Policy 12.1.1: Preserve features and sites of significant historical and cultural value consistent with their intrinsic and scientific values.
- Policy 19.3.4: Preserve and protect important areas of historic and cultural interest that serve as visible reminders of the City's social and architectural history.

5.5.3 IMPACT THRESHOLDS AND SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

SIGNIFICANCE GUIDELINES

Historical Resources

Impacts to a significant cultural resource that affect characteristics that would qualify it for the National Register or that adversely alter the significance of a resource listed in or eligible for listing in the California Register are considered a significant effect on the environment. These impacts could result from "physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of an historical resource would be materially impaired" (*CEQA Guidelines* Section 15064.5 [b][1], 2000). Material impairment is defined as demolition or alteration "in an adverse manner [of] those characteristics of an historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its inclusion in, or eligibility for inclusion in, the California Register" (*CEQA Guidelines* Section 15064.5[b][2][A]). CEQA states that when a project will cause damage to a historical resource, reasonable efforts must be made to preserve the resource in place or left in an undisturbed state. Mitigation measures are required to the extent that the resource could be



damaged or destroyed by a project. Projects that follow the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for the Treatments of Historic Properties* are typically mitigated below the level of significance.

Archaeological Resources

A significant prehistoric archaeological impact would occur if grading and construction activities result in a substantial adverse change to archaeological resources determined to be “unique” or “historic.” “Unique” resources are defined in Public Resources Code Section 21083.2; “historic” resources are defined in Public Resources Code Section 21084.1 and *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.4.

Public Resources Code Section 21083.2(g) states:

As used in this section, “unique archaeological resource” means an archaeological artifact, object, or site about which it can be clearly demonstrated that, without merely adding to the current body of knowledge, there is a high probability that it meets any of the following criteria:

- 1. Contains information needed to answer important scientific research questions and that there is a demonstrable public interest in that information;*
- 2. Has a special and particular quality, such as being the oldest of its type or the best available example of its type; or*
- 3. Is directly associated with a scientifically recognized important prehistoric or historic event or person.*

CEQA states that when a project would cause damage to a unique archaeological resource, reasonable efforts must be made to preserve the resource in place or leave it in an undisturbed state. Mitigation measures are required to the extent that the resource could be damaged or destroyed by a project.

Tribal Cultural Resources

AB 52 established a new category of resources in CEQA called tribal cultural resources. (Public Resources Code Section 21074.) “Tribal cultural resources” are either of the following:

- (1) Sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are either of the following:*
 - (A) Included or determined to be eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources.*
 - (B) Included in a local register of historical resources as defined in subdivision (k) of Section 5020.1.*
- (2) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Section 5024.1. In applying*



the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Section 5024.1 for the purposes of this paragraph, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

AB 52 also created a process for consultation with California Native American Tribes in the CEQA process. Tribal governments can request consultation with a lead agency and give input into potential impacts to tribal cultural resources before the agency decides what kind of environmental assessment is appropriate for a proposed project. The Public Resources Code requires avoiding damage to tribal cultural resources, if feasible. If not, lead agencies must mitigate impacts to tribal cultural resources to the extent feasible.

CEQA SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines* contains the Environmental Checklist form that was used during the preparation of this EIR. Accordingly, a project may create a significant adverse environmental impact if it would:

Cultural Resources

- Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15064.5 (refer to Impact Statement CUL-1);
- Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15064.5 (refer to Impact Statement CUL-2);
- Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries (refer to Section 8.0, *Effects Found Not To Be Significant*);

Tribal Cultural Resources

- Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:
 - Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k) (refer to Impact Statement CUL-3); or
 - A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American Tribe (refer to Impact Statement CUL-3).



Based on these standards/criteria, the effects of the proposed project have been categorized as either a “less than significant impact” or “potentially significant impact.” Mitigation measures are recommended for potentially significant impacts. If a potentially significant impact cannot be reduced to a less than significant level through the application of mitigation, it is categorized as a significant and unavoidable impact.

5.5.4 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

HISTORICAL RESOURCES

CUL-1 THE PROJECT COULD CAUSE SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS TO HISTORICAL RESOURCES.

Impact Analysis: The Cultural and Paleo Report identified six parcels with documented historic-aged buildings (i.e., greater than 45 years old) within the proposed overlay zone; refer to Cultural and Paleo Report Table 7, *Historic Built Resources within the Overlay Zone*. The six parcels are of historic age; however, as stated, development within the overlay zone started in the nineteenth century, suggesting that the number of historic-aged buildings in the overlay zone is low. Nevertheless, the entire overlay zone has the potential for historic-aged buildings that may require evaluation for inclusion in the National Register and/or California Register if affected by future development in accordance with the proposed overlay zone.

Future light industrial projects developed in accordance with the overlay zone would be required to undergo project-level environmental review under CEQA on a case-by-case basis and comply with existing applicable federal, State, and local laws related to historical resources. Future projects with the potential for ground disturbing activities may also be required to comply with Mitigation Measure CUL-1 as deemed appropriate by the City, which requires a Phase I cultural resources study be conducted by a qualified archaeologist and/or architectural historian meeting the Secretary of the Interior’s Professional Qualification Standards for archaeology, architectural history, and/or history. Specifically, the Phase I cultural resources study would be required to include an identification effort, including, at a minimum, a South Central Coastal Information Center records search, literature review, field survey, interested parties consultation, and buried site sensitivity analysis. Site-specific mitigation measures may also be required as a result of the Phase I cultural resources study. As such, implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-1 would reduce potential impacts in this regard to a less than significant level.

Mitigation Measures:

CUL-1 Each future development within the overlay zone subject to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review (meaning, subject to discretionary action and non-exempt from CEQA) shall be screened by the City of Lancaster Community Development Department to determine whether a Phase I Cultural Resources Study is required. Screening shall consider the type of project and whether ground disturbances are proposed. Ground disturbances include activities such as grading, excavation, trenching, boring, or demolition that extend below the current grade. If there will be no ground



disturbance, then a Phase I Cultural Resources Study shall not be required. If there will be ground disturbance, prior to issuance of any permits required to conduct ground disturbing activities, the City may require a Phase I Cultural Resources Study be prepared by a qualified archaeologist and/or architectural historian meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards for archaeology, architectural history, and/or history. The study shall include an identification effort including, at minimum, a South Central Coastal Information Center records search, literature review, field survey, interested parties consultation, and buried site sensitivity analysis. Any cultural resource greater than 45 years of age that may be impacted by the project shall be evaluated for their eligibility for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources and/or National Register of Historic Places. Additional mitigation measures may be developed depending on the results of the study.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

CUL-2 THE PROJECT COULD CAUSE A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT TO ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES.

Impact Analysis: Results from the Cultural and Paleo Report indicate that the archaeological sensitivity for potential unknown prehistoric archaeological sites within the overlay zone is moderate. The overlay zone is located within the ancestral territory of the Serrano Native American tribe. No village sites are known or anticipated to have existed within the overlay zone. However, human use of the area extends into the deep past, including periods when the climate was much more suitable for human habitation. Moreover, the presence of ephemeral creeks in the overlay zone such as Little Rock Wash could have drawn Native Americans to the overlay zone seasonally. No prehistoric archaeological sites are documented within the East Side Overlay Zone; however, an isolated flake documented within 0.25-mile of the overlay zone further suggests sporadic or seasonal use of the overlay zone and its vicinity. As such, the overlay zone could contain previously undiscovered archaeological resources.

Further, the sensitivity for potential undocumented historic period buildings, structures, and archaeological sites is high. Topographic maps and aerial photographs indicate that the overlay zone shares the agricultural history of the western Antelope Valley beginning in the late nineteenth century. As stated, six historic archaeological sites have been previously recorded within the overlay zone; refer to Cultural and Paleo Report Table 6, *Archaeological Resources within the Overlay Zone*. Similar historic homesteads and associated archaeological sites and historic built features are anticipated on the surface and at shallow depths within the overlay zone.

Future light industrial projects developed in accordance with the overlay zone would be required to undergo project-level environmental review under CEQA on a case-by-case basis to evaluate site-specific archaeological impacts. Additionally, as deemed appropriate by the City, future projects with the potential for ground disturbing activities may be required to comply with Mitigation Measure CUL-1, which would require a Phase I cultural resources study be conducted by a qualified



archaeologist and/or architectural historian meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards for archaeology, architectural history, and/or history. Specifically, the study would be required to incorporate an identification effort, including, at a minimum, a South Central Coastal Information Center records search, literature review, field survey, interested parties consultation, and buried site sensitivity analysis. Site-specific mitigation measures may also be required as a result of the Phase I cultural resources study. As such, implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-1 would reduce potential impacts in this regard to a less than significant level.

Mitigation Measures: Refer to Mitigation Measure CUL-1.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.

TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

CUL-3 THE PROJECT COULD CAUSE A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT TO TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES.

Impact Analysis: As stated above, the City distributed letters inviting them to consult on the project pursuant to AB 52 on May 31, 2022.

The FTBMI responded on June 22, 2022 requesting tribal consultation and additional project information, including project plans, a geotechnical report (if available), Sacred Lands File search results, and a cultural resources report. The City consulted with the FTBMI and provided additional information regarding the proposed overlay. The FTBMI did not have any further questions or requests afterwards and consultation was deemed complete.

Additionally, the YSMN responded on June 30, 2022 stating that the proposed project area exists within Serrano ancestral territory. While the YSMN does not have any concerns with the project, as planned at this time, the tribe also requested specific tribal cultural resources mitigation measures be included as project conditions. Specifically, Mitigation Measure TCR-1 would require future light industrial project construction activities to halt if cultural resources are discovered and tribes in which the project site is within their ancestral region of occupation (e.g., YSMN) be contacted to evaluate the nature of the find. Mitigation Measure TCR-2 would require a Monitoring and Treatment Plan be developed and implemented if significant pre-contact and/or historic-era cultural resources are discovered. Mitigation Measure TCR-3 would require work in the immediate vicinity of any human remains or funerary objects to cease and the County Coroner to be contacted immediately. Additionally, Mitigation Measure TCR-4 would ensure tribes in which the project site is within their ancestral region of occupation are able to provide input regarding any potential tribal cultural resource discovered and Mitigation Measure TCR-5 would ensure all archaeological/cultural documents created as a part of the future development projects in accordance with the East Side Overlay Zone (e.g., isolate records, site records, survey reports, testing reports, etc.) are disseminated to said tribes. Consultation with the YSMN was deemed complete upon inclusion of the requested measures.

Upon implementation of Mitigation Measures TCR-1 through TCR-5, potential impacts to tribal cultural resources would be less than significant.



Mitigation Measures:

- TCR-1 In the event that cultural resources are discovered during future light industrial developments in accordance with the East Side Overlay Zone, all work in the immediate vicinity of the find (within a 60-foot buffer) shall cease and a qualified archaeologist meeting Secretary of Interior standards shall be hired to assess the find. Work on the other portions of the project site outside of the buffered area may continue during this assessment period. Additionally, tribes in which the project site is within their ancestral region of occupation shall be contacted, as detailed within Mitigation Measure TCR-4, regarding any pre-contact and/or historic-era finds and be provided information after the archaeologist makes his/her initial assessment of the nature of the find, so as to provide tribal input with regards to significance and treatment.
- TCR-2 If significant pre-contact and/or historic-era cultural resources, as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (as amended, 2015), are discovered during implementation of future light industrial developments in accordance with the East Side Overlay Zone and avoidance cannot be ensured, the archaeologist shall develop a Monitoring and Treatment Plan, the drafts of which shall be provided to tribes in which the project site is within their ancestral region of occupation for review and comment, as detailed within Mitigation Measure TCR-4. The archaeologist shall monitor the remainder of the project and implement the Plan accordingly.
- TCR-3 If human remains or funerary objects are encountered during any activities associated with future light industrial projects associated with the East Side Overlay Zone, work in the immediate vicinity (within a 100-foot buffer of the find) shall cease and the County Coroner shall be contacted pursuant to State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 and that code enforced for the duration of the project.
- TCR-4 Tribes in which the project site is within their ancestral region of occupation shall be contacted, as detailed in Mitigation Measure TCR-1, of any pre-contact and/or historic-era cultural resources discovered during project implementation and be provided information regarding the nature of the find, so as to provide tribal input with regards to significance and treatment. Should the find be deemed significant, as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (as amended, 2015), a cultural resources Monitoring and Treatment Plan (Plan) shall be created by the archaeologist, in coordination with tribes in which the project site is within their ancestral region of occupation, and all subsequent finds shall be subject to this Plan. This Plan shall allow for monitor(s) to be present that represent tribes in which the project site is within their ancestral region of occupation for the remainder of the project, should such tribes elect to place monitor(s) on-site.
- TCR-5 Any and all archaeological/cultural documents created as a part of the future development projects in accordance with the East Side Overlay Zone (e.g., isolate records, site records, survey reports, testing reports, etc.) shall be disseminated to tribes in which the project site is within their ancestral region of occupation. The City of Lancaster Community



Development Department shall, in good faith, consult with such tribes throughout the life of the project.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.

5.5.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

CEQA Guidelines Section 15355 requires an analysis of cumulative impacts, which are defined as, “two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable, or which compound or increase other environmental impacts.”

- **THE PROPOSED PROJECT, COMBINED WITH OTHER RELATED PROJECTS, COULD RESULT IN CUMULATIVELY CONSIDERABLE IMPACTS TO HISTORICAL RESOURCES.**

Impact Analysis: Cumulative projects developed in accordance with the General Plan have the potential to impact historical resources on their respective sites. However, future cumulative projects would be required to undergo project-specific environmental review under CEQA and the City’s discretionary review process to determine potential impacts based on site-specific ground-disturbing activities.

Future light industrial development accommodated by the proposed overlay zone would similarly be required to undergo project-level environmental review under CEQA on a case-by-case basis and comply with existing applicable State and local laws related to historical resources. Further, given that construction activities associated with future light industrial development could adversely impact built historic-age resources on a site, implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-1 may be required as deemed appropriate by the City. With implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-1, the proposed overlay zone would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact and impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: Refer to Mitigation Measure CUL-1.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.

- **PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION IN CONJUNCTION WITH OTHER CUMULATIVE PROJECTS COULD RESULT IN CUMULATIVELY CONSIDERABLE IMPACTS TO ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES.**

Impact Analysis: Cumulative projects developed in accordance with the General Plan have the potential to result in cumulatively considerable impacts to archaeological resources. However, future cumulative projects would be required to undergo project-specific environmental review under CEQA and the City’s discretionary review process to determine potential impacts based on project-specific ground-disturbing activities.



Future light industrial development accommodated by the proposed overlay zone would also be required to undergo project-level environmental review under CEQA on a case-by-case basis and comply with existing applicable State and local laws related to archaeological resources. Further, given that future construction activities associated with allowed uses in accordance with the East Side Overlay Zone could uncover previously undiscovered archaeological resources, implementation of Mitigation Measures CUL-1 would reduce potential impacts in this regard. With implementation of Mitigation Measure CUL-1, future light industrial development associated with the proposed overlay zone would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact and impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: Refer to Mitigation Measure CUL-1.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.

- **THE PROPOSED PROJECT, COMBINED WITH OTHER RELATED PROJECTS, COULD RESULT IN CUMULATIVELY CONSIDERABLE IMPACTS TO A TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCE.**

Impact Analysis: Future cumulative development projects developed in accordance with the General Plan would be required to undergo project-specific environmental review under CEQA and the City's discretionary review process to determine potential impacts to tribal cultural resources and any required mitigation.

As stated, while the proposed overlay zone does not involve any development, future light industrial developments permitted by the overlay zone could impact tribal cultural resources during ground-disturbing activities. However, similar to cumulative development projects, all future light industrial projects would similarly require separate environmental review under CEQA, which may include consultation with Native American tribes pursuant to AB 52. Additionally, future light industrial developments would be required to comply with Mitigation Measures TCR-1 through TCR-5 to reduce potential adverse impacts to previously undiscovered tribal cultural resources on development sites. Therefore, future light industrial developments, in conjunction with cumulative projects developed in accordance with the General Plan, would result in less than significant cumulative impacts in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: Refer to Mitigation Measures TCR-1 through TCR-5.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.

5.5.6 SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

No significant unavoidable impacts related to tribal or cultural resources have been identified.



5.6 Geology and Soils



5.6 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

This section describes the geologic and seismic conditions within the City and evaluates the potential for geologic impacts associated with implementation of the proposed project. This section is partially based upon the *Lancaster East Side Project, Lancaster, Los Angeles County, California Cultural and Paleontological Resources Assessment*, prepared by Michael Baker International and dated July 2022; refer to [Appendix 11.3, *Cultural and Paleontological Resources Assessment/AB 52 Documentation*](#).

5.6.1 EXISTING SETTING

GEOTECHNICAL CONDITIONS

Regional Geology

The project area is located in the Antelope Valley, which is within the western Mojave Desert. The Mojave Desert is a wedge-shaped block bounded by the San Andreas Fault Zone on the southwest, the Garlock Fault Zone on the northwest, and the Colorado River on the east. Uplifts of the San Gabriel and Tehachapi Mountains isolated the Mojave Desert from the Pacific Coast and created the interior drainage basins of the western Mojave Desert, such as the Antelope Valley. The Antelope Valley is surrounded by the Tehachapi Mountain range in the north and northwest, and the San Gabriel, Sierra Pelona, and Liebre Mountains to the south and southwest. Geologically, the Antelope Valley is part of the Mojave structural block, which is an elevated desert. The topography of the City generally slopes up to the southwest, with elevations ranging from approximately 2,300 feet in the northeast to 3,500 feet in the southwest. The overall topography of the City is somewhat flat. Major topographic features include Quartz Hill located in the southern portion of the City, and the Fairmont and Antelope Buttes located outside of the City limits west of 110th Street West.

The geology of the region consists of three main rock groups: crystalline rocks of Pre-Tertiary age; volcanic and sedimentary rocks of Tertiary age; and alluvial sedimentary rocks of Quaternary age. The first of the two groups consist of older, hard, consolidated materials from the surrounding mountains and rocky buttes that rise from the valley floor. The Antelope Valley soils profile consists of up to 4,000 feet of alluvial fill underlain by consolidated rocks. The bottom of the rock formations, known as the basement, includes the oldest formation and consists of quartz, monzonite, granite, gneiss, schist and other igneous and metamorphic rocks. The rocks overlying the basement primarily consist of shale, sandstone, conglomerate, and siltstone.

Local Geology

The City lies within a seismically active area referred to as the Mojave Desert Geomorphic Province of Southern California and is located at the western edge of a moving plate in the earth's crust. Defining the boundary of this area is the San Andreas Fault, where the Pacific Plate and the North American Plate meet. The San Andreas Fault is located approximately seven miles south of Lancaster.



Similar to the regional geology, the City's geology consists of the same three main rock groups: crystalline rocks of Pre-Tertiary age; volcanic and sedimentary rocks of Tertiary age; and alluvial sedimentary deposits of Tertiary and Quaternary age. Some of these rock types include schists, quartz monzonite, and local volcanic formations. The third group comprises younger, unconsolidated alluvial (stream-deposited) materials formed in the wash areas of the lower foothills and stream beds that comprise much of the valley flow, in some locations to depths in excess of 2,000 feet. Consolidated rocks equivalent to Tertiary and older materials underlie this alluvium.

SOILS

Most of the Mojave Desert region is a high basin that includes remnants of older earth materials that occur as scattered buttes. The alluvial fans and terrace region in the western and southwestern parts of Antelope Valley is made up of deposited stream materials. The upland region consists of foothills, mountains, ridges, fault scarps, and associated valley floors of the nearby San Gabriel Mountains. Generally, the soils within the Lancaster area have resulted from the uplift of the San Gabriel Mountains and their subsequent erosion. The alluvial deposits found within the foothill region consist of coarse-grained sediment intermingled with organic matter with depositions of finer-grained silts and clays in areas further from the mountains.

The project area, as identified by the United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service Soil Survey, consists of the Hesperia-Rosamond-Cajon desert soil association.¹ This soil is characterized as stable and well drained and are most conducive for development. Specifically, these soils are very deep and are moderately well drained to excessively drained. They are formed in alluvium derived from granitic rock. Slopes range from 0 to 15 percent. These soils are characterized by good to fair topsoil, low water-holding capacity for irrigation, slow permeability, and low shrink-swell potential. Depth to bedrock is five feet or greater.

GROUNDWATER

The City is underlain by the Antelope Valley Groundwater Basin. The Antelope Valley Groundwater Basin stores subsurface water that is extracted by the wells of various agencies as a source of supply. Elevations across the valley floor range from 2,300 to 3,500 feet above mean sea level. Bounding the basin are the Garlock Fault Zone to the northwest at the base of the Tehachapi Mountains. The Antelope Valley Groundwater Basin consists of the West Antelope, Neenach, Buttes, Finger Buttes, Lancaster, Pearland, and North Muroc sub-basins (aquifers).

SEISMIC HAZARDS

Potential seismic hazards involve primary hazards (i.e., surface fault rupture and seismicity/ground shaking) and secondary hazards including liquefaction, seismically induced settlement, lateral spreading, seismically induced landslides, seismically induced flooding, seiches, and tsunamis. Refer to [Section 5.7, *Hydrology and Water Quality*](#), for an analysis concerning potential impacts involving flooding,

¹ United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, *Custom Soil Resource Report for Antelope Valley Area, California. Lancaster East Side Project (Overlay Zone)*, May 23, 2022.



seiches, and tsunamis. The primary and secondary seismic hazards with potential to impact the City are discussed below.

Faulting And Seismicity

There are no active fault zones within the City. The nearest active fault to Lancaster is the San Andreas Fault, located approximately seven miles to the south. Additional principal faults that could produce damaging earthquakes in the regional area are the Sierra Madre-San Fernando, Garlock, Sierra Nevada (Owens Valley), and White Wolf Faults.

Surface Fault Rupture

Surface fault rupture is the offset or rupturing of the ground surface by relative displacement across a fault during an earthquake. The City is not transected by known active or potentially active faults. As discussed above, the active San Andreas fault zone is located approximately seven miles to the south from Lancaster. Therefore, the potential for surface rupture is considered low. However, lurching or cracking of the ground surface as a result of nearby seismic events is possible.

Seismic Ground Shaking

Earthquake events from one of the regional active or potentially active faults near the City could result in strong ground shaking. The intensity of ground shaking at a given location depends on many factors, including the magnitude of the earthquake, distance from the earthquake epicenter, and underlying soil conditions. The type of construction also affects how particular structures and improvements perform during seismic ground shaking events. In general, the larger the magnitude of an earthquake and the closer a site is to the epicenter of the event, the greater the effects. However, soil conditions can also amplify earthquake shock waves. Generally, the shock waves remain unchanged in bedrock, are amplified to a degree in thick alluvium, and are greatly amplified in thin alluvium.

According to the California Department of Conservation, portions of the project site could be subjected to intense seismic shaking associated with a large earthquake along the San Andreas Fault.^{2,3} The expected peak horizontal ground accelerations are dependent on several factors: distance from an active fault (in this case, the San Andreas Fault), the maximum earthquake that can be expected on that fault, and the underlying soil conditions.

If a major earthquake were to occur, extensive damage could result, including the destruction of most unreinforced masonry and frame structures along with their foundations, as well as the destruction of some well-built wooden structures and bridges. Conspicuous ground cracking, bent rails, considerable landsliding from steep slopes, the shifting of mud and sand, and water splash could also be expected as the result of a major earthquake.

² California Geological Survey, *Seismic Hazard Zone Report for the Lancaster East 7.5-Minute Quadrangle, Los Angeles County, California*, 2005.

³ California Geological Survey, *Seismic Hazard Zone Report for the Lancaster West 7.5-Minute Quadrangle, Los Angeles County, California*, 2005.



Secondary Seismic Hazards

Liquefaction

Liquefaction is the phenomenon in which loosely deposited granular soils located below the water table undergo rapid loss of shear strength due to excess pore pressure generation when subjected to strong earthquake-induced ground shaking. Ground shaking of sufficient duration results in the loss of grain-to-grain contact due to a rapid rise in pore water pressure causing the soil to behave as a fluid for a short period of time.

The greatest danger from liquefaction occurs in areas where the groundwater table is within 30 feet of ground level, and the soil is poorly consolidated or relatively uncompacted. This condition is characterized by the sudden loss of shearing resistance due to ground shaking combined with an increase in pore water pressure. Subsequently, this often results in the collapse or displacement of building foundations. According to the General Plan MEA, the water table is lower than historic levels at approximately 60 feet from the surface. Therefore, in most areas of the City, the water table rarely comes within 30 feet of the surface.

According to the California Geological Survey and General Plan MEA, there is a potential liquefaction zone located along the length of Little Rock Wash (traversing north to south along 60th Street East), in the eastern portion of the City and within the project site; refer to the General Plan MEA Figure 2-6, *Study Area Seismic Hazards Map*.⁴

Landslides

Landslides, slope failures, and mudflows of earth materials generally occur where slopes are steep and/or the earth materials are too weak to support themselves. Earthquake-induced landslides may also occur due to seismic ground shaking. Based on the California Geological Survey and General Plan MEA Figure 2-6, *Study Area Seismic Hazards Map*, the overlay zone does not have the potential for earthquake induced landslides. Only the southwestern areas of the City directly below the northern slopes of Quartz Hill and the slopes of Portal Ridge have the potential for landslide hazards.⁵

Soil Erosion

Erosion is a process by which soil or earth material is loosened or dissolved and removed from its original location. Erosion can occur by varying processes and may occur on a project site where bare soil is exposed to wind or moving water (both rainfall and surface runoff). The processes of erosion are generally a function of material type, terrain steepness, rainfall or irrigation levels, surface drainage conditions, and general land uses. As discussed above, the City has relatively flat topography and thus, would have minimal potential for soil erosion. However, grading and development associated with

⁴ California Geological Survey, *Earthquake Zones of Required Investigation*, <https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/EQZApp/app/>, accessed August 6, 2022.

⁵ Ibid.



new development of vacant and underutilized sites within the City have the potential to result in soil erosion and loss of topsoil.

Subsidence

Subsidence is characterized as a sinking of the ground surface relative to surrounding areas and can generally occur where deep soil deposits are present. Subsidence in areas of deep soil deposits is typically associated with regional groundwater withdrawal or other fluid withdrawal from the ground such as oil and natural gas. Subsidence can result in the development of ground cracks and damage to subsurface vaults, pipelines, and other improvements.

According to the General Plan MEA, the only soil condition identified in the City that may present a hazard from subsidence is the potential for fissuring. Surface water may enter fissures and move laterally through the soils, eroding the underlying rock material and creating earth bridges that can easily collapse. The fissures and sinkholes within the City limits are located in the central portion of the City, approximately six miles to the west of the overlay zone; refer to General Plan MEA Figure 2-3, *Soil Stability Issues*.

Compressible/Collapsible Soils

Compressible soils are generally comprised of soils that undergo consolidation when exposed to new loading, such as fill or foundation loads. Soil collapse is a phenomenon where the soils undergo a significant decrease in volume upon increase in moisture content, with or without an increase in external loads. Buildings, structures, and transportation improvements may be subject to excessive settlement-related distress when compressible soils or collapsible soils are present. Areas that have a high potential for fissures are an example of areas with compressible soils.

As stated, and shown on General Plan MEA Figure 2-3, *Soil Stability Issues*, known areas of fissure occurrence are located generally in the central portion of the City, approximately six miles to the west of the overlay zone. Therefore, potentially compressible/collapsible soils are not present within the project area.

Expansive Soils

Soils within the City are primarily characterized by soils of low shrink-swell potential (i.e., expansion), which do not represent a problem for typical construction activities. However, as shown on General Plan MEA Figure 2-3, *Soil Stability Issues*, there is a small area in the eastern end of the City where the soils are classified as moderately expansive. Highly expansive soils can cause substantial damage to building foundations, highways and other surface structures. However, these effects can be minimized or eliminated (particularly in areas of moderate shrink-swell), provided that structures are engineered in accordance with existing building code requirements and given special design considerations.

WASTEWATER SYSTEMS

Wastewater generated within the City generally flows through small local sewer pipelines owned and maintained by the City, which connect to regional trunk sewer pipelines owned and maintained by the



County of Los Angeles Sanitation District (LACSD). The City's wastewater is then conveyed to LACSD's Lancaster Wastewater Reclamation Plant for treatment. As shown on Figure 1, *Wastewater Collection System Map*, of the *City of Lancaster Sewer System Management Plan Update* (SSMP), the project site is not connected to the City's wastewater system.⁶ Instead, wastewater generated by existing uses within the project site are collected and treated by underground, privately-owned septic tank systems.

PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

According to the *Cultural and Paleontological Resources Assessment for Lancaster Eastside Project, Lancaster, Los Angeles County, California* (Cultural and Paleo Report), prepared by Michael Baker International (Michael Baker) and dated July 2022, a fossil locality records search from the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County (NHMLAC) was conducted on June 19, 2022. The NHMLAC records search did not find any previously known localities within the project site. Twelve fossil localities from similar sedimentary deposits as those found within the project site occurred within 10 miles of the overlay zone. Two additional localities from similar sedimentary deposits to those observed in the project site occurred within 37 miles of the project site; refer to Cultural and Paleo Report Table 1, *Previously Recorded Paleontological Resources from NHMLAC Records Search*.

The proposed overlay zone contains gentle sloping alluvial sediments with finer soils that have developed over time, possibly burying any hard organic materials that were deposited there and preserving them as fossils. The mapped rock formations within the overlay zone consist of alluvium of Holocene to late Pleistocene age and eolian deposits of Holocene age. These sediments are typically too young to contain significant fossil deposits. Therefore, the project site has a low potential to disturb paleontological resources within undisturbed bedrock.

5.6.2 REGULATORY SETTING

FEDERAL LEVEL

Federal Clean Water Act

The primary goals of the Federal Clean Water Act (CWA) are to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters and to make all surface waters fishable and swimmable. The CWA forms the basic national framework for water quality management and control of pollution discharges; it provides the legal framework for several water quality regulations, including the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), effluent limitations, water quality standards, pretreatment standards, anti-degradation policy, nonpoint-source discharge programs, and wetlands protection. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has delegated the administrative responsibility for portions of the CWA to State and regional agencies. In California, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) administers the NPDES permitting program and is responsible for developing NPDES permitting requirements. The SWRCB works in coordination with

⁶ City of Lancaster, *City of Lancaster Sewer System Management Plan Update*, October 2019.



the Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCB) to preserve, protect, enhance, and restore water quality. The City lies within jurisdiction of the Lahontan RWQCB.

Under the NPDES permit program, the EPA establishes regulations for discharging stormwater by municipal and industrial facilities and construction activities. CWA Section 402 prohibits discharge of pollutants to “Waters of the United States” from any point source unless the discharge complies with an NPDES Permit.

Soil and Water Resources Conservation Act

The purpose of the Soil and Water Resources Conservation Act of 1977 is to protect or restore soil functions on a permanent sustainable basis. Protection and restoration activities include prevention of harmful soil changes, rehabilitation of the soil of contaminated sites and of water contaminated by such sites, and precautions against negative soil impacts. If the soil is impacted, disruptions of its natural functions and of its function as an archive of natural and cultural history should be avoided, as far as practicable. In addition, CWA requirements provide guidance for protection of geologic and soil resources through the NPDES permit.

Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act

The Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act of 1977 (Public Law 95-124) established the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program which is coordinated through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), the National Science Foundation, and the National Institute of Standards and Technology. The purpose of the program is to establish measures for earthquake hazards reduction and promote the adoption of earthquake hazards reduction measures by Federal, State, and local governments; national standards and model code organizations; architects and engineers; building owners; and others with a role in planning and constructing buildings, structures, and lifelines through (1) grants, contracts, cooperative agreements, and technical assistance; (2) development of standards, guidelines, and voluntary consensus codes for earthquake hazards reduction for buildings, structures, and lifelines; and (3) development and maintenance of a repository of information, including technical data, on seismic risk and hazards reduction. The program is intended to improve the understanding of earthquakes and their effects on communities, buildings, structures, and lifelines through interdisciplinary research that involves engineering, natural sciences, and social, economic, and decisions sciences.

U.S. Geological Survey Landslide Hazard Program

The USGS Landslide Hazard Program provides information on landslide hazards, including information on current landslides, landslide reporting, real time monitoring of landslide areas, mapping of landslides through the National Landslide Hazards Map, local landslide information, landslide education, and research.



STATE LEVEL

Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act

The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act (Act) (Public Resources Code 2621-2624, Division 2 Chapter 7.5) was passed in 1972 to mitigate the hazard of surface faulting to structures for human occupancy. The Act's main purpose is to prevent the construction of buildings used for human occupancy on the surface trace of active faults. The Act only addresses the hazard of surface fault rupture and is not directed toward other earthquake hazards. The Act requires the State Geologist to establish regulatory zones, known as "Earthquake Fault Zones," around the surface traces of active faults and to issue appropriate maps. Local agencies must regulate most development projects within these zones.

Seismic Hazards Mapping Act

The Seismic Hazards Mapping Act of 1990 directs the Department of Conservation, California Geological Survey to identify and map areas prone to liquefaction, earthquake-induced landslides, and amplified ground shaking. The purpose of the Seismic Hazards Mapping Act is to minimize loss of life and property through the identification, evaluation, and mitigation of seismic hazards.

Staff geologists in the Seismic Hazard Zonation Program gather existing geological, geophysical, and geotechnical data from numerous sources to produce the Seismic Hazard Zone Maps. They integrate and interpret these data regionally to evaluate the severity of the seismic hazards and designate as Zones of Required Investigation (ZORI) those areas prone to liquefaction and earthquake-induced landslides. Cities and counties are then required to use the Seismic Hazard Zone Maps in their land use planning and building permit processes.

The Seismic Hazards Mapping Act requires that site-specific geotechnical investigations be conducted within the ZORI to identify and evaluate seismic hazards (i.e., liquefaction and earthquake induced landslides) and formulate mitigation measures prior to permitting most developments designed for human occupancy.

California Building Standards Code

California building standards are published in the California Code of Regulations, Title 24, also known as the California Building Standards Code (CBSC). The CBSC, which applies to all applications for building permits, consists of 11 parts that contain administrative regulations for the California Building Standards Commission and for all State agencies that implement or enforce building standards. Local agencies must ensure development complies with the CBSC guidelines. Cities and counties can adopt additional building standards beyond the CBSC. Note, the 2022 CBSC was published July 1, 2022 with



an effective date of January 1, 2023. CBSC Part 2, named the California Building Code (CBC), is based upon the 2021 International Building Code.⁷

CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS TITLE 24 –PLUMBING CODE

California Code of Regulations Title 24, Part 5 refers to the 2019 edition of the California Plumbing Code (CPC), which contains plumbing design and construction standards for habitable structures. Provisions contained in the CPC provide minimum standards to safeguard life or limb, health, property, and public welfare. It also protects against hazards that may arise from the use of plumbing piping and systems by regulating and controlling the design, construction, installation, quality of materials, location and operation of plumbing piping systems within the State. In particular, Appendix H, *Private Sewage Disposal Systems*, provides design and system standards for private sewage systems, including septic systems.

Soils Investigation Requirements

California Health and Safety Code Sections 17953–17955 and in Section 1802 of the California Building Code identify requirements for soils investigations for subdivisions requiring tentative and final maps, and for other specified types of structures. Testing of samples from subsurface investigations is required, such as from borings or test pits. Studies must be done as needed to evaluate slope stability, soil strength, position and adequacy of load-bearing soils, the effect of moisture variation on load-bearing capacity, compressibility, liquefaction, differential settlement, and expansiveness.

California Public Resources Code

Paleontological resources are protected under a wide variety of Public Resources Code policies and regulations. In addition, paleontological resources are recognized as nonrenewable resources and receive protection under the Public Resources Code and CEQA. Public Resources Code Division 5, Chapter 1.7, Section 5097.5, and Division 20, Chapter 3, Section 30244 states:

No person shall knowingly and willfully excavate upon, or remove, destroy, injure or deface any historic or prehistoric ruins, burial grounds, archaeological or vertebrate paleontological site, including fossilized footprints, inscriptions made by human agency, or any other archaeological, paleontological or historical feature, situated on public lands, except with the express permission of the public agency having jurisdiction over such lands. Violation of this section is a misdemeanor.

This statute prohibits the removal, without permission, of any paleontological site or feature from lands under the jurisdiction of the State or any city, county, district, authority, or public corporation, or any agency thereof. As a result, local agencies are required to comply with Public Resources Code Section 5097.5 for their own activities, including construction and maintenance, as well as for permit actions (e.g., encroachment permits) undertaken by others. Public Resources Code Section 5097.5 also establishes the removal of paleontological resources as a misdemeanor and requires reasonable

⁷ California Department of General Services, Building Standards Commission, *California Building Standards Code*, <https://www.dgs.ca.gov/BSC/Codes>, accessed August 2, 2022.



mitigation of adverse impacts to paleontological resources from developments on public (State, county, city, and district) lands.

State Water Resources Control Board

CONSTRUCTION GENERAL PERMIT ORDER 2009-0009-DWQ

The SWRCB administers water rights, water pollution control, and water quality functions throughout the State, while the RWQCBs conduct planning, permitting, and enforcement activities. The NPDES permit is addressed in two parts: construction and post-construction (operations). Construction permitting would be administered by the SWRCB, while post-construction permitting would be administered by the RWQCB.

On November 16, 1990, the EPA published final regulations that established stormwater permit application requirements for specified categories of industries. The regulations provide that discharges of stormwater to waters of the United States from construction projects are effectively prohibited unless the discharge complies with an NPDES Permit. On August 19, 1999, the SWRCB reissued the General Construction Stormwater Permit (Water Quality Order 99-08-DWQ). On December 8, 1999, the SWRCB amended Order 99-08-DWQ to apply to sites as small as one acre.

Dischargers whose projects disturb one or more acres of soil or whose projects disturb less than one acre but are part of a larger common plan of development that in total disturbs one or more acres, are required to obtain coverage under Construction General Permit Order 2009-0009-DWQ (amends 2009-0009-DWQ as amended by 2010-0014-DWQ). Construction activity subject to this permit includes clearing, grading, and disturbances to the ground such as stockpiling, or excavation, but does not include regular maintenance activities performed to restore a facility's original line, grade, or capacity.

The Construction General Permit requires the development of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). Construction General Permit Section A describes the elements that must be contained in a SWPPP, which include a site map(s), a list of Best Management Practices (BMPs) the discharger would use to protect stormwater runoff, and the placement of those BMPs. Additionally, the SWPPP is required to contain a visual monitoring program; a chemical monitoring program for "non-visible" pollutants to be implemented if there is a failure of BMPs; and a sediment monitoring plan if the site discharges directly to a water body listed on the 303(d) list for sediment. A project applicant must submit a Notice of Intent (NOI) to the SWRCB, to be covered by the Construction General Permit, and prepare the SWPPP prior to construction. Implementation of the plan begins at commencement of construction and continues through project completion. Upon project completion, the applicant is required to submit a Notice of Termination (NOT) to the SWRCB to indicate that construction is completed.



LOCAL LEVEL

City of Lancaster General Plan 2030

PLAN FOR THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The Plan for the Natural Environment evaluates natural and human-induced environments within the General Plan study area and focuses on resources that are suitable for certain levels of maintenance and protection. The Plan identifies “Land Resources” as a focused resource, which includes geologic and paleontological resources within the City. The following objective and policies are relevant to the proposed project:

- Objective 3.5: Preserve land resources through the application of appropriate soils management techniques and the protection and enhancement of surrounding landforms and open space.
- Policy 3.5.1: Minimize erosion problems resulting from development activities.
- Policy 3.5.2: Since certain soils in the Lancaster study area have exhibited shrink-swell behavior and a potential for fissuring, and subsidence may exist in other areas, minimize the potential for damage resulting from the occurrence of soils movement.
- Policy 3.5.3: Protect lands currently in agricultural production from the negative impacts created when urban and rural land uses exist in close proximity, while recognizing the possibility of their long-term conversion to urban or rural uses.

PLAN FOR PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Plan for Public Health and Safety evaluates the natural and manmade conditions which may pose certain levels of health and safety hazards to life and property within the City, along with a comprehensive program to mitigate those hazards to acceptable levels. The Plan addresses issues regarding geology and seismicity for facilities and the general population. The following objective and policy are relevant to the proposed project:

- Objective 4.1: Minimize the potential for loss of life, physical injury, property damage, and social disruption resulting from seismic ground shaking and other geologic events.
- Policy 4.1.1: Manage potential seismic hazards resulting from fault rupture and strong ground motion to facilitate rapid physical and economic recovery following an earthquake through the identification and recognition of potentially hazardous conditions and implementation of effective standards for seismic design of structures.



- Policy 4.1.2: Require development within hillside areas and areas which potentially have soils or underlying formations that might produce severe building constraints to have engineering studies performed in order to determine appropriate structural design criteria and effective construction standards.

Lancaster Municipal Code

Municipal Code Section 8.16.030, *Disturbing Surface of Land or Causing Wind Erosion Prohibited*, prohibits persons from disturbing or causing the disturbance of surface or subsurface land by excavating, grading, leveling, cultivating, plowing, discing, removing any existing vegetation or by depositing or spreading a quantity of soil on said land, or by any other act likely to cause or contribute to dust emission or wind erosion of said land. The section also states that persons are prohibited from causing or aggravating an existing dust or wind erosion condition without providing sufficient protection so as to prevent the soil on said land from being eroded by wind, creating dust, or blowing into a public road or roads or other public or private property.

Chapter 15.08, *Building Code*, of the Municipal Code, is the presiding building code within the City for the purposes of regulating the erection, construction, enlargement, alteration, repair, moving, removal, demolition, conversion, occupancy, use, height, area maintenance of all structures and certain equipment therein and providing penalties for violation of such codes. The City's Building Code has adopted volumes 1 and 2 of the CBSC.

Municipal Code Section 16.24.210, *Use of septic tanks*, allows the use of on-site septic systems in nonurban residential areas as defined by the general plan only where there is no feasible method of providing sanitary sewers, and where the soil and groundwater conditions of the site are suitable for the use of such systems.

5.6.3 IMPACT THRESHOLDS AND SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines* contains the Environmental Checklist form that was used during the preparation of this EIR. Accordingly, a project may create a significant adverse environmental impact if it would:

- a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:
 - i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42 (refer to Section 8.0, *Effects Found Not To Be Significant*);
 - ii) Strong seismic ground shaking (refer to Impact Statement GEO-1);
 - iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction (refer to Impact Statement GEO-2);



- iv) Landslides (refer to Section 8.0, *Effects Found Not To Be Significant*);
- b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil (refer to Impact Statement GEO-3);
- c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse (refer to Impact Statement GEO-4);
- d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property (refer to Impact Statement GEO-4);
- e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater (refer to Impact Statement GEO-5); and
- f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature (refer to Impact Statement GEO-6).

Based on these standards/criteria, the effects of the proposed project have been categorized as either a “less than significant impact” or “potentially significant impact.” Mitigation measures are recommended for potentially significant impacts. If a potentially significant impact cannot be reduced to a less than significant level through the application of mitigation, it is categorized as a significant and unavoidable impact.

5.6.4 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

STRONG SEISMIC GROUND SHAKING

GEO-1 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION COULD EXPOSE PEOPLE AND STRUCTURES TO POTENTIAL SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE EFFECTS, INCLUDING THE RISK OF LOSS, INJURY, OR DEATH INVOLVING STRONG SEISMIC GROUND SHAKING.

Impact Analysis: Southern California is known to be earthquake prone, and the City would likely be subjected to some degree of seismic ground shaking during earthquake events. The proposed overlay zone would permit new light industrial uses such as alcohol production, contractor storage yard, and research and development in addition to the existing Rural Residential (RR-2.5) and Single Family Residential (R-7,000) permitted uses. Other new uses such as alternative energy uses; automobile repair; building trades and related uses; distribution; food manufacturing, processing, wholesale sales, and storage; light manufacturing; and warehousing would be subject to conditional use permits. All future development permitted by the overlay zone would be required to comply with existing regulatory requirements, including the Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act, Seismic Hazard Mapping Act, the CBSC, and Municipal Code Chapter 15.08, *Building Code*. Future projects implemented under the overlay zone would also require environmental review under CEQA. Thus,



project-specific analysis and mitigation measures would be implemented, as needed. Thus, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

LIQUEFACTION

GEO-2 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION COULD EXPOSE PEOPLE AND STRUCTURES TO SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE EFFECTS, INCLUDING THE RISK OF LOSS, INJURY, OR DEATH INVOLVING LIQUEFACTION.

Impact Analysis: As shown on General Plan MEA Figure 2-6, *Study Area Seismic Hazards Map*, there is an area of the overlay zone with liquefaction potential located along the length of Little Rock Wash (traversing north to south along 60th Street East) in the eastern portion of the City. Therefore, future development within the overlay zone in this area could occur in a potential liquefaction zone. As such, all future development projects, would be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA to evaluate project-specific impacts and identify any required mitigation measures. Additionally, future improvements would be required to comply with the CBSC and Municipal Code requirements related to building safety to reduce potential liquefaction impacts. Thus, the proposed overlay zone itself would not expose people or structures to adverse liquefaction hazards, and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

SOIL EROSION

GEO-3 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION COULD RESULT IN SUBSTANTIAL SOIL EROSION OR LOSS OF TOPSOIL.

Impact Analysis: As shown on [Exhibit 3-2](#), the overlay zone is located in the eastern portion of Lancaster, a remote area predominantly consisting of agriculture, undeveloped, and vacant lands. The proposed overlay zone would permit new light industrial uses such as alcohol production, contractor storage yard, and research and development in addition to the existing Rural Residential and Single Family Residential permitted uses. Other new uses such as alternative energy uses; automobile repair; building trades and related uses; distribution; food manufacturing, processing, wholesale sales, and storage; light manufacturing; and warehousing would be subject to conditional use permits. Construction of these permitted uses would likely require grading activities which would result in potential soil erosion or loss of topsoil.

Municipal Code Section 8.16.030 *Disturbing Surface of Land or Causing Wind Erosion Prohibited*, prohibits the disturbance of surface or subsurface land by excavating, grading, leveling cultivating, plowing,



discing, removing any existing vegetation or by depositing or spreading a quantity of soil on said land, or by any other act likely to cause or contribute to dust emission or wind erosion of said land. Municipal Code Section 8.16.030 also prohibits the aggravation of an existing dust or wind erosion condition without providing sufficient protection. Further, in compliance with the NPDES program, development projects involving one or more acres of site disturbance would be required to prepare and implement a SWPPP and associated BMPs in compliance with the Construction General Permit during grading and construction. Typical BMPs include erosion prevention mats or geofabrics, silt fencing, sandbags, plastic sheeting, temporary drainage devices, and positive surface drainage to allow surface runoff to flow away from site improvements or areas susceptible to erosion. Surface drainage design provisions and site maintenance practices would reduce potential soil erosion following site development. Adherence to the BMPs in the SWPPP would reduce, prevent, or minimize soil erosion from grading and construction activities.

As such, future development projects within the overlay zone would be required to comply with Section 8.16.030 *Disturbing Surface of Land or Causing Wind Erosion Prohibited*, of the Municipal Code, and the NPDES program requirements. Further, all future development projects would be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA to evaluate site-specific impacts and identify any required mitigation measures. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

UNSTABLE AND EXPANSIVE SOILS

GEO-4 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION COULD BE LOCATED ON UNSTABLE OR EXPANSIVE SOILS AND POTENTIALLY RESULT IN GEOLOGIC HAZARDS.

Impact Analysis: Future development within the overlay zone could be located on unstable or expansive soils that could result in landslides, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse. Refer to [Section 8.0](#) for a discussion concerning the project's potential impacts in regard to landslide impacts and to Impact Statement GEO-3 for analysis regarding the project's potential impacts with regards to liquefaction hazards.

Unstable Soils

Lateral Spreading. As shown on General Plan MEA Figure 2-6, *Study Area Seismic Hazards Map*, there is an area of the overlay zone located along the length of Little Rock Wash (traversing north to south along 60th Street East) in the eastern portion of the City that is susceptible to liquefaction hazard and thus, could be more susceptible to liquefaction-induced lateral spreading.

Subsidence. Fissures can lead to subsidence as surface water enters fissures and moves laterally through the soils to eventually erode the underlying rock material. According to the General Plan



MEA, the fissures and sinkholes within the City limits are located in the central portion of the City, approximately six miles to the west of the overlay zone.

Collapse. Similar to subsidence hazards, collapsible/compressible soils are also associated with potential fissure locations generally in the central portion of the City, approximately six miles to the west of the overlay zone.

Expansive Soils

As detailed above, most soils within the City have low shrink-swell potential (i.e., expansion), which do not represent a problem for typical construction activities. However, as shown on General Plan MEA Figure 2-3, *Soil Stability Issues*, there is a small area in the eastern end of the City where the soils are classified as moderately expansive.

Future development could occur in various areas of the overlay zone; refer to Exhibit 3-2. Thus, it is speculative to determine and analyze project impacts related to site-specific soil conditions at this programmatic level of analysis. All future development projects within the overlay zone, would be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA to evaluate site-specific impacts related to unstable soils and expansive soils and to identify any required mitigation measures. Additionally, future improvements would be required to comply with the CBSC and Municipal Code requirements related to building safety to reduce potential geologic hazards. Thus, the proposed overlay zone itself would not expose people or structures to adverse hazards, and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

ALTERNATIVE WASTEWATER SYSTEMS

GEO-5 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION COULD OCCUR ON SOILS INCAPABLE OF ADEQUATELY SUPPORTING THE USE OF SEPTIC TANKS OR ALTERNATIVE WASTEWATER DISPOSAL SYSTEMS WHERE SEWERS ARE NOT AVAILABLE FOR THE DISPOSAL OF WASTEWATER.

Impact Analysis: As previously stated, the overlay zone area is not connected to the City's sewer network and wastewater generated by existing uses in the project area is currently collected by private septic systems. Therefore, future development would be required to either connect to existing septic systems on-site or install new septic tanks. Since the overlay zone contains areas of potential liquefaction, unstable soils, or expansive soils, all future development projects would be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA to evaluate project-specific impacts and identify any required mitigation measures.

Furthermore, the use of septic tanks in the City is regulated by Municipal Code Section 16.24.210, *Use of septic tanks*, which allows the use of on-site septic systems in nonurban residential areas as defined



by the General Plan only where there is no feasible method of providing sanitary sewers, and where the soil and groundwater conditions of the site are suitable for the use of such systems. Additionally, the 2019 CPC contains plumbing design and construction standards related to septic tanks. The standards protect against hazards that may arise from the use of plumbing piping and systems by regulating and controlling the design, construction, installation, quality of materials, location and operation of plumbing piping systems within the State. Specifically, septic tank systems are required to meet design criteria, distance requirements, and capacity standards outlined in Appendix H, *Private Sewage Disposal System*, of the 2019 CPC. Additionally, new septic tank systems would also be required to meet design criteria and soil absorption capacities that are compatible with existing on-site soils. Upon compliance with existing State and local regulations, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

GEO-6 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION COULD DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY DESTROY A UNIQUE PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCE OR SITE OR UNIQUE GEOLOGIC FEATURE.

Impact Analysis: As stated above, though no known fossil localities have been previously recorded within the City boundaries, soils in the overlay zone consist of alluvium of Holocene to late Pleistocene age and eolian deposits of Holocene age. There is a low potential to disturb paleontological resources within undisturbed bedrock; however, these soils may overlay older Pleistocene-age alluvial soils at unknown depths, which have a moderate to high potential for paleontological sensitivity. Surface deposits consisting of younger Quaternary alluvial soils near the City (outside of City limits) have recovered faunal remains from small vertebrates. As such, the overlay zone has the potential to encounter paleontological resources.

Potential impacts to paleontological resources are based on site-specific soil conditions and project details (e.g., depth of excavation required). Thus, it is speculative to determine potential impacts to paleontological resources at this programmatic level of analysis. Nevertheless, future development projects would be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA to evaluate project- and site-specific impacts and to identify any required mitigation measures. Additionally, Mitigation Measure GEO-1 would require a Paleontological Resources Assessment be prepared at the discretion of the City and based on the type of project and whether ground disturbing activities are proposed. The Paleontological Resources Assessment would identify the paleontological sensitivity of the project site and any required mitigation to reduce impacts to paleontological resources. Additionally, Mitigation Measures GEO-2 through GEO-5 would be required to reduce impacts to paleontological resources during construction of future development projects requiring ground-disturbing activities in undisturbed bedrock at depths greater than four feet. As such, upon implementation of Mitigation Measures GEO-1 through GEO-5, future projects developed in accordance with the overlay zone would not directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological



resource or site or unique geologic feature, and impacts would be reduced to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures:

GEO-1 To ensure identification and preservation of paleontological resources within a project site, each future development within the overlay zone subject to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review (meaning, subject to discretionary action and non-exempt from CEQA) shall be screened by the City of Lancaster Community Development Department to determine whether a Paleontological Resources Assessment is required. Screening shall consider the type of project and whether ground disturbances are proposed. Ground disturbances include activities such as grading, excavation, trenching, boring, or demolition that extend below the current grade. If there will be no ground disturbance, then a Paleontological Resources Assessment shall not be required. If there will be ground disturbance, prior to issuance of any permits required to conduct ground disturbing activities, the City may require a Paleontological Resources Assessment be prepared by a qualified paleontologist, defined as a paleontologist who meets the Society of Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP) standards for a Principal Investigator or Project Paleontologist.

The Paleontological Resources Assessment shall include and take into account project-specific and local geologic mapping, geotechnical data, and paleontological records search. The Paleontological Resources Assessment shall adhere to and incorporate the performance standards and practices from the current SVP Standard procedures for the assessment and mitigation of adverse impacts to paleontological resources. The qualified paleontologist shall submit the Paleontological Resources Assessment to the City of Lancaster Community Development Department for review and approval before issuance of a grading permit.

GEO-2 For projects with ground-disturbing activities at depths greater than four feet, the Applicant shall retain a Society of Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP) qualified paleontologist to provide or supervise a paleontological sensitivity training to all personnel planned to be involved with earth-moving activities, prior to the beginning of ground-disturbing activities. The training session shall focus on how to identify paleontological localities such as fossils that may be encountered and the procedures to follow if identified.

GEO-3 Prior to grading or excavation in sedimentary rock material other than topsoil, the Applicant shall retain a Society of Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP) qualified paleontologist to monitor these activities at depths of four feet below present grade or greater. In the event that fossils are discovered during grading at any depth, the on-site construction supervisor shall be notified and shall redirect work away from the location of the discovery. The recommendations of the paleontologist shall be implemented with respect to the evaluation and recovery of fossils, after which the on-site construction supervisor shall be notified and shall direct work to continue in the location of the fossil discovery.



- GEO-4 If discovered fossils are determined to be significant, the Society of Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP) qualified paleontologist shall prepare and implement a data recovery plan. The plan shall include, but not be limited to, the following measures:
- The paleontologist shall ensure that all significant fossils collected are cleaned, identified, catalogued, and permanently curated with an appropriate institution with a research interest in the materials (which may include the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County);
 - The paleontologist shall ensure that specialty studies are completed, as appropriate, for any significant fossil collected; and
 - The paleontologist shall ensure that curation of fossils is completed in consultation with the City of Lancaster Community Development Department. A letter of acceptance from the curation institution shall be submitted to the City of Lancaster Community Development Department.
- GEO-5 If any paleontological resources are encountered during construction or the course of any ground-disturbance activities, all such activities shall halt immediately. At this time, the Applicant shall notify the City of Lancaster Community Development Department and consult with a qualified paleontologist to assess the significance of the find. The assessment shall follow Society of Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP) standards as delineated in the *Standard Procedures for the Assessment and Mitigation of Adverse Impacts to Paleontological Resources* (2010). If any find is determined to be significant, appropriate avoidance measures recommended by the paleontologist and approved by City staff must be followed unless avoidance is determined to be infeasible by the City of Lancaster Community Development Department. If avoidance is infeasible, other appropriate measures (e.g., data recovery, excavation) shall be instituted.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.

5.6.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

CEQA Guidelines Section 15355 requires an analysis of cumulative impacts, which are defined as, “two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable, or which compound or increase other environmental impacts.” The cumulative analysis below considers the proposed project’s impacts in conjunction with future buildout of the General Plan; refer to Table 4-1, *General Plan 2030 – GPCAC Preferred Land Use Plan Alternative Buildout*.

- **THE PROPOSED PROJECT, IN CONJUNCTION WITH CUMULATIVE DEVELOPMENT, COULD EXPOSE PEOPLE OR STRUCTURES TO POTENTIAL SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE EFFECTS INVOLVING GEOLOGY AND SOILS AND COULD IMPACT UNKNOWN PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES.**

Impact Analysis: Future cumulative projects developed in accordance with the General Plan would be required to undergo project-specific environmental review under CEQA and the City’s



discretionary review process to determine potential effects involving geology and soils and impacts to paleontological resources. Additionally, similar to future development projects within the overlay zone, cumulative projects would be required to comply with existing local, State, and Federal regulations regarding geologic hazards. For example, future developments would be required to comply with the CBSC, NPDES program requirements, the 2019 CPC, and Municipal Code Chapter 15.08, *Building Code*, Section 8.16.030 *Disturbing Surface of Land or Causing Wind Erosion Prohibited*, and Section 16.24.210, *Use of septic tanks*.

As concluded above, geologic/seismic hazards and paleontological impacts associated with the overlay zone would be less than significant upon implementation of regulatory requirements and Mitigation Measures GEO-1 through GEO-5. Further, all future development projects within the overlay zone would be required to undergo separate project- and site-specific environmental review. Thus, cumulative impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: Refer to Mitigation Measures GEO-1 through GEO-5.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.

5.6.6 SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

No significant unavoidable impacts related to geology and soils have been identified.



5.7 Hydrology and Water Quality



5.7 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

This section identifies regional and local hydrology conditions and relevant federal, State, and local policies and regulations. Potential project impacts related to hydrology and water quality are analyzed herein.

5.7.1 EXISTING SETTING

HYDROLOGY AND DRAINAGE

Groundwater

The Antelope Valley Groundwater Basin (Basin) is located in the southwestern portion of the Mojave Desert. The Basin straddles the Los Angeles County-Kern County line, encompassing approximately 1,220 square miles within Los Angeles County, 2,006 square miles in Kern County, and 143 square miles in San Bernardino County.¹ It is considered a closed topographic basin with no outlet to the ocean, which restricts the removal of runoff to percolation or evaporation. The Basin is primarily recharged through infiltration of precipitation and runoff from the surrounding mountains and hills in ephemeral stream channels. Other sources of recharge to the Basin include artificial recharge and return flows from agricultural and urban irrigation. Depending on the thickness and characteristics of the unsaturated zone of the aquifer below a particular site, these sources may or may not contribute to recharge of the Basin.²

In general, groundwater in the Basin flows northeasterly from several major mountain range canyons, then spreads out and flows across the alluvial fans, eventually reaching the dry lakebeds, including Rogers Lake, Rosamond Lake, and Buckhorn Lake, all located northeast of the City. Storm flows in the undeveloped portions of the City are generally channeled through wide, north-south swales until intercepted by flood control structures or natural creek beds. Natural tributaries within the City include Amargosa Creek and Little Rock Creek. The total storage capacity of the Basin has been reported to be approximately 68,000,000 to 70,000,000 acre-feet.³ For the part of the Basin between 20 and 220 feet in depth, the storage capacity has been reported to be approximately 5,400,000 acre-feet.

¹ Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, *Antelope Valley Watershed*, <https://dpw.lacounty.gov/wmd/watershed/av/>, accessed June 6, 2022.

² Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, *Antelope Valley Integrated Regional Water Management Plan, 2019 Update*, <https://pw.lacounty.gov/wwd/avirwmp/docs/finalplan/2019%20Final%20AV%20IRWMP.pdf>, accessed June 6, 2022.

³ California Department of Water Resources, *California's Groundwater, Bulletin 118, South Labontan Hydrologic region, Antelope Valley Groundwater Basin*, February 27, 2004, https://water.ca.gov/-/media/DWR-Website/Web-Pages/Programs/Groundwater-Management/Bulletin-118/Files/2003-Basin-Descriptions/6_044_AntelopeValley.pdf, accessed June 6, 2022.



Surface Water

Surface watersheds in California are divided into ten hydrologic regions, as defined by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR). The City is located within the South Lahontan Hydrologic Region and is subject to the objectives and limits of the *Water Quality Control Plan for the Lahontan Region* (Basin Plan) under the jurisdiction of the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board (Lahontan RWQCB). Hydrologic Regions are subdivided into Hydrologic Units (HUs), and further into Hydrologic Areas (HAs). The City is in the Antelope HU and specifically within the Lancaster HA. Notable named streams in the watershed include Amargosa Creek, Big Rock Creek, and Little Rock Creek which begin as well-defined channels in the San Gabriel Mountains and become broad, ephemeral washes as they flow northeast onto the valley floor towards Rosamond Dry Lake. Oak Creek and Cottonwood Creek begin in the Tehachapi Mountains and flow southeast towards the center of the watershed.

Drainage Facilities

The *City of Lancaster Master Plan of Drainage Update* (Master Plan of Drainage) includes a map showing existing local and regional flood control facilities in Lancaster, including channels, storm drains, and retention basins.⁴ As of 2019, the project site does not have any existing storm drains.⁵ According to the Proposed Master Plan Facilities Map in the Master Plan of Drainage, the City proposes several storm drains in the project site, including a regional storm drain and storm drains, sized for 50-year and 25-year storm events, respectively, in the northwestern portion of the project site; and several regional storm drains, sized for a 50-year year storm event, in the southwestern portion of the project site.⁶

As discussed in the Master Plan of Drainage, the portion of the project site from 55th Street East to the eastern boundary of the project site (and City limits) are located in designated natural floodplain management areas where existing flood management infrastructure is limited. In this area, storm water flow is characterized by alluvial fan flow, or incised riverine conveyances prone to scour, erosion, and/or lateral migration. Development in these areas will typically not have an ability to discharge to an engineered flood control facility, and floodplain management measures are required.⁷

⁴ Stantec Consulting Inc., *City of Lancaster Master Plan of Drainage Update, Appendix C, Existing Hydrology Map*, March 20, 2019, <https://www.cityoflancasterca.org/home/showpublisheddocument/42836/637485843453730000>, accessed June 6, 2022.

⁵ Stantec Consulting Inc., *City of Lancaster Master Plan of Drainage Update, Appendix C, Existing Hydrology Map*, March 20, 2019, <https://www.cityoflancasterca.org/home/showpublisheddocument/42836/637485843453730000>, accessed June 6, 2022.

⁶ Stantec Consulting Inc., *City of Lancaster Master Plan of Drainage Update, Appendix B, Proposed Facilities Map*, December 01, 2020, <https://www.cityoflancasterca.org/home/showpublisheddocument/42834/637485843440470000>, accessed June 15, 2022.

⁷ Stantec Consulting Inc., *City of Lancaster Master Plan of Drainage Update*, December 3, 2020, <https://www.cityoflancasterca.org/home/showpublisheddocument/42855/637492592202330000>, accessed June 15, 2022.



Flooding

Based on the General Plan, the City and surrounding area's population reside in low lying areas adjacent to significant mountain ranges with uncontrolled runoff, including the San Gabriel and Sierra Pelona Mountains to the south. As such, residents in these areas are subject to periodic flooding during and immediately after periods of heavy rain fall. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) for Los Angeles County, California (Map Numbers 06037C0150F, 06037C0400F, 06037C0175F, 06037C0405F, 06037C0415F, 06037C0410F, 06037C0420F, 06037C0450F, 06037C0442F, 06037C0475F, 06037C0465F, and 06037C0462F, dated September 26, 2008) show that the majority of the City is located within areas of 0.2-percent annual chance of flood hazard.⁸ A portion of the proposed overlay zone in the southwest corner is located within an area of 0.2-percent annual chance of flood hazard. A portion of the proposed overlay zone, surrounding the Little Rock Wash, is located within areas of one percent annual chance flood. As discussed above, the portion of the project site from 55th Street East to the eastern boundary of the project site (and City limits) are located in designated natural floodplain management areas where existing flood management infrastructure is limited.

STORMWATER QUALITY

Point Source Pollutants

Historically, point source pollutants have consisted of industrial operations with discrete discharges to receiving waters. Over the past several decades, many industrial operations have been identified as potential sources of pollutant discharges. For this reason, many types of industrial operations require coverage under the State of California's General Industrial Permit. This permit regulates the operation of industrial facilities and monitors and reports mechanisms to ensure compliance with water quality objectives. State regulations require industrial operations to comply with California's General Industrial Permit, which significantly lessens impacts on the quality of receiving waters. However, industrial operations that are not covered under the General Industrial Permit's jurisdiction may still have the potential to affect the water quality of receiving waters. These industrial operations would be considered nonpoint source pollutants.

Nonpoint Source Pollutants

A net effect of urbanization can be to increase pollutant export over naturally occurring conditions. The impact of the higher export affects the adjacent streams and the downstream receiving waters. However, an important consideration in evaluating stormwater quality is to assess whether the beneficial use to the receiving waters is impaired. Nonpoint source pollutants are characterized by the following major categories to assist in determining the pertinent data and its use. Receiving waters can assimilate a limited quantity of various constituent elements; however, there are thresholds beyond

⁸ County of Los Angeles, *Comprehensive Floodplain Management Plan, Appendix F, FEMA Flood Zone Maps*, February 24, 2020, <https://pw.lacounty.gov/wmd/NFIP/FMP/documents/Comprehensive%20Floodplain%20Management%20Plan.pdf>, accessed June 15, 2022.



which the measured amount becomes a pollutant and results in an undesirable impact. Standard water quality categories of typical urbanization impacts are:

- *Sediment.* Sediment is made up of tiny soil particles that are washed or blown into surface waters. It is the major pollutant by volume in surface water. Suspended soil particles can cause the water to look cloudy or turbid. The fine sediment particles also act as a vehicle to transport other pollutants, including nutrients, trace metals, and hydrocarbons. Construction sites are the largest source of sediment for urban areas under development. Another major source of sediment is streambank erosion, which may be accelerated by increases in peak rates and volumes of run-off due to urbanization.
- *Nutrients.* Nutrients are a major concern for surface water quality, especially phosphorous and nitrogen, which can cause algal blooms and excessive vegetative growth. Of the two, phosphorus is usually the limiting nutrient that controls the growth of algae in lakes. The orthophosphorous form of phosphorus is readily available for plant growth. The ammonium form of nitrogen can also have severe effects on surface water quality. The ammonium is converted to nitrate and nitrite forms of nitrogen in a process called nitrification. This process consumes significant amounts of oxygen, which can impair the dissolved oxygen levels in water. The nitrate form of nitrogen is very soluble and is found naturally at low levels in water. When nitrogen fertilizer is applied to lawns or other areas more than needed by the plant, nitrates can leach below the root zone, eventually reaching groundwater. Orthophosphate from auto emissions also contributes phosphorus in areas with heavy automobile traffic. Generally, nutrient export is greatest from development sites with the most impervious areas. Other problems resulting from excess nutrients are: 1) surface algal scums; 2) water discolorations; 3) odors; 4) toxic releases; and 5) overgrowth of plants. Common measures for nutrients are total nitrogen, organic nitrogen, total Kjeldahl nitrogen (TKN), nitrate, ammonia, total phosphate, and total organic carbon (TOC).
- *Trace Metals.* Trace metals are primarily a concern because of their toxic effects on aquatic life, and their potential to contaminate drinking water supplies. The most common trace metals found in urban run-off are lead, zinc, and copper. Fallout from automobile emissions is also a major source of lead in urban areas. A large fraction of the trace metals in urban runoff are attached to sediment; this effectively reduces the level, which is immediately available for biological uptake and subsequent bioaccumulation. Metals associated with sediment settle out rapidly and accumulate in the soils. Urban runoff events typically occur over a shorter duration, reducing the amount of exposure, which could be toxic to the aquatic environment. The toxicity of trace metals in runoff varies with the hardness of the receiving water. As total hardness of the water increases, the threshold concentration levels for adverse effects increases.
- *Bacteria.* Bacteria levels in undiluted urban runoff exceed public health standards for water contact recreation almost without exception. Studies have found that total coliform counts exceeded the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) water quality criteria at almost every site and almost every time it rained. The coliform bacteria that are detected may not be a health risk by themselves but are often associated with human pathogens.



- *Oil and Grease.* Oil and grease are characterized as high-molecular weight organic compounds. Elevated oil and grease content can decrease the aesthetic value of the water body, as well as the water quality. Introduction of these pollutants to water bodies may occur due to the wide uses and applications of some of these products in municipal, residential, commercial, industrial, and construction areas. Primary sources of oil and grease are petroleum hydrocarbon products, motor products from leaking vehicles, esters, oils, fats, waxes, and high molecular-weight fatty acids.
- *Other Toxic Chemicals.* Priority pollutants are generally related to hazardous wastes or toxic chemicals and can be sometimes detected in stormwater. Priority pollutant scans have been conducted in previous studies of urban run-off, which evaluated the presence of over 120 toxic chemicals and compounds. The scans rarely revealed toxins that exceeded the current safety criteria. The urban run-off scans were primarily conducted in suburban areas not expected to have many sources of toxic pollutants (possibly except for illegally disposed or applied household hazardous wastes). Measures of priority pollutants in stormwater include: 1) phthalate (plasticizer compound); 2) phenols and creosols (wood preservatives); 3) pesticides and herbicides; 4) oils and greases; and 5) metals.

Physical Characteristics of Surface Water Quality

Standard parameters, which can assess stormwater quality, provide a method of measuring impairment. A background of these typical characteristics assists in understanding water quality requirements. The quantity of a material in the environment and its characteristics determine the degree of availability as a pollutant in surface run-off. In an urban environment, the quantity of certain pollutants in the environment is a function of the intensity of the land use. For instance, high automobile traffic volumes cause various potential pollutants (such as lead and hydrocarbons) to be more prevalent. The availability of a material, such as a fertilizer, is a function of the quantity and the way in which it is applied. Applying fertilizer in quantities that exceed plant needs leaves the excess nutrients available for loss to surface or groundwater.

The physical properties and chemical constituents of water traditionally have served as the primary means for monitoring and evaluating water quality. Evaluating the condition of water through a water quality standard refers to its physical, chemical, or biological characteristics. There are many types and classifications of water quality parameters for stormwater. Typically, the concentration of an urban pollutant, rather than the annual load of that pollutant, is required to assess a water quality problem. Some of the physical, chemical, or biological characteristics that evaluate the quality of surface runoff are listed below.

- *Dissolved Oxygen.* Dissolved oxygen (DO) in the water has a pronounced effect on the aquatic organisms and the chemical reactions that occur. It is one of the most important biological water quality characteristics in the aquatic environment. The DO concentration of a water body is determined by the solubility of oxygen, which is inversely related to water temperature, pressure, and biological activity. DO is a transient property that can fluctuate rapidly in time and space and represents the status of the water system at a point and time of sampling. The decomposition of organic debris in water is a slow process, as are the resulting changes in



oxygen status. The oxygen demand is an indication of the pollutant load and includes measurements of biochemical oxygen demand or chemical oxygen demand.

- *Biochemical Oxygen Demand.* The biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) is an index of the oxygen-demanding properties of the biodegradable material in the water. Samples are taken from the field and incubated in the laboratory at 20°C, after which the residual dissolved oxygen is measured. The BOD value commonly referenced is the standard five-day values. These values are useful in assessing stream pollution loads and for comparison purposes.
- *Chemical Oxygen Demand.* The chemical oxygen demand (COD) is a measure of the pollutant loading in terms of complete chemical oxidation using strong oxidizing agents. It can be determined quickly because it does not rely on bacteriological actions as with BOD. COD does not necessarily provide a good index of oxygen demanding properties in natural waters.
- *Total Dissolved Solids.* Total dissolved solids (TDS) concentration is determined by evaporation of a filtered sample to obtain residue whose weight is divided by the sample volume. The TDS of natural waters varies widely. There are several reasons why TDS is an important indicator of water quality. Dissolved solids affect the ionic bonding strength related to other pollutants such as metals in the water. TDS are also a major determinant of aquatic habitat. TDS affects saturation concentration of dissolved oxygen and influences the ability of a water body to assimilate wastes. Eutrophication rates depend on TDS.
- *pH.* The pH of water is the negative log, base 10, of the hydrogen ion (H^+) activity. A pH of 7 is neutral; a pH greater than 7 indicates alkaline water; a pH less than 7 represents acidic water. In natural water, carbon dioxide reactions are some of the most important in establishing pH. The pH at any one time is an indication of the balance of chemical equilibrium in water and affects the availability of certain chemicals or nutrients in water for uptake by plants. The pH of water directly affects fish and other aquatic life; generally, toxic limits are pH values less than 4.8 and greater than 9.2.
- *Alkalinity.* Alkalinity is the opposite of acidity, representing the capacity of water to neutralize acid. Alkalinity is also linked to pH and is caused by the presence of carbonate, bicarbonate, and hydroxide, which are formed when carbon dioxide is dissolved. A high alkalinity is associated with a high pH and excessive solids. Most streams have alkalinities less than 200 milligrams per liter (mg/l). Ranges of alkalinity of 100-200 mg/l seem to support well-diversified aquatic life.
- *Specific Conductance.* The specific conductivity of water, or its ability to conduct an electric current, is related to the total dissolved ionic solids. Long-term monitoring of project waters can develop a relationship between specific conductivity and TDS. Its measurement is quick and inexpensive and can be used to approximate TDS. Specific conductivities more than 2,000 microohms per centimeter ($\mu\text{ohms/cm}$) indicate a TDS level too high for most freshwater fish.



- Turbidity. The clarity of water is an important indicator of water quality that relates to the alkalinity of photosynthetic light to penetrate. Turbidity is an indicator of the property of water that causes light to become scattered or absorbed. Turbidity is caused by suspended clays and other organic particles. It can be used as an indicator of certain water quality constituents, such as predicting sediment concentrations.
- Nitrogen. Sources of nitrogen in stormwater are from the additions of organic matter to water bodies or chemical additions. Ammonia and nitrate are important nutrients for the growth of algae and other plants. Excessive nitrogen can lead to eutrophication since nitrification consumes dissolved oxygen in the water. Nitrogen occurs in many forms. Organic nitrogen breaks down into ammonia, which eventually becomes oxidized to nitrate-nitrogen, a form available for plants. High concentrations of nitrate-nitrogen (N/N) in water can stimulate growth of algae and other aquatic plants, but if phosphorus is present, only about 0.30 mg/l of nitrate-nitrogen is needed for algal blooms. Some fish life can be affected when nitrate-nitrogen exceeds 4.2 mg/l. There are several ways to measure the various forms of aquatic nitrogen. Typical measurements of nitrogen include Kjeldahl nitrogen (organic nitrogen plus ammonia), ammonia, nitrite plus nitrate, nitrite, and nitrogen in plants. The principal water quality criterion for nitrogen focuses on nitrate and ammonia.
- Phosphorus. Phosphorus is an important component of organic matter. In many water bodies, phosphorus is the limiting nutrient that prevents additional biological activity from occurring. The origin of this constituent in urban stormwater discharge is generally from fertilizers and other industrial products. Orthophosphate is soluble and considered the only biologically available form of phosphorus. Since phosphorus strongly associates with solid particles and is a significant part of organic material, sediments influence concentration in water and are an important component of the phosphorus cycle in streams. Important methods of measurement include detecting orthophosphate and total phosphorus.

Existing Regional Water Quality Conditions

The City is under the jurisdiction of the Lahontan RWQCB. The Lahontan RWQCB is responsible for establishing water quality standards and objectives that protect the beneficial uses of various waters in their region. The Lahontan RWQCB is also responsible for protecting surface and groundwaters from both point and non-point sources of pollution. Water quality standards and control measures for surface and ground waters of the Lahontan Region are contained in the Basin Plan. The Basin Plan designates beneficial uses for surface water and groundwater and establishes water quality objectives, waste discharge prohibitions, and other implementation measures to protect those beneficial uses. A total of 23 beneficial uses and their definitions were developed and recommended for use in the Basin Plans and 12 beneficial use designations have been added since adoption of the 1975 Basin Plans. the following of which are applicable to the discussion below:

- AGR – Agricultural Supply. Beneficial uses of waters used for farming, horticulture, or ranching, including, but not limited to, irrigation, stock watering, and support of vegetation for range grazing;



- AQUA – Aquaculture. Beneficial uses of waters used for aquaculture or mariculture operations including, but not limited to, propagation, cultivation, maintenance, and harvesting of aquatic plants and animals for human consumption or bait purposes;
- BIOL – Preservation of Biological Habitats of Special Significance. Beneficial uses of waters that support designated areas or habitats, such as established refuges, parks, sanctuaries, ecological reserves, and Areas of Special Biological Significance, where the preservation and enhancement of natural resources requires special protection;
- COLD – Cold Freshwater Habitat. Beneficial uses of waters that support cold water ecosystems including, but not limited to, preservation and enhancement of aquatic habitats, vegetation, fish, and wildlife, including invertebrates;
- COMM – Commercial and Sportfishing. Beneficial uses of waters used for commercial or recreational collection of fish or other organisms including, but not limited to, uses involving organisms intended for human consumption;
- FLD – Flood Peak Attenuation/Flood Water Storage. Beneficial uses of riparian wetlands in floodplain areas and other wetlands that receive natural surface drainage and buffer its passage to receiving waters;
- FRSH – Freshwater Replenishment. Beneficial uses of waters used for natural or artificial maintenance of surface water quantity or quality [e.g., salinity];
- GWR – Ground Water Recharge. Beneficial uses of waters used for natural or artificial recharge of groundwater for purposes of future extraction, maintenance of water quality, or halting of saltwater intrusion into freshwater aquifers;
- IND – Industrial Service Supply. Beneficial uses of waters used for industrial activities that do not depend primarily on water quality including, but not limited to, mining, cooling water supply, geothermal energy production, hydraulic conveyance, gravel washing, fire protection, and oil well repressurization;
- MUN – Municipal and Domestic Supply. Beneficial uses of waters used for community, military, or individual water supply systems including, but not limited to, drinking water supply;
- RARE – Rare, Threatened, or Endangered Species. Beneficial uses of waters that support habitat necessary for the survival and successful maintenance of plant or animal species established under State and/or Federal law as rare, threatened or endangered;
- REC-1 – Water Contact Recreation. Beneficial uses of waters used for recreational activities involving body contact with water where ingestion of water is reasonably possible. These uses include, but are not limited to, swimming, wading, water-skiing, skin and scuba diving, surfing, white water activities, fishing, and use of natural hot springs;



- REC-2 – Noncontact Water Recreation. Beneficial uses of waters used for recreational activities involving proximity to water, but not normally involving body contact with water where ingestion of water is reasonably possible. These uses include, but are not limited to, picnicking, sunbathing, hiking, beach-combing, camping, boating, tidepool and marine life study, hunting, sightseeing, and aesthetic enjoyment in conjunction with the above activities;
- SAL – Inland Saline Water Habitat. Beneficial uses of waters that support inland saline water ecosystems including, but not limited to, preservation and enhancement of aquatic saline habitats, vegetation, fish, and wildlife, including invertebrates;
- WARM – Warm Freshwater Habitat. Beneficial uses of waters that support warm water ecosystems including, but not limited to, preservation and enhancement of aquatic habitats, vegetation, fish, and wildlife, including invertebrates;
- WILD – Wildlife Habitat. Beneficial uses of waters that support wildlife habitats including, but not limited to, the preservation and enhancement of vegetation and prey species used by wildlife, such as waterfowl; and
- WQE – Water Quality Enhancement. Beneficial uses of waters that support natural enhancement or improvement of water quality in or downstream of a water body including, but not limited to, erosion control, filtration and purification of naturally occurring water pollutants, streambank stabilization, maintenance of channel integrity, and siltation control.

The Basin Plan identifies the following beneficial uses for the Basin:⁹

- MUN, AGR, IND, FRSH, AQUA, WILD

Further, the Basin Plan identifies the following beneficial uses for the subunit drainage features (watersheds/sub-watershed) within the Lancaster Hydrologic Area:¹⁰

- Amargosa Creek (above discharge from Lancaster Water Reclamation Plant [Lancaster WRP])
 - MUN, AGR, GWR, FRSH, REC-1, REC-2, COMM, WARM, COLD, WILD
- Amargosa Creek (below discharge from Lancaster WRP)
 - AGR, GWR, FRSH, REC-2, WARM, WILD
- Piute Ponds
 - AGR, GWR, FRSH, REC-2, WARM, WILD, BIOL, RARE
- Piute Ponds (wetlands)
 - AGR, GWR, FRSH, REC-2, WARM, WILD, BIOL, RARE, WQE, FLD

⁹ State of California Regional Water Quality Control Board Lahontan Region, *Water Quality Control Plan for the Lahontan Region, North and South Basins*, Table 2-2, Beneficial Uses for Ground Waters of the Lahontan Region, effective March 31, 1995, including amendments effective August 1995 through September 22, 2021.

¹⁰ State of California Regional Water Quality Control Board Lahontan Region, *Water Quality Control Plan for the Lahontan Region, North and South Basins*, Table 2-1, Beneficial Uses of Surface Waters of the Lahontan Region, effective March 31, 1995, including amendments effective August 1995 through September 22, 2021.



- Rosamond Dry Lake
 - GWR, REC-2, WARM, SAL, WILD
- Minor Surface Waters
 - MUN, AGR, GWR, REC-1, REC-2, COMM, WARM, COLD, WILD
- Minor Wetlands
 - MUN, AGR, GWR, FRSH, REC-1, REC-2, WARM, WILD, WQE, FLD

The State and RWQCBs assess water quality data for California’s waters every two years to determine if they contain pollutants at levels that exceed protective water quality criteria and standards. This biennial assessment is required under Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 303(d). Once a water body has been listed as “impaired”, a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for the constituent of concern (pollutant) must be developed for that water body. According to the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), no waterbody within the Lancaster hydrologic area is identified as 303(d) listed.¹¹ As such, no TMDLs have been established.

5.7.2 REGULATORY SETTING

FEDERAL LEVEL

Clean Water Act

The principal law governing pollution of the nation’s surface waters is the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act [CWA]). Originally enacted in 1948, it was amended in 1972 and has remained substantially the same since. The CWA consists of two major parts: provisions that authorize Federal financial assistance for municipal sewage treatment plant construction and regulatory requirements that apply to industrial and municipal dischargers. The CWA authorizes the establishment of effluent standards on an industry basis. The CWA also requires States to adopt water quality standards that “consist of the designated uses of the navigable waters involved and the water quality criteria for such waters based upon such uses.”

The CWA forms the basic national framework for the management of water quality and the control of pollution discharges; it provides the legal framework for several water quality regulations, including the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), effluent limitations, water quality standards, pretreatment standards, antidegradation policy, nonpoint source discharge programs, and wetlands protection. The U.S. EPA has delegated the responsibility for administration of portions of the CWA to State and regional agencies.

¹¹ State Water Resources Control Board, *Impaired Water Bodies, 2018 Integrated Report, Appendix A: 2018 303(d) List of Impaired Waters*, https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/water_quality_assessment/2018_integrated_report.html, accessed June 15, 2022.



Section 303(d) List of Impaired Water Bodies

CWA Section 303(d) and California’s Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (described below) require that the State establish the beneficial uses of its State waters and to adopt water quality standards to protect those beneficial uses. Section 303(d) establishes a TMDL, which is the maximum quantity of a contaminant that a water body can maintain without experiencing adverse effects, to guide the application of State water quality standards. Section 303(d) also requires the State to identify “impaired” streams (water bodies affected by the presence of pollutants or contaminants) and to establish the TMDL for each stream.

National Pollution Discharge Elimination System

To achieve its objectives, the CWA is based on the concept that all discharges into the nation’s waters are unlawful, unless specifically authorized by a permit. The NPDES is the permitting program for discharge of pollutants into surface waters of the United States under CWA Section 402. Thus, industrial and municipal dischargers (point source discharges) must obtain NPDES permits from the appropriate RWQCB. The existing NPDES (Phase I) stormwater program requires municipalities serving more than 1,000,000 persons to obtain a NPDES stormwater permit for any construction project larger than five acres. Proposed NPDES stormwater regulations (Phase II) expand this existing national program to smaller municipalities with populations of 10,000 persons or more and construction sites that disturb more than one acre. For other dischargers, such as those affecting groundwater or from nonpoint sources, a Report of Waste Discharge must be filed with the regional RWQCB. For specified situations, some permits may be waived, and some discharge activities may be handled through being included in an existing General Permit.

National Flood Insurance Program

Congress passed the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 and the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973. These Acts are intended to reduce the need for large publicly funded flood control structures and disaster relief by restricting development on floodplains.

The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) provides a means for property owners to financially protect themselves from flood damage. The NFIP offers flood insurance to homeowners, renters, and business owners if their community participates in the program. Participating communities agree to adopt and enforce ordinances that meet or exceed FEMA requirements to reduce the risk of flooding. The City of Lancaster is a participating community and must adhere to the NFIP.

Through its Flood Hazard Mapping Program, FEMA identifies flood hazards, assesses flood risks and partners with States and communities to provide accurate flood hazard and risk data. Flood hazard mapping is an important part of the NFIP, as it is the basis of the NFIP regulations and flood insurance requirements. FEMA maintains and updates data through FIRMs and risk assessments. A FIRM is an official map of a community on which FEMA has delineated both the special hazard areas and the risk premium zones applicable to the community.

A Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) is an area within a floodplain having a one percent or greater chance of flood occurrence within any given year (commonly referred to as the 100-year flood zone).



SFHAs are delineated on flood hazard boundary maps issued by FEMA. The Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 and the National Flood Insurance Reform Act of 1994 make flood insurance mandatory for most properties in SFHAs.

STATE LEVEL

Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act

The CWA places the primary responsibility for the control of surface water pollution and for planning the development and use of water resources with the States, although it establishes certain guidelines for the States to follow in developing their programs and allows the EPA to withdraw control from States with inadequate implementation mechanisms.

California's primary statute governing water quality and water pollution issues with respect to both surface waters and groundwater is the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (Water Code Sections 13000, et seq.). The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act grants the SWRCB and the RWQCBs authority and responsibility to adopt plans and policies, to regulate discharges to surface and groundwater, to regulate waste disposal sites, and to require cleanup of discharges of hazardous materials and other pollutants. The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act also establishes reporting requirements for unintended discharges of any hazardous substance, sewage, or oil or petroleum product.

Each RWQCB must formulate and adopt a water quality control plan for its region. The regional plans are to conform to the policies set forth in the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act and established by the SWRCB in its State water policy. The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act also provides that a RWQCB may include, within its regional plan, water discharge prohibitions applicable to particular conditions, areas, or types of waste.

State Water Resources Control Board

The SWRCB administers water rights, water pollution control, and water quality functions throughout the State, while the RWQCBs conduct planning, permitting, and enforcement activities. The NPDES permit is divided into two parts: construction and post-construction. Construction permitting is administered by the SWRCB, while post-construction permitting is administered by the regional RWQCB. In California, NPDES permits are also referred to as waste discharge requirements (WDRs) that regulate discharges to waters of the United States.

Construction General Permit Order 2009-0009-DWQ

On November 16, 1990, the EPA published final regulations that established stormwater permit application requirements for specified categories of industries. The regulations provide that discharges of stormwater to waters of the United States from construction projects are effectively prohibited unless the discharge complies with an NPDES Permit. On August 19, 1999, the SWRCB reissued the General Construction Stormwater Permit (Water Quality Order 99-08-DWQ). On December 8, 1999, the State Water Board amended Order 99-08-DWQ to apply to sites as small as one acre.



Dischargers whose projects disturb one or more acres of soil or whose projects disturb less than one acre but are part of a larger common plan of development that in total disturbs one or more acres, are required to obtain coverage under the General Permit for Discharges of Stormwater Associated with Construction Activity Construction General Permit Order 2009-0009-DWQ. Construction activity subject to this permit includes clearing, grading, and disturbances to the ground such as stockpiling, or excavation, but does not include regular maintenance activities performed to restore a facility's original line, grade, or capacity.

To obtain coverage under the Construction General Permit, Permit Registration Documents (PRDs), including a Notice of Intent (NOI), Risk Assessment, Site Map, and Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), among others, must be filed with the SWRCB prior to the commencement of construction activity. The NOI would notify the SWRCB of the applicant's intent to comply with the Construction General Permit. The SWPPP, which must be prepared by a certified Qualified SWPPP Developer (QSD), would include a list of Best Management Practices (BMPs) the discharger would use to protect stormwater run-off and the placement of those BMPs. Additionally, the project's SWPPP must contain a visual monitoring program and a chemical monitoring program for "non-visible" pollutants to be implemented if there is a failure of BMPs.

Groundwater Management Act

In 1992, the State Legislature provided for more formal groundwater management with the passage of Assembly Bill (AB) 3030, the Groundwater Management Act (Water Code Section 10750, et seq.). Groundwater management, as defined in DWR's Bulletin 118 Update 2003, is the planned and coordinated monitoring, operation, and administration of a groundwater basin, or portion of a basin, with the goal of long-term groundwater resource sustainability. Groundwater management needs are generally identified and addressed at the local level in the form of Groundwater Management Plans (GMP). The Act provides local water agencies with procedures to develop a GMP to enable those agencies to manage their groundwater resources efficiently and safely while protecting the quality of supplies. Under the Act, development of a GMP by a local water agency is voluntary.

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) established a framework for sustainable, local groundwater management. SGMA requires groundwater-dependent regions to halt overdraft and bring basins into balanced levels of pumping and recharge. With passage of the SGMA, the Department of Water Resources launched the Sustainable Groundwater Management (SGM) Program to implement the law and provide ongoing support to local agencies around the State. The SGMA:

- Establishes a definition of "sustainable groundwater management";
- Requires that a Groundwater Sustainability Plan be adopted for the most important groundwater basins in California;
- Establishes a timetable for adoption of Groundwater Sustainability Plans;
- Empowers local agencies to manage basins sustainably;
- Establishes basic requirements for Groundwater Sustainability Plans; and
- Provides for a limited State role.



Specifically, SGMA requires local public agencies and groundwater sustainability agencies in high- and medium-priority basins to develop and implement groundwater sustainability plans (GSPs) or prepare an alternative to a GSP. According to the California Department of Water Resources, the Antelope Valley Groundwater Basin is categorized as a “very low” priority basin.¹² Therefore, there is no groundwater sustainability plan established for the Basin.

REGIONAL LEVEL

Water Quality Control Plan for the Lahontan Region, North And South Basins

The City of Lancaster is within the jurisdictional boundaries of the Lahontan RWQCB. As one of nine regional boards in the State, the Lahontan RWQCB develops and enforces water quality objectives and implementation plans that safeguard the quality of water resources in its region. Its duties include developing “basin plans” for its hydrologic area, issuing waste discharge requirements, taking enforcement action against violators, and monitoring water quality. In March 1995, a *Water Quality Control Plan for the Lahontan Region, North and South Basins* (Basin Plan), adopted by the Lahontan RWQCB, took effect. The Basin Plan incorporates language from and replaces three earlier plans: the Lahontan RWQCB’s 1975 *North and South Lahontan Basin Plans*, as amended through 1991, and the SWRCB’s 1980 *Lake Tahoe Basin Water Quality Plan*, as amended through 1989. The earlier plans were combined into a single plan which was adopted by the Lahontan RWQCB in November 1994 and took effect upon approval by the California Office of Administrative Law in March 1995. The current Basin Plan incorporates amendments effective August 1995 through September 22, 2021.

Antelope Valley Integrated Regional Urban Water Management Plan

The *Antelope Valley Integrated Regional Water Management Plan* (Antelope Valley IRWMP) is a multi-county collaboration effort developed to address regional concerns about water supply reliability, water quality, flood protection, environmental resources and land use management in the Antelope Valley. It should be noted that the current Antelope Valley IRWMP (2019) includes new information as required by the DWR’s 2016 *Integrated Regional Water Management Proposition 1 Guidelines* as well as updates to information from the previous Antelope Valley IRWMP prepared in 2013. The Antelope Valley Groundwater Basin Adjudication Judgment (Judgment) determined the Basin is in a state of overdraft, established respective water rights among groundwater producers based on the Basin’s Native Safe Yield, and ordered a rampdown of production to meet the Native Safe Yield by 2023. Following the adjudication, the Antelope Valley Watermaster was formed to implement the Judgment. The Watermaster is charged with administering the adjudicated water rights and managing of the groundwater resources within the adjudicated portion of the Antelope Valley.

¹² California Department of Water Resources, *SGMA Basin Prioritization Dashboard*, <https://gis.water.ca.gov/app/bp2018-dashboard/p1/>, accessed June 15, 2022.



LOCAL LEVEL

City of Lancaster Master Plan of Drainage

In 1992, the City adopted the *City of Lancaster Master Plan of Drainage Update*. The Master Plan of Drainage (dated May 2019 and revised December 3, 2020) contains updated facilities and drainage fee schedules. The City funds all Master Plan of Drainage facilities through drainage impact fees and drainage maintenance fees. As undeveloped lands are covered or paved over, their natural absorption capabilities are reduced and the amount of runoff is increased. Even small amounts of rain in the Lancaster area can cause flooding problems because of the general lack of adequate storm drain facilities.

For areas located on the extreme west and east sides of the City that were determined to be remotely located in relationship to existing drainage infrastructure that could manage and convey runoff from such areas, the Master Plan of Drainage calls for proposed developments to include floodplain management measures that mitigate the floodplain impacts associated with the development to less-than-significant levels. These measures typically include the continued acceptance of pre-development flows from upstream areas tributary to the development, the safe conveyance of flow through or around the development without an adverse effect to adjacent properties, and the discharge of flows to downstream areas in a manner consistent with pre-development flow characteristics. Areas within a development dedicated to flood mitigation will be encumbered with a drainage and maintenance covenant with the City to ensuring that flood mitigation features will be maintained. The drainage and maintenance covenant agreement will ensure that flood mitigation features remain configured as intended. Drainage facilities not included in the Master Plan of Drainage that may be necessary to convey storm water through the development will be the developer's sole responsibility. Additionally, drainage from a development needs to be properly conveyed downstream to a suitable receiving facility; should these facilities not serve the needs of the Master Plan of Drainage, they will be developer's sole responsibility.

City of Lancaster Storm Water Management Program

The CWA mandates that cities in major metropolitan areas, such as Los Angeles County, obtain permits to “effectively prohibit non-stormwater discharges into the storm sewers” and “require controls to reduce the discharge of pollutants to the maximum extent practicable...” The EPA has delegated this authority to the State of California, which has authorized the SWRCB and its local regulatory agencies, the RWQCBs, to control nonpoint source discharges to California's waterways.

The Municipal Storm Water Permitting Program regulates stormwater discharges from municipal separate storm sewer (drain) systems (MS4s). Most of these permits are issued to a group of co-permittees encompassing an entire metropolitan area. These regional MS4 permits require the discharger to develop and implement a Storm Water Management Plan/Program with the goal of reducing the discharge of pollutants to the maximum extent practicable (MEP). MEP is the performance standard specified in CWA Section 402(p). The management programs specify what BMPs will be used to address certain program areas. The program areas include public education and



outreach; illicit discharge detection and elimination; construction and post-construction; and good housekeeping for municipal operations.

The City of Lancaster has been designated a regulated Small Municipal Separate Storm System by the EPA pursuant to 40 CFR 122.322(a)(1). To comply with the Phase II regulations of the NPDES, the City filed an NOI to comply with the SWRCB Small MS4 General Permit (MS4 Permit) in lieu of obtaining an individual permit. In compliance with Federal regulations, the City submitted an NOI, a Storm Water Management Program (SWMP), and applicable fee on March 7, 2003. On April 20, 2003, NPDES General Permit No. CAS000004 was adopted. The objective of the City's SWMP is to establish ordinances, policies, procedures, and practices to manage and control the quality of stormwater runoff in Lancaster.

City of Lancaster General Plan 2030

The General Plan includes the Plan for the Natural Environment, Plan for Public Health and Safety, Plan for Municipal Services and Facilities, all of which identifies objectives and policies to address the City's hydrology and water quality. The following policies are relevant to the proposed project:

Plan for the Natural Environment

- Objective 3.1: Protect, maintain, and replenish groundwater supplies to meet present and future urban and rural needs.
- Policy 3.1.1: Ensure that development does not adversely affect the groundwater basin.
- Policy 3.1.2: Promote efforts to exert greater City control over the existing water supply and to explore potential new sources.
- Policy 3.1.3: Encourage the use of recycled tertiary treated wastewater when possible.
- Objective 3.2: Reduce the per capita rate of water consumption in the City of Lancaster through increased conservation, technology, retrofits and system efficiency to levels consistent with other desert communities.
- Policy 3.2.1: Promote the use of water conservation measures in the landscape plans of new developments.
- Policy 3.2.2: Consider the potential impact of new development projects on the existing water supply.
- Policy 3.2.3: Encourage incorporation of water-saving design measures into existing developments.
- Policy 3.2.4: Implement the public information/education component of the City's Water Conservation Program in order to develop and maintain public sensitivity to



water conservation issues and to encourage voluntary compliance with programs designed to reduce water consumption.

Policy 3.2.5: Promote the use of water conservation measures in the design of new developments.

Policy 3.2.6: Continue to provide water conservation leadership by example through implementing the Water Management Component of the City's Water Conservation Program at City facilities.

Objective 3.5.1: Preserve land resources through the application of appropriate soils management techniques and the protection and enhancement of surrounding landforms and open space.

Policy 3.5.1 Minimize erosion problems resulting from development activities.

Plan for Public Health and Safety

Objective 4.2: Minimize the potential for loss of life, physical injury, property damage, and social disruption resulting from a FEMA 100-year flood.

Policy 4.2.1 Manage flood hazards to ensure an acceptable level of risk and to facilitate rapid physical and economic recovery following a flood through the identification and recognition of potentially hazardous conditions and implementation of effective standards for location and construction of development.

Plan for Municipal Services and Facilities

Objective 15.1: Achieve and maintain the following levels of service: Flood Control – Provision of protection of structures for human occupancy from the FEMA 100-year flood.

Policy 15.1.1 Promote continued coordination between the City of Lancaster and local service providers.

Policy 15.1.3 Ensure that adequate flood control facilities are provided, which maintain the integrity of significant riparian and other environmental habitats in accordance with Biological Resources policies.

Policy 15.1.4 Ensure that mitigation is provided for all development in recognized flood prone areas. Any mitigation of flood hazard in one area shall not exacerbate flooding problems in other areas.



Lancaster Municipal Code

Municipal Code Section 8.50, *Landscaping Installation and Maintenance*, establishes various requirements that establish a structure for planning, designing, installing, maintaining and managing water efficient landscapes in new construction and rehabilitated projects. Specifically, Section 8.50.110, *Grading design plan*, requires that grading of a project site be designed to minimize soil erosion, runoff, and water waste. Section 8.50.200, *Stormwater Management and Rainwater Retention*, establishes stormwater management practices or technical requirements for existing and/or new landscape that minimize runoff and increase rainwater retention and infiltration.

Municipal Code Chapter 13.04, *Drainage Regulations*, requires the maintenance of drainage facilities, prohibits depositing trash or debris in stormwater drainage facilities, and establishes the city's intent to construct the planned drainage facilities and to designate fees that are fairly apportioned within the drainage area based on the need for drainage facilities created by the proposed subdivision and development of other property within such area.

Municipal Code Title 15, *Buildings and Construction*, contains the requirements of the following codes: building, residential, electrical, mechanical, plumbing, security, property maintenance, energy, historical buildings, fire, green building standards, and existing buildings. Specifically, Section 15.64.060, *Drainage/Flood Control Improvements Fee*, requires that all new development in the City pay a drainage/flood control improvements fee to mitigate the stormwater runoff impacts caused by new development.

Municipal Code Chapter 16.24, *Improvements, Dedications, and Reservations*, requires all improvements that are required by the conditions of a tentative map, by this chapter, or by any other City statute, ordinance or policy, to conform with the requirements within Chapter 16.24, including those outlines in Article II, *Drainage Facilities*, of this chapter. Specifically, Section 16.24.140, *Hydrology Study*, requires a hydrology study to be submitted and approved prior to the filing of the final map. The hydrology study would verify, among other things, that the proposed streets and existing downstream streets are designed to carry a 50-year storm, top of curb to top of curb, and 100-year storm within the right-of-way. Additionally, the anticipated flow through the subdivisions and/or potential drainage problems would be mitigated through the installation of drainage structures such as culverts, storm drains, or other improvements in accordance with Municipal Code Section 16.24.150, *Mitigation of Storm and Nuisance Water Runoff*.

5.7.3 IMPACT THRESHOLDS AND SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines* contains the Environmental Checklist form that was used during the preparation of this EIR. Accordingly, a project may create a significant adverse environmental impact if it would:

- a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality (refer to Impact Statement HWQ-1);



- b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin (refer to Impact Statement HWQ-2);
- c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:
 - i) Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site (refer to Impact Statement HWQ-3);
 - ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface run-off in a manner that would result in flooding on- or off-site (refer to Impact Statement HWQ-3);
 - iii) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff (refer to Impact Statement HWQ-3); or
 - iv) Impede or redirect flood flows (refer to Impact Statement HWQ-3);
- d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation (refer to Impact Statement HWQ-4); and/or
- e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan (refer to Impact Statement HWQ-5).

Based on these standards/criteria, the effects of the proposed project have been categorized as either a “less than significant impact” or a “potentially significant impact.” Mitigation measures are recommended for potentially significant impacts. If a potentially significant impact cannot be reduced to a less than significant level through the application of mitigation, it is categorized as a significant and unavoidable impact.



5.7.4 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

WATER QUALITY

HWQ-1 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROPOSED PROJECT COULD VIOLATE WATER QUALITY STANDARDS OR WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS, OR OTHERWISE SUBSTANTIALLY DEGRADE WATER QUALITY.

Impact Analysis:

CONSTRUCTION

Future light industrial developments constructed within the proposed overlay zone and that disturb less than one acre of land would be required to comply with the City's SWMP, which includes minimum control measures that minimize stormwater runoff during construction and operation. If future projects are anticipated to disturb more than one acre of land, a General Construction Permit under the NPDES program would be required and the future development project would be subject to the stormwater discharge requirements of a General Construction Permit (Order No. 2009-0009-DWQ, NPDES Permit No. CAS000002). Compliance with the General Construction Permit would require submittal of an NOI, SWPPP, Risk Assessment, and other documents prior to the commencement of soil disturbing activities. The SWPPP would identify point and nonpoint sources of pollutant discharge associated with the future development project that could adversely affect water quality in the City. The SWPPP would also list proposed BMPs to be implemented by future development projects in order to control sediment and other pollutants in stormwater and non-storm water runoff. Further, the SWPPP is required to include a visual monitoring program, a chemical monitoring program for "nonvisible" pollutants to be implemented if there is a failure of BMPs, and a monitoring plan if the site discharges directly to a water body listed on the State's 303(d) list of impaired waters. Examples of construction BMPs include soil and wind erosion controls, sediment controls, tracking controls, non-stormwater management controls, and waste management controls. Selection and implementation of these BMPs would occur on a case-by-case basis and would be based on the pollutants of concern for the specific project site and the BMP's ability to effectively treat those pollutants, in consideration of site conditions and constraints dependent on project size and stormwater treatment needs. Additionally, future development projects would similarly be required to comply with the City's SWMP and associated minimum control measures that minimize stormwater runoff during construction and operation. Compliance with existing regulations would minimize construction-related water quality impacts associated with future development projects within the proposed overlay zone. Impacts would be less than significant.

OPERATIONS

Buildout of the proposed overlay zone could contribute to water quality degradation in the City as it would increase impervious areas within the overlay zone, thus increasing urban runoff. As the proposed overlay zone would allow for light industrial uses, substances such as oils, fuels, paints, and solvents may be transported to nearby drainages, watersheds, and groundwater in stormwater runoff.



The significance of these water quality impacts would vary depending upon a variety of conditions, including weather conditions, soil conditions, increased sedimentation of drainage systems within the area, compliance with MS4 permit and NPDES permit requirements, and proper installation of BMPs. Additionally, all future development projects would also be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA and implement project-level mitigation measures, as needed. Further, in accordance with Municipal Code Section 8.50.200, *Stormwater Management And Rainwater Retention*, stormwater management practices or technical requirements for existing and/or new landscaping would be required for new developments to minimize runoff and increase rainwater retention and infiltration.

Additionally, applicable future development projects would be required to prepare a Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) in compliance with the NPDES permit requirements. Project-specific WQMPs are intended to reduce pollutants and post-development runoff and can include low impact development (LID) features, site design BMPs, and structural/nonstructural treatment BMPs to address post-construction stormwater runoff management. LID features may include techniques to infiltrate, filter, store, evaporate, or retain runoff close to the source of runoff, and are consistent with the prescribed hierarchy of treatment provided in the regional MS4 permit. Selection of LID and additional treatment control BMPs would be based on the pollutants of concern for the specific project site and the BMP's ability to effectively treat those pollutants, in consideration of site conditions and constraints. Additionally, future projects would be required to comply with the City's SWMP, which includes additional minimum control measures that reduce stormwater runoff during operation. Overall, future development projects would be required to comply with existing regulations for water quality standards or waste discharge requirements and would be ensured as part of the City's plan review process. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

GROUNDWATER SUPPLIES

HWQ-2 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROPOSED PROJECT COULD DECREASE GROUNDWATER SUPPLIES OR INTERFERE SUBSTANTIALLY WITH GROUNDWATER RECHARGE SUCH THAT THE PROJECT MAY IMPEDE SUSTAINABLE GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT OF THE BASIN.

Impact Analysis:

CONSTRUCTION

Construction of future light industrial projects associated with the proposed overlay zone would require water for activities such as dust suppression, mixing concrete, and vehicle and equipment washing. It is anticipated that water usage for construction of future developments would be nominal and would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater



recharge such that the construction activities may impede sustainable groundwater management of the Basin. Additionally, all future development projects would be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA and implement project-level mitigation measures, as needed. Impacts would be less than significant.

OPERATIONS

As the proposed overlay zone area is currently primarily vacant, future light industrial development associated with the overlay zone may increase the amount of impervious areas, which has the potential to interfere with groundwater recharge. It is not anticipated that this change in imperviousness would interfere with natural groundwater recharge since direct rainfall from the Lancaster area makes an inconsequential contribution to overall groundwater recharge of aquifers in the Antelope Valley.¹³

Although impacts to natural groundwater recharge are not anticipated, impacts to groundwater supplies as a result of future development could occur. The proposed overlay zone is located in the Antelope Valley Groundwater Basin, which is managed by the Antelope Valley Watermaster. Prolonged drought conditions in recent years, which resulted in decreased runoff and recharge, and declining water levels in much of the Basin, resulted in an overall decrease in groundwater in storage.¹⁴ However, since 2015, a judgement was administered for the Basin to establish a safe yield for groundwater production and an allocation of that safe yield among Basin producers. Since long-term recharge is expected to be stable, it is anticipated that groundwater pumping, and hence supply, will be reliable even in short-term and multiple year droughts. Thus, groundwater is considered a very reliable supply for the Antelope Valley Region. Additionally, with the introduction of State Water Project water and increasing urbanization, the water table depressions have either stabilized or increased in the Antelope Valley Region.¹⁵

Due to the potential increased water demand generated by future light industrial uses in the proposed overlay zone in areas currently zoned RR-2.5 (Rural Residential, 1 du/ac), groundwater demand is anticipated to increase, and total water demand in the City and Antelope Valley is anticipated to increase. Each future development project would have a specific impact on water demand, depending on the historic water use at the development site and the proposed land use type. However, future development implemented in accordance with the proposed East Side Overlay Zone would be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA to evaluate project-level impacts to groundwater supplies. Additionally, as discussed in Section 5.11, *Utilities and Service Systems*, future development would also be required to comply with all applicable State and local regulations and policies. Specifically, future development would be required to adhere to Title 20 of the CCR and

¹³ Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, *Antelope Valley Integrated Regional Water Management Plan, 2019 Update*, <https://pw.lacounty.gov/wwd/avirwmp/docs/finalplan/2019%20Final%20AV%20IRWMP.pdf>, accessed March 28, 2023.

¹⁴ Antelope Valley Watermaster, *Final Antelope Valley Watermaster 2021 Annual Report*, <https://avwatermaster.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Final-AVWM-2021-Annual-Rpt-7-28-22.pdf>, accessed August 10, 2022.

¹⁵ Antelope Valley Watermaster, *Final Antelope Valley Watermaster 2021 Annual Report*, <https://avwatermaster.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Final-AVWM-2021-Annual-Rpt-7-28-22.pdf>, accessed August 10, 2022.



implement water efficiency design standards. New light industrial developments associated with the proposed overlay zone would be required to either construct underground water service lines on-site to connect to LACWD 40's existing water conveyance network or utilize individual water wells if outside of LACWD 40's service area. Water connections to off-site water lines would be established through coordination between future project Applicants, the City, and LACWD 40. In compliance with SB 610 requirements, future developments may also be required to demonstrate adequate water supply with either a signed Water Availability Form, "Will-Serve" letter, or Water Supply Assessment from LACWD 40, as applicable. Additionally, future developments would be required to adhere to Municipal Code Section 15.64.070, *Water Improvements Fee*, which requires all new development within the City to pay a water improvements fee. The water improvements fee would provide funding of capital improvements, including pump stations, water reservoir facilities, wells, treatment facilities, water lines, and other related improvements to ensure a continuing supply of potable water. Adherence to State and local regulations would minimize impacts to groundwater supplies. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

DRAINAGE PATTERNS

HWQ-3 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROPOSED PROJECT COULD SUBSTANTIALLY ALTER THE EXISTING DRAINAGE PATTERNS OF THE SITE OR AREA, OR SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASE THE RATE OR AMOUNT OF SURFACE RUNOFF, IN A MANNER THAT WOULD RESULT IN SUBSTANTIAL EROSION, SILTATION, OR FLOODING ON- OR OFF-SITE.

Impact Analysis:

EROSION/SILTATION

Construction for future light industrial projects associated with the proposed overlay zone would involve earthmoving activities, which has the potential to result in soil erosion or siltation. However, if the future project disturbs less than one acre of land, the project would be required to comply with the City's SWMP, which includes minimum control measures that minimize stormwater runoff resulting from erosion or siltation during construction and operation. If the future project disturbs more than one acre of land, a General Construction Permit under the NPDES program would be required and the future project would be subject to the stormwater discharge requirements of a General Construction Permit (Order No. 2009-0009-DWQ, NPDES Permit No. CAS000002). Compliance with the General Construction Permit would require submittal of an NOI, SWPPP, Risk Assessment, and other documents prior to the commencement of soil disturbing activities. The SWPPP would list structural and non-structural BMPs to be implemented by future projects in order to control erosion and sediment during construction and operation. Future projects would also require development and implementation of an erosion control plan. These plans would include but not be



limited to erosion and sediment control, general housekeeping practices such as sweeping up of site debris, proper waste disposal procedures, use of tarps or other controls on soil stockpiles, containment of building materials, and inspection for and repair of leaks and spills from construction vehicles. Municipal Code Section 8.50.110, *Grading design plan*, also requires that grading of a project site be designed to minimize soil erosion, runoff, and water waste. Additionally, all future development projects would also be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA and implement project-level mitigation measures, as needed. Compliance with existing regulations would minimize construction- and operation-related erosion and siltation impacts associated with future development projects within the proposed overlay zone. Impacts would be less than significant.

FLOODING

Portions of the proposed overlay zone are within flood hazard zones. The southwestern area of the overlay zone is located within areas of 0.2-percent annual chance of flood hazard, and the area surrounding Little Rock Wash is identified as an area of one percent annual chance flood hazard. As such, future light industrial projects in the overlay zone could be located in areas that are prone to flooding. However, all future projects would be required to comply with applicable federal, State, and local regulations related to flood control. These regulations and requirements may include preparation of hydrology and/or drainage studies per Municipal Code Section 16.24.140, *Hydrology Study*; installation of drainage structures such as culverts, storm drains, or other improvements in accordance with Municipal Code Section 16.24.150, *Mitigation of Storm and Nuisance Water Runoff*; implementation of stormwater management practices for proposed landscaping per Municipal Code Section 8.50.200, *Stormwater Management And Rainwater Retention*; and payment of drainage/flood control improvement fees per Municipal Code Section 15.64.060, *Drainage/Flood Control Improvements Fee*.

Further, the Master Plan of Drainage requires that drainage facilities not identified in the plan but that may be necessary to convey storm water through a proposed development be the developer's sole responsibility. Additionally, any drainage from a future development project needs to be properly conveyed downstream to a suitable receiving facility; should these facilities not serve the needs of the Master Plan of Drainage, implementation of the facilities would be the developer's sole responsibility. Lastly, all future projects would be required to undergo project-level environmental review under CEQA and implement project-level mitigation measures, as needed. Therefore, impacts related to flooding resulting from altered drainage patterns would be less than significant.

STORMWATER DRAINAGE SYSTEM

The proposed overlay zone is remotely located in relationship to existing drainage infrastructure that could manage and convey runoff from such areas. As discussed above, any drainage facilities not included in the Master Plan of Drainage that may be necessary to convey storm water through a proposed development is the developer's sole responsibility. Additionally, drainage from a future project would need to be properly conveyed downstream to a suitable receiving facility; should these facilities not serve the needs of the Master Plan of Drainage, implementation of the facilities would be the developer's sole responsibility. In addition to requiring separate environmental review under CEQA, future development projects would also be required to pay drainage/flood control improvement fees per Municipal Code Section 15.64.060, *Drainage/Flood Control Improvements Fee*, to



mitigate stormwater runoff impacts caused by new development. Further, Municipal Code Section 16.24.140, *Hydrology Study*, requires a hydrology study be submitted and approved, and the anticipated flow through a development and/or potential drainage problems be mitigated through the installation of drainage structures such as culverts, storm drains, or other improvements in accordance with Municipal Code Section 16.24.150, *Mitigation of Storm and Nuisance Water Runoff*. Overall, upon compliance with existing regulations, future development projects would not alter existing drainage patterns or substantially increase runoff volumes or rates in a manner that would exceed stormwater drainage system capacities. Impacts would be less than significant.

Adherence to applicable local regulations would ensure that project impacts related to exceeding the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or providing substantial additional sources of polluted runoff are less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

PROJECT INUNDATION

HWQ-4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROPOSED PROJECT COULD RISK RELEASE OF POLLUTANTS DUE TO PROJECT INUNDATION FROM FLOOD HAZARD, TSUNAMI, OR SEICHE ZONES.

Impact Analysis: Flooding can occur during and immediately after periods of heavy rain fall, or from tsunamis, seiches, or dam failure. Tsunamis are large waves caused by the sudden displacement of water that results from an underwater earthquake, landslide, or volcanic eruption. Tsunamis generally affect low-lying areas along the coastline. The project site is located over 80 miles inland, and not located within a designated Tsunami Hazard Area. Thus, tsunamis are not a potential hazard. Seiches are oscillating standing waves generated by two waves traveling in opposite directions in an enclosed body of water. They can be caused by wind or earthquake-related ground shaking. The project site is not in close proximity to any large bodies of water. Thus, seiches are not a potential hazard. Dam failure is the structural collapse of a dam that releases the water stored in the reservoir behind the dam. A dam failure is usually the result of the age of the structure, inadequate spillway capacity used in construction, or structural damage caused by an earthquake or flood. Littlerock-Palmdale Dam is located approximately 12 miles south of the project site. However, the project site is not located within the inundation area of the dam.¹⁶ Thus, dam failure is not a potential hazard.

As discussed under Impact Statement HWQ-3, portions of the proposed overlay zone are within flood hazard zones. The southwestern area of the overlay zone is located within areas of 0.2-percent annual chance of flood hazard, and the area surrounding Little Rock Wash is identified as an area of one percent annual chance flood. As such, construction of future light industrial projects in these areas may result in the release of pollutants due to project inundation from flood hazards. As previously discussed, all future projects would be required to comply with applicable federal, State, and local

¹⁶ California Department of Water Resources, *Dam Breach Inundation Map Web Publisher*, February 24, 2020, https://fmds.water.ca.gov/webgis/?appid=dam_prototype_v2, accessed June 16, 2022.



regulations related to flood control. These regulations and requirements may include preparation of hydrology and/or drainage studies per Municipal Code Section 16.24.140, *Hydrology Study*; installation of drainage structures such as culverts, storm drains, or other improvements in accordance with Municipal Code Section 16.24.150, *Mitigation of Storm and Nuisance Water Runoff*; implementation of stormwater management practices for proposed landscaping per Municipal Code Section 8.50.200, *Stormwater Management And Rainwater Retention*; and payment of drainage/flood control improvement fees per Municipal Code Section 15.64.060, *Drainage/Flood Control Improvements Fee*. Compliance with these aforementioned regulations would minimize impacts related to flooding. Additionally, future project compliance with the NPDES permit requirements for preparation of a SWPPP and/or WQMP to implement site-specific structural and non-structural controls would further minimize the risk of releasing pollutants due to project inundation. Lastly, all future projects would be required to undergo project-level environmental review under CEQA and implement project-level mitigation measures, as needed. Therefore, impacts related to the release of pollutants from project inundation would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

WATER QUALITY CONTROL OR SUSTAINABLE GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN

HWQ-5 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROPOSED PROJECT COULD CONFLICT WITH OR OBSTRUCT IMPLEMENTATION OF A WATER QUALITY CONTROL PLAN OR SUSTAINABLE GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN.

Impact Analysis: The project site is located in the Antelope Valley Groundwater Basin. As stated, the Basin is categorized as a “very low” priority basin by the California Department of Water Resources. Therefore, no groundwater sustainability plan is established for the Basin. However, the City is located within the South Lahontan Hydrologic Region and is subject to the objectives and limits of the Basin Plan under the jurisdiction of the Lahontan RWQCB. Water quality standards and control measures for surface and ground waters of the Lahontan Region are contained in the Basin Plan.

CONSTRUCTION

Construction activities associated with future light industrial projects associated with the overlay zone may result in water quality degradation as substances such as oils, fuels, paints, and solvents may be transported to nearby drainages, watersheds, and groundwater in stormwater runoff, wash water, and dust control water. For any future projects that disturb more than one acre of land, a General Construction Permit under the NPDES program would be required. Such projects would be subject to the stormwater discharge requirements of a General Construction Permit (Order No. 2009-0009-DWQ, NPDES Permit No. CAS000002). Compliance with the General Construction Permit would require submittal of an NOI, SWPPP, Risk Assessment, and other documents prior to the commencement of soil disturbing activities. The SWPPP would identify point and nonpoint sources



of pollutant discharge associated with the project that could adversely affect water quality in the City. The SWPPP would also list proposed BMPs to be implemented by the future project in order to control sediment and other pollutants in stormwater and non-storm water runoff. Further, the SWPPP is required to include a visual monitoring program, a chemical monitoring program for “nonvisible” pollutants to be implemented if there is a failure of BMPs, and a monitoring plan if the site discharges directly to a water body listed on the State’s 303(d) list of impaired waters. Examples of construction BMPs include soil and wind erosion controls, sediment controls, tracking controls, non-stormwater management controls; and waste management controls. Selection and implementation of these BMPs would occur on a case-by-case basis and would be based on the pollutants of concern for the specific project site and the BMP’s ability to effectively treat those pollutants, in consideration of site conditions and constraints dependent on project size and stormwater treatment needs. Additionally, future development projects would similarly be required to comply with the City’s SWMP and associated minimum control measures that minimize stormwater runoff during construction and operation. Compliance with existing regulations would minimize construction-related water quality impacts associated with future light industrial projects associated with the proposed overlay zone. Impacts would be less than significant.

OPERATIONS

Future projects implemented in accordance with the proposed overlay zone could contribute to water quality degradation in the City through potentially increasing impervious areas in the City, thus increasing urban runoff. The significance of these water quality impacts would vary depending upon the level of construction activity, weather conditions, soil conditions, increased sedimentation of drainage systems within the area, compliance with NPDES permit requirements, and proper installation of BMPs.

To reduce long-term operational impacts in accordance with the requirements of the City and the regional MS4 permit, future development projects within the proposed overlay zone would be required to comply with the NPDES permit and any BMP conditions and requirements established by the City. Additionally, future development projects would also be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA and implement project-level mitigation measures, as needed. Thus, project- and site-specific operational impacts would be analyzed and, if applicable, future developers would be required to prepare a hydrology study pursuant to Municipal Code Section 16.24.140, *Hydrology Study*. Further, in accordance with Municipal Code Section 8.50.200, *Stormwater Management And Rainwater Retention*, stormwater management practices or technical requirements for existing and/or new landscaping would be required for new developments to minimize runoff and increase rainwater retention and infiltration. Additionally, Section 15.64.060, *Drainage/Flood Control Improvements Fee*, of the Municipal Code, requires all new development in the City to pay a drainage/flood control improvement fee to mitigate stormwater runoff impacts caused by new development.

Additionally, applicable future development projects within the proposed overlay zone would be required to prepare a WQMP in compliance with the NPDES permit requirements. Project-specific WQMPs are intended to reduce pollutants and post-development runoff and can include LID features, site design BMPs, and structural/nonstructural treatment BMPs to address post-construction



stormwater runoff management. LID features may include techniques to infiltrate, filter, store, evaporate, or retain runoff close to the source of runoff, and are consistent with the prescribed hierarchy of treatment provided in the regional MS4 permit. Selection of LID and additional treatment control BMPs would be based on the pollutants of concern for the specific project site and the BMP's ability to effectively treat those pollutants, in consideration of site conditions and constraints. Additionally, future development projects would be required to comply with the City's SWMP, which includes additional minimum control measures that reduce stormwater runoff during construction and operation. With adherence to State and local regulations impacts related to conflict with the water quality control plan would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

5.7.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

CEQA Guidelines Section 15355 requires an analysis of cumulative impacts, which are defined as, “two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable, or which compound or increase other environmental impacts.” The cumulative analysis below considers the proposed project's impacts in conjunction with future buildout of the proposed project.

WATER QUALITY

- **FUTURE DEVELOPMENT, COMBINED WITH OTHER RELATED CUMULATIVE PROJECTS, COULD VIOLATE WATER QUALITY STANDARDS OR WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS, OR OTHERWISE SUBSTANTIALLY DEGRADE WATER QUALITY.**

Impact Analysis: Cumulative projects developed within the proposed overlay zone could contribute to water quality degradation in the proposed overlay zone. However, all cumulative projects would be required to mitigate site-specific hydrologic impacts on a project-by-project basis pursuant to all applicable federal, State, and local stormwater regulations and requirements, including NPDES permit requirements (i.e., preparation of project-specific SWPPPs, WQMPs, and associated BMP/LID features). Similarly, cumulative projects would also be required to undergo project-level environmental review under CEQA on a case-by-case basis.

The proposed project does not propose site-specific development and would not significantly impact drainage courses and hydrologic flows throughout the proposed overlay zone. As discussed under Impact Statement HWQ-1, in compliance with NPDES permit requirements, future development projects would be required to implement project-specific SWPPPs and WQMPs to minimize off-site discharge of anticipated and potential pollutant runoff during the construction and post-construction phase. As a result, future development projects would not result in the violation of water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade water quality. Implementation of the proposed project would not result in a substantial cumulative contribution to water quality impacts and impacts in this regard would be less than significant.



Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

GROUNDWATER SUPPLIES

- FUTURE DEVELOPMENT, COMBINED WITH OTHER RELATED CUMULATIVE PROJECTS, COULD DECREASE GROUNDWATER SUPPLIES OR INTERFERE SUBSTANTIALLY WITH GROUNDWATER RECHARGE SUCH THAT THE PROJECT MAY IMPEDE SUSTAINABLE GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT OF THE BASIN.

Impact Analysis: Cumulative impacts to groundwater supplies as a result of future development are anticipated to occur as future development would increase water demand. However, all projects would be required to mitigate site-specific hydrologic impacts on a project-by-project basis pursuant to all applicable federal, State, and local regulations and requirements. Similarly, cumulative projects would also be required to undergo project-level environmental review under CEQA on a case-by-case basis.

All future light industrial developments implemented in accordance with the overlay zone would be required to adhere to Title 20 of the CCR and implement water efficiency design standards. Additionally, in compliance with SB 610 requirements, future developments may also be required to demonstrate adequate water supply with either a signed Water Availability Form, “Will-Serve” letter, or Water Supply Assessment from LACWD 40, as applicable. Additionally, future developments would be required to adhere to Municipal Code Section 15.64.070, *Water Improvements Fee*, which requires all new development within the City to pay a water improvements fee. The water improvements fee would provide funding of capital improvements, including pump stations, water reservoir facilities, wells, treatment facilities, water lines, and other related improvements to ensure a continuing supply of potable water. Adherence to State and local regulations would minimize impacts to groundwater supplies. Implementation of the proposed project would not result in a substantial cumulative contribution to water quality impacts and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.



DRAINAGE PATTERNS

- **FUTURE DEVELOPMENT, COMBINED WITH OTHER RELATED CUMULATIVE PROJECTS, COULD SUBSTANTIALLY ALTER THE EXISTING DRAINAGE PATTERNS OF THE SITE OR AREA, OR SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASE THE RATE OR AMOUNT OF SURFACE RUNOFF, IN A MANNER THAT WOULD RESULT IN SUBSTANTIAL EROSION, SILTATION, OR FLOODING ON- OR OFF-SITE.**

Impact Analysis: Cumulative projects developed in accordance with the General Plan could alter local drainage patterns and result in substantial erosion/siltation, flooding, and/or stormwater in excess of planned capacity. However, as stated above, cumulative projects would be required to evaluate site-specific hydrologic impacts on a project-by-project basis pursuant to all applicable federal, State, and local stormwater regulations and requirements. These regulations would require project-specific BMPs, LID features, and/or on-site retention techniques, which would reduce peak flow rate or runoff volumes. If a future development project disturbs more than one acre of land, a General Construction Permit under the NPDES program would be required and a project-specific SWPPP would be prepared that lists structural and non-structural BMPs to be implemented by the future development project. Additionally, future cumulative projects would be required to comply with the Municipal Code, which would include installation of drainage structures and payment of drainage/flood control fees, as applicable. Future cumulative projects would also be required to undergo project-level environmental review under CEQA on a case-by-case basis. As such, implementation of the proposed project would not result in a substantial cumulative contribution to erosion, siltation, or flooding on- or off-site and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

PROJECT INUNDATION

- **FUTURE DEVELOPMENT, COMBINED WITH OTHER RELATED CUMULATIVE PROJECTS, COULD RISK RELEASE OF POLLUTANTS DUE TO PROJECT INUNDATION FROM FLOOD HAZARD, TSUNAMI, OR SEICHE ZONES.**

Impact Analysis: As discussed under Impact Statement HWQ-3, portions of the proposed overlay zone are within flood hazard zones. Thus, cumulative projects developed within identified flood zones may result in the release of pollutants due to project inundation from flood hazards. However, all cumulative projects would be required to mitigate site-specific hydrologic impacts on a project-by-project basis pursuant to all applicable federal, State, and local regulations and requirements, including the Municipal Code requirements for installation of drainage structures and payment of drainage/flood control improvement fees. Additionally, individual project compliance with NPDES permit requirements regarding the preparation of a SWPPP and/or WQMP to implement site-specific structural and non-structural BMP controls would further minimize the risk of releasing pollutants



due to project inundation. Similarly, cumulative projects would also be required to undergo project-level environmental review under CEQA on a case-by-case basis. As such, implementation of the proposed project would not result in a substantial cumulative contribution to release of pollutants due to project inundation from flood hazard and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

WATER QUALITY CONTROL OR SUSTAINABLE GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN

- **FUTURE DEVELOPMENT, COMBINED WITH OTHER RELATED CUMULATIVE PROJECTS, COULD CONFLICT WITH OR OBSTRUCT IMPLEMENTATION OF A WATER QUALITY CONTROL PLAN OR SUSTAINABLE GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN.**

Impact Analysis: As discussed, no groundwater sustainability plan is established for the Antelope Valley Groundwater Basin. However, water quality standards and control measures for surface and ground waters of the Lahontan Region are contained in the Basin Plan. Cumulative projects developed within the proposed overlay zone could contribute to water quality degradation in the proposed overlay zone through potentially increasing impervious areas in the City and thus increasing urban runoff. However, all cumulative projects would be required to mitigate site-specific hydrologic impacts on a project-by-project basis pursuant to all applicable federal, State, and local regulations and requirements, including NPDES permit requirements (i.e., preparation of project-specific SWPPPs, WQMPs, and associated BMP/LID features) and Municipal Code requirements, which would require installation of drainage structures and payment of drainage/flood control fees, as applicable. Similarly, cumulative projects would also be required to undergo project-level environmental review under CEQA on a case-by-case basis. As a result, future development projects would not result in substantial cumulative contribution related to conflict with a water quality control plan and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.



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5.8 Hazards and Hazardous Materials



5.8 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

This section describes the potential for the proposed project to expose the public to hazards, hazardous materials, or risk of upset that may be related to existing conditions or new hazards created as a result of the project.

For the purpose of this analysis, the term “hazardous material” refers to both hazardous substances and hazardous waste. A material is defined as “hazardous” if it appears on a list of hazardous materials prepared by a federal, State, or local regulatory agency, or if it possesses characteristics defined as “hazardous” by such an agency. A “hazardous waste” is a solid waste that exhibits toxic or hazardous characteristics (i.e., ignitability, corrosivity, reactivity, and/or toxicity).

5.8.1 EXISTING SETTING

ASBESTOS-CONTAINING MATERIALS

Structures within Lancaster constructed between the 1940s and the 1960s may be associated with hazardous building materials (e.g., asbestos-containing material [ACM] and/or lead-based paint [LBP]). Additionally, universal waste (certain categories of hazardous waste such as batteries, pesticides, mercury-containing equipment, and lamps that are commonly generated by a wide variety of establishments) are present within Lancaster.

Asbestos is a strong, incombustible, and corrosion resistant material, which was used in many commercial products since prior to the 1940s and up until the early 1970s. If inhaled, asbestos fibers can result in serious health problems. The California Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA) asbestos construction standard (Title 8, California Code of Regulations (CCR), Section 1259) defines ACM as material containing more than one percent asbestos. Asbestos Containing Construction Material (ACCM) is defined as any manufactured construction material which contains more than one tenth of one percent asbestos by weight (a lower threshold than the one percent for ACM). Suspect materials that may contain ACMs include, but may not be limited to, drywall systems, floor tiles, ceiling tiles, and roofing systems.

LEAD-BASED PAINTS

Lead has long been used as a component of paint, primarily as a pigment and for its ability to inhibit and resist corrosion. Over time, as concern over the health effects associated with lead began to grow, health and environmental regulations were enacted to restrict the use of lead in certain products and activities in the U.S. In the last 25 years, lead-based paint, leaded gasoline, leaded can solder, and lead-containing plumbing materials were among the products that were gradually restricted or phased out of use.



REGULATORY PROPERTIES WITHIN THE CITY

Many existing industrial, institutional, and commercial/retail uses currently handle, store, and/or transport hazardous materials/waste within the City. The following describes existing uses that have reported such activities to the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and/or the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC). It is acknowledged that other uses, not listed below, may also handle, store, and/or transport hazardous materials/waste, as this list is not meant to be all inclusive.

UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANKS

The SWRCB's GeoTracker is a data warehouse that tracks regulatory data regarding underground fuel tanks, fuel pipelines, and public drinking water supplies. GeoTracker was developed pursuant to a mandate by the California State Legislature (Assembly Bill 592, Senate Bill 1189) to investigate the feasibility of establishing a Statewide Geographic Information System (GIS) database for leaking underground fuel tank (LUFT) sites. The GeoTracker database contains well, tank, and pipeline data for California.

A search of the GeoTracker database conducted by Michael Baker International on June 17, 2022 identified a total of two regulated sites within the project site:

- 8506 Avenue K East; and
- 8841 East Avenue J (Big Nine Market).

Both sites were reported as leaking underground storage tank (LUST) sites and have been granted case closure, indicating the releases have been remediated and/or mitigated to the satisfaction of the overseeing regulatory agency and no longer pose a threat to human health or the environment.

SITES HANDLING, STORING, AND TRANSPORTING HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

The DTSC's EnviroStor database is an online search and GIS tool for identifying sites that have known contamination or sites for which there may be reasons to investigate further. It also identifies facilities that are authorized to treat, store, dispose of, or transfer hazardous waste. The EnviroStor database includes lists of the following site types: Federal Superfund sites (National Priority List); State Response, including Military Facilities and State Superfund; Voluntary Cleanup; and School sites. EnviroStor provides site name, site type, status, address, any restricted use (recorded deed restrictions), past use(s) that caused contamination, potential contaminants of concern, potential environmental media affected, site history, planned and completed activities.

A search of the EnviroStor database conducted by Michael Baker International on June 17, 2022 identified two listed sites within the project site:

- 8506 Avenue K East; and
- 8841 East Avenue J (Big Nine Market).



As stated, both sites were reported as LUST sites and have been granted case closure, indicating the releases have been remediated and/or mitigated to the satisfaction of the overseeing regulatory agency and no longer pose a threat to human health or the environment.

PAST RELEASES/CORTESE LIST

Government Code Section 65962.5 requires the local enforcement agency, as designated pursuant to CCR Title 14 Section 18051 to compile, as appropriate, a list of all solid waste disposal facilities from which there is a known migration of hazardous waste. Specifically, Government Code Section 65962.5 requires the DTSC and SWRCB to compile and update a regulatory sites listing per the Code Section's criteria. Additionally, the State Department of Health Services is also required to compile and update, as appropriate, a list of all public drinking water wells that contain detectable levels of organic contaminants and are subject to water analysis pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 116395. These lists are collectively known as the "Cortese List".¹

According to CalEPA, the project site is not currently listed pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5.²

SCHOOL SITES

The City is served by four school districts: Lancaster School District, Westside Union School District, Eastside Union School District, and Antelope Valley Union High School District. These districts provide educational services for students in kindergarten through 12th grade. Education facilities and resources within Lancaster also include joint-use programs, and private and public education.

Several schools and educational facilities are located within 0.25-mile of the project site. Specifically, Enterprise Elementary School is approximately 0.1-mile west of the project site and West Coast Baptist College, Lancaster Baptist School and Antelope Valley Music Academy are approximately 0.17-mile north of the project site. While not within 0.25-mile of the site, Eastside High School is approximately 0.5-mile west of the project site.

5.8.2 REGULATORY SETTING

FEDERAL LEVEL

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), a "hazardous" waste is defined as one "which because of its quantity, concentrations, or physiochemical or infectious properties, may either increase mortality or produce irreversible or incapacitating illness, or pose a substantial present

¹ California Environmental Protection Agency, *Cortese List Data Resources*, <https://calepa.ca.gov/sitecleanup/corteselist/>, accessed June 17, 2022.

² California Environmental Protection Agency, *Cortese List Data Resources, List of Leaking Underground Storage Tank Sites from the State Water Board's GeoTracker database*, https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/search?CMD=search&case_number=&business_name=&main_street_name=&city=&zip=&county=&SITE_TYPE=LUFT&oilfield=&STATUS=&BRANCH=&MASTER_BASE=&Search=Search, accessed June 17, 2022.



or potential hazard to human health or the environment when improperly treated, stored, transported, or disposed of, or otherwise managed” (U.S. Public Health and Welfare Code Section 6903). Special handling and management are required for materials and wastes that exhibit hazardous properties. Treatment, storage, transport, and disposal of these materials are highly regulated at both the federal and State levels. The federal and State laws provide the “cradle to grave” regulation of hazardous wastes. Businesses, institutions, and other entities that generate hazardous waste are required to identify and track their hazardous waste from the point of generation until it is recycled, reused, or disposed of. Compliance with federal and State hazardous materials laws and regulations minimizes the potential risks to the public presented by these potential hazards.

Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA)

The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) is the principal federal law that regulates generation, management, and transportation of hazardous waste. Hazardous waste management includes the treatment, storage, or disposal of hazardous waste. The primary responsibility for implementing RCRA is assigned to the EPA’s DTSC, although individual states are encouraged to seek authorization to implement some or all RCRA provisions.

Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA)

The Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA) is a law developed to protect the water, air, and soil resources from the risks created by past chemical disposal practices. This law is also referred to as the Superfund Act and regulates sites on the National Priority List, which are called Superfund sites.

Hazardous Materials Transportation Act (HMTA)

The Hazardous Materials Transportation Act of 1975 (HMTA) empowered the Secretary of Transportation to designate as hazardous material any “particular quantity or form” of a material that “may pose an unreasonable risk to health and safety or property.” In 1990, Congress enacted the Hazardous Materials Transportation Uniform Safety Act (HMTUSA) to clarify the maze of conflicting State, local, and federal regulations. Like the HMTA, the HMTUSA requires the Secretary of Transportation to promulgate regulations for the safe transport of hazardous material in intrastate, interstate, and foreign commerce. The HMTUSA statute includes provisions to encourage uniformity among different State and local highway routing regulations, to develop criteria for the issuance of federal permits to motor carriers of hazardous materials, and to regulate the transport of radioactive materials.

Emergency Planning and Community Right-To-Know Act (EPCRA)

In 1986, Congress passed the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act. Title III of this regulation may be cited as the “Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act of 1986” (EPCRA). The EPCRA required the establishment of State commissions, planning districts, and local committees to facilitate the preparation and implementation of emergency plan. Under the



requirements, local emergency planning committees are responsible for developing a plan for preparing for and responding to a chemical emergency, including:

- An identification of local facilities and transportation routes where hazardous materials are present;
- The procedures for immediate response in case of an accident (this must include a community-wide evacuation plan);
- A plan for notifying the community that an incident has occurred;
- The names of response coordinators at local facilities; and
- A plan for conducting drills to test the plan.

The emergency plan is reviewed by the State Emergency Response Commission and publicized throughout the community. The local emergency planning committee is required to review, test, and update the plan each year. The goal of the plan is to improve public- and private-sector readiness and to mitigate local impacts resulting from natural or man-made emergencies.

Another purpose of the EPCRA is to inform communities and citizens of chemical hazards in their areas. Sections 311 and 312 of EPCRA require businesses to report to State and local agencies the location and quantities of chemicals stored on-site. Under Section 313 of EPCRA, manufacturers are required to report chemical releases for more than 600 designated chemicals. In addition to chemical releases, regulated facilities are also required to report off-site transfers of waste for treatment or disposal at separate facilities, pollution prevention measures, and chemical recycling activities. The EPA maintains the Toxic Release Inventory database that documents the information that regulated facilities are required to report annually.

National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants

The National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAP) are stationary source standards for hazardous air pollutants established by the EPA. Hazardous air pollutants (HAPs) are those pollutants that are known or suspected to cause cancer or other serious health effects, such as reproductive effects or birth defects, or adverse environmental effects. Sources subject to NESHAPs are required to perform an initial performance test to demonstrate compliance. To demonstrate continuous compliance, sources are generally required to monitor control device operating parameters which are established during the initial performance test. Sources may also be required to install and operate continuous emission monitors to demonstrate compliance.

STATE LEVEL

The EPA and the DTSC have developed and continue to update lists of hazardous wastes subject to regulation. In addition to the EPA and DTSC, the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board (Lahontan RWQCB) is the enforcing agency for the protection and restoration of water resources, including remediation of unauthorized releases of hazardous substances in soil and groundwater. Other State agencies involved in hazardous materials management include the Office of Emergency Services (OES), California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), CHP, California Air Resources Board (CARB), and the California Integrated Waste Management Board.



Hazardous Materials Release Notification

Many State statutes require emergency notification of a hazardous chemical release, including, but not limited to, the following:

- California Health and Safety Codes Sections 25270.8, and 25507;
- Vehicle Code Section 23112.5;
- Public Utilities Code Section 7673, (PUC General Orders #22-B, 161);
- Government Code Sections 51018, 8670.25.5 (a);
- Water Codes Sections 13271, 13272; and
- California Labor Code Section 6409.1 (b)10.

Requirements for immediate notification of all significant spills or threatened releases cover owners, operators, persons in charge, and employers. Notification is required regarding significant releases from facilities, vehicles, vessels, pipelines, and railroads. In addition, all releases that result in injuries or harmful exposure to workers must be immediately reported to the California Occupational Safety and Health Administration pursuant to the California Labor Code Section 6409.1(b).

Hazardous Materials Disclosure Programs

The Unified Program administered by the State of California consolidates, coordinates, and makes consistent the administrative requirements, permits, inspections, and enforcement activities for environmental and emergency management programs, which include: Hazardous Materials Release Response Plans and Inventories (business plans), the California Accidental Release Prevention (CalARP) Program, the UST Program, and the Aboveground Petroleum Storage Tank (APST) Program. The Unified Program is implemented at the local government level by Certified Unified Program Agencies (CUPAs).

Hazardous Materials Business Plans

Both the federal government (Code of Federal Regulations) and the State of California (California Health and Safety Code) require all businesses that handle more than a specified amount - or “reporting quantity” - of hazardous or extremely hazardous materials to submit a hazardous materials business plan (business plan) to their CUPA. Chapter 6.95 of the Health and Safety Code establishes minimum Statewide standards for a business plan. The Los Angeles County Code of Ordinances Section 12.64.030 requires all hazardous materials handlers operating under the jurisdiction of Los Angeles County to electronically submit an updated Hazardous Materials Business Plan (HMBP) and/or a certification statement including hazardous materials inventory, site map, contingency plan and the employee training plan information via the California Environmental Reporting System annually.

An HMBP must include an inventory of the hazardous materials at the facility. Businesses must update their HMBP at least every three years and the chemical portion every year. Also, HMBPs must include emergency response plans and procedures to be used in the event of a significant or threatened



significant release of a hazardous material. These plans need to identify the procedures for immediate notification of all appropriate agencies and personnel, identification of local emergency medical assistance appropriate for potential accident scenarios, contact information for all company emergency coordinators, a listing and location of emergency equipment at the business, an evacuation plan, and a training program for business personnel.

Transportation of Hazardous Materials/Wastes

Transportation of hazardous materials/wastes is regulated by CCR Title 26. The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) is the primary regulatory authority for the interstate transport of hazardous materials. The DOT establishes regulations for safe handling procedures (i.e., packaging, marking, labeling, and routing) and enforces federal and State regulations and respond to hazardous materials transportation emergencies along with the California Highway Patrol. Emergency responses are coordinated as necessary between federal, State, and local governmental authorities and private persons through a State-mandated Emergency Management Plan.

Worker and Workplace Hazardous Materials Safety

Occupational safety standards exist to minimize worker safety risks from both physical and chemical hazards in the workplace. Cal/OSHA is responsible for developing and enforcing workplace safety standards and assuring worker safety in the handling and use of hazardous materials. Among other requirements, Cal/OSHA requires many businesses to prepare Injury and Illness Prevention Plans and Chemical Hygiene Plans. The Hazard Communication Standard requires that workers be informed of the hazards associated with the materials they handle.

Department of Toxic Substances Control

The responsibility for implementation of RCRA was given to DTSC in August 1992. The DTSC is also responsible for implementing and enforcing California's own hazardous waste laws, which are known collectively as the Hazardous Waste Control Law. Although similar to RCRA, the California Hazardous Waste Control Law and its associated regulations define hazardous waste more broadly and regulate a larger number of chemicals. Hazardous wastes regulated by California but not by EPA are called "non-RCRA hazardous wastes."

Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board

The Lahontan RWQCB is the enforcing agency for the protection and restoration of water resources, including remediation of unauthorized releases of hazardous substances in soil and groundwater. The Underground Storage Tank Program protects public health and safety and the environment from releases of petroleum and other hazardous substances from UST systems. Such sites include active and inactive gasoline stations, agricultural sites, brownfield redevelopment sites, airports, bulk petrochemical storage terminals, pipeline facilities, and various chemical and industrial facilities. The Site Cleanup Program (SCP) focuses on releases of pollutants to soils and groundwater, but in some cases also to surface waters and sediments. SCP sites include those with pollution from recent or



historical surface spills and subsurface releases (e.g., pipelines, sumps), along with other unauthorized discharges that pollute or threaten to pollute surface waters or groundwater.

REGIONAL LEVEL

County of Los Angeles

Hazardous Materials Control Program

In May 1982, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors established the Hazardous Materials Control Program within the Department of Health Services. Originally, the Program focused on the inspection of businesses that generate hazardous waste, but has since expanded to include hazardous materials inspections, criminal investigations, site mitigation oversight, and emergency response operations. On July 1, 1991, the Program was transferred to the Los Angeles County Fire Department (LACFD) and its name changed to Health Hazardous Materials Division (HHMD).

The HHMD's mission is to protect the public health and the environment throughout Los Angeles County from accidental releases and improper handling, storage, transportation, and disposal of hazardous materials and wastes through coordinated efforts of inspections, emergency response, enforcement, and site mitigation oversight. The Hazardous Materials Specialists are environmental health professionals dedicated to preventing pollution by serving both the public and business communities in Los Angeles County.

Household Hazardous and E-Waste Program

The Los Angeles County Sanitation District, in cooperation with the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services (DHS), established the Household Hazardous and E-Waste (electronic waste) Roundup Program. The Household Hazardous Waste Collection Program provides Los Angeles County residents a legal and cost-free way to dispose of unwanted household chemicals that cannot be disposed of in the regular trash.

LOCAL LEVEL

City of Lancaster General Plan 2030

Plan for Public Health and Safety

The Plan for Public Health and Safety of the General Plan discusses natural and manmade conditions in the City which may pose certain levels of health and safety hazards to life and property within Lancaster, along with a comprehensive program to mitigate those hazards to acceptable levels. To a great extent, the creation, transportation, storage, use, and disposal of hazardous materials is regulated by federal, State, and County agencies, precluding action by the City. There are, however, well defined areas within which the City has the responsibility to enforce hazardous material regulations. The following policies pertaining to hazardous materials apply to the proposed project:



- Objective 4.5 Protect life and property from the potential detrimental effects (short and long term) of the creation, transportation, storage, treatment, and disposal of hazardous materials and wastes within the City of Lancaster.
- Policy 4.5.1: Ensure that activities within the City of Lancaster transport, use, store, and dispose of hazardous materials in a responsible manner which protects the public health and safety.

City of Lancaster General Plan Safety Element Update

The Safety Element is one of the State-mandated elements of the General Plan and was recently updated in June 2022 to comply with recent State legislation and guidelines. It presents the City’s overall goals, policies, and action programs to facilitate resiliency and prosperity. Through incorporating data and maps, addressing vulnerability to climate change, and incorporating policies and programs from the City’s update to the City’s *Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP)*, technical amendments to the Safety Element are intended to achieve compliance with State, regional and local policies and guidelines. The Safety Element organizes safety goals and policies into the following sections: Geology and Seismicity, Flooding, Noise, Air Installation Land Use Compatibility, Hazardous Materials, Crime Prevention and Protection Services, Fire Prevention and Suppression Services, Disaster Preparedness and Evacuation, Emergency Medical Facilities, and Climate Adaptation.

Lancaster Municipal Code

Municipal Code Chapter 17.40, Article VII, *Hazardous Waste Facilities*, establishes a uniform conditional use permit application and review process for the location, design and maintenance of hazardous waste facilities to ensure protection of the health, safety, and welfare of City residents. All land use decisions made with regard to an application for a hazardous waste facility project is required to be consistent with the approved Los Angeles County Hazardous Waste Management Plan. Review at the local level allows the community greater protection from hazardous waste facility projects being sited and located under County guidelines, which may not adequately address unique or specific circumstances within Lancaster. The permit process requires a detailed application, proper environmental assessment, and public hearings before the Lancaster Planning Commission, which ensures that site development occurs in an orderly, safe, and environmentally sound manner.

Section 10.04.240, *Vehicles Transporting Hazardous Materials-Parking Restrictions*, of the Municipal Code addresses vehicles transporting hazardous materials. This section aims to provide rules that prevent relief of a driver from any obligation imposed by federal, State, or local laws relating to the transportation of hazardous materials or explosives, motor carrier safety regulations, or the placement of warning signs or devices when a motor vehicle is stopped on a public street or highway. Specifically, the section requires a vehicle transporting hazardous materials to be attended at all times by its driver or a qualified representative. It also prohibits the vehicle from being parked on any highway, highway shoulder, street, alley, public way or public place, or within five feet of a residential zone, 1,000 feet of any school, or 300 feet of any bridge or tunnel, except for brief periods when mechanical or



equipment failure or disablement or malfunction of the vehicle, or the necessities of operation require the vehicle to be parked and make it impractical to park the vehicle in any other place.

Antelope Valley Environmental Collection Center

The Antelope Valley Environmental Collection Center (AVECC), located at 1200 West City Ranch Road in the City of Palmdale, is a joint partnership between the City of Lancaster, County, and Waste Management. AVECC is available to the residents of Lancaster to dispose of household hazardous waste at no cost. The AVECC is open the first and third Saturday of every month and collects household hazardous waste, including batteries, oil, paint, anti-freeze and pesticides, electronic waste (e.g., televisions, computers, monitors, cell phones, and printers), as well as sharps.

Lancaster residents also have the option to dispose of electronic waste at the Lancaster City Yard (615 West Avenue H) or Lancaster Landfill and Recycling Center (600 East Avenue F) at no additional cost.

5.8.3 IMPACT THRESHOLDS AND SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

The issues presented in the Initial Study Environmental Checklist (Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines*) have been utilized as thresholds of significance in this Section. Accordingly, hazards and hazardous materials impacts resulting from the implementation of the proposed project may be considered significant if they would result in the following:

- a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials (refer to Impact Statements HAZ-1);
- b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment (refer to Impact Statements HAZ-1);
- c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school (refer to Impact Statement HAZ-2);
- d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment (refer to Impact Statement HAZ-3);
- e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area (refer to Section 8.0, *Effects Found Not To Be Significant*);
- f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan (refer to Impact Statement HAZ-4); and



- g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fire (refer to Section 8.0, *Effects Found Not To Be Significant*).

Based on these standards/criteria, the effects of the proposed project have been categorized as either a “less than significant impact” or “potentially significant impact.” Mitigation measures are recommended for potentially significant impacts. If a potentially significant impact cannot be reduced to a less than significant level through the application of mitigation, it is categorized as a significant and unavoidable impact.

5.8.4 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATIONAL-RELATED IMPACTS

HAZ-1 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION COULD CREATE A SIGNIFICANT HAZARD TO THE PUBLIC OR ENVIRONMENT THROUGH REASONABLY FORESEEABLE UPSET AND ACCIDENT CONDITIONS INVOLVING THE RELEASE OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS INTO THE ENVIRONMENT, OR THROUGH THE ROUTINE TRANSPORT, USE, OR DISPOSAL OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS.

Impact Analysis: One of the means through which human exposure to hazardous substance could occur is through accidental release. Incidents that result in an accidental release of hazardous substances into the environment can cause contamination of soil, surface water, and groundwater, in addition to any toxic fumes that might be generated. Human exposure to contaminated soil or water can have potential health effects based on a variety of factors, such as the nature of the contaminant and the degree of exposure.

CONSTRUCTION

Disturbance of Contaminated Properties

As discussed, two properties within the proposed East Side Overlay Zone are listed as regulatory sites for containing LUSTs. However, both sites have received a cleanup status listing of “Case Closed” and are not a potential hazard of concern.^{3,4}

Future construction activities associated with allowed uses in accordance with the East Side Overlay Zone could involve the release of hazardous materials into the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions or the transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials.

Future development could involve grading and excavation activities that could expose construction workers and the public to hazardous substances and hazardous waste in the soil, soil vapor, and/or

³ State Water Resources Control Board, *GeoTracker*, https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/profile_report.asp?global_id=T0603700279, accessed June 21, 2022.

⁴ State Water Resources Control Board, *GeoTracker*, https://geotracker.waterboards.ca.gov/profile_report.asp?global_id=T0603799274, accessed July 8, 2022.



groundwater from the listed sites. However, future development would be required to comply with existing applicable federal, State, and local laws related to the hazardous materials.

Additionally, all future development would be required to undergo project-level environmental review under CEQA (e.g., preparation of a Categorical Exemption, Mitigated Negative Declaration, or Environmental Impact Report) on a case-by-case basis. Similarly, future development projects would be required to comply with existing applicable federal, State, and local laws related to the hazardous materials. The LACFD, Lahontan RWQCB, as well as the DTSC are responsible for monitoring regulatory sites (e.g., permitted UST and APST facilities) and preventing accidental release of hazards and hazardous materials. For example, owners or operators of APST and UST facilities are required to file a tank facility statement and develop and implement a Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasure (SPCC) Plan. Compliance with these programs would reduce the likelihood and severity of accidents involving leaking storage tanks, which could pollute ground and surface waters. If leaking storage tanks occur, the Lahontan RWQCB is responsible for overseeing cleanup actions. Additionally, Cal/OSHA is responsible for developing and enforcing workplace safety standards and assuring worker safety in the handling and use of hazardous materials. Compliance with regulations established by these agencies would reduce potential risks related to accidental release of hazardous materials from contaminated properties during construction to less than significant levels.

Hauling and Disposal of Hazardous Waste

Construction activities associated with future development could expose construction workers and the public to hazardous substances/materials involving the transport, use, and storage of construction materials, equipment (i.e., oil, diesel fuel, and transmission fluid), and demolition debris. Specifically, structures constructed between the 1940s and 1970s may be associated with hazardous building materials (e.g., ACM and/or LBP). Additionally, organochlorine-containing termiticides may have been used to treat wooden buildings constructed prior to 1989, and universal waste (certain categories of hazardous waste such as batteries, pesticides, mercury-containing equipment, and lamps that are commonly generated by a wide variety of establishments) are often present in sites with historical uses. Demolition of structures could expose construction personnel and the public to ACMs or LBPs. Federal and State regulations govern the renovation and demolition of structures where ACMs and LBPs are present. Future demolition activities associated with projects developed in accordance with the East Side Overlay Zone that could result in the release of ACMs and/or LBPs would be conducted according to applicable federal and State regulations. Specifically, the NESHAP establishes that building owners conduct an asbestos survey to determine the presence of ACMs prior to the commencement of any remedial work, including demolition.

Based on the unknown construction date of existing structures within the proposed overlay zone, there is the potential that ACM and/or LBPs are present in existing buildings. Should a future project developed in accordance with the East Side Overlay Zone require the demolition of existing buildings constructed between the 1940s and 1970s, the project would be required to comply with Mitigation Measure HAZ-1, which would require ACM and LBP surveys be conducted by a qualified specialist or contractor and be submitted to the HHMD for review and to the Community Development Director for approval prior to demolition of existing structures. Specifically, if ACMs are identified, asbestos abatement is required to be completed prior to any activities that would disturb ACMs or



create an airborne asbestos hazard. Asbestos removal is required to be performed by a State-certified asbestos containment contractor in accordance with the Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District's (AVAQMD) Rule 1403. Additionally, in accordance with AVAQMD Rule 1403, asbestos abatement is required prior to any demolition activities if ACMs are found. If paint is separated from building materials (chemically or physically) during demolition of the structures, the paint waste is required to be evaluated independently from the building material by a qualified environmental professional in accordance with California Code of Regulations Title 8, Section 1532.1. If LBPs are found, abatement is required to be completed by a qualified Lead Specialist prior to any activities that would create lead dust or fume hazard. LBP removal and disposal activities are required to comply with California Code of Regulation Title 8, Section 1532.1, which specifies exposure limits, exposure monitoring and respiratory protection, and mandates good worker practices by workers exposed to lead. Specialists or contractors performing ACM, LBP, and/or universal waste removal are required to provide evidence of abatement activities to the HHMD and Community Development Director. As such, compliance with existing regulations related to ACMs and LBPs and implementation of Mitigation Measure HAZ-1 would reduce potential impacts in this regard to a less than significant level.

Unknown Contaminated Sites

Future development in accordance with the overlay zone could involve grading and excavation activities which could reveal unknown hazards and hazardous materials contamination. As stated, future development would be required to comply with existing applicable federal, State, and local laws related to the hazardous materials.

Nevertheless, given that the exact location of future development projects within the proposed East Side Overlay Zone is unknown at this time, Mitigation Measure HAZ-2 establishes procedures to minimize potential risks to the public and environment if unknown wastes or suspect materials believed to involve hazardous waste or materials are encountered during construction of future development projects. Additionally, as mentioned above, the project would be required to comply with Mitigation Measure HAZ-1, which would require surveys of ACM, LBP, and universal waste to be conducted by a qualified specialist or contractor prior to demolition of existing structures constructed between the 1940s and 1970s. Compliance with Mitigation Measures HAZ-1 and HAZ-2 would minimize potential risks related to accidental release of hazardous materials from unknown contamination discovered during construction. Impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

OPERATIONS

Future development in accordance with the overlay zone would accommodate light industrial uses. As such, long-term operations associated with future uses allowed under the overlay zone may involve the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials typically associated with light industrial uses.

Future operational activities associated with future development in accordance with the overlay zone would be subject to compliance with existing federal, State, and local regulations, standards, and guidelines related to the transport, use, and disposal of hazardous materials. Specifically, future development would be subject to compliance with existing hazardous materials regulations codified



in California Code of Regulations Titles 8, 22, and 26, and their enabling legislations set forth in Health and Safety Code Chapter 6.95 as well as California Code of Regulations Title 49. Both federal and State regulations require any business, where the maximum quantity of a regulated substance exceeds the specified threshold quantity, register with the LACFD as a manager of regulated substances and prepare a Risk Management Plan. The Risk Management Plan must contain an off-site consequence analysis, a five-year accident history, an accident prevention program, an emergency response program, and a certification of the truth and accuracy of the submitted information. Businesses would also be required to submit their plans to the CUPA (i.e., LACFD), which would make the plans available to emergency response personnel.

Compliance with applicable laws and regulations governing the use, storage, and transportation of hazardous materials would ensure that all potentially hazardous materials are used and handled in an appropriate manner, and would minimize the potential for safety impacts to occur. Impacts regarding the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials during project operations associated with future development would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures:

HAZ-1 Each future development within the overlay zone subject to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review (meaning, subject to discretionary action and non-exempt from CEQA) shall be screened by the City of Lancaster Community Development Department to determine whether surveys of asbestos-containing materials (ACM), lead-based paint (LBP), and/or universal waste is required. Screening shall consider whether demolition or disturbance of existing structures constructed between the 1940s and 1970s is required. If no existing structures constructed between the 1940s and 1970s are proposed for demolition or disturbance, then surveys shall not be required. If such structures exist on-site and are proposed for demolition or disturbance, prior to issuance of any demolition permits, the City may require future project Applicants to retain a qualified specialist or contractor to conduct surveys of ACM, LBP, and universal waste and submit the surveys to the Los Angeles County Fire Department Health Hazardous Materials Division (HHMD) for review and comment, and to the City of Lancaster Community Development Director for approval. If ACMs are located, asbestos abatement shall be completed prior to any activities that would disturb ACMs or create an airborne asbestos hazard. Asbestos removal shall be performed by a State-certified asbestos containment contractor in accordance with the Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District's (AVAQMD) Rule 1403. If LBPs are found, abatement shall be completed by a qualified lead specialist prior to any activities that would create lead dust or fume hazard. LBP removal and disposal shall be performed in accordance with California Code of Regulation Title 8, Section 1532.1, which specifies exposure limits, exposure monitoring and respiratory protection, and mandates good worker practices by workers exposed to lead. Specialists or contractors performing ACM, LBP, and/or universal waste removal shall provide evidence of abatement activities to the HHMD and Community Development Director. The project Applicant shall inform the Community Development Director, via monthly compliance reports, of the date when all ACMs, LBPs, and/or universal waste are removed from the project site.



HAZ-2 If unknown wastes or suspect materials are discovered during construction activities associated with future development that are believed to involve hazardous waste or materials, the construction contractor shall implement the following:

- Immediately cease work in the vicinity of the suspected contaminant, and remove workers and the public from the area;
- Notify the City of Lancaster Community Development Director;
- Secure the area as directed by the City of Lancaster Community Development Director; and
- Notify the implementing agency's Hazardous Waste/Materials Coordinator (e.g., Los Angeles County Fire Department, Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board, and/or Department of Toxic Substances Control, as applicable). The Hazardous Waste/Materials Coordinator shall advise the responsible party of further actions that shall be taken, if required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.

SCHOOL SITES

HAZ-2 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION COULD EMIT HAZARDOUS EMISSIONS OR HANDLE HAZARDOUS OR ACUTELY HAZARDOUS MATERIALS, SUBSTANCES, OR WASTE WITHIN ONE-QUARTER MILE OF AN EXISTING SCHOOL.

Impact Analysis: Construction and operational activities associated with future development within the East Side Overlay Zone could be located within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school and thus, could expose children to hazardous substances/materials involving the transport, use, and storage of construction materials/equipment (i.e., oil, diesel fuel, and transmission fluid) and demolition debris. Specifically, Enterprise Elementary School is approximately 0.10-mile west of the overlay zone and West Coast Baptist College, Lancaster Baptist School and Antelope Valley Music Academy are approximately 0.17-mile north of the overlay zone. However, as discussed above, construction activities would be short-term, and the materials used would not be in such quantities, or stored in such a manner, as to pose a significant safety hazard. Further, all construction and operational activities would be required to demonstrate compliance with the applicable laws and regulations governing the use, storage, and transportation of hazardous materials, ensuring that all potentially hazardous materials are used and handled in an appropriate manner.

Additionally, all future development would be required to undergo project-level environmental review under CEQA on a case-by-case basis and comply with existing applicable federal, State, and local laws related to the hazardous materials. As mentioned previously, the LACFD, Lahontan RWQCB and DTSC are responsible for monitoring regulatory sites and preventing accidental release of hazards and hazardous materials. Compliance with these programs would reduce the likelihood and severity of



accidents involving leaking storage tanks, which could pollute ground and surface waters. If leaking storage tanks occur, the Lahontan RWQCB is responsible for overseeing cleanup actions. Additionally, Cal/OSHA is responsible for developing and enforcing workplace safety standards and assuring worker safety in the handling and use of hazardous materials. Compliance with regulations established by these agencies would ensure the transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials during construction or operational activities within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school are reduced to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS SITES

HAZ-3 FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT COULD BE LOCATED ON A HAZARDOUS MATERIAL SITES PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 65962.5 AND CREATE A SIGNIFICANT HAZARD TO THE PUBLIC OR THE ENVIRONMENT.

Impact Analysis: According to the California Environmental Protection Agency, the project site is not currently listed with any active regulatory sites pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5; however, it is acknowledged that the project site was historically listed pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. According to the GeoTracker and Envirostor databases, the Big Nine Market located at 8841 East Avenue J and an unknown site located at 8506 Avenue K are identified as LUST sites. Both sites have received a cleanup status listing of “Case Closed” as of May 2007 and June 1990, respectively.^{5,6} As such, future development of allowed uses in accordance with the East Side Overlay Zone would not be located on regulatory sites on the Cortese List pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. Impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.



EVACUATION PLAN

HAZ-4 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION COULD CREATE A SIGNIFICANT HAZARD TO THE PUBLIC OR ENVIRONMENT THROUGH INTERFERENCE WITH AN ADOPTED EMERGENCY RESPONSE OR EVACUATION PLAN.

Impact Analysis: The City’s LHMP provides a comprehensive analysis of natural and human-caused hazards that threaten the City, with a focus on mitigation and reduction of risks. Each section of the LHMP provides information and resources to assist in understanding the region and hazard-related issues facing citizens, businesses, and the environment. The sections of the LHMP combine to create a document that guides the City’s goal to reduce risk and prevent loss from future hazard events. Additionally, to be used in conjunction with the LMHP, the City’s *Emergency Operations Plan* (EOP) is a flexible, multi-hazard document that addresses the City’s planned response and short-term recovery to extraordinary emergency/disaster situations associated with natural disasters, technological incidents, and national security emergencies. The EOP does not address normal day-to-day emergencies or the established and routine procedures used in coping with such emergencies. Instead, the operational concepts reflected in this plan focus on potential large-scale disasters that can generate unique situations requiring unusual responses. It is designed to include the City as part of the Los Angeles Operational Area, California Standardized Emergency Management System, and National Incident Management System. The Safety Element presents the City’s overall goals, policies, and action programs to facilitate resiliency.

The proposed project would establish the East Side Overlay Zone within the eastern portion of the City and would not result in any adverse alterations to vehicular circulation routes or obstruct public access along adjacent roadways. Future development implemented in accordance with the proposed overlay zone would be required to comply with all applicable City codes and policies related to emergency access, including the California Fire Code and Municipal Code Title 15, *Buildings and Construction*. Future development would also be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA to evaluate project-level impacts with regards to emergency access. Thus, the proposed project would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. Impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

5.8.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Section 15355 of the *CEQA Guidelines* requires an analysis of cumulative impacts, which are defined as, “two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable, or which compound or increase other environmental impacts.”



- **PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION, COMBINED WITH OTHER RELATED PROJECTS, COULD CREATE A SIGNIFICANT HAZARD TO THE PUBLIC OR ENVIRONMENT THROUGH REASONABLY FORESEEABLE UPSET AND ACCIDENT CONDITIONS INVOLVING THE RELEASE OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS INTO THE ENVIRONMENT, OR THROUGH THE ROUTINE TRANSPORT, USE, OR DISPOSAL OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS.**

Impact Analysis: Cumulative projects developed in accordance with the General Plan could result in the handling of hazardous materials, potential for accidental conditions, or an increase in the transport of hazardous materials, during site disturbance, demolition, and/or grading activities. However, future cumulative projects would be required to undergo project-specific environmental review under CEQA and the City's discretionary review process to determine potential impacts based on project-specific construction and operational activities.

Future light industrial development accommodated by the proposed overlay zone would be required to undergo project-level environmental review under CEQA on a case-by-case basis and comply with existing applicable State and local laws related to hazardous materials. Further, given that the exact location of future light industrial development is unknown at this time, implementation of Mitigation Measures HAZ-1 and HAZ-2 would reduce potential risks associated with ACM, LBP, universal waste, and any unknown wastes or suspect material discovered during construction activities. With implementation of Mitigation Measures HAZ-1 and HAZ-2, the proposed overlay zone would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact and impacts in this regard would be reduced to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures: Refer to Mitigation Measures HAZ-1 and HAZ-2.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.

- **THE PROPOSED PROJECT, COMBINED WITH OTHER RELATED PROJECTS, COULD EMIT HAZARDOUS EMISSIONS OR HANDLE HAZARDOUS OR ACUTELY HAZARDOUS MATERIALS, SUBSTANCES, OR WASTE WITHIN ONE-QUARTER MILE OF AN EXISTING SCHOOL.**

Impact Analysis: Dependent on a project's location, cumulative projects developed in accordance with the General Plan have the potential to emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing school. However, future cumulative projects would similarly be required to undergo project-level environmental review under CEQA on a case-by-case basis and comply with existing applicable federal, State and local laws related to hazardous materials.

As stated, future development in accordance with the proposed overlay zone would not result in significant impacts involving hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing school upon compliance with existing regulations. Thus, the project would not significantly contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact in this regard.



Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

- **THE PROPOSED PROJECT, COMBINED WITH OTHER RELATED PROJECTS, COULD BE LOCATED ON A HAZARDOUS MATERIAL SITES PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 65962.5 AND RESULT IN CUMULATIVELY CONSIDERABLE IMPACTS TO THE PUBLIC OR THE ENVIRONMENT.**

Impact Analysis: Depending on a project's location, cumulative projects developed in accordance with the General Plan could occur on hazardous material sites pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. However, as there are no active regulatory sites pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 located within the proposed overlay zone, less than significant impacts would occur in this regard and the project would not significantly contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

- **THE PROPOSED PROJECT, COMBINED WITH OTHER RELATED PROJECTS, COULD CREATE A SIGNIFICANT HAZARD TO THE PUBLIC OR ENVIRONMENT THROUGH INTERFERENCE WITH AN ADOPTED EMERGENCY RESPONSE OR EVACUATION PLAN.**

Impact Analysis: Cumulative projects developed in accordance with the General Plan could interfere with an adopted emergency response or evacuation plan. However, as stated, future cumulative projects would be required to undergo project-level environmental review under CEQA on a case-by-case basis and comply with existing applicable State and local laws related to emergency access and response.

As analyzed above, the proposed project would establish the East Side Overlay Zone within the eastern portion of the City and would not result in any adverse alterations to vehicular circulation routes or obstruct public access along adjacent roadways. Future development associated with the overlay zone would also be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA to evaluate project-level and site-specific impacts with regards to emergency access. Thus, cumulatively considerable impacts would not occur in this regard and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

5.8.6 SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

No significant unavoidable impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials have been identified.



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5.9 Population and Housing



5.9 POPULATION AND HOUSING

This section identifies the existing population, housing, and employment statistics in the City and provides an analysis of potential impacts that may result from project implementation. More specifically, this impact analysis evaluates how project implementation would induce direct or indirect population, housing, or employment growth in the City. The following analyses are based primarily on data obtained from the 2000 and 2010 U.S. Census, California Department of Finance (2022 data), California Employment Development Department (2022 data), and Southern California Association of Governments' (SCAG) *Connect SoCal: 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/ Sustainable Communities Strategy* (2020-2045 RTP/SCS).

5.9.1 EXISTING SETTING

POPULATION

Population data for the County and City is presented in Table 5.9-1, *Population Estimates and Projections*.

**Table 5.9-1
Population Estimates and Projections**

Year	County of Los Angeles	City of Lancaster	City of Lancaster as Percent of County of Los Angeles
Population			
2010 ¹	9,818,605	156,633	1.6%
Existing Conditions (May 2022) ²	9,861,224	175,164	1.8%
2010-2022 Change	+42,619	+18,531	--
2010-2022 % Change	+4.3%	+11.8%	--
2045 SCAG Forecast³	11,673,600	213,300	1.8%
2022-2045 Change	+1,812,376	+38,136	--
2022-2045 % Change	+18.4%	21.8%	--

Sources:

1. U.S. Census Bureau, *2010 Census-Total Population*, <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=Los%20Angeles%20County&t=Populations%20and%20People&tid=DECENNIALSF12010.P1>, accessed June 8, 2022.
2. California Department of Finance, *E-5 Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State, January 2021-2022, with 2020 Benchmark*, May 2022.
3. Southern California Association of Governments, *2020-2045 RTP/SCS Demographics & Growth Forecast Appendix*, September 2020, https://scag.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/0903fconnectsocial_demographics-and-growth-forecast.pdf?1606001579, accessed June 8, 2022.



County of Los Angeles

According to Table 5.9-1, the County’s 2010 population was approximately 9,818,605 persons and is currently estimated to be approximately 9,861,224 persons, representing a growth rate of approximately 4.3 percent between 2010 and 2022.

SCAG projects the County’s population to increase to approximately 11,673,600 persons by 2045, an 18.4 percent increase from 2022 to 2045.

City of Lancaster

As indicated in Table 5.9-1, the City’s population was an estimated 156,633 persons in 2010 and is currently estimated to be approximately 175,164 persons, representing a population increase rate of approximately 11.8 percent between 2010 and 2022.

SCAG forecasts the City’s population to increase to approximately 213,300 persons by 2045, a 21.8 percent increase from 2022 to 2045. Comparatively, the City is forecast to grow at a faster rate than the County, which is forecast to grow by approximately 18.4 percent. By 2045, the City is forecasted to constitute approximately 1.8 percent of the County’s total population, similar to existing conditions.

HOUSING

Housing data for the County and City is presented in Table 5.9-2, *Housing Inventory Estimates and Projections*.

Table 5.9-2
Housing Inventory Estimates and Projections

	Dwelling Units	
	County of Los Angeles	City of Lancaster
2010 ¹	3,445,076	51,835
Existing Conditions (May 2022) ²	3,635,136	55,702
2010-2022 Change	+190,060	+3,867
2010-2022 % Change	+5.5%	+7.5%
2022 Vacancy Rate ²	5.3%	3.4%
2022 Persons per Household ²	2.80	3.11
2045 SCAG Forecasts ³	4,349,630⁴	77,226⁴
2022-2045 Change	+714,494	+21,524
2022-2045 % Change	+19.7%	+38.6%

Sources:

1. U.S. Census Bureau, *California, 2010*, <https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/decennial/2010/cph-2/cph-2-6.pdf>, accessed July 18, 2022.
2. California Department of Finance, *E-5 Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State, January 2021-2022, with 2020 Benchmark*, May 2022.
3. Southern California Association of Governments, *2020-2045 RTP/SCS Demographics & Growth Forecast Appendix*, September 2020, https://scag.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/0903fconnectsocial_demographics-and-growth-forecast.pdf?1606001579, accessed June 8, 2022.
4. Dwelling unit forecasts are based on 2022 vacancy rates and SCAG forecasted household estimates.



County of Los Angeles

The County's housing inventory was an estimated 3,445,076 dwelling units in 2010 and is currently estimated to be approximately 3,635,136 dwelling units, representing an increase of approximately 5.5 percent between 2010 and 2022.

Vacancy rates are a measure of the general availability of housing. They also indicate how well the types of available units meet the housing market demand. A low vacancy rate suggests that households may have difficulty finding housing within their price range, whereas a high vacancy rate indicates that either the units available are not suited to the population's needs or there is an oversupply of housing units. The availability of vacant housing units provides households with choices of type and price to accommodate their specific needs. Low vacancy rates can result in higher prices, limited choices, and settling with inadequate housing. Low vacancy rates may also contribute to overcrowding. A vacancy rate between 4.0 and 6.0 is considered "healthy." As of 2022, the County has an estimated vacancy rate of 5.3 percent and an average household size of 2.80.

SCAG forecasts the County's households to reach 4,119,100 by 2045. Assuming a 5.3 percent vacancy rate, the County's housing inventory is forecast to total approximately 4,349,630 dwelling units by 2045, representing an increase of approximately 19.7 percent between 2022 and 2045; refer to [Table 5.9-2](#).

City of Lancaster

The City's housing inventory was an estimated 51,835 dwelling units in 2010 and is currently estimated to be approximately 55,702 dwelling units, representing an increase of approximately 7.5 percent from 2010 to 2022; refer to [Table 5.9-2](#). Comparatively, the City's housing growth rate between 2010 and 2022 was higher than the County's growth rate for the same period (5.5 percent).

As indicated in [Table 5.9-2](#), the City's 2022 vacancy rate is estimated to be approximately 3.4 percent and an average household size of 3.11. Comparatively, the City has a lower vacancy rate than the County's overall vacancy rate of 5.3 percent and a greater household size than the County's average household size of 2.80.

SCAG forecasts the City's households to reach 74,600 by 2045. Assuming a 3.4 percent vacancy rate, the City's housing inventory is anticipated to increase to 77,226 dwelling units by 2045, representing an increase of approximately 38.6 percent between 2022 and 2045; refer to [Table 5.9-2](#).

EMPLOYMENT

[Table 5.9-3, *Employment Estimates and Projections*](#), details existing and projected employment data for the County and City.



**Table 5.9-3
Employment Estimates and Projections**

	County of Los Angeles		City of Lancaster	
	Employment	Unemployment Rate	Employment	Unemployment Rate
Existing Conditions (February 2023) ¹	4,777,500	5.3%	59,400	7.3%
2045 SCAG Forecast ²	5,382,200	--	65,500	--
2022-2045 Change	+604,700	--	+6,100	--
2022-2045 % Change	+12.7%	--	+10.3%	--

Sources:

1. California Employment Development Department, Labor Market Information Division, *Monthly Labor Force Data for Cities and Census Designated Places (CDP) February 2023 - Preliminary*, March 24, 2023.
2. Southern California Association of Governments, *2020-2045 RTP/SCS Demographics & Growth Forecast Appendix*, September 2020, https://www.connectsocial.org/Documents/Draft/dConnectSoCal_Demographics-And-Growth-Forecast.pdf, accessed June 8, 2022.

County of Los Angeles

According to the California Employment Development Department, the County has an estimated 4,784,400 jobs and an unemployment rate of 4.5 percent as of May 2022. SCAG projections indicate the County will have an estimated 5,382,200 jobs by 2045.

City of Lancaster

As indicated in Table 5.9-3, the City has an estimated 59,400 jobs and an unemployment rate of 6.9 percent as of May 2022. SCAG projections indicate that the number of jobs within the City are forecast to increase by 6,100 jobs to 65,500 jobs by 2045.

The jobs/housing ratio is used as a general measure of balance between a community's employment opportunities and the housing needs of its residents. However, it does not indicate the types of jobs available or if wages are commensurate with housing prices. It should be noted that a ratio of 1.0 or greater generally indicates that a community provides adequate employment opportunities, potentially allowing its residents to work within the community (rather than commuting to neighboring cities). As of May 2022, the City's jobs/housing ratio is approximately 1.07. By 2045, the City's jobs/housing ratio is anticipated to be approximately 0.85.

5.9.2 REGULATORY SETTING

REGIONAL LEVEL

Southern California Association of Governments

SCAG is the responsible agency for developing and adopting regional housing, population, and employment growth forecasts for local governments from Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura counties.



SCAG’s demographic data is developed to enable the proper planning of infrastructure and facilities to adequately meet the needs of anticipated growth. On September 3, 2020, SCAG’s Regional Council adopted the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS, a long-range visioning plan that balances future mobility and housing needs with economic, environmental, and public health goals.

REGIONAL HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

State law requires that jurisdictions provide their fair share of regional housing needs. The State of California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) is mandated to determine the Statewide housing need. In cooperation with HCD, local governments and Councils of Governments (COGs) are charged with deciding of the existing and projected housing needs as a share of the Statewide housing need of their city or region.

The Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) is an assessment process performed periodically as part of housing element and general plan updates at the local level. The RHNA quantifies the housing need by income group within each jurisdiction during specific planning periods. The 6th RHNA cycle covers the housing element planning period from October 2021 through October 2029. The *6th Cycle Final RHNA Allocation Plan* was approved by HCD on March 22, 2021.

The RHNA allows communities to anticipate growth so that collectively, the region can grow in ways that enhance quality of life, improve access to jobs, promote transportation mobility, and address social equity and fair share housing needs.

LOCAL LEVEL

City of Lancaster General Plan 2030

PLAN FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND VITALITY

The Plan for Economic and Vitality focuses on the ways in which people and businesses contribute to the City’s economy through consumption, production, investment, and job creation. Additionally, the Plan for Economic and Vitality creates linkages between population, area businesses and industry, and the financial health of City government. The following objectives and policies are relevant to the proposed project:

- Objective 16.1 Implement the four Pillars of the Lancaster Economic Development/Redevelopment Strategic Plan in order to achieve a more vibrant, energetic and prosperous Lancaster.

- Policy 16.1.1 Promote a jobs/housing balance that places an emphasis on the attraction of high-paying jobs which will enable the local workforce to achieve the standard of living necessary to both live and work within the community.



PLAN FOR PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

The Plan for Physical Development focuses on the organization of the City's physical environment into a local, functional, and aesthetic pattern consistent with community values. These policies and programs are illustrated on the General Plan Land Use Map. This plan meets the California Government Code land use element mandate to designate the proposed general distribution, general location, and extent of the uses of land for housing, business, industry, and open space. Beyond that requirement, the Plan for Physical Development is also a summary of the manner in which other General Plan issues affect the arrangement and design of development within the General Plan study area. The plan focuses on understanding current land uses, the design and form of present developments, identifies land use constraints to development, land use trends for the future, and agency coordination to ensure compatible land uses. The following objectives and policies are relevant to the proposed project:

Objective 17.1 Designate adequate land for a balanced mix of rural and urban residential and non-residential uses.

Policy 17.1.4: Provide for office and industrial-based employment-generating lands which are highly accessible and compatible with other uses in the community.

City of Lancaster 2021-2029 Housing Element

The *City of Lancaster 2021-2029 Housing Element* (Housing Element) was adopted by the City Council in February 2022. The Housing Element identifies and establishes the City's strategy for the maintenance and development of housing to meet the needs of existing and future residents. It establishes policies that guide City decision making and an action program to implement housing goals for the State-designated eight-year planning period from October 2021 through October 2029. The City's housing strategy is based on a comprehensive evaluation of existing housing programs and policies; an assessment of the City's population, economic, and housing characteristics; and a discussion of the physical and regulatory resources and constraints for housing production.

According to SCAG's *6th Cycle Final RHNA Allocation Plan*, the housing needs of the City for the 2021-2029 planning period is 9,023 housing units; refer to Table 5.9-4, *City of Lancaster 2021-2029 RHNA Allocation*. Table 5.9-4 summarizes the specific number of housing units per income category anticipated to be provided between 2021 and 2029.



Table 5.9-4
City of Lancaster 2021-2029 RHNA Allocation

Income Category ¹	RHNA Allocation (Units)	Percentage of Units
Very Low Income (0-50% AMI ²)	2,224	25%
Low Income (51-80% AMI)	1,194	13%
Moderate Income (80-120% AMI)	1,328	15%
Above Moderate Income (121+% AMI)	4,277	47%
Total	9,023	100%

Notes:

1. Income Categories:

Very Low Income: Four-person household does not exceed 50 percent of the median family income of the County.

Low Income: Four-person household with income between 51 percent and 80 percent of the County median family income.

Moderate Income: Four-person household with income between 81 percent and 120 percent of the County median family income.

Above Moderate Income: Four-person household with income 121 percent or more of the County median family income.

2. AMI= Area Median Income

Source: Southern California Association of Governments, *SCAG 6th Cycle Final RHNA Allocation Plan*, approved March 22, 2021, modified July 1, 2021, <https://scag.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/6th-cycle-rhna-final-allocation-plan.pdf?1623447417>, accessed June 29, 2022.

5.9.3 IMPACT THRESHOLDS AND SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines* contains the Environmental Checklist form that was used during the preparation of this EIR. Accordingly, a project may create a significant adverse environmental impact to population and housing if it would:

- a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure) (refer to Impact Statement PH-1); and/or
- b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere (refer to Section 8.0, *Effects Found Not To Be Significant*).

Based on these standards/criteria, the effects of the proposed program have been categorized as either a “less than significant impact” or “significant and unavoidable impact.” If a potentially significant impact cannot be reduced to a less than significant level through the application of mitigation, it is categorized as a significant and unavoidable impact.



5.9.4 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

UNPLANNED POPULATION GROWTH

PH-1 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROPOSED PROJECT COULD POTENTIALLY INDUCE SUBSTANTIAL UNPLANNED POPULATION GROWTH IN AN AREA, EITHER DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY.

Impact Analysis: The proposed project would introduce a new overlay zone in the eastern portion of Lancaster that would allow light industrial uses. Potential uses include alternative energy uses, light manufacturing, distribution, and warehousing, among others, which would result in direct employment growth. These employment-generating land uses could result in direct population growth in the City assuming that future employees and their families may choose to relocate to the City from other jurisdictions.

However, estimating the number of employees who would relocate to the City as a result of the proposed overlay zone would be speculative given that many personal factors influence personal housing location decisions (i.e., family income levels and the cost and availability of suitable housing in the local area). There is also an expectation that existing Lancaster residents would be a portion of the workforce employed by future developments permitted by the overlay zone. Moreover, while the proposed overlay would allow for light industrial uses within the project site, the existing City land use and zoning designations for the site would remain; thus, development occurring under the overlay project would not conflict with the City's long range plan for development and population or represent unplanned growth.

All future development associated with allowed uses in accordance with East Side Overlay Zone would be required to undergo project-level environmental review under CEQA on a case-by-case basis. As such, future development projects would be required to analyze project-specific impacts to the City's existing population and housing. Thus, the proposed East Side Overlay Zone would not induce substantial unplanned population growth. Impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

5.9.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

CEQA Guidelines Section 15355 requires an analysis of cumulative impacts, which are defined as, “two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable, or which compound or increase other environmental impacts.”



UNPLANNED POPULATION GROWTH

- **PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION, COMBINED WITH OTHER RELATED PROJECTS, COULD INDUCE SUBSTANTIAL UNPLANNED POPULATION GROWTH IN AN AREA, EITHER DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY.**

Impact Analysis: Cumulative projects developed in accordance with the General Plan could introduce new residences and businesses to the City that result in population growth in the City. Therefore, cumulative projects could induce substantial unplanned population growth. However, estimating the number of residents who would relocate to the City would be speculative given that many personal factors influence personal housing location decisions (i.e., family income levels and the cost and availability of suitable housing in the local area). There is also the potential that future jobs generated by employment-generating developments in accordance with the General Plan are filled by existing City residents. Future cumulative projects would be required to undergo project-specific environmental review under CEQA and the City's discretionary review process to determine the project's potential impacts to the City's population growth.

As stated, future buildout of the proposed East Side Overlay Zone would result in less than significant impacts regarding unplanned population growth and would be required to undergo separate environmental review to evaluate project-specific population impacts. Moreover, while the proposed overlay would allow for light industrial uses within the project site, the existing City land use and zoning designations for the site would remain; thus, development occurring under the overlay project would not conflict with the City's long range plan for development and population or represent unplanned growth. Thus, the overlay zone would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

5.9.6 SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

No significant unavoidable impacts related to population and housing have been identified.



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5.10 Public Services and Recreation



5.10 PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

Public services addressed in this section include fire protection, police protection, schools, parks and recreation, and other public facilities such as libraries. This section discusses existing conditions and potential project impacts on such services.

5.10.1 EXISTING SETTING

FIRE PROTECTION

The City contracts with the Los Angeles County Fire Department (LACFD) for fire protection and paramedic services. LACFD provides fire suppression, fire prevention, paramedic response, and hazardous materials response to the project area. LACFD is organized into nine fire divisions with multiple battalions in each division; Lancaster is served by Division 5, Battalion 11 of the LACFD.^{1,2} The City is served by six stations located in Lancaster, as well as one station located within the unincorporated community of Antelope Acres; refer to Table 5.10-1, *Fire Stations*. As shown in Table 5.10-1, the closest fire station to the project site is Fire Station 117, approximately 1.2 miles to the northwest at 44851 30th East Street.

**Table 5.10-1
Fire Stations**

Station Name	Address	Distance and Direction from Project Site
Fire Station 33	44947 Date Avenue Lancaster, CA 93534	4.7 miles northwest
Fire Station 112	8812 West Avenue E-8 Lancaster, CA 93535	13.7 miles northwest
Fire Station 117	44851 30th Street East Lancaster, CA 93535	1.2 miles northwest
Fire Station 129	42110 6th Street West Lancaster, CA 93534	4.8 miles southwest
Fire Station 130	44558 40th Street West Lancaster, CA 93536	8.2 miles northwest
Fire Station 134	43225 North 25th Street Lancaster, CA 93534	6.6 miles west
Fire Station 135	1846 East Avenue K-4 Lancaster, CA 93535	2.1 miles west

Source: City of Lancaster, *L.A. County Fire Department*, <https://www.cityoflancasterca.org/our-city/departments-services/public-safety/contract-services-emergency-response/l-a-county-fire-department>, accessed June 3, 2022.

¹ Los Angeles County Fire Department, *Contact Us-Find Your Local Assistant Fire Chief*, <https://fire.lacounty.gov/contact-us/>, accessed June 3, 2022.

² City of Lancaster, *L.A. County Fire Department*, <https://www.cityoflancasterca.org/our-city/departments-services/public-safety/contract-services-emergency-response/l-a-county-fire-department>, accessed June 3, 2022.



POLICE PROTECTION

The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD) is contracted by the City for police protection and emergency services. The LASD also provides patrol and traffic law enforcement, detective services and support services to the City. The Lancaster Sheriff's Station serves the City and the surrounding unincorporated communities, including Antelope Acres, Lake Los Angeles, and Quartz Hill, and is located approximately 4.5 miles west of the project site at 501 West Lancaster Boulevard.

As of June 1, 2019, the Lancaster Sheriff's Station is staffed by 228 sworn personnel, of which 191 personnel are assigned to patrol duties during day, night, or early morning shifts. The Lancaster Sheriff's Station's average response times for emergency, priority, and routine calls for service are 6 minutes, 20 minutes, and 133 minutes, respectively.³

According to 2020 data, the Lancaster Sheriff's Station service area population was 194,929 residents; and, based on current staffing levels, equates to a service ratio of 10 patrol deputies per 8,550 residents. Additionally, the crime-to-population ratio in the Lancaster Sheriff's Station service area is 23.02 incidents per 1,000 residents.⁴

SCHOOLS

The project site is served by the Eastside Union School District (EUSD) and the Antelope Valley Union High School District (AVUHSD).

Eastside Union School District

The EUSD provides educational services for students in grades kindergarten through eighth grade at four elementary schools, one middle school, and one transitional learning center.⁵ The closest EUSD school to the project site is Enterprise Elementary school, which is approximately 500 feet to the west of the project site at 3730 East Avenue J 4. EUSD imposes a development impact fee of \$2.58 per residential unit and \$0.414 per square foot for commercial/industrial land uses.⁶ A Fee Sharing Agreement of all development fee funds is in place with AVUHSD, in which 26 percent of all development impact fees is shared with AVUHSD.

Antelope Valley Union High School District

The AVUHSD provides educational services for students between ninth through twelfth grade, an early college high school, a charter academy for students between seventh grade and eighth grade, an

³ City of Lancaster, *Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Lancaster Health District Master Plan*, December 2020.

⁴ Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, *Lancaster Station 2020 Synopsis*, <http://shq.lasdnews.net/CrimeStats/yir9600/yir2020/lan/synopsis.htm>, accessed July 18, 2022.

⁵ Eastside Union School District, *Our Schools*, <https://www.eastsideusd.org/Page/129>, accessed June 3, 2022.

⁶ Robinson, Shanna, Executive Assistant, Eastside Union School District Administrative Services, Email Correspondence, July 21, 2022.



adult education center, and a virtual academy.⁷ The closest AVUHSD school to the project site is Eastside High School, located approximately 0.5-mile west at 3200 East Avenue J 8.

According to the 2022 *Antelope Valley Joint Union High School District School Facilities Fee Justification Report*, AVUHSD facilities are expected to have a surplus of 358 seats that may be utilized to house students expected to be generated by future housing units.⁸ AVUHSD imposes a development impact fee of \$1.25 per square foot of new residential development, and \$0.20 per square foot of new commercial and industrial development. As stated, EUSD and AVUHSD have a Fee Sharing Agreement of all development fee funds collected from new development.

PARKS AND RECREATION

There are 12 City parks encompassing approximately 450 acres of parkland that are maintained by the City's PARCS: Parks, Arts, Recreation & Community Services. The City also owns and maintains several museums, community buildings, and a baseball stadium that are not included in the total parkland acreage, including the Cedar Center for the Arts, City Hall, Lancaster Municipal Stadium, Lancaster Museum of Art and History, Lancaster National Soccer Center, Lancaster Performing Arts Center, Maintenance Yard, and Western Hotel Museum. Park amenities include open play areas; playgrounds; walking trails; basketball, horseshoe, tennis, and volleyball courts; softball and soccer fields; swimming pools; barbecue facilities; picnic tables and shelters; restrooms; kitchens; meeting rooms; and auditoriums.⁹

Table 5.10-2, *Local Parks and Facilities within 5-Miles of the Project Site*, identifies existing City parks within a five-mile radius of the project area. There are no parks or joint-use facilities on-site. The closest park to the project site is Skytower Park, located approximately 0.7-mile to the west at 43434 Vineyard Drive. Additionally, the Lancaster National Soccer Center is approximately 0.5-mile to the west at 43000 30th Street East.

Based on an estimated 2022 population of 175,164 persons, the City has approximately 2.6 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.¹⁰

⁷ Antelope Valley Union High School District, *Schools*, <https://www.avdistrict.org/schools>, accessed June 3, 2022.

⁸ Key Analytics, *Antelope Valley Joint Union High School District School Facilities Fee Justification Report*, approved June 8, 2022.

⁹ City of Lancaster, *Parks and Facilities*, <https://www.cityoflancasterca.org/our-city/departments-services/parks-recreation-arts/parks-and-facilities>, accessed June 3, 2022.

¹⁰ California Department of Finance, *E-5 Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State, January 2021-2022, with 2020 Benchmark*, June 2022.



Table 5.10-2
Local Parks and Facilities within 5-Miles of the Project Site

Park/Facility	Meeting Rooms	Auditorium	Kitchen	Restrooms	Picnic Tables	Barbecue Facilities	Open Play Areas	Playground	Walking Trails	Basketball Courts	Horseshoe Courts	Softball Fields	Soccer Fields	Tennis Courts	Volleyball Courts	Swimming Pools
American Heroes Park 701 West Kettering Avenue	X		X	X	X			X	X	X	X		X			
Cedar Center for the Arts 44851 Cedar Avenue	X	X		X												
Deputy Pierre Bain Park/ Eastside Pool 45045 North 5th Street East				X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X			X
El Dorado Park 44501 North 5th Street East	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	
Forrest E. Hull Park 2850 West Avenue L-12					X	X			X	X	X					
Jane Reynolds Park/Webber Pool 716 Oldfield Street	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Sergeant Steve Owen Memorial Park/Big 8 Softball Complex 43063 10th Street West	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X			X	
Lancaster Museum of Art and History 665 West Lancaster Boulevard	X			X												
Lancaster National Soccer Center 43000 30th Street East	X		X				X				X					
Maintenance Yard 615 West Avenue H	X		X													
Mariposa Park 45755 North Fig Avenue				X	X	X	X	X	X	X						
Prime Desert Woodland Preserve 43201 35th Street West				X						X						
Rawley Duntley Park 3334 West Avenue K			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	
Skytower Park 43434 North Vineyard	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X					
Tierra Bonita Park 44910 27th Street East				X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X			
Whit Carter Park 45635 Sierra Highway				X	X			X	X							

Source: City of Lancaster, *Parks and Facilities*, <https://www.cityoflancasterca.org/our-city/departments-services/parks-recreation-arts/parks-and-facilities>, accessed July 7, 2022.



PUBLIC LIBRARIES

The LA County Library provides library services to over 3.4 million residents in unincorporated areas and to residents of 49 of the 88 incorporated cities of the County, including the City of Lancaster.¹¹ The Lancaster Library serves as the LA County Library branch library for Lancaster. The approximately 48,700-square foot Lancaster Library is located at 601 West Lancaster Boulevard, approximately 4.6 miles northwest of the project site. The Lancaster Library provides hardcopy and online collections, in-person services (e.g., a self-service photocopier/scanner and telephone research assistance), online services (e.g., an online library catalog, online research databases, downloadable audiobooks, eBooks, and music), and a children’s and teens online homework assistance program. The library has nine public computers, two children’s computers, two express computers (for 15-minute use), and 10 laptop/hotspot kits. Additionally, the library has a 200-capacity meeting room.¹²

5.10.2 REGULATORY SETTING

FIRE PROTECTION

State Level

CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS TITLE 24 – FIRE CODES

California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 24 refers to the California Building Code (CBC), which contains complete regulations and general construction building standards of State agencies, including administrative, fire and life safety and field inspection provisions. Part 2 was updated in 2008 to reflect changes in the base document from the Uniform Building Code to the International Building Code. CBC Part 9 refers to the California Fire Code, which contains other fire safety-related building standards. In particular, the CBC Chapter 7A, *Materials and Construction Methods for Exterior Wildfire Exposure*, addresses fire safety standards for new construction.

CALIFORNIA PUBLIC RESOURCES CODE SECTIONS 4290-4299 AND GENERAL CODE SECTION 51178

A variety of State codes, particularly Public Resources Code Sections 4290-4299 and General Code Section 51178, require minimum Statewide fire safety standards pertaining to roads for fire equipment access; signage identifying streets, roads and buildings; minimum private water supply reserves for emergency fire use; and fire fuel breaks and greenbelts. They also identify primary fire suppression responsibilities among the federal, State, and local governments. In addition, any person who owns, leases, controls, operates or maintains a building or structure in or adjoining a mountainous area or forest-covered, brush-covered or grass-covered land, or any land covered with flammable material, must follow procedures to protect the property from wildland fires. This regulation also helps ensure

¹¹ Los Angeles County Library, *About the Library*, <https://lacountylibrary.org/aboutus/>, accessed June 8, 2022.

¹² Ibid.



fire safety and provide adequate access to outlying properties for emergency responders and safe evacuation routes for residents.

Local Level

Title 32, *California Fire Code*, of the Los Angeles County Code of Ordinances, adopted Part 9 of the State of California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 24 as the County's Fire Code. Title 32 establishes the same regulations and general construction building standards as the State's CCR pertaining to fire safety and emergency response.

CITY OF LANCASTER GENERAL PLAN 2030

Plan for Public Health and Safety

The General Plan includes the Plan for Public Health and Safety that discusses natural and manmade conditions in the City which may pose certain levels of health and safety hazards to life and property within Lancaster, along with a comprehensive program to mitigate those hazards to acceptable levels. The following objective and policies are applicable to the project:

- Objective 4.7 Ensure that development occurs in a manner that minimizes the risk of structural and wildland fire.

- Policy 4.7.1: Ensure that an adequate number of fire stations and adequate firefighting equipment and personnel are provided to protect the citizens and businesses of the City of Lancaster.

- Policy 4.7.2 Ensure that the design of new development minimizes the potential for fire.

Plan for Municipal Services and Facilities

The General Plan includes the Plan for Municipal Services and Facilities, which sets forth policies and programs for the rational and cost-efficient provision and extension of public services, infrastructure and facilities to serve the City and support planned development. The following objectives and policies are applicable to the project:

- Objective 15.1 Achieve and maintain five-minute average response time from receipt of alarm at station to time of arrival on scene. (Fire Protection)

- Policy 15.1.1 Promote continued coordination between the City of Lancaster and local service providers.

- Objective 15.3 Ensure the coordination of development activity with the provision of public services and facilities in order to eliminate gaps in service provision, provide economical public services, and achieve the equitable sharing of the cost of such facilities and services.



- Policy 15.3.1 Direct growth to areas with adequate existing facilities and services, areas which have adequate facilities and services committed, or areas where public services and facilities can be economically extended.

LANCASTER MUNICIPAL CODE

Municipal Code Chapter 15.32, *Fire Code*, adopts the Los Angeles County Fire Code as the City's Fire Code. Chapter 15.32 establishes requirements with respect to fire protection and prevention. Chapter 15.32 also adopts all regulations in the 2019 California Fire Code and the Los Angeles County Fire Code amendments pertaining to the obstruction of fire apparatus access roads.

Municipal Code Chapter 15.76, *Fire Protection Fees*, establishes fire protection fees which are intended to mitigate impacts that new development would have on the City's current fire protection service capacity in existing facilities. All new residential, commercial, or industrial developments are required to pay fire protection fees prior to issuance of a building permit. However, consideration in lieu of the fire protection fees required may be accepted provided that either an acceptable substitute consideration is proposed that has a value equal or greater than the required fees.

POLICE PROTECTION

Local Level

CITY OF LANCASTER GENERAL PLAN 2030

Plan for Public Health and Safety

The General Plan includes the Plan for Public Health and Safety that discusses natural and manmade conditions in the City which may pose certain levels of health and safety hazards to life and property within Lancaster, along with a comprehensive program to mitigate those hazards to acceptable levels. The following objective and policies are applicable to the project:

- Objective 4.6 Reduce the risk of crime and provide residents with security through maintenance of an adequate force of peace officers, physical planning strategies that maximize surveillance, minimize opportunities for crimes, and by creating a high level of public awareness and support for crime prevention.
- Policy 4.6.2 Ensure that the design of new development discourages opportunities for criminal activities to the maximum extent possible.

Plan for Municipal Services and Facilities

The General Plan includes the Plan for Municipal Services and Facilities, which sets forth policies and programs for the rational and cost-efficient provision and extension of public services, infrastructure and facilities to serve the City and support planned development. The following objective and policies are applicable to the project:



- Objective 15.1 Achieve and reduce part one crimes to below 300 crimes per 10,000 population. (Police Protection)
- Policy 15.1.1 Promote continued coordination between the City of Lancaster and local service providers.
- Objective 15.3 Ensure the coordination of development activity with the provision of public services and facilities in order to eliminate gaps in service provision, provide economical public services, and achieve the equitable sharing of the cost of such facilities and services.
- Policy 15.3.1 Direct growth to areas with adequate existing facilities and services, areas which have adequate facilities and services committed, or areas where public services and facilities can be economically extended.

LANCASTER MUNICIPAL CODE

Municipal Code Chapter 15.08, *Building Code*, adopts by reference the 2019 CBC. This includes CBC standards regarding building access for emergency services, and other safety precautions.

Municipal Code Section 15.64.130, *Sheriff's Substation Facilities Fees*, establishes a development impact fee for new development, to protect the safety, well-being and general welfare of the City's growing population. The sheriff's substation facilities fee is used to finance land acquisition, design, construction, equipping and related capital costs for sheriff substation facilities.

SCHOOLS

State Level

LEROY F. GREENE SCHOOL FACILITIES ACT OF 1998 (SENATE BILL 50)

Senate Bill 50 (SB 50) was enacted by the State Legislature in 1998 and made significant amendments to existing State law governing school fees. Specifically, SB 50 amended prior California Government Code Section 65995(a) to prohibit State or local agencies from imposing school impact mitigation fees, dedications or other requirements in excess of those provided in the statute in connection with "any legislative or adjudicative act...by any State or local agency involving...the planning, use, or development of real property...." The legislation also amended California Government Code Section 65996(b) to prohibit local agencies from using the inadequacy of school facilities as a basis for denying or conditioning approvals of any "legislative or adjudicative act [involving] the planning, use or development of real property." Further, SB 50 established the base amount of allowable developer fees: \$1.93 per square foot for residential construction and \$0.31 per square foot for commercial. These base amounts are commonly called "Level 1 fees" and are the same caps that were in place at the time SB 50 was enacted. Level 1 fees are subject to inflation adjustment every two years.

In certain circumstances, for residential construction, school districts can impose fees that are higher than Level 1 fees. School districts can impose Level 2 fees, which are equal to 50 percent of land and



construction costs if they: (1) prepare and adopt a school needs analysis for facilities; (2) are determined by the State Allocation Board to be eligible to impose these fees; and (3) meet at least two of the following four conditions:

- At least 30 percent of the district’s students are on a multi-track year-round schedule;
- The district has placed on the ballot within the previous four years a local school bond that received at least 50 percent of the votes cast;
- The district has passed bonds equal to 30 percent of its bonding capacity; or
- At least 20 percent of the district’s teaching stations are relocatable classrooms.

Additionally, if the State’s bond funds are exhausted, a school district that is eligible to impose Level 2 fees is authorized to impose even higher fees. Commonly referred to as “Level 3 fees,” these fees are equal to 100 percent of land and construction costs of new schools required as a result of new developments.

Local Level

CITY OF LANCASTER GENERAL PLAN 2030

Plan for Municipal Services and Facilities

The General Plan includes the Plan for Municipal Services and Facilities, which sets forth policies and programs for the rational and cost-efficient provision and extension of public services, infrastructure and facilities to serve the City and support planned development. The following objectives and policies are applicable to the project:

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| Objective 15.1 | Achieve and maintain sufficient number and size to provide required services. (Schools and Other Public Buildings and Facilities) |
| Policy 15.1.1 | Promote continued coordination between the City of Lancaster and local service providers. |
| Objective 15.3 | Ensure the coordination of development activity with the provision of public services and facilities in order to eliminate gaps in service provision, provide economical public services, and achieve the equitable sharing of the cost of such facilities and services. |
| Policy 15.3.1 | Direct growth to areas with adequate existing facilities and services, areas which have adequate facilities and services committed, or areas where public services and facilities can be economically extended. |



PARKS AND RECREATION

State Level

QUIMBY ACT

The Quimby Act (Government Code Section 66477) states that the legislative body of a city or county may, by ordinance, require the dedication of land or impose a fee payment requirement of in lieu thereof, or a combination of both, for park or recreational purposes as a condition to the approval of a tentative map or parcel map, provided certain requirements are met. This Section further states that “the dedication of land, or the payment of fees, or both, shall not exceed the proportionate amount necessary to provide three acres of park area per 1,000 persons residing within a subdivision subject to this section.”

Local Level

CITY OF LANCASTER PARKS, RECREATION, OPEN SPACE AND CULTURAL MASTER PLAN

The *City of Lancaster Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Cultural Master Plan* (Parks and Recreation Master Plan), dated October 2007, presents a long-term vision and goals for the City of Lancaster Department of Parks, Recreation, and Arts and the community for the next 20 to 25 years; describes current and future needs, interests, and community preferences for parks, recreation, arts programs and facilities; and develops a process and priorities for managing the Department’s commitments so that new requests and initiatives are considered in light of existing commitments. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan is divided into the following sections: Vision, Values, and Goals; Existing Conditions; Community Needs; Policies, Recommendations, and Actions; Operations and Maintenance; Capital Improvement Plan; and Financial Plan.

CITY OF LANCASTER GENERAL PLAN 2030

Plan for Active Living

The General Plan includes the Plan for Active Living, which focuses on the components of the community’s shelter, culture, and lifestyle. The Plan includes policies that protect and promote the City’s existing parks and recreational facilities. The following objective and policy are applicable to the project:

- Objective 10.1 Provide sufficient neighborhood and community park facilities such that a rate of 5.0 acres of park land per 1,000 residents is achieved and distributed so as to be convenient to Lancaster residents.

- Policy 10.1.1: Provide opportunities for a wide variety of recreational activities and park experiences, including active recreation and passive open space enjoyment within a coordinated system of local, regional, and special use park lands areas.



PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Local Level

CITY OF LANCASTER GENERAL PLAN 2030

Plan for Active Living

The General Plan includes the Plan for Active Living, which focuses on the components of the community's shelter, culture, and lifestyle. The Plan includes policies that protect and promote the City's existing public library facilities. The following objective and policies are applicable to the project:

- Objective 12.2 Promote the availability of local library facilities; book, audiovisual and other material reserves, computer databases, internet access, and programs in accordance with the standards of the American Library Association.
- Policy 12.2.1 Promote the construction of libraries or expansion of existing libraries as required to meet the needs of existing and future residents.
- Policy 12.2.2 Promote the acquisition of library materials, databases and programs that reflect the needs and interests of the City residents.

Plan for Municipal Services and Facilities

The General Plan includes the Plan for Municipal Services and Facilities, which sets forth policies and programs for the rational and cost-efficient provision and extension of public services, infrastructure and facilities to serve the City and support planned development. The following objectives and policies are applicable to the project:

- Objective 15.1 Achieve and maintain 0.35 square feet of library space per capita and 2.0 loanable material items per capita. (Libraries)
- Policy 15.1.1 Promote continued coordination between the City of Lancaster and local service providers.
- Objective 15.3 Ensure the coordination of development activity with the provision of public services and facilities in order to eliminate gaps in service provision, provide economical public services, and achieve the equitable sharing of the cost of such facilities and services.
- Policy 15.3.1 Direct growth to areas with adequate existing facilities and services, areas which have adequate facilities and services committed, or areas where public services and facilities can be economically extended.



LANCASTER MUNICIPAL CODE

Municipal Code Section 15.64.140, *Library Facilities Fee*, establishes a library facilities fee to be imposed on all new development in the City to provide adequate public services and to support the well-being and general welfare of the City's growing population. The library facilities fee is used to finance land acquisition, design, construction, equipping, and related capital costs for local library facilities.

5.10.3 IMPACT THRESHOLDS AND SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines* contains the Environmental Checklist form that was used during the preparation of this EIR. Accordingly, a project may create a significant adverse environmental impact if it would:

PUBLIC SERVICES

- Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:
 - Fire protection (refer to Impact Statement PS-1);
 - Police protection (refer to Impact Statement PS-2);
 - Schools (refer to Impact Statement PS-3);
 - Parks (refer to Impact Statement PS-4);
 - Other public facilities (refer to Impact Statement PS-5);

RECREATION

- Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated (refer to Impact Statement PS-4); and/or
- Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment (refer to Impact Statement PS-4).

Based on these standards/criteria, the effects of the proposed program have been categorized as either a “less than significant impact” or “significant and unavoidable impact.” If a potentially significant impact cannot be reduced to a less than significant level through the application of mitigation, it is categorized as a significant and unavoidable impact.



5.10.4 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

FIRE PROTECTION

PS-1 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROPOSED PROJECT COULD RESULT IN THE NEED FOR ADDITIONAL FIRE PROTECTION FACILITIES, THE CONSTRUCTION OF WHICH COULD CAUSE SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS, IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN ACCEPTABLE SERVICE RATIOS, RESPONSE TIMES OR OTHER PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES.

Impact Analysis: The proposed project would introduce a new overlay zone in the eastern portion of the City that would allow development of light industrial uses in a mostly undeveloped, rural area of Lancaster. As such, future development in accordance with the overlay zone could result in the need for additional LACFD fire protection services.

Future development projects would be subject to all applicable laws, ordinances, and regulations in place for fire protection and emergency services. Specifically, future developments would be required to adhere to the general building standards, fire safety standards, and fire safety provisions outlined in Title 24 of the CCR and Municipal Code Chapter 15.32, *Fire Code*. Per Title 24 of the CCR, future structures would be required to install applicable fire suppression design features (i.e., fire sprinklers, fire hydrants, emergency access), and would require LACFD site plan review and approval. Future developments would also be required to adhere to Municipal Code Chapter 15.76, *Fire Protection Fees*, which requires payment of a development impact fee for fire protection services to the City prior to issuance of a building permit. As detailed in Municipal Code Section 15.76.030, *Fire Protection Fees*, payment of the fees would mitigate impacts of new development of the level of fire service capacity in existing LACFD facilities and ensure that the burdens of financing new capital improvements are borne by all of the development projects benefited thereby. Therefore, although the proposed overlay zone would allow increased development and new uses (i.e., light industrial) to occur in the eastern portion of the City, the City would collect development impact fees as new development occurs and LACFD would review and plan for any required capital improvements to continue providing adequate fire protection services in the project area. Moreover, future light industrial development occurring as part of the proposed overlay zone would be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA to evaluate project-level impacts with regards to LACFD and its existing fire protection services. Overall, impacts to fire protection services would be less than significant in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

POLICE PROTECTION

PS-2 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROPOSED PROJECT COULD RESULT IN THE NEED FOR ADDITIONAL POLICE PROTECTION FACILITIES, THE CONSTRUCTION OF WHICH COULD



CAUSE SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS, IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN ACCEPTABLE SERVICE RATIOS, RESPONSE TIMES OR OTHER PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES.

Impact Analysis: The proposed project would implement a new overlay zone in the eastern portion of the City that would allow light industrial uses. As such, future development in accordance with the proposed East Side Overlay Zone could result in the increase in demand for police protection services and facilities.

Future developments would be required to pay development impact fees for LASD services pursuant to Municipal Code Section 15.64.130, *Sherriff's Substation Facilities Fees*. Payment of development impact fees would ensure future projects offset their respective impacts to LASD services and facilities within Lancaster. Additionally, future developments would be reviewed by LASD as part of the site plan and development review process. The LASD generally encourages Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) design, which reduce opportunities for criminal activities by implementing physical design features that encourage proper defensible spaces, territoriality, surveillance, physical security, and strategically located lighting and landscaping. Moreover, future light industrial development within the proposed overlay zone would be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA to evaluate project-level impacts with regards to LASD services and facilities. Therefore, compliance with local regulations would reduce impacts to LASD services and facilities to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

SCHOOLS

PS-3 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROPOSED PROJECT COULD POTENTIALLY RESULT IN THE NEED FOR ADDITIONAL SCHOOL FACILITIES, THE CONSTRUCTION OF WHICH COULD CAUSE SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS, IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN ACCEPTABLE PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES.

Impact Analysis: Future light industrial uses within the proposed East Side Overlay Zone could generate new jobs that result in employees and families relocating into the City from other jurisdictions. Thus, future employment generating uses could indirectly increase permanent residents in the City and increase demand for EUSD and AVUHSD school services.

Pursuant to SB 50, school fees imposed through the Education Code are deemed to be full mitigation for new development projects; thus, payment of school impact fees would offset the cost of providing services for students potentially generated by future projects. Specifically, future light industrial developments would be required to pay a standard development impact fee of \$0.414 per square foot of industrial use to EUSD and \$0.20 per square foot of industrial use to AVUSHD. Moreover, future light industrial projects developed in accordance with the proposed overlay zone would be required



to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA to evaluate project-level impacts with regard to existing EUSD and AVUHSD services. Thus, compliance with State and local regulations and payment of school impact fees would ensure impacts to EUSD and AVUHSD services are proportionally offset and reduced to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

PARKS AND RECREATION

PS-4 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROPOSED PROJECT COULD POTENTIALLY RESULT IN THE NEED FOR ADDITIONAL PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AND/OR THE INCREASED USE OF EXISTING NEIGHBORHOOD AND REGIONAL PARKS SUCH THAT SUBSTANTIAL PHYSICAL DETERIORATION COULD OCCUR OR BE ACCELERATED.

Impact Analysis: The proposed overlay zone would allow development of light industrial uses in the east side of Lancaster. These employment-generating land uses could result in population growth in the City assuming that future employees and their families may choose to relocate to the City from other jurisdictions. As such, there is potential for future light industrial developments to indirectly impact existing parks and recreational facilities in Lancaster. Pursuant to the Quimby Act, the City is allowed to require the dedication of land or impose a fee payment requirement of in lieu thereof, or a combination of both, for park or recreational purposes as a condition to the approval of a tentative map or parcel map. Thus, future residential developments would be required to either dedicate parkland or pay park in-lieu fees per Municipal Code Chapter 15.72, *Park-In-Lieu Fees*, to offset potential impacts with regards to parks and recreation.

As such, the proposed overlay zone itself would not adversely impact existing City parks and recreational facilities. Impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES

PS-5 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROPOSED PROJECT COULD POTENTIALLY RESULT IN THE NEED FOR ADDITIONAL PUBLIC LIBRARY FACILITIES, THE CONSTRUCTION OF



WHICH COULD CAUSE SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS, IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN ACCEPTABLE PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES.

Impact Analysis: The proposed overlay zone would allow development of light industrial uses in the east side of Lancaster. The allowed uses are not directly associated with increases in permanent residents. However, these employment-generating land uses could result in population growth in the City assuming that future employees and their families may choose to relocate to the City from other jurisdictions. Thus, there is potential for future light industrial developments to indirectly impact existing Lancaster Library services and resources. Future light industrial development within the proposed overlay zone would be required to pay a library facilities fee to the City to offset any increase in demand for library services and facilities pursuant to Municipal Code Section 15.64.140, *Library Facilities Fee*. The library facilities fee would be used to finance land acquisition, design, construction, equipping, and related capital costs for local library facilities. As such, impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

5.10.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

CEQA Guidelines Section 15355 requires an analysis of cumulative impacts, which are defined as, “two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable, or which compound or increase other environmental impacts.”

FIRE PROTECTION

- **THE PROPOSED PROJECT, IN CONJUNCTION WITH CUMULATIVE DEVELOPMENT, COULD CREATE INCREASED DEMAND FOR FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES THAT COULD CAUSE SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS.**

Impact Analysis: Cumulative projects developed in accordance with the General Plan could increase the demand for additional LACFD resources (e.g., additional staffing, equipment, and expanded/new facilities). Similar to future light industrial projects proposed in accordance with the proposed East Side Overlay Zone, cumulative projects would also be required to undergo project-specific environmental review under CEQA and the City’s discretionary review process. Cumulative projects would also be subject to all applicable laws, ordinances, and regulations in place for fire protection and emergency services, including Title 24 of the CCR regarding fire suppression standards for new development. Additionally, in conformance with Municipal Code Chapter 15.76, *Fire Protection Fees*, cumulative developments would also be required to pay development impact fees to the City to mitigate impacts on existing LACFD services and resources.

As discussed above, future development implemented in accordance with the proposed East Side Overlay Zone is not anticipated to result in potentially significant impacts to LACFD services upon



compliance with applicable State and local regulations and payment of fire protection fees. Therefore, the proposed overlay zone would not result in cumulatively considerable impacts to fire protection services.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

POLICE PROTECTION

- **THE PROPOSED PROJECT, IN CONJUNCTION WITH CUMULATIVE DEVELOPMENT, COULD CREATE INCREASED DEMAND FOR POLICE PROTECTION SERVICES THAT COULD CAUSE SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS.**

Impact Analysis: Cumulative projects developed in accordance with the General Plan could have the potential to result in the need for additional LASD resources (e.g., additional staffing, equipment, and expanded/new facilities). However, cumulative projects would be required to undergo project-specific environmental review under CEQA and the City's discretionary review process. Cumulative projects would also be subject to LASD site plan review and approval and be required to implement CPTED design features, where applicable, to discourage opportunities for criminal activity. Additionally, Municipal Code Section 15.64.130, *Sheriff's Substation Facilities Fee*, requires payment of development impact fees to offset individual project demands on existing LASD police protection services.

As discussed above, future development implemented in accordance with the proposed East Side Overlay Zone is anticipated to result in less than significant impacts to LASD services upon conformance with all applicable laws, ordinances, and regulations in place for police protection services and payment of the sheriff's substation facilities fee per Municipal Code Section 15.64.130. Therefore, the proposed overlay zone would not result in cumulatively considerable impacts to LASD services.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

SCHOOLS

- **THE PROPOSED PROJECT, IN CONJUNCTION WITH CUMULATIVE DEVELOPMENT, COULD CREATE INCREASED DEMAND FOR SCHOOL SERVICES AND FACILITIES THAT COULD CAUSE SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS.**

Impact Analysis: Cumulative projects developed in accordance with the General Plan would introduce new development that could increase demands for EUSD and AVUHSD services.



However, cumulative projects would also be required to undergo project-specific environmental review under CEQA and the City's discretionary review process. Similarly, cumulative projects would be required to pay the statutory school fees to the appropriate school district based on the type and size of development proposed pursuant to SB 50. Payment of school impact fees is considered full mitigation for a project's impacts associated with the need to provide new or altered school facilities to serve new students generated by future development.

As discussed above, future buildout of the proposed East Side Overlay Zone would result in less than significant impacts to school services following conformance with the applicable laws, ordinances, and regulations in place for school services as discussed above. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in cumulatively considerable impacts to school services.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

PARKS AND RECREATION

- **THE PROPOSED PROJECT, IN CONJUNCTION WITH CUMULATIVE DEVELOPMENT, COULD CREATE INCREASED DEMAND FOR PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES THAT COULD CAUSE SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS.**

Impact Analysis: Cumulative projects developed in accordance with the General Plan would introduce new development that could increase demands for parks and recreational facilities. However, cumulative projects would also be required to undergo project-specific environmental review under CEQA and the City's discretionary review process. Cumulative projects would also be required to adhere to all applicable laws, ordinances, and regulations pertaining to parks and recreational facilities within the City, including the dedication of parklands or payment of park in-lieu fees to offset any potential increase in demand for City parks and recreational facilities.

As discussed above, future buildout of the proposed East Side Overlay Zone would result in less than significant impacts to existing City parks and recreational facilities. Therefore, the proposed overlay zone would not contribute towards cumulatively considerable impacts in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.



PUBLIC LIBRARIES

- **THE PROPOSED PROJECT, IN CONJUNCTION WITH CUMULATIVE DEVELOPMENT, COULD CREATE INCREASED DEMAND FOR OTHER PUBLIC FACILITIES (I.E., LIBRARY FACILITIES) THAT COULD CAUSE SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS.**

Impact Analysis: Cumulative projects developed in accordance with the General Plan would introduce new development that could increase demands for Lancaster Library services and facilities. However, cumulative projects would also be required to undergo project-specific environmental review under CEQA and the City's discretionary review process. Cumulative projects would also be required to adhere to all applicable laws, ordinances, and regulations pertaining to parks and recreational facilities within the City, including payment of development impact fees to offset potential impacts to library services.

As discussed above, future development implemented in accordance with the proposed East Side Overlay Zone is anticipated to result in less than significant impacts to library services upon conformance with all applicable laws, ordinances, and regulations in place and payment of the library facilities fee per Municipal Code Section 15.64.140, *Library Facilities Fee*. Therefore, the proposed overlay zone would not result in cumulatively considerable impacts to LA County Library services.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

5.10.6 SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

No significant unavoidable impacts related to public services and recreation have been identified.



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5.11 Utilities and Service Systems



5.11 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

This section identifies the existing utilities and service systems in the City and provides an analysis of potential impacts that may result from project implementation. Existing baseline conditions, potential project impacts, and appropriate mitigation measures to reduce potentially significant impacts, if any, are described.

5.11.1 EXISTING SETTING

WATER

Water service to the City is provided by numerous retail water agencies with all water provided from either imported water from the Antelope Valley-East Kern Water Agency (AVEK), groundwater, or a combination. The largest purveyor serving the City is the Los Angeles County Waterworks District 40 (LACWD 40). Eastern portions of the overlay zone are located in Region 4 of the LACWD 40 service area while the remainder of the project site is served by individual water wells (i.e., not connected to the water infrastructure network).¹

Imported Water

As discussed in the Los Angeles County Waterworks Districts' *2020 Urban Water Management Plan for Los Angeles County Waterworks District No. 40 Antelope Valley* (2020 UWMP), LACWD 40 uses both imported water (purchased from AVEK) and groundwater as its primary water supply sources. Currently, AVEK has an average allocation for purchasing up to 144,844 acre-feet per year (AFY) from the State Water Project (SWP). To maximize the use of its SWP supplies, AVEK has developed and is planning several groundwater banks, including the Westside Water Bank, Antelope Valley Water Bank, and the Water Supply Stabilization Project. AVEK has also entered into various water transfer/exchange programs with other SWP contractors. Of AVEK's 144,844 AFY allocation from the SWP, LACWD 40 typically purchases about 70 percent of that volume, which is approximately 58,800 AFY.

Table 5.11-1, *LACWD 40 Current and Projected Water Supplies*, summarizes LACWD 40's current and projected water supply sources and amounts from 2025 through 2045. As shown, in addition to imported water from AVEK and groundwater, additional purchased/imported water (from a new supply or developer fees) and recycled water are also supply sources for LACWD 40.

¹ Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, *Los Angeles County Waterworks District No. 40 Region 4, Lancaster* ↻ *Region 34, Desert View Highlands*, https://pw.lacounty.gov/wwd/web/Documents/LACo_wwd_40_04_&_34index.pdf, accessed June 15, 2022.



**Table 5.11-1
LACWD 40 Current and Projected Water Supplies**

Water Supply	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
Purchased Water (from AVEK)	31,552	57,300	55,800	54,200	52,700	52,700
Groundwater (from Antelope Valley Groundwater Basin)	14,266	23,298	23,298	23,298	23,298	23,298
Purchased or Imported Water (from new supply/developer fees)	0	1,733	1,733	1,733	1,733	1,733
Recycled Water	361	764	902	1,102	1,302	1,302
Total Water Supplies	46,179	83,095	80,831	80,333	79,033	79,033
Notes: 1 All units are in acre-feet per year (AFY). 2. New Supply refers to new supply from new development.						
Source: Los Angeles County Waterworks Districts, 2020 Urban Water Management Plan for Los Angeles County Waterworks District No. 40, October 2021.						

Groundwater

The LACWD 40 relies on the Antelope Valley Groundwater Basin for its groundwater supplies. The Antelope Valley Groundwater Basin is a large, topographically closed, alluvial basin with an estimated total storage capacity of about 68 million acre-feet. The basin is recharged principally by deep percolation of precipitation and runoff from the surrounding mountains and hills. The Antelope Valley Groundwater Basin does not have an associated groundwater sustainability plan and is not identified as being in overdraft but has had subsidence occur.

In December 2015, the Superior Court of California (Court), Santa Clara County, entered a judgment and physical solution in the *Antelope Valley Groundwater Cases* (2015) based on the Court’s findings that the Antelope Valley Groundwater Basin is in overdraft. As of 2020, the groundwater adjudication judgment provides non-overlying production rights of 6,789 acre-feet, approximately 3,500 acre-feet of unused federal reserve rights, and return flows equivalent to 39 percent of LACWD 40’s five-year average of purchased SWP water supply (39 percent of 26,657 acre-feet or 10,400 acre-feet). LACWD 40 also has the right to lease 2,600 acre-feet of groundwater rights from AVEK, for a total of 23,289 acre-feet of groundwater available to LACWD 40.

Water Demand

LACWD 40 currently provides water to 58,607 service connections, including residential, commercial, industrial, institutional/governmental, and other uses. Table 5.11-2, LACWD 40 Current and Projected Water Demand, summarizes LACWD’s current and total water demand projections through 2045.



Table 5.11-2
LACWD 40 Current and Projected Water Demand

Water Demand	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
Potable and Raw Water	45,818	54,400	57,100	60,000	63,100	66,300
Recycled Water	362	764	902	1,102	1,302	1,302
Total Water Demand	46,180	55,164	58,002	61,102	64,402	67,602
Note: All units are in acre-feet per year. Projected water demand for 2020 through 2045 reflect future water committed for development and reflect average normal water year demand before taking into consideration savings from water conservation. Source: Los Angeles County Waterworks Districts, <i>2020 Urban Water Management Plan for Los Angeles County Waterworks District No. 40, Table 4-3. Retail: Total Water Use Potable and Non-Potable (ac-ft/yr)</i> , October 2021.						

Table 5.11-3, *LACWD 40 Projected Use for Potable and Non-Potable Water*, provides a summary of projected potable and raw water demands by use type for LACWD.

Table 5.11-3
LACWD 40 Projected Use for Potable and Non-Potable Water

Land Use	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
Single-Family	40,919	43,706	46,599	49,601	52,116
Multi-Family	2,212	2,364	2,518	2,683	2,819
Commercial ¹	3,112	2,617	2,178	1,780	1,870
Industrial	3,315	3,546	3,777	4,022	4,226
Institutional/Governmental	1,035	870	726	595	625
Losses ²	3,808	3,998	4,202	4,419	4,643
Total Water Demand	54,400	57,100	60,000	63,100	66,300
Notes: All units are in acre-feet per year. 1. The 2025 - 2040 projected water demand is based on gallon(s) per capita per day (GPCD) times the projected population. 2. Losses are assumed to be seven percent of projected water demand. Source: Los Angeles County Waterworks Districts, <i>2020 Urban Water Management Plan for Los Angeles County Waterworks District No. 40, Table 4-2. Retail: Use for Potable and Non-Potable Water – Projected</i> , October 2021.					

WASTEWATER

Wastewater generated within the City generally flows through small local sewer pipelines owned and maintained by the City, which connect to regional trunk sewer pipelines owned and maintained by the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts (LACSD). The City's wastewater is then conveyed to LACSD's Lancaster Wastewater Reclamation Plant for treatment. As shown on Figure 1, *Wastewater Collection System Map*, of the *City of Lancaster Sewer System Management Plan Update* (SSMP), the project site is not connected to the City's wastewater system.² Instead, wastewater generated by existing uses within the project site are collected by underground, privately-owned septic tank systems.

² City of Lancaster, *City of Lancaster Sewer System Management Plan Update*, October 2019.



STORMWATER

There are a number of existing local and regional flood control facilities and floodplain management areas in the City. However, there is no existing stormwater infrastructure within the project area. A portion of the project site from 55th Street East to the eastern boundary of the project site (and City limits) is located in designated natural floodplain management areas where existing flood management infrastructure is limited. Nevertheless, the City plans for several storm drains in the project area in the future. These include a regional storm drains and local storm drains, sized for 50-year and 25-year storm events, respectively, in the northwestern portion of the project site, and several regional storm drains, sized for 50-year storm events, in the southwestern portion of the project site.

SOLID WASTE

Waste Management is the exclusive provider of waste and recycling collection services to residents and businesses in the City. The majority of the City’s solid waste is admitted to two landfills, the Antelope Valley Public Landfill and the Lancaster Landfill and Recycling Center. These landfills are classified as Class III landfills, which are permitted to accept only non-hazardous waste. Table 5.11-4, Landfills Serving the City, provides a summary of both facilities and their respective levels of capacity for solid waste.

**Table 5.11-4
Landfills Serving the City**

Landfill/Location	Amount Disposed by City in 2019 (tons per day)	Maximum Daily Throughput (tons per day)	Remaining Capacity (cubic yards)	Anticipated Closure Date
Antelope Valley Public Landfill 1200 West City Ranch Road Palmdale, CA 93551	38,525	5,548	17,911,225	4/1/2044
Lancaster Landfill and Recycling Center 600 East Avenue F Lancaster, CA 93535	88,749	5,100	14,514,648	3/1/2044
Total	128,671	--	32,425,873	--

Note: The following landfills received less than one percent (combined) of the City’s solid waste and thus were excluded from this table: Azusa Land Reclamation Co. Landfill, Chiquita Canyon Sanitary Landfill, El Sobrante Landfill, Frank R. Bowerman Sanitary LF, Olinda Alpha Landfill, Simi Valley Landfill and Recycling Center, and Canyon City/County Landfill.

Sources:

1. California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery, SWIS Facility/Site Search, <https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/SolidWaste/Site/Search>, accessed June 13, 2022.
2. California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery, Jurisdiction Disposal By Facility, Disposal during 2019 for Lancaster, <https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/LGCentral/DisposalReporting/Destination/DisposalByFacility>, accessed June 13, 2022.



DRY UTILITIES

Electricity

Lancaster Choice Energy (LCE) is the City's locally operated, locally controlled electrical power provider. LCE was designed to offer residents and businesses within the City a viable alternative to traditional investor-owned utilities (e.g., Southern California Edison). LCE obtains electricity from a variety of generation sources. At a minimum, 35 percent of LCE's Clear Choice option comes from renewable sources. LCE's Smart Choice option provides electricity from 100 percent renewable sources. LCE rolled out to all City customers in 2015. Southern California Edison (SCE) continues to maintain the grid, provide customer service, and handle repairs, outages, and billing. Overall, LCE procures and generates electricity while SCE delivers the energy through existing infrastructure.

Natural Gas

Natural gas services in the project area are provided by the Southern California Gas Company (SCG). The SCG's total service territory encompasses approximately 24,000 square miles throughout central and southern California.

SCG maintains an extensive supply network within the City. Natural gas service lines range in size from two- to six-inch delivery mains. The main 30-inch supply line to the Antelope Valley comes from the south end of the valley, from Palmdale off of Avenue S. Existing SCG infrastructure within the project site include one transmission line along the length of 90th Street East and high-pressure distribution lines along 40th Street East from Avenue K through Avenue L that branch off to adjacent roadways.³

Telecommunications

Telecommunication systems for telephones, internet, and cable television are serviced by Spectrum. Facilities are located above and below ground within private easements.

5.11.2 REGULATORY SETTING

WATER

Federal Level

FEDERAL SAFE DRINKING WATER ACT OF 1974

The Safe Drinking Water Act authorizes the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to set national health-based standards for drinking water to protect against both naturally occurring and

³ Southern California Gas Company, *Gas Transmission Pipeline Interactive Map - Los Angeles*, <https://socialgas.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=c85ced1227af4c8aae9b19d677969335>, accessed July 20, 2022.



man-made contaminants that may be found in drinking water. The EPA, states, and water systems then work together to make sure that these standards are met. Originally, Safe Drinking Water Act focused primarily on treatment as the means of providing safe drinking water at the tap. The 1996 amendments greatly enhanced the existing law by recognizing source water protection, operator training, funding for water system improvements, and public information as important components of safe drinking water. This approach ensures the quality of drinking water by protecting it from source to tap. The Safe Drinking Water Act applies to every public water system in the United States.

State Level

STATE OF CALIFORNIA WATER RECYCLING ACT

Enacted in 1991, the Water Recycling Act established water recycling as a State priority. The Water Recycling Act encourages municipal wastewater treatment districts to implement recycling programs to reduce local water demands.

CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 22, DIVISION 4, CHAPTER 3 WATER RECYCLING CRITERIA

California regulates the wastewater treatment process and use of recycled water pursuant to California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Division 4, Chapter 3, *Water Recycling Criteria*. According to these regulations, recycled water to be used for irrigation of public areas must be filtered and disinfected to tertiary standards.

URBAN WATER MANAGEMENT ACT

The Urban Water Management Plan Act was passed in 1983 and codified as Water Code Sections 10610 through 10657. Since its adoption in 1983, the Urban Water Management Plan Act has been amended on several occasions. Some of the more notable amendments include an amendment in 2004, which required additional discussion of transfer and exchange opportunities, non-implemented demand management measures, and planned water supply projects. Also, in 2005, another amendment required water use projections (required by Water Code Section 10631) to include projected water use for single-family and multi-family residential housing needed for lower income households. In addition, Government Code Section 65589.7 was amended to require local governments to provide the adopted housing element to water and sewer providers. The Act requires “every urban water supplier providing water for municipal purposes to more than 3,000 customers or supplying more than 3,000-acre feet of water annually, to prepare and adopt, in accordance with prescribed requirements, an urban water management plan.” Urban water suppliers must file these plans with the California Department of Water Resources every five years describing and evaluating reasonable and practical efficient water uses, reclamation, and conservation activities. As required by the Memorandum of Understanding Regarding Urban Water Conservation in California and Assembly Bill 11, the 2005 Urban Water Management Plan Act, incorporated water conservation initiatives, and a Water Shortage Contingency Plan as well.



WATER CONSERVATION ACT OF 2009

Water Code Sections 10800, *et seq.* creates a framework for future planning and actions by urban (and agricultural) water suppliers to reduce California’s water use. The law requires urban water suppliers to reduce Statewide per capita water consumption by 20 percent by 2020. Additionally, the State is required to make incremental progress towards this goal by reducing per capita water use by at least 10 percent by 2015. Each urban retail water supplier was required to develop water use targets and an interim water use target by July 1, 2011. Each urban retail water supplier was required, by July 2011, to include in their water management plan the baseline daily per capita water use, water use target, interim water use target, and compliance daily per capita water use.

SENATE BILL 610

Water Code Sections 10610 to 10656 require water suppliers to prepare an UWMP to promote water demand management and efficient use in their service areas. UWMPs are included with the environmental document for specified projects.

Concerning water supply, the Water Code requires preparation of a Water Supply Assessment for certain projects.⁴ The Water Code requires that a Water Supply Assessment be prepared for any “project” which would consist of one or more of the following:⁵

- A proposed residential development of more than 500 dwelling units;
- A proposed shopping center or business establishment employing more than 1,000 persons or having more than 500,000 square feet of floor space;
- A proposed shopping center or business establishment employing more than 1,000 persons or having more than 500,000 square feet of floor space;
- A proposed commercial office building employing more than 1,000 persons or having more than 250,000 square feet of floor space;
- A proposed hotel or motel, or both, having more than 500 rooms;
- A proposed industrial, manufacturing, or processing plant, or industrial park planned to house more than 1,000 persons, occupying more than 40 acres of land, or having more than 650,000 square feet of floor area;
- A mixed-use project that includes one or more of the projects specified above; or
- A project that would demand an amount of water equivalent to, or greater than, the amount of water required by a 500-dwelling unit project.

⁴ Water Code Sections 10910–10915.

⁵ Water Code Section 10912(a).



EFFICIENCY STANDARDS

California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 20 addresses Public Utilities and Energy and includes appliance efficiency standards that promote water conservation. The CBC (CCR Title 24) includes the California Plumbing Code (Part 5), which promotes water conservation. In addition, a number of California laws listed below require water-efficient plumbing fixtures in structures:

- CCR Title 20 Section 1604(g) establishes efficiency standards that give the maximum flow rate of all new showerheads, lavatory faucets, sink faucets, and tub spout diverters.
- CCR Title 20 Section 1606 prohibits the sale of fixtures that do not comply with established efficiency regulations.
- CCR Title 24 Sections 25352(i) and (j) address pipe insulation requirements, which can reduce water used before hot water reaches equipment or fixtures. Insulation of water-heating systems is also required.
- Health and Safety Code Section 17921.3 requires low-flush toilets and urinals in virtually all buildings.

Local Level

LOS ANGELES COUNTY WATERWORKS 2020 URBAN WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR LOS ANGELES COUNTY WATERWORKS DISTRICT NO. 40 ANTELOPE VALLEY

In compliance with Water Code Sections 10610 through 10656 of the Urban Water Management Planning Act, LACWD 40 adopted its UWMP in October 2021. The UWMP outlines LACWD 40's existing and future water supplies and assesses LACWD's forecasted water demands and supply availability through 2045. The UWMP also includes a description of LACWD's service area, baseline and target updates for water demand per capita, water supplies, water supply reliability, and water conservation efforts.

CITY OF LANCASTER GENERAL PLAN 2030

The Plan for the Natural Environment and the Plan for Municipal Services and Facilities in the General Plan includes objectives and policies related to the City's water services. The following goals and policies are relevant to the proposed project:

Plan for the Natural Environment

Objective 3.1: Protect, maintain, and replenish groundwater supplies to meet present and future urban and rural needs.

Policy 3.1.1 Ensure that development does not adversely affect the groundwater basin.



Objective 3.2: Reduce the per capita rate of water consumption in the City of Lancaster through increased conservation, technology, retrofits and system efficiency to levels consistent with other desert communities.

Policy 3.2.1 Promote the use of water conservation measures in the landscape plans of new developments.

Plan for Municipal Services and Facilities

Objective 15.1: Achieve and maintain adequate fire flow as established by the County Fire Department; sufficient storage for emergency situations. (Water Systems)

Policy 15.1.2: Cooperate with local water agencies to provide an adequate water supply system to meet the standards for domestic and emergency needs.

LANCASTER MUNICIPAL CODE

Municipal Code Chapter 15.64, *Development Impact Fees*, establishes an urban structure program for the adoption and administration of development impact fees by the City for the benefit of the citizens. Specifically, Municipal Code Section 15.64.070, *Water Improvements Fee*, requires new development within the City to pay a water improvements fee. The water improvements fee would provide funding for capital improvements, including pump stations, water reservoir facilities, wells, treatment facilities, water lines, and other related improvements to ensure a continuing supply of potable water.

WASTEWATER

Federal Level

FEDERAL CLEAN WATER ACT (33 USC SECTIONS 1251, ET SEQ.)

The Clean Water Act's (CWA) primary goals are to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters and to make all surface waters fishable and swimmable. The CWA forms the basic national framework for the management of water quality and the control of pollution discharges; it provides the legal framework for several water quality regulations, including the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), effluent limitations, water quality standards, pretreatment standards, antidegradation policy, nonpoint-source discharge programs, and wetlands protection. The EPA has delegated the responsibility for administration of CWA portions to State and regional agencies. In California, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) administers the NPDES permitting program and is responsible for developing NPDES permitting requirements. The SWRCB works in coordination with the Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCB) to preserve, protect, enhance, and restore water quality.



State Level

CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS TITLE 24 –PLUMBING CODE

CCR Title 24, Part 5 refers to the 2019 edition of the California Plumbing Code (CPC), which contains plumbing design and construction standards for habitable structures. Provisions contained in the CPC provide minimum standards to safeguard life or limb, health, property, and public welfare. It also protects against hazards that may arise from the use of plumbing piping and systems by regulating and controlling the design, construction, installation, quality of materials, location and operation of plumbing piping systems within the State. In particular, Appendix H, *Private Sewage Disposal Systems*, provides design and system standards for private sewage systems, including septic systems.

Local Level

LANCASTER SEWER SYSTEM MANAGEMENT PLAN

The *Lancaster Sewer System Management Plan* (SSMP), last updated in October 2019, was prepared pursuant to SWRCB’s Statewide General Waste Discharge Requirements and Monitoring and Reporting Program (GWDR) Order No. 2006-0003. SSMPs are State-mandated requirements for California public collection system agencies that own or operate sanitary sewer systems greater than one mile in length. The goals for these plans are to reduce Sanitary Sewer Overflows (SSOs), protect public health and environment, and improve the overall maintenance and management of sewer systems, including neighborhood lift stations. The City’s SSMP includes a comprehensive assessment of its existing sewer system and its ability to accommodate existing and future wastewater collection needs. It is acknowledged that the project site is not currently connected to the City’s sewer system network but may in the future.

CITY OF LANCASTER GENERAL PLAN 2030

The Plan for the Natural Environment and the Plan for Municipal Services and Facilities in the General Plan includes objectives and policies to address the City’s wastewater services. The following goals and policies are relevant to the proposed project:

Plan for the Natural Environment

- Objective 3.1: Protect, maintain, and replenish groundwater supplies to meet present and future urban and rural needs.
- Policy 3.1.3: Encourage the use of recycled tertiary treated wastewater when possible.
- Policy 3.2.3 Encourage incorporation of water-saving design measures into existing developments.
- Policy 3.2.5 Promote the use of water conservation measures in the design of new developments.



Plan for Municipal Services and Facilities

Objective 15.1: Achieve and maintain the following levels of service:

- Performance Objective (Facility/Service)
- Restricted flow only during peak day, peak hour conditions (Sanitary Sewers)
- Remain within the rated capacity of the treatment facility (Sewage Treatment)

Policy 15.1.5: Ensure sufficient infrastructure is built and maintained to handle and treat wastewater discharge.

LANCASTER MUNICIPAL CODE

Municipal Code Section 13.08.785, *Permit—Not required when*, states that City permits are not required for the disposal of waste which consists only of domestic sewage into septic tanks or cesspools constructed pursuant to the provisions of the CPC, as set out under Municipal Code Title 15, *Buildings and Construction*.

Municipal Code Chapter 15.64, *Development Impact Fees*, establishes an urban structure program for the adoption and administration of development impact fees by the City for the benefit of the citizens. Specifically, Municipal Code Section 15.64.080, *Sewage Treatment Improvements Fee*, requires all new developments to pay a sewage treatment improvements fee to mitigate additional burdens placed on the City's existing sewage treatment systems created by new development. The fee provides funding for land acquisition, design and construction of sewage treatment plant improvements and expansions, wastewater interceptors, and other related improvements.

Municipal Code Section 16.24.210, *Use of septic tanks*, allows the use of on-site septic systems in nonurban residential areas as defined by the general plan only where there is no feasible method of providing sanitary sewers, and where the soil and groundwater conditions of the site are suitable for the use of such systems.

STORMWATER

Federal Level

Refer to [Section 5.7.2, *Regulatory Setting*](#), for a discussion regarding all applicable federal level regulations regarding stormwater.

State Level

Refer to [Section 5.7.2](#) for a discussion regarding all applicable State level regulations regarding stormwater.



Local Level

Section 5.7 includes a discussion on all applicable local level regulations regarding stormwater. Nevertheless, the following discussion on local regulations and standards are specifically focused on impacts to stormwater as a utility service system.

CITY OF LANCASTER MASTER PLAN OF DRAINAGE

In 1992, the City adopted the *City of Lancaster Master Plan of Drainage* (Master Plan of Drainage). The current version of the Master Plan of Drainage (dated May 2019 and revised December 3, 2020) contains updated facilities and drainage fee schedules. The City funds all Master Plan of Drainage facilities through drainage impact fees and drainage maintenance fees. As undeveloped lands are covered or paved over, their natural absorption capabilities are reduced and the amount of runoff is increased. Even small amounts of rain in the Lancaster area can cause flooding problems because of the general lack of adequate storm drain facilities.

For areas located on the extreme west and east sides of the City that were determined to be remotely located in relationship to existing drainage infrastructure that could manage and convey runoff from such areas, the Master Plan of Drainage calls for proposed developments to include floodplain management measures that mitigate the floodplain impacts associated with the development to less-than-significant levels. These measures typically include the continued acceptance of pre-development flows from upstream areas tributary to the development, the safe conveyance of flow through or around the development without an adverse effect to adjacent properties, and the discharge of flows to downstream areas in a manner consistent with pre-development flow characteristics. Areas within a development dedicated to flood mitigation are be encumbered with a drainage and maintenance covenant with the City to ensure that flood mitigation features are maintained. The drainage and maintenance covenant agreement would ensure that flood mitigation features remain configured as intended. Drainage facilities not included in the Master Plan of Drainage that may be necessary to convey stormwater through a development is the developer's sole responsibility. Additionally, drainage from a development needs to be properly conveyed downstream to a suitable receiving facility; should these facilities not serve the needs of the Master Plan of Drainage, they are the developer's sole responsibility.

CITY OF LANCASTER STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN

The CWA mandates that cities in major metropolitan areas, such as Los Angeles County, obtain permits to “effectively prohibit non-stormwater discharges into the storm sewers” and “require controls to reduce the discharge of pollutants to the maximum extent practicable...” The EPA has delegated this authority to the State of California, which has authorized the SWRCB and its local regulatory agencies, the RWQCBs, to control nonpoint source discharges to California's waterways.

The Municipal Storm Water Permitting Program regulates stormwater discharges from municipal separate storm sewer (drain) systems (MS4s). Most of these permits are issued to a group of co-permittees encompassing an entire metropolitan area. These regional MS4 permits require the discharger to develop and implement a Storm Water Management Plan/Program with the goal of



reducing the discharge of pollutants to the maximum extent practicable (MEP). MEP is the performance standard specified in CWA Section 402(p). The management programs specify what best management practices (BMPs) will be used to address certain program areas. The program areas include public education and outreach; illicit discharge detection and elimination; construction and post-construction; and good housekeeping for municipal operations.

The City has been designated a regulated Small Municipal Separate Storm System by the EPA pursuant to 40 Code of Federal Regulations 122.322(a)(1). To comply with the Phase II regulations of the NPDES, the City filed a Notice of Intent (NOI) to comply with the SWRCB Small MS4 General Permit (MS4 Permit) in lieu of obtaining an individual permit. In compliance with federal regulations, the City submitted an NOI, a Storm Water Management Program (SWMP), and applicable fee on March 7, 2003. On April 20, 2003, NPDES General Permit No. CAS000004 was adopted. The objective of the City's SWMP is to establish ordinances, policies, procedures, and practices to manage and control the quality of stormwater runoff in Lancaster.

LANCASTER MUNICIPAL CODE

Municipal Code Section 8.50.200, *Stormwater Management and Rainwater Retention*, establishes stormwater management practices or technical requirements for existing and/or new landscape that minimize runoff and increase rainwater retention and infiltration. Suggested BMPs are also outlined in the section.

Municipal Code Chapter 13.04, *Drainage Regulations*, requires the maintenance of drainage facilities, prohibits depositing trash or debris in stormwater drainage facilities, and establishes the city's intent to construct the planned drainage facilities and to designate fees that are fairly apportioned within the drainage area based on the need for drainage facilities created by the proposed subdivision and development of other property within such area.

Municipal Code Section 15.64.060, *Drainage/Flood Control Improvements Fee*, requires that all new development in the City pay a drainage/flood control improvements fee to offset impacts related to each new development's stormwater runoff.

Municipal Code Chapter 16.24, *Improvements, Dedications, and Reservations*, of the Municipal Code requires all improvements that are required by the conditions of a tentative map, by this chapter, or by any other City statute, ordinance or policy, to conform with the requirements within Chapter 16.24, including those outlines in Article II, *Drainage Facilities*, of this chapter. Specifically, Section 16.24.140, *Hydrology Study*, requires a hydrology study be submitted and approved prior to the filing of the final map. The hydrology study would verify that the proposed streets and existing downstream streets are designed to carry a 50-year storm, top-of-curb to top-of-curb, and 100-year storm within the right-of-way, among others. The anticipated flow through new developments and potential associated drainage problems would be mitigated through the installation of drainage structures such as culverts, storm drains, or other improvements in accordance with Municipal Code Section 16.24.150, *Mitigation of Storm and Nuisance Water Runoff*.



SOLID WASTE

Federal Level

RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND RECOVERY ACT OF 1976

The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) of 1976 (Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations), Part 258 contains regulations for municipal solid waste landfills and requires states to implement their own permitting programs incorporating the Federal landfill criteria. The Federal regulations address the location, operation, design (liners, leachate collection, run-off control, etc.), groundwater monitoring, and closure of landfills.

State Level

CALIFORNIA INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT ACT OF 1989 (AB 939)

The Integrated Solid Waste Management Act of 1989 (AB 939) (California Public Resources Code Section 40050 et seq.) established an integrated waste management system that focuses on source reduction, recycling, composting, and land disposal of waste. AB 939 requires every city and county in California to divert 50 percent of its waste from landfills whether through waste reduction, recycling, or other means. Compliance with AB 939 is measured in part by comparing solid waste disposal rates for a jurisdiction with target disposal rates. Actual rates at or below target rates are consistent with AB 939. AB 939 also requires California counties to show 15 years of disposal capacity for all jurisdictions in the County or show a plan to transform or divert its waste.

ASSEMBLY BILL 1826

Assembly Bill 1826 (AB 1826) (California Public Resources Code Sections 42649.8 et seq.) requires recycling of organic matter by businesses generating such wastes in amounts over certain thresholds. AB 1826 also requires that local jurisdictions implement an organic waste recycling program to divert organic waste generated by businesses and multi-family developments that consist of five or more units.

CALIFORNIA GREEN BUILDING STANDARDS CODE

Section 5.408, *Construction Waste Reduction, Disposal, and Recycling*, of the California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen) (Title 24, California Code of Regulations, Part 11) requires at least 50 percent of nonhazardous construction and demolition waste from non-residential construction operations be recycled and/or salvaged for reuse. CALGreen is updated on a three-year cycle; the 2019 CALGreen took effect on January 1, 2020.



Local Level

CITY OF LANCASTER GENERAL PLAN 2030

Plan for Municipal Services and Facilities

The Plan for Municipal Services and Facilities in the General Plan includes objectives and policies to address solid waste within the City. The following goals and policies are relevant to the proposed project:

- Objective 15.2: Minimize the negative impacts of solid waste disposal using a variety of methods including mitigating the disposal of waste from outside the Antelope Valley.
- Policy 15.2.1: Consider the use of conversion technologies at appropriate facilities.
- Policy 15.2.2 Minimize the generation of solid wastes as required by State law (AB 939) through an integrated program of public education, source reduction, and recycling.

LANCASTER MUNICIPAL CODE

Municipal Code Chapter 13.16, *Refuse Collection and Disposal*, addresses waste collection and disposal within the City. The purpose of the Chapter is to promote the health, safety, and welfare of residents in Lancaster by establishing regulations governing the collection and disposal of refuse.

Municipal Code Chapter 13.17, *Requirements for the Collection and Recycling of Recyclable Materials and Collection and Organics Processing of Organic Material Generated from Commercial Facilities, Multi-Family Dwellings, and Special Events*, adopts the State-mandated policies regarding solid waste collection and disposal. These policies include the California Integrated Waste Management Act (AB 939), as amended by AB 341 and AB 1826, and any future bills amending the California Integrated Waste Management Act. The State assembly aims to increase the diversion of recyclable material and organic waste from landfill disposal, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, conserve water, energy, and other natural resources, and protect the environment. This Chapter ensures Citywide compliance with State-mandated solid waste policies.

DRY UTILITIES

State Level

CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS TITLE 24 – ELECTRIC CODES

CCR Title 24 refers to the California Building Code (CBC) and contains regulations and general construction building standards of State adopting agencies, including provisions discussing electricity and potential hazards arising from electric installations. Part 3 of the CBC refers to the California Electrical Code, which contains standards for the installation and maintenance for electric utility lines.



Local Level

CITY OF LANCASTER GENERAL PLAN 2030

Plan for the Municipal Services and Facilities

The Plan for Municipal Services and Facilities in the General Plan includes objectives and policies to address dry utilities within the City. The following goals and policies are relevant to the proposed project:

- Objective 15.3 Ensure the coordination of development activity with the provision of public services and facilities in order to eliminate gaps in service provision, provide economical public services, and achieve the equitable sharing of the cost of such facilities and services.

- Policy 15.3.2 Ensure that the City is proactive in addressing the infrastructure and service needs of the wireless communications industry.

LANCASTER MUNICIPAL CODE

Municipal Code Chapter 15.12, *Electrical Code*, adopts by reference the 2019 California Electrical Code (CEC) in its entirety. The California Electrical Code would constitute the electrical code regulations of the City.

Municipal Code Chapter 17.40, *General Regulations*, established general development standards for new development, regardless of its zoning. Specifically, Municipal Code Article XIII, *Wireless Telecommunication Facilities*, establishes standards for the placement and use of wireless telecommunication facilities in all zones in which they are allowed within the City of Lancaster. These requirements provide incentives for well-designed and well-placed telecommunication facilities by simplifying and shortening the review process, where warranted, while at the same time protecting the public interest.

5.11.3 IMPACT THRESHOLDS AND SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

CEQA Guidelines Appendix G contains the Environmental Checklist Form that was used during the preparation of this EIR. Accordingly, a project may create a significant adverse environmental impact if it would:

- a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, or wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects (refer to Impact Statements USS-1, USS-2, USS-3, and USS-5);

- b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years (refer to Impact Statement USS-1);



- c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments (refer to Impact Statement USS-2);
- d) Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals (refer to Impact Statement USS-4); and
- e) Comply with Federal, State, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste? (refer to Impact Statement USS-4).

Based on these standards/criteria, the effects of the proposed project have been categorized as either a "less than significant impact" or "potentially significant impact." Mitigation measures are recommended for potentially significant impacts. If a potentially significant impact cannot be reduced to a less than significant level through the application of mitigation, it is categorized as a significant and unavoidable impact.

5.11.4 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

WATER SUPPLY AND DISTRIBUTION

USS-1 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION COULD HAVE SUFFICIENT WATER SUPPLIES AVAILABLE TO SERVE THE PROJECT AND REASONABLY FORESEEABLE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT DURING NORMAL, DRY AND MULTIPLE DRY YEARS, AND WOULD NOT REQUIRE OR RESULT IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW WATER SUPPLY FACILITIES OR EXPANSION OF EXISTING FACILITIES, THE CONSTRUCTION OF WHICH COULD CAUSE SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS.

Impact Analysis: The proposed East Side Overlay Zone itself would not require the construction of new water facilities or the expansion of existing water facilities. However, future light industrial development associated with the overlay zone would occur in the future and may require or result in the construction of new or expanded water utility infrastructure.

Future development implemented in accordance with the proposed East Side Overlay Zone would be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA to evaluate project-level impacts to existing water facilities, including LACWD 40 facilities and individual water wells in the project area. Future development would also be required to comply with all applicable State and local regulations and policies related to water supply and infrastructure. Specifically, future development would be required to adhere to Title 20 of the CCR and implement water efficiency design standards. New light industrial developments associated with the proposed overlay zone would be required to either construct underground water service lines on-site to connect to LACWD 40's existing water conveyance network or utilize individual water wells if outside of LACWD 40's service area. Water connections to off-site water lines would be established through coordination between future project Applicants, the City, and LACWD 40. In compliance with SB 610 requirements, future developments



may also be required to demonstrate adequate water supply with either a signed Water Availability Form, “Will-Serve” letter, or Water Supply Assessment from LACWD 40, as applicable. Additionally, future developments would be required to adhere to Municipal Code Section 15.64.070, *Water Improvements Fee*, which requires all new development within the City to pay a water improvements fee. The water improvements fee would provide funding of capital improvements, including pump stations, water reservoir facilities, wells, treatment facilities, water lines, and other related improvements to ensure a continuing supply of potable water. Adherence to State and local regulations would reduce potential water supply and infrastructure impacts to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

WASTEWATER TREATMENT

USS-2 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION COULD RESULT IN A DETERMINATION BY THE WASTEWATER TREATMENT PROVIDER WHICH SERVES OR MAY SERVE THE PROJECT THAT IT HAS ADEQUATE CAPACITY TO SERVE THE PROJECT’S PROJECTED DEMAND IN ADDITION TO THE PROVIDER’S EXISTING COMMITMENTS, EXCEED WASTEWATER TREATMENT REQUIREMENTS OF THE APPLICABLE REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD, OR RESULT IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITIES OR EXPANSION OF EXISTING FACILITIES, THE CONSTRUCTION OF WHICH COULD CAUSE SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS.

Impact Analysis: Future light industrial development associated with the proposed overlay zone would increase wastewater generation and require additional wastewater collection and treatment. However, future development within the proposed East Side Overlay Zone would be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA to evaluate project-level impacts related to wastewater collection and treatment. As stated, the overlay zone area is not connected to the City’s sewer network and wastewater generated by existing uses in the project area is currently treated by private septic systems. Therefore, future development would also be required to either connect to existing septic systems on-site or install new septic tanks. The use of septic tanks in the City is regulated by Municipal Code Section 16.24.210, *Use of septic tanks*, which allows the use of on-site septic systems in nonurban residential areas as defined by the General Plan only where there is no feasible method of providing sanitary sewers, and where the soil and groundwater conditions of the site are suitable for the use of such systems. Additionally, the 2019 CPC contains plumbing design and construction standards related to septic tanks. The standards protect against hazards that may arise from the use of plumbing piping and systems by regulating and controlling the design, construction, installation, quality of materials, location and operation of plumbing piping systems within the State. Specifically, septic tank systems are required to meet design criteria, distance requirements, and capacity standards outlined in Appendix H, *Private Sewage Disposal System*, of the 2019 CPC. Additionally, new septic tank systems would also be required to meet design criteria and soil absorption capacities that are compatible with existing on-site soils.



While there are currently only septic systems in the project area, it is possible that the City extends wastewater services into the project area in the future as more development occurs in the eastern portion of Lancaster. For example, future light industrial developments may require more substantial wastewater services (collection and treatment) than what is available through septic systems. As such, project Applicants would still be required to pay a sewage treatment improvement fee per Municipal Code Section 15.64.080, *Sewage Treatment Improvements Fee*, to offset impacts on the City's existing sewage treatment systems and fund sewer-related capital improvements, such as acquisition, design, and construction of sewage treatment plant improvement and expansions, wastewater interceptors, and other related improvements, including potential service expansions into eastern Lancaster. Upon compliance with existing State and local regulations, impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

STORMWATER DRAINAGE FACILITIES

USS-3 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION COULD REQUIRE THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW STORM WATER DRAINAGE FACILITIES OR THE EXPANSION OF EXISTING FACILITIES, THE CONSTRUCTION OF WHICH COULD CAUSE SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS.

Impact Analysis: Refer to Section 5.7, *Hydrology and Water Quality*, for a detailed discussion on the potential for the proposed project to create or contribute stormwater runoff that could exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems.

New light industrial developments associated with the proposed overlay zone would be constructed on predominately vacant, undeveloped land, and would accordingly result in an increase in impervious surfaces and stormwater runoff in the area. As stated, the overlay zone does not have any existing City storm drain infrastructure. Additionally, the portion of the overlay zone from 55th Street East to the eastern boundary of the overlay zone (and City limits) is located in designated natural floodplain management areas where existing flood management infrastructure is limited. However, based on the Master Plan of Drainage, the City is planning several storm drains in the overlay zone, including a regional storm drain and storm drains, sized for 50-year and 25-year storm events, respectively, in the northwestern portion of the overlay zone, and several regional storm drains, sized for a 50-year storm event in the southwestern portion of the overlay zone.

Future development associated with the proposed overlay zone would be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA to evaluate project-level impacts to existing and planned stormwater drainage facilities. If construction activities associated with future development disturbs less than one acre of land, compliance with the City's SWMP is required to minimize stormwater runoff volumes. If construction activities are anticipated to disturb more than one acre of land, a General Construction Permit under the NPDES program would be required (Order No. 2009-0009-DWQ, NPDES Permit No. CAS000002). In compliance with the General Construction Permit,



preparation and implementation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), Risk Assessment, and other documentation would be required prior to the commencement of soil disturbing activities. The SWPPP also must include a list of BMPs that would be utilized to reduce and treat stormwater runoff.

Additionally, in compliance with Municipal Code Chapter 16.24, *Improvements, Dedications, and Reservations*, project Applicants may be required to submit a hydrology study for applicable developments to verify that proposed streets and existing downstream streets are designed to carry a 50-year storm event, top-of-curb to top-of-curb, and 100-year storm event within the existing right-of-way, among others. Further, payment of drainage/flood control improvements fees would also be required for future developments pursuant to Municipal Code Section 15.64.060, *Drainage/Flood Control Improvements Fee*, to offset impacts related to each new development's stormwater runoff. As such, impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

SOLID WASTE GENERATION

USS-4 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION COULD BE SERVED BY EXISTING LANDFILLS WITH SUFFICIENT PERMITTED CAPACITY TO ACCOMMODATE THE PROJECT'S SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL NEEDS AND COMPLY WITH FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL STATUTES AND REGULATIONS RELATED TO SOLID WASTE.

Impact Analysis: Future temporary construction impacts would potentially involve demolition of existing structures, construction of new structures, and excavation and grading to construct building pads and other on-site improvements. Other activities may include constructing walls and fencing, installing signage and lighting, providing landscaping, and installing on-site utilities and infrastructure improvements. Future construction activities would be subject to conformance with relevant federal, State, and local requirements concerning solid waste. Specifically, future light industrial developments would be required to demonstrate compliance with AB 939, which requires all California cities to "reduce, recycle, and re-use solid waste generated in the state to the maximum extent feasible." AB 939 requires that at least 50 percent of waste produced is recycled, reduced, or composted. Future developments would also be required to demonstrate compliance with the 2019 (or most recent) Green Building Code (CALGreen), which includes design and construction measures that act to reduce construction-related waste through material conservation measures and other construction-related efficiency measures. Compliance with these programs would ensure short-term construction related solid waste impacts are less than significant.

Operations of light industrial developments in accordance with the East Side Overlay Zone would generate solid waste that requires disposal at the Lancaster Landfill and Recycling Center and/or Antelope Valley Public Landfill. Future development within the proposed overlay zone would be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA to evaluate project-level impacts to



existing landfill capacities for solid waste. Compliance with all applicable federal, State, and local laws, regulations, and standards regarding solid waste disposal, including the mandates of RCRA, AB 939, AB 1826, CALGreen Section 5.408, *Construction Waste Reduction, Disposal, and Recycling*, and Municipal Code Chapter 13.16 (which includes regulations for solid waste management within the City) would reduce impacts to solid waste disposal. As such, operational impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

DRY UTILITIES

USS-5 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION COULD RESULT IN THE RELOCATION OR CONSTRUCTION OF NEW OR EXPANDED DRY UTILITY FACILITIES, THE CONSTRUCTION OF WHICH COULD CAUSE SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS.

Impact Analysis: Future development within the proposed East Side Overlay Zone would occur on predominately vacant, undeveloped land, and would therefore increase use of electricity, natural gas, and telecommunication services within the City. Future development associated with the proposed overlay zone would be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA to evaluate project-level impacts to dry utility facilities. Additionally, future developments would be required to construct new on-site dry utility connections for electricity, natural gas, and telecommunication services. Construction of new dry utility infrastructure would be subject to compliance with all applicable local, State, and federal laws, ordinances, and regulations. Impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

5.11.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

CEQA Guidelines Section 15355 requires an analysis of cumulative impacts, which are defined as, “two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable, or which compound or increase other environmental impacts.”



WATER SUPPLY AND DISTRIBUTION

- **PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION, IN CONJUNCTION WITH CUMULATIVE DEVELOPMENT, COULD RESULT IN CUMULATIVELY CONSIDERABLE IMPACTS TO WATER FACILITIES, SUPPLY AND DISTRIBUTION.**

Impact Analysis: Cumulative projects developed in accordance with General Plan buildout could increase demand for water and adversely impact existing water supply and facilities. As such, cumulative projects would be required to undergo project-specific environmental review under CEQA and the City’s discretionary review process to determine potential effects to water facilities. Additionally, cumulative projects would be required to comply with existing regulations pertaining to water supply and conveyance. For example, related projects may be required to demonstrate adequate water supply with either a signed Water Availability Form, “Will-Serve” letter, or Water Supply Assessment from the applicable water purveyor. Additionally, payment of standard connection fees would be required to offset project-related impacts to water supply and distribution services.

As stated, future development projects associated with the proposed East Side Overlay Zone would be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA and comply with established regulatory requirements. Future developments would also be required to adhere to Title 20 of the CCR and implement water efficiency design standards. Additionally, future developments would be required to pay a water improvements fee pursuant to Municipal Code Section 15.64.070, *Water Improvements Fee*. The water improvements fee would provide funding of capital improvements, including pump stations, water reservoir facilities, wells, treatment facilities, water lines, and other related improvements to ensure a continuing supply of potable water. Thus, cumulative project impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

WASTEWATER TREATMENT

- **PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION, IN CONJUNCTION WITH CUMULATIVE DEVELOPMENT COULD RESULT IN CUMULATIVELY CONSIDERABLE IMPACTS TO WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITIES.**

Impact Analysis: Future cumulative projects developed in accordance with the General Plan could result in increased wastewater generation compared to existing conditions. However, cumulative projects would be required to undergo project-specific environmental review under CEQA and the City’s discretionary review process to determine potential effects to wastewater treatment facilities. Additionally, similar to future development projects within the proposed East Side Overlay Zone, cumulative projects would be required to comply with federal and local regulations regarding wastewater treatment.



As stated, future development projects associated with the proposed East Side Overlay Zone would result in less than significant impacts to wastewater services and infrastructure and would be required to undergo separate environmental review and conform with established regulatory requirements. Future light industrial projects would also be required to comply with State and local regulations pertaining to septic tanks and septic systems, as applicable. New septic tank systems would be required to meet design criteria, distance requirements, and capacity standards under Appendix H, *Private Sewage Disposal System*, of the 2019 CPC. Additionally, new septic tank systems would be required to meet the design criteria and absorption capacity compatible with the existing on-site soils per the 2019 CPC.

It is also acknowledged that while there are currently only septic systems in the project area, it is possible that the City extends wastewater services into the project area in the future as more development occurs in the eastern portion of Lancaster. For example, future light industrial developments may require more substantial wastewater services (collection and treatment) than what is available through septic systems. All new development within the City is required to adhere to Municipal Code Section 15.64.080, *Sewage Treatment Improvements Fee*, and pay a standard sewage treatment fee to offset any additional demand placed on the City's existing sewage treatment systems created by new development. Thus, cumulative impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

STORMWATER DRAINAGE FACILITIES

● PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION, IN CONJUNCTION WITH CUMULATIVE DEVELOPMENT COULD INCREASE DEMAND FOR STORMWATER DRAINAGE FACILITIES.

Impact Analysis: Future cumulative projects developed in accordance with the General Plan would be required to undergo project-specific environmental review under CEQA and the City's discretionary review process to determine project-specific impacts to existing storm drainage facilities. Similar to future development projects within the proposed East Side Overlay Zone, cumulative projects would be required to comply with federal, State, and local regulations and policies. For example, Municipal Code Section 16.24.140, *Hydrology Study*, requires applicable projects to prepare a hydrology study to identify whether existing and/or planned stormwater facilities can adequately accommodate increases in stormwater runoff generated by a project. Additionally, compliance with the City's SWMP and/or General Construction Permit under the NPDES program would reduce stormwater impacts associated with cumulative projects.

As stated, future development projects within the East Side Overlay Zone would result in less than significant impacts to storm drainage facilities and each project would be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA to evaluate site-specific impacts. Depending on the number of acres disturbed, future light industrial uses would be required to either comply with the City's SWMP and/or obtain a General Construction Permit under the NPDES program. The General Construction Permit involves preparing and implementing a SWPPP and associated BMPs to reduce impacts related



to stormwater. Future projects would also be required to pay a drainage/flood control improvements fee pursuant to Municipal Code Section 15.64.060, *Drainage/Flood Control Improvements Fee*, to offset potential stormwater impacts. Thus, cumulative impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

SOLID WASTE GENERATION

- **PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION, IN CONJUNCTION WITH CUMULATIVE DEVELOPMENT COULD CREATE INCREASED DEMAND FOR SOLID WASTE GENERATION THAT COULD CAUSE SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS.**

Impact Analysis: Future cumulative projects developed in accordance with the General Plan would be required to undergo project-specific environmental review under CEQA and the City's discretionary review process to determine project-specific impacts related to solid waste generation. Cumulative projects would be required to comply with existing regulations and policies, including AB 939 and AB 341 (related to diverting solid waste from landfills), AB 1826 (related to recycling organic matter), CALGreen Section 5.408, *Construction Waste Reduction, Disposal, and Recycling* (related to recycling construction and demolition waste), and Municipal Code Chapter 13.17, *Requirements for the Collection and Recycling of Recyclable Materials and Collection and Organics Processing of Organic Material Generated from Commercial Facilities, Multi-Family Dwellings, and Special Events* (related to compliance with AB 939, AB 341, and AB 1826 at the local level).

As stated, all future development within the proposed East Side Overlay Zone would be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA and comply with existing regulations regarding solid waste. Thus, cumulative impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

DRY UTILITIES

- **PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION, IN CONJUNCTION WITH CUMULATIVE DEVELOPMENT COULD CREATE INCREASED DEMAND FOR DRY UTILITY SERVICES THAT COULD CAUSE SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS.**

Impact Analysis: Similar to future development within the proposed overlay zone, cumulative projects may increase demand for electricity, natural gas, and telecommunication services. However, cumulative projects would be required to undergo environmental review under CEQA to determine project-level impacts to dry utilities and to identify any required mitigation. Additionally, cumulative



developments would be required to pay applicable connection and ongoing user fees to LCE, SCG, and Spectrum to receive electricity, natural gas, and telecommunication services, respectively.

As stated, all future development projects within the proposed overlay zone would be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA and comply with existing regulations regarding electricity. Additionally, future developments would be required to construct new on-site dry utility connections for electricity, natural gas, and telecommunication services. Construction of new dry utility infrastructure would be subject to compliance with all applicable local, State, and federal laws, ordinances, and regulations. Thus, cumulative impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

5.11.6 SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

No significant unavoidable impacts related to utilities and service systems have been identified.



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5.12 Transportation



5.12 TRANSPORTATION

This section evaluates potential transportation impacts resulting from implementation of the proposed project. This section is primarily based on the *East Side Overlay Zone Programmatic VMT Assessment* (VMT Assessment), prepared by Michael Baker International, and dated March 21, 2023; refer to Appendix 11.4, *VMT Analysis*.

In 2013, Senate Bill (SB) 743 was adopted, starting a process that fundamentally changed the way transportation impact analysis is conducted under CEQA. SB 743 identifies Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) as the most appropriate CEQA transportation metric and eliminates auto delay, or level of service (LOS), and similar measurements of vehicular roadway capacity and traffic congestion as the basis for determining significant impacts. In December 2018, the California Natural Resource Agency integrated VMT into the CEQA Guidelines (14 California Code of Regulations Section 15064.3) pursuant to the provisions of SB 743. The VMT guidelines became effective Statewide beginning July 1, 2020. As such, the following analysis utilizes VMT as the transportation metric to evaluate the project's potential impacts.

5.12.1 EXISTING SETTING

EXISTING ROADWAY CIRCULATION SYSTEM

The Antelope Valley Freeway (State Route 14 [SR-14]) is an important regional north-south arterial within the Antelope Valley. SR-14 provides the primary regional connection between the City of Lancaster, City of Palmdale, and the Santa Clarita Valley, as well as metropolitan Los Angeles County, approximately 45 miles to the south. SR-14 runs north to Kern County and then transitions to Interstate Highway 395 north of the community of Inyokern. Highway 58 branches from SR-14 in the community of Mojave to extend northwest to the City of Bakersfield.

Various other regional arterials in the vicinity of the City provide regional connectivity. Avenue D (State Route 138) extends west from SR-14, and connects to the Golden State Freeway (Interstate 5) near the Ventura County border, and extends east from the City of Palmdale, connecting with Interstate 15. Avenue I turns into Lancaster Road at 110th Street West, and then proceeds northwest to intersect with Avenue D at 250th Street West. Sierra Highway links Lancaster with the community of Rosamond to the north and the City of Palmdale to the south. Sierra Highway continues south and connects to San Fernando Road in the northern San Fernando Valley. Consequently, Sierra Highway is commonly used as an alternate route to SR-14 by southbound commuters trying to connect to the San Fernando Valley. Similarly, mountain roads such as Soledad Canyon Road, Bouquet Canyon Road, and San Francisquito Canyon Road are utilized to travel from the Antelope Valley to Santa Clarita Valley.



Roadway Classifications

The existing local roadway network in the eastern portion of Lancaster is a system of local streets developed to provide local access. The roadway network is primarily designed in a north-south and east-west grid pattern with major and secondary arterials spaced at one mile and one-half mile intervals, respectively. The following section provides a description of the functional classification of the facilities within the project site.

Major Arterials

Major arterials are primarily intended to serve through, non-local traffic and provide limited local access. They have a cross-section of three through lanes, and a raised landscape median and turn lanes at a limited number of access points. Major arterials are designated as 84-foot wide roadways, within a 100-foot right-of-way.

Secondary Arterials

Secondary arterials provide more local access than major arterials, while also providing a reduced level of non-local through traffic service. Secondary arterials have a cross-section of four through lanes, a bike lane in each direction and a left-turn lane within 68 feet of curb-to-curb space, within an 84-foot right-of-way. These roadways are usually undivided with the potential for limited on-street parking, turn lanes at major intersections, and partial control of vehicular and pedestrian access from driveways, cross streets, and crosswalks.

Collectors

The primary role of collector roadways is to provide access between the arterial network and the neighborhoods and commercial development. These roadways are typically two lanes wide with limited access to driveways and cross streets. They are usually undivided and do not have turn lanes at intersections. Collectors in Lancaster are 44 feet wide, curb to curb, within 64-foot rights-of-way.

Local Residential Streets

Local residential streets serve adjacent residential land uses only, allowing access to residential driveways and providing on-street parking for neighborhoods. Local residential streets in Lancaster are designated as 42-foot wide roadways within a 60-foot right-of-way. These streets are not intended to serve through traffic traveling from one street to another.

EXISTING STREET SYSTEM

The principal local network of streets serving the project area include 40th Street East, Avenue J, Avenue K, 50th Street East, 70th Street East, 90th Street East, 100th Street East, 107th Street East, and Avenue L.



- 40th Street East is a two lane, undivided roadway that travels in a north-south circulation along the western boundary of the project site. 40th Street East is classified as a Major Arterial Roadway in the General Plan.
- Avenue J is a two lane, undivided roadway that travels in an east-west circulation along the northern perimeter of the project site. The roadway operates with an unpaved, right-of-way shoulder composed of gravel to the west, and an unpaved shoulder composed of dirt to the east. Avenue J is classified as a Major Arterial Roadway in the General Plan.
- Avenue K is a two-lane, undivided roadway that travels in an east-west circulation within the project site. The roadway operates with an unpaved, right-of-way shoulder composed of gravel to the east, and a dirt shoulder to the west. East Avenue K is classified as a Major Arterial Roadway in the General Plan.
- 50th Street East is a two lane, undivided roadway that travels in a north-south circulation along the eastern perimeter of the project site. 50th Street East is classified as a Major Arterial Roadway in the General Plan.
- 70th Street East is a two lane, undivided roadway that travels in a north-south circulation within the project site. 70th Street East is classified as a Major Arterial Roadway in the General Plan.
- 90th Street East is a two lane, undivided roadway that travels in a north-south circulation within the project site. 90th Street East is classified as a Major Arterial Roadway in the General Plan.
- 100th Street East is a two lane, undivided roadway that travels in a north-south circulation within the project site. 100th Street East is classified as a Major Arterial Roadway in the General Plan.
- 107th Street East is a two lane, undivided roadway that travels in a north-south circulation at the eastern perimeter of the project site. 107th Street East is classified as a Major Arterial Roadway in the General Plan.
- Avenue L is a is a two-lane, undivided roadway that travels in an east-west circulation along the southern perimeter of the project site. Avenue L is classified as a Major Arterial Roadway in the General Plan.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Antelope Valley Transit Authority's (AVTA) local fixed-route bus services, AVTA commuter bus services, and Metrolink commuter rail lines, among others, currently provide public transit services within the Antelope Valley.



AVTA Local Fixed-Route Bus Services

AVTA provides fixed-route bus services throughout Lancaster, including Routes 1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 50, 94, and 97.¹ Several routes travel through downtown Lancaster and other routes provide connections from Lancaster to the City of Palmdale and communities of Sun Village, Littlerock, and Pearblossom to the south and Lake Los Angeles to the east.

Route 50 runs along the northern perimeter of the project site along Avenue J and provides connections to Lake Los Angeles to the east. Route 50 also provides transit connections to Route 51 in Lake Los Angeles, which travels through the City of Palmdale in an east-west direction.

5.12.2 REGULATORY SETTING

STATE LEVEL

Complete Streets Act of 2008

Assembly Bill 1358 (AB 1358), the Complete Streets Act of 2008, was developed in response to and in support of other legislation aimed at reducing vehicle emissions through reduced trip length and frequency combined with changes in land use policies. Specifically, the bill directs that, “commencing January 1, 2011, that the legislative body of a city or county, upon any substantive revision of the circulation element of a general plan, modify the circulation element to plan for a balanced, multi-modal transportation network that meets the needs of all users of streets, roads, and highways, defined to include motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, children, persons with disabilities, seniors, movers of commercial goods, and users of public transportation, in a manner that is suitable to the rural, suburban, or urban context of the general plan.”

The Complete Streets Act is supported by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) Deputy Directive DD-64-R1, which memorializes the importance of pedestrian and bicycle facilities to the State’s transportation system and outlines responsibilities for Caltrans employees to ensure that travelers of all ages and abilities can move safely and efficiently along and across a network of complete streets throughout the State.

Senate Bill 743

In September 2013, the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR) signed SB 743 into law, starting a process that fundamentally changes the way transportation impact analysis is conducted under CEQA. SB 743 identifies VMT as the most appropriate CEQA transportation metric and eliminates of auto delay, or LOS, and similar measurements of vehicular roadway capacity and traffic congestion as the basis for determining significant impacts. In December 2018, the California Natural

¹ Antelope Valley Transit Authority, *Local Transit Service*, <https://www.avta.com/system-map.php>, accessed January 31, 2022.



Resource Agency certified and adopted the CEQA statute (14 California Code of Regulations Section 15064.3).

REGIONAL LEVEL

SCAG Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy

On September 3, 2020, the Regional Council of SCAG formally adopted the *Connect SoCal: 2020–2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy* (2020–2045 RTP/SCS). The SCS portion of the 2020–2045 RTP/SCS highlights strategies for the region to reach the regional target of reducing greenhouse gases (GHGs) from autos and light-duty trucks by 8 percent per capita by 2020, and 19 percent by 2035 (compared to 2005 levels). Specially, these strategies are:

- Focus growth near destinations and mobility options;
- Promote diverse housing choices;
- Leverage technology innovations;
- Support implementation of sustainability policies; and
- Promote a green region.

Furthermore, the 2020–2045 RTP/SCS discusses a variety of land use tools to help achieve the state-mandated reductions in GHG emissions through reduced per capita VMT. Some of these tools include center-focused placemaking, focusing on priority growth areas, job centers, transit priority areas, as well as high quality transit areas and green regions.

LOCAL LEVEL

City of Lancaster General Plan 2030

Plan for Physical Mobility

The Plan for Physical Mobility focuses on transportation issues, such as how goods and people move within Lancaster. The plan recognizes that transportation affects land use, urban design, energy consumption, air quality, and the City's infrastructure. Addressed not only at the local level, but circulation decisions must also be coordinated with regional, State, and Federal agencies, as well as with neighboring communities. Transportation facilities as well as alternative modes of transportation are discussed in the Plan for Physical Mobility. The following goal and policies are applicable to the proposed project:

- Objective 14.1: Maintain a hierarchical system which balances the need for free traffic flow with economic realities, such that streets are designed to handle normal traffic flows with tolerances to allow for potential short-term delays at peak hours.
- Policy 14.1.3: Require that the fair and equitable cost of constructing arterials which connect outlying urban development to the City core be borne by developments which create the need for them.



- Objective 14.3: Achieve a balance between the supply of parking and demand for parking, recognizing the desirability and availability of alternatives to the use of the private automobile.
- Policy 14.3.1: Maintain an adequate supply of parking that will support the present level of automobiles and allow for the expected increase in alternative modes of transportation.
- Policy 14.3.2: Provide safe and convenient parking that has minimal impacts on the natural environment, the community image, and quality of life.
- Objective 14.4: Reduce reliance of the use of automobiles and increase the average vehicle occupancy by promoting alternatives to single-occupancy auto use, including ridesharing, non-motorized transportation (bicycle, pedestrian), and the use of public transit.
- Policy 14.4.5: Design transportation facilities to encourage walking, provide connectivity, ADA accessibility, and safety by reducing potential auto/pedestrian conflicts.

Lancaster Municipal Code

Municipal Code Section 15.64.040, *Street improvements fee*, imposes a fee on all new development in the City to finance the costs of street improvements, including acquisition, widening and reconstruction, street landscaping, intersection improvements and freeway interchange improvements in order to mitigate the additional traffic burdens created by new development to the City's arterial and collector street system.

Municipal Code Section 15.64.050, *Traffic signalization fee*, imposes a traffic signalization fee on all new development in the City to finance the costs of traffic signalization improvements in order to mitigate additional burdens created by new development to the City's traffic congestion beyond the financial ability of the City to control.

City of Lancaster Master Plan of Trails and Bikeways

The *City of Lancaster Master Plan of Trails and Bikeways* (Master Plan of Trails and Bikeways), adopted March 2012, is intended to guide the planning and design of pedestrian, bicycle, and equestrian facilities in a comprehensive manner throughout Lancaster. The City's vision is to create a connected network of on-road and off-road trails and bikeway facilities to accommodate users of all ages and abilities, including equestrians. When implemented, it is anticipated that the proposed network will provide linkages between residential areas, commercial centers, transportation hubs, employment centers, and recreational venues. The Master Plan of Trails and Bikeways includes a summary of the City's public outreach efforts during preparation of the plan; discussion of the plan's context with other neighboring jurisdictions and regional plans; goals, policies, and actions to implement the plan; and discussion of the City's existing bicycle, pedestrian, and trail conditions; Bicycle Plan, Trails Plan, and ADA Transition Plan, potential funding programs, implementation actions, and design guidelines.



Transportation Analysis Updates in Lancaster

In response to SB 743, the City of Lancaster adopted new transportation impact thresholds utilizing the VMT metric. The *Transportation Analysis Updates in Lancaster* (Lancaster Transportation Analysis), prepared by Fehr & Peers and dated May 27, 2020, provides guidance on conducting transportation studies in the City. Specifically, the Lancaster Local Transportation Analysis provides an overview of SB 743 and what it means for transportation impact analysis in Lancaster; describes the process for determining the City's baseline VMT and describes the analysis methodology and VMT metrics; and outlines the methodology for calculating VMT for projects and plans in the City, provides the threshold of significance, and discusses mitigation options for projects that are found to have a VMT impact.

City of Lancaster Local Transportation Assessment Guidelines

The City's *Local Transportation Assessment Guidelines* (Lancaster Local Transportation Assessment Guidelines), dated January 2021, provides guidance on conducting VMT assessments in the City. Specifically, the Lancaster Local Transportation Assessment Guidelines provides an outline of land use projects that meet the City established screening threshold criteria based on size, location, proximity to transit, or trip-making potential that may be presumed to have a less-than-significant transportation impact under CEQA and do not require a full detailed VMT analysis. If the project is not screened out from a full VMT analysis, the SCAG regional travel demand model would be required to determine the project's full VMT impact. It is acknowledged that the Lancaster Local Transportation Assessment Guidelines are the primary resource for VMT assessment; however, the guidelines are utilized in conjunction with the Lancaster Transportation Analysis.

5.12.3 IMPACT THRESHOLDS AND SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

VMT SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLDS

In compliance with SB 743, the Lancaster Local Transportation Assessment Guidelines provides new guidance to analyze VMT impacts under CEQA. The guidelines discuss VMT screening; VMT analysis methodology, VMT impact thresholds, and VMT mitigation. The Lancaster Local Transportation Assessment Guidelines closely follow the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) *Technical Advisory for Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA* (OPR Technical Advisory), dated December 2018.

Specifically, a project can be screened out of VMT analysis if it falls within one of the following categories, as defined by the Lancaster Local Transportation Assessment Guidelines: 1) Project Size, 2) Locally Serving Retail, 3) Low VMT Area, 4) Transit Proximity, 5) Affordable Housing, or 6) Transportation Facilities.

If a project is not screened out from a VMT analysis, the SCAG regional travel demand model would be required to determine the project's full VMT impact. While the City has identified Los Angeles County's Antelope Valley Planning Area as the geographic area for establishing the baseline VMT, the VMT Assessment only considers the traffic analysis zones (TAZs) within the overlay zone. In addition,



the City has established a threshold of significance as 15 percent below the baseline VMT and projects where the VMT exceeds this threshold are considered to have a significant VMT impact, however this assessment only compares the changes to VMT associated with the land use modifications in the overlay zone. As the overlay zone is subject to a programmatic analysis evaluating the impacts associated with the changes in the allowable land uses, it is not subject to the project specific screening. The VMT thresholds for the proposed overlay zone are summarized below in Table 5.12-1, *VMT Screening Criteria Summary*.

**Table 5.12-1
VMT Screening Criteria Summary**

Screening Criteria	Project Requirements to Meet Screening Criteria
Project Size	A project that generates 110 or fewer daily trips.
Locally Serving Retail	A project that has locally serving retail uses that are 50,000 square feet or less, including specialty retail, shopping center, grocery store, pharmacy, financial services, fitness center or health club, restaurant, and café. If the project contains other land uses, those uses need to be considered under other applicable screening criteria
Low VMT Area	A residential or office project that is located in a TAZ that is already 15% below the AVPA Baseline VMT.
Transit Proximity	A multifamily residential project providing higher density housing or a commercial project in an area already zoned for commercial use that is located within ½ mile of the Metrolink station or within ½ mile of a bus stop with service frequency of 15 minutes or less during commute periods.
Affordable Housing	A residential project that provides affordable housing units; if part of a larger development, only those units that meet the definition of affordable housing satisfy the screening criteria.
Transportation Facilities	Transportation projects that promote non-auto travel, improve safety, or improve traffic operations at current bottlenecks, such as transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, intersection traffic control (e.g. traffic signals or roundabouts), or widening at intersections to provide new turn lanes.
Source: Michael Baker International, <i>East Side Overlay Zone Programmatic VMT Assessment</i> , March 21, 2023.	

CEQA SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines* contains the Environmental Checklist form that was used during the preparation of this EIR. Accordingly, a project may create a significant adverse environmental impact if it would:

- a) Conflict with a program plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities (refer to Impact Statement TRA-1);
- b) Conflict or be inconsistent with *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15064.3, subdivision (b) (refer to Impact Statement TRA-2);
- c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment) (refer to Impact Statement TRA-3); and/or



- d) Result in inadequate emergency access (refer to Impact Statement TRA-4).

Based on these standards/criteria, the effects of the proposed project have been categorized as either a “less than significant impact” or “potentially significant impact.” Mitigation measures are recommended for potentially significant impacts. If a potentially significant impact cannot be reduced to a less than significant level through the application of mitigation, it is categorized as a significant and unavoidable impact.

5.12.4 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

CONSISTENCY WITH TRANSPORTATION PROGRAMS

TRA-1 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION COULD CONFLICT WITH A PROGRAM PLAN, ORDINANCE, OR POLICY ADDRESSING THE CIRCULATION SYSTEM, INCLUDING TRANSIT, ROADWAY, BICYCLE, AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES.

Impact Analysis: The proposed project would introduce a new overlay zone in the eastern portion of Lancaster that would allow the development of various light industrial uses. No development is proposed as part of the overlay zone. However, future light industrial developments in accordance with the proposed overlay zone could result in a conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs related to transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities. Future light industrial development within the proposed overlay zone would be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA. Thus, project-specific analysis and mitigation measures would be implemented, as needed. Future development projects would also be required to comply with existing policies, plans, and programs related to transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities (e.g., General Plan, Master Plan of Trails and Bikeways, Master Plan of Complete Streets, Lancaster Local Transportation Assessment Guidelines, Lancaster Transportation Analysis, and Municipal Code Sections 15.64.040 and 15.64.050). Thus, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED

TRA-2 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION COULD CONFLICT OR BE INCONSISTENT WITH CEQA GUIDELINES SECTION 15064.3, SUBDIVISION (B).

Impact Analysis: As discussed above, the Lancaster Local Transportation Assessment Guidelines provide recommendations for thresholds of significance for residential, office, local serving retail, and transportation projects regarding impact to VMT. The proposed overlay zone would increase the allowable land uses within the project site and, as such, would be subject to a programmatic VMT analysis to evaluate the potential VMT impacts associated with the change in allowable land uses.



MODELING ASSUMPTIONS

The SCAG transportation demand model (TDM) covers the Antelope Valley Planning Area and includes Lancaster, Palmdale, and portions of Los Angeles County. This model uses 2020 as the baseline year with the future forecast year of 2040 and was used to calculate the Baseline Total VMT per service population Without and With the Overlay Zone. No modifications were made to the model's roadway network.

After the model was run to establish the Existing 2020 and Future Forecast 2040 baseline conditions with the General Plan land use assumptions (Without Overlay Zone), the proposed land use modifications were coded into the model using standard employment densities. Based on input from City staff, it is assumed that 75 percent of the currently vacant/undeveloped land would utilize the new proposed land uses based on the following breakdown:

- 42.5 percent Warehousing (29.5 percent High-Cube and 12.75 percent Standard Warehouse);
- 20 percent Light Industrial/Manufacturing; and
- 12.5 percent Research and Development.

The remaining 25 percent of the currently vacant/undeveloped land would utilize the existing zoning designation of the current General Plan and would remain unchanged without and with the proposed overlay zone (i.e., rural residential and agriculture).

PROGRAMATIC LEVEL VMT ASSESSMENT

For the TAZs within the proposed overlay zone, the average VMT per service population is 45.6 under Existing 2020 with General Plan conditions, which is calculated based on a total service population of 21,498 and a total daily VMT of 981,116. Under Future Forecast Year 2040 conditions with the General Plan land uses, the total service population is anticipated to increase to 21,704; however, the total daily VMT is anticipated to decrease to 844,437. This results in a VMT per service population of 38.9.

With the land use modifications associated with the overlay zone, the average VMT per service population for the TAZs within the overlay zone is estimated to be 34.1 under Existing 2020 With the Overlay Zone conditions based on a total service population of 35,836 and a total daily VMT of 1,220,829. This is approximately 25.2 percent below the baseline General Plan conditions VMT per service population of 45.6.

Under Future Forecast Year 2040 Conditions With the Overlay Zone, the average VMT per service population within the project area is estimated to be 28.8 based on a service population of 36,042 and a total VMT of 1,038,314. This is approximately 26 percent below the baseline General Plan 2040 conditions VMT per service population of 38.9. [Table 5.12-2, VMT Summary](#), provides the results of the VMT Assessment and the conditions with the proposed overlay zone land use modifications.



Table 5.12-2
VMT Summary

Performance Measure	Without Overlay Zone	With Overlay Zone	Net Difference	% Difference
Existing 2020				
Population	21,419	16,749	-4,670	-21.80%
Employment	79	19,087	19,008	24060.76%
Service Population	21,498	35,836	14,338	66.69%
Total Daily VMT	981,116	1,220,829	239,713	24.43%
VMT Service Population	45.6	34.1	-12	-25.22%
Future Forecast Year 2040				
Population	21,618	16,948	-4,670	-21.60%
Employment	86	19,094	19,008	22102.33%
Service Population	21,704	36,042	14,338	66.06%
Total Daily VMT	844,437	1,038,314	193,877	22.96%
VMT Service Population	38.9	28.8	-10	-25.96%

Source: Michael Baker International, *East Side Overlay Zone Programmatic VMT Assessment*, March 21, 2023.

As indicated in Table 5.12-2, total daily VMT is projected to increase based on the intensification of employment opportunities within the overlay zone compared to those anticipated in the General Plan; however, the project’s VMT per service population would result in an overall decrease of more than 25 percent for both analysis years (2020 and 2040) as compared to a scenario without the overlay zone. Utilizing the General Plan buildout as baseline VMT and the City’s 15 percent below baseline VMT threshold, VMT impacts associated with the overlay zone would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

HAZARDOUS DESIGN FEATURES

TRA-3 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION COULD SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASE HAZARDS DUE TO A GEOMETRIC DESIGN FEATURE (E.G., SHARP CURVES OR DANGEROUS INTERSECTIONS) OR INCOMPATIBLE USES (E.G., FARM EQUIPMENT).

Impact Analysis: The overlay zone does not propose any specific changes to roadways. However, the proposed project would introduce a new overlay zone in the eastern portion of Lancaster that would allow a number of light industrial uses. As such, future development in accordance with the proposed overlay zone could substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature or incompatible uses. Future light industrial development within the proposed overlay zone would be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA to evaluate project- and site-specific impacts with regards to increasing hazards due to a geometric design feature or incompatible uses. Thus, project-specific analysis and mitigation measures would be implemented, as needed. Additionally, any future roadway improvements associated with the proposed light industrial uses



would be required to comply with existing City standards related to street improvements. Specifically, Municipal Code Chapter 12.12, *Streets, Curbs and Sidewalks*, requires street improvements (e.g., curbs, gutters, sidewalks, streetlights, and paving) installed along the frontage of any lots or parcels improved with new or expanded structure to conform to the City's Public Works Department's standards and specifications. Thus, impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

EMERGENCY ACCESS

TRA-4 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION COULD RESULT IN INADEQUATE EMERGENCY ACCESS.

Impact Analysis: As stated, no development is proposed as part of the overlay zone. However, future light industrial uses implemented in accordance with the proposed overlay zone could impact existing emergency access routes in the area. Future developments would be required to comply with all applicable City codes and policies related to emergency access, including the California Fire Code and Municipal Code Title 15, *Buildings and Construction*. Additionally, future light industrial developments within the proposed overlay zone would be required to undergo separate environmental review to evaluate project-level impacts with regards to emergency access and plan check review with the City, Los Angeles County Fire Department, and Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. Thus, impacts associated with the overlay zone related to emergency access would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

5.12.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

CEQA Guidelines Section 15355 requires an analysis of cumulative impacts, which are defined as, "two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable, or which compound or increase other environmental impacts." The cumulative analysis below considers the proposed project's impacts in conjunction with future buildout of the General Plan; refer to Table 4-1, *General Plan 2030 – GPCAC Preferred Land Use Plan Alternative Buildout*.

- **THE PROPOSED PROJECT, IN CONJUNCTION WITH CUMULATIVE DEVELOPMENT, COULD CONFLICT WITH A PROGRAM, PLAN, ORDINANCE, OR POLICY ADDRESSING THE CIRCULATION SYSTEM, INCLUDING TRANSIT, ROADWAY, BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES.**

Impact Analysis: Cumulative projects developed in accordance with the General Plan could conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Similar to future light industrial projects proposed in



accordance with the East Side Overlay Zone, cumulative projects would also be required to undergo project-specific environmental review under CEQA and the City's discretionary review process. Cumulative projects would also be subject to all applicable policies, plans, and programs related to transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities (e.g., General Plan, Master Plan of Trails and Bikeways, Master Plan of Complete Streets, Lancaster Local Transportation Assessment Guidelines, Lancaster Transportation Analysis, and Municipal Code Sections 15.64.040, *Street improvements fee*, and 15.64.050, *Traffic signalization fee*).

As discussed above, future development implemented in accordance with the proposed East Side Overlay Zone is not anticipated to result in potentially significant impacts to existing regulations and standards pertaining to pedestrian, bike, and transit services/facilities, upon compliance with applicable State and local regulations and payment of street improvement fees. Therefore, the proposed overlay zone would not result in cumulatively considerable impacts to existing regulations and standards pertaining to pedestrian, bike, and transit services/facilities. The project would not conflict with existing transportation programs and plans and would result in less than significant impacts. Thus, the project's contribution towards cumulative impacts in conjunction with development associated with the General Plan buildout are not cumulatively considerable. Impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

- **THE PROPOSED PROJECT, IN CONJUNCTION WITH CUMULATIVE DEVELOPMENT, COULD CONFLICT OR BE INCONSISTENT WITH CEQA GUIDELINES SECTION 15064.3, SUBDIVISION (B).**

Impact Analysis: Cumulative projects have the potential to increase the City's average VMT per capita and total VMT. As discussed, the Lancaster Local Transportation Assessment Guidelines provide recommendations for thresholds of significance for residential, office, local serving retail, and transportation projects regarding impact to VMT. Similar to future light industrial projects proposed in accordance with the East Side Overlay Zone, cumulative projects would also be required to undergo project-specific environmental review under CEQA and the Lancaster Local Transportation Assessment Guidelines. Therefore, the proposed overlay zone would not result in cumulatively considerable impacts to VMT. Compared to the General Plan buildout baseline VMT, the overlay zone would reduce VMT by over 25 percent compared to baseline VMT per service population. Utilizing the City's 15 percent below baseline threshold, VMT impacts associated with the overlay zone would result in less than significant impacts. Thus, the project's contribution towards cumulative impacts in conjunction with development associated with the General Plan buildout are not cumulatively considerable. Impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.



- **THE PROPOSED PROJECT, IN CONJUNCTION WITH CUMULATIVE DEVELOPMENT, COULD SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASE HAZARDS DUE TO A GEOMETRIC DESIGN FEATURE (E.G., SHARP CURVES OR DANGEROUS INTERSECTIONS) OR INTRODUCE INCOMPATIBLE USES (E.G., FARM EQUIPMENT).**

Impact Analysis: Similar to future industrial development associated with the overlay zone, future cumulative projects developed in accordance with the General Plan would be required to comply with existing City standards related to street improvements, including Municipal Code Chapter 12.12, *Streets, Curbs and Sidewalks*. Future cumulative projects would also be required to undergo separate environmental review to evaluate project-specific impacts.

As analyzed above, future industrial development associated with the overlay zone would be required to comply with existing City standards related to street improvements. Therefore, the project would not contribute towards cumulatively considerable impacts with regards to increasing hazards due to geometric design features or introducing incompatible uses. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

- **THE PROPOSED PROJECT, IN CONJUNCTION WITH CUMULATIVE DEVELOPMENT, COULD RESULT IN INADEQUATE EMERGENCY ACCESS.**

Impact Analysis: Similar to future industrial development associated with the overlay zone, cumulative projects developed in accordance with the General Plan would be required to comply with existing codes and standards, including the California Fire Code and Municipal Code Title 15, *Buildings and Construction*. Future cumulative projects would also be required to undergo separate environmental review to evaluate project-specific impacts.

As analyzed above, future industrial development associated with the overlay zone would also be required to undergo separate environmental review and would be evaluated to determine potential adverse impacts on emergency access. Additionally, future light industrial projects would be required to comply with existing codes and standards. Therefore, the project would not contribute towards cumulatively considerable impacts with regards to emergency access. Impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less than Significant Impact.

5.12.6 SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

No significant and unavoidable transportation impacts have been identified.



5.13 Air Quality



5.13 AIR QUALITY

This section addresses the potential air emissions generated by construction and operational activities as a result of implementation of the proposed project and associated impacts to air quality. The analysis also addresses the consistency of the proposed project with the air quality policies set forth within the Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District's (AVAQMD) *Air Quality Management Plan* (AQMP). The analysis of project-generated air emissions focuses on whether the proposed project would cause an exceedance of an ambient air quality standard or AVAQMD significance thresholds.

5.13.1 EXISTING SETTING

MOJAVE DESERT AIR BASIN

Geography

The State of California is divided geographically into 15 air basins. The City of Lancaster is located in the Mojave Desert Air Basin (MDAB). The MDAB includes the desert portion of Los Angeles and San Bernardino Counties, the eastern desert portion of Kern County, and the northeastern desert portion of Riverside County. The MDAB primarily contains pollutants from other air basins, dust raised by construction, travel on unpaved roads, and paved roads with silty debris.

Air quality in the MDAB is a function of the area's natural physical characteristics (weather and topography) as well as man-made influences (development patterns and lifestyle). Factors such as wind, sunlight, temperature, humidity, rainfall, and topography all affect the accumulation and/or dispersion of air pollutants throughout the MDAB.

Climate

The general region lies in the semipermanent high-pressure zone of the eastern Pacific. As a result, the climate is mild, tempered by cool sea breezes. The climate consists of a semiarid environment with mild winters, warm summers, moderate temperatures, and comfortable humidity. Precipitation is limited to a few winter storms. The usually mild climatological pattern is interrupted infrequently by periods of extremely hot weather, winter storms, or Santa Ana winds. The average annual temperature varies little throughout the MDAB, averaging 75 degrees Fahrenheit (°F). However, with a less-pronounced oceanic influence, the eastern inland portions of the MDAB show greater variability in annual minimum and maximum temperatures. All portions of the MDAB have recorded temperatures over 100°F in recent years.

The AVAQMD covers a western portion of the MDAB. The MDAB is an assemblage of mountain ranges interspersed with long broad valleys that often contain dry lakes. Many of the lower mountains which dot the vast terrain rise from 1,000 to 4,000 feet above the valley floor. Prevailing winds in the MDAB are out of the west and southwest. These prevailing winds are due to the proximity of the MDAB to coastal and central regions and the blocking nature of the Sierra Nevada mountains to the



north; air masses pushed onshore in southern California by differential heating are channeled through the MDAB. The MDAB is separated from the southern California coastal and central California valley regions by mountains (highest elevation approximately 10,000 feet), whose passes form the main channels for these air masses. The Antelope Valley is bordered in the northwest by the Tehachapi Mountains, separated from the Sierra Nevada Mountains in the north by the Tehachapi Pass (3,800 feet elevation). The Antelope Valley is bordered in the south by the San Gabriel Mountains, bisected by Soledad Canyon (3,300 feet).

During the summer, the MDAB is generally influenced by a Pacific Subtropical High cell that sits off the coast, inhibiting cloud formation and encouraging daytime solar heating. The MDAB is rarely influenced by cold air masses moving south from Canada and Alaska, as these frontal systems are weak and diffuse by the time they reach the desert. Most desert moisture arrives from infrequent warm, moist and unstable air masses from the south. The MDAB is classified as a dry-hot desert climate, with portions classified as dry-very hot desert, to indicate at least three months have maximum average temperatures over 100.4° F.¹

The City experiences average high temperatures of up to 98°F during the month of July and August, and average low temperatures of 30°F during the month of December. The annual average precipitation in the City is 7.38 inches. Rainfall occurs most frequently in February with an average rainfall of 1.78 inches.²

LOCAL AMBIENT AIR QUALITY

California Air Resources Board (CARB) monitors ambient air quality at approximately 250 air monitoring stations across the State. Air quality monitoring stations usually measure pollutant concentrations ten feet above ground level; therefore, air quality is often referred to in terms of ground-level concentrations. The closest monitoring station to the City is the Lancaster – Division Street Monitoring Station. The air pollutants measured at Lancaster – Division Street Monitoring Station include ozone (O₃), carbon monoxide (CO), particulate matter (PM₁₀), nitrogen oxide (NO₂), and fine particulates (PM_{2.5}). The air quality data monitored at the Lancaster – Division Street Monitoring Station from 2019 to 2021 are presented in Table 5.13-1, *Measured Air Quality Levels*.

**Table 5.13-1
Measured Air Quality Levels**

Pollutant	Primary Standard		Year	Maximum Concentration ¹	Number of Days State/Federal Std. Exceeded
	California	Federal			
Carbon Monoxide (CO) ² (1-Hour)	20 ppm for 1 hour	35 ppm for 1 hour	2019	1.388 ppm	0 / 0
			2020	1.617 ppm	0 / 0
			2021	1.415 ppm	0 / 0

¹ Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District, *California Environmental Quality Act and Federal Conformity Guidelines*, August 2016.

² U.S. Climate Data, *City of Lancaster, California*, <https://www.usclimatedata.com/climate/lancaster/california/%20united-states/usca0591>, accessed July 25, 2022.



Table 5.13-1 [cont'd]
Measured Air Quality Levels

Pollutant	Primary Standard		Year	Maximum Concentration ¹	Number of Days State/Federal Std. Exceeded
	California	Federal			
Ozone (O ₃) ² (1-Hour)	0.09 ppm for 1 hour	N/A	2019 2020 2021	0.096 ppm 0.099 ppm 0.086 ppm	1 / 0 4 / 0 0 / 0
Ozone (O ₃) ² (8-Hour)	0.070 ppm for 8 hours	0.070 ppm for 8 hours	2019 2020 2021	0.082 ppm 0.084 ppm 0.080 ppm	14 / 13 8 / 8 4 / 3
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO _x) ²	0.18 ppm for 1 hour	0.100 ppm for 1 hour	2019 2020 2021	0.049 ppm 0.051 ppm 0.046 ppm	0 / 0 0 / 0 0 / 0
Particulate Matter (PM ₁₀) ^{2,3,4}	50 µg/m ³ for 24 hours	150 µg/m ³ for 24 hours	2019 2020 2021	165.1 µg/m ³ 192.3 µg/m ³ 411.2 µg/m ³	* / 2 * / 1 * / 1
Fine Particulate Matter (PM _{2.5}) ^{2,4}	No Separate State Standard	35 µg/m ³ for 24 hours	2019 2020 2021	13.6 µg/m ³ 74.7 µg/m ³ 35.7 µg/m ³	* / 0 * / 9 * / 1
ppm = parts per million		PM ₁₀ = particulate matter 10 microns in diameter or less			
µg/m ³ = micrograms per cubic meter		PM _{2.5} = particulate matter 2.5 microns in diameter or less			
* = Data Not Provided		N/A = Not Applicable			
Notes:					
1. Maximum concentration is measured over the same period as the California Standard.					
2. Measurements taken at the Lancaster – Division Street Monitoring Station located at 43301 Division St, Lancaster CA 93535.					
3. PM ₁₀ exceedances are based on State thresholds established prior to amendments adopted on June 20, 2002.					
4. PM ₁₀ and PM _{2.5} exceedances are derived from the number of samples exceeded, not days.					
Sources: California Air Resources Board, iADAM Air Quality Data Statistics, http://www.arb.ca.gov/adam/ , accessed March 22, 2023. California Air Resources Board, AQMIS Air Quality and Meteorological Information's Systems, https://www.arb.ca.gov/aqmis2/aqdselect.php , accessed March 22, 2023.					

Criteria Air Pollutants

Carbon Monoxide (CO). CO is an odorless, colorless toxic gas that is emitted by mobile and stationary sources as a result of incomplete combustion of hydrocarbons or other carbon-based fuels. In cities, automobile exhaust can cause as much as 95 percent of all CO emissions.

CO replaces oxygen in the body's red blood cells. Individuals with a deficient blood supply to the heart, patients with diseases involving heart and blood vessels, fetuses (unborn babies), and patients with chronic hypoxemia (oxygen deficiency) as seen in high altitudes are most susceptible to the adverse effects of CO exposure. People with heart disease are also more susceptible to developing chest pains when exposed to low levels of CO.

Ozone (O₃). O₃ occurs in two layers of the atmosphere. The layer surrounding the earth's surface is the troposphere. The troposphere extends approximately 10 miles above ground level, where it meets the second layer, the stratosphere. The stratospheric (the "good" O₃ layer) extends upward from about 10 to 30 miles and protects life on earth from the sun's harmful ultraviolet rays. "Bad" O₃ is a



photochemical pollutant, and needs volatile organic compounds (VOCs), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), and sunlight to form; therefore, VOCs and NO_x are O₃ precursors. To reduce O₃ concentrations, it is necessary to control the emissions of these O₃ precursors. Significant O₃ formation generally requires an adequate amount of precursors in the atmosphere and a period of several hours in a stable atmosphere with strong sunlight. High O₃ concentrations can form over large regions when emissions from motor vehicles and stationary sources are carried hundreds of miles from their origins.

While O₃ in the upper atmosphere (stratosphere) protects the earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation, high concentrations of ground-level O₃ (in the troposphere) can adversely affect the human respiratory system and other tissues. O₃ is a strong irritant that can constrict the airways, forcing the respiratory system to work hard to deliver oxygen. Individuals exercising outdoors, children, and people with pre-existing lung disease such as asthma and chronic pulmonary lung disease are considered to be the most susceptible to the health effects of O₃. Short-term exposure (lasting for a few hours) to O₃ at elevated levels can result in aggravated respiratory diseases such as emphysema, bronchitis and asthma, shortness of breath, increased susceptibility to infections, inflammation of the lung tissue, increased fatigue, as well as chest pain, dry throat, headache, and nausea.

Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂). NO_x are a family of highly reactive gases that are a primary precursor to the formation of ground-level O₃ and react in the atmosphere to form acid rain. NO₂ (often used interchangeably with NO_x) is a reddish-brown gas that can cause breathing difficulties at elevated levels. Peak readings of NO₂ occur in areas that have a high concentration of combustion sources (e.g., motor vehicle engines, power plants, refineries, and other industrial operations). NO₂ can irritate and damage the lungs and lower resistance to respiratory infections such as influenza. The health effects of short-term exposure are still unclear. However, continued or frequent exposure to NO₂ concentrations that are typically much higher than those normally found in the ambient air may increase acute respiratory illnesses in children and increase the incidence of chronic bronchitis and lung irritation. Chronic exposure to NO₂ may aggravate eyes and mucus membranes and cause pulmonary dysfunction.

Coarse Particulate Matter (PM₁₀). PM₁₀ refers to suspended particulate matter, which is smaller than 10 microns or ten one-millionths of a meter. PM₁₀ arises from sources such as road dust, diesel soot, combustion products, construction operations, and dust storms. PM₁₀ scatters light and significantly reduces visibility. In addition, these particulates penetrate into lungs and can potentially damage the respiratory tract. On June 19, 2003, the CARB adopted amendments to the statewide 24-hour particulate matter standards based upon requirements set forth in the Children's Environmental Health Protection Act (Senate Bill 25).

Fine Particulate Matter (PM_{2.5}). Due to recent increased concerns over health impacts related to fine particulate matter (particulate matter 2.5 microns in diameter or less), both State and Federal PM_{2.5} standards have been created. Particulate matter impacts primarily affect infants, children, the elderly, and those with pre-existing cardiopulmonary disease. In 1997, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced new PM_{2.5} standards. Industry groups challenged the new standard in court and the implementation of the standard was blocked. However, upon appeal by the EPA, the United States Supreme Court reversed this decision and upheld the EPA's new standards.



On January 5, 2005, the EPA published a Final Rule in the Federal Register that designates the MDAB as a nonattainment area for Federal PM_{2.5} standards. On June 20, 2002, CARB adopted amendments for statewide annual ambient particulate matter air quality standards. These standards were revised/established due to increasing concerns by CARB that previous standards were inadequate, as almost everyone in California is exposed to levels at or above the current State standards during some parts of the year, and the statewide potential for significant health impacts associated with particulate matter exposure was determined to be large and wide-ranging.

Sulfur Dioxide (SO₂). Sulfur dioxide (SO₂) is a colorless, irritating gas with a rotten egg smell; it is formed primarily by the combustion of sulfur-containing fossil fuels. SO₂ is often used interchangeably with SO_x. Exposure of a few minutes to low levels of SO₂ can result in airway constriction in some asthmatics.

Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC). VOCs are hydrocarbon compounds (any compound containing various combinations of hydrogen and carbon atoms) that exist in the ambient air. VOCs contribute to the formation of smog through atmospheric photochemical reactions and/or may be toxic. Compounds of carbon (also known as organic compounds) have different levels of reactivity; that is, they do not react at the same speed or do not form O₃ to the same extent when exposed to photochemical processes. VOCs often have an odor, and some examples include gasoline, alcohol, and the solvents used in paints. Exceptions to the VOC designation include carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, carbonic acid, metallic carbides or carbonates, and ammonium carbonate. VOCs are a criteria pollutant since they are a precursor to O₃, which is a criteria pollutant. The terms VOC and reactive organic gases (ROG) (see below) are often used interchangeably.

Reactive Organic Gases (ROG). Similar to VOCs, ROGs are also precursors in forming O₃ and consist of compounds containing methane, ethane, propane, butane, and longer chain hydrocarbons, which are typically the result of some type of combustion/decomposition process. Smog is formed when ROG and NO_x react in the presence of sunlight. ROGs are a criteria pollutant since they are a precursor to O₃, which is a criteria pollutant. The terms ROG and VOC are often used interchangeably.

Toxic Air Contaminants (TACs). TACs (also referred to as hazardous air pollutants [HAPs]), are pollutants that result in an increase in mortality, a serious illness, or pose a present or potential hazard to human health. Health effects of TACs may include cancer, birth defects, and immune system and neurological damage.

TACs can be separated into carcinogens and noncarcinogens based on the nature of the physiological degradation associated with exposure to the pollutant. For regulatory purposes, carcinogens are assumed to have no safe threshold below which health impacts would not occur. Noncarcinogenic TACs differ in that there is a safe level in which it is generally assumed that no negative health impacts would occur. These levels are determined on a pollutant-by-pollutant basis.

TACs are not considered criteria air pollutants and thus are not specifically addressed through the setting of ambient air quality standards. Instead, the EPA and CARB regulate HAPs and TACs, respectively, through statutes and regulations that generally require the use of the maximum or best available control technology (MACT or BACT) to limit emissions.



Airborne Fungus

Coccidioidomycosis, more commonly known as “Valley Fever,” is primarily a disease of the lungs caused by the spores of the *Coccidioides immitis* fungus. The spores are found in soils, become airborne when the soil is disturbed, and are subsequently inhaled into the lungs. After the fungal spores have settled in the lungs, they change into a multicellular structure called a spherule. Fungal growth in the lungs occurs as the spherule grows and bursts, releasing endospores, which then develop into more spherules.

Valley Fever symptoms occur within two to three weeks of exposure. Approximately 60 percent of Valley Fever cases are mild and display flu-like symptoms or no symptoms at all. Of those who are exposed and seek medical treatment, the most common symptoms include fatigue, cough, loss of appetite, rash, headache, and joint aches. In some cases, painful red bumps may develop on the skin. One important fact to mention is that these symptoms are not unique to Valley Fever and may be caused by other illnesses as well. Identifying and confirming this disease require specific laboratory tests such as: (1) microscopic identification of the fungal spherules in infected tissue, sputum, or body fluid sample; (2) growing a culture of *Coccidioides immitis* from a tissue specimen, sputum, or body fluid; (3) detection of antibodies (serological tests specifically for Valley Fever) against the fungus in blood serum or other body fluids; and (4) administering the Valley Fever Skin Test (called coccidioidin or spherulin), which indicate prior exposure to the fungus.

Valley Fever is not contagious, and therefore, cannot be passed on from person to person. Most of those who are infected would recover without treatment within six months and would have a life-long immunity to the fungal spores. In severe cases, especially in those patients with rapid and extensive primary illness, those who are at risk for dissemination of disease, and those who have disseminated disease, antifungal drug therapy is used. The type of medication used, and the duration of drug therapy are determined by the severity of disease and response to the therapy. The medications used include ketoconazole, itraconazole and fluconazole in chronic, mild-to-moderate disease, and amphotericin B, given intravenously or inserted into the spinal fluid, for rapidly progressive disease. Although these treatments are often helpful, evidence of disease may persist, and years of treatment may be required.

The usual course of Valley Fever in healthy people is complete recovery within six months. In most cases, the body’s immune response is effective, and no specific course of treatment is necessary. About five percent of cases of Valley Fever result in pneumonia (infection of the lungs), while another five percent of patients develop lung cavities after their initial infection with Valley Fever. These cavities occur most often in older adults, usually without symptoms, and about 50 percent of them disappear within two years. Occasionally, these cavities rupture, causing chest pain and difficulty breathing, and require surgical repair. Only one to two percent of those exposed who seek medical attention would develop a disease that disseminates (spreads) to other parts of the body other than the lungs.

Factors that affect the susceptibility to coccidioidal dissemination are race, sex, pregnancy, age, and immunosuppression. While there are no racial or gender differences in susceptibility to primary infection with coccidioidomycosis, differences in risk of disseminated infection do appear to exist. Men have a higher rate of dissemination than do women and several studies have shown that the rate of dissemination in African Americans and Filipinos is several times higher than in the rest of the U.S.



population. Native Americans, Hispanics, and Asians may also have a higher rate of dissemination than the general population, but these population differences are not well defined.

The *Coccidioides immitis* fungal spores are often found in the soil around rodent burrows, Indian ruins, and burial grounds. The spores become airborne when the soil is disturbed by winds, construction, farming, and soil disturbing activities. This type of fungus is endemic to the southwestern United States and is common in the Antelope Valley. The City is located in an area designated as suspected endemic for Valley Fever by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).³ Annual morbidity reports for 2011 through 2016 from Los Angeles County Public Health (LACPH) indicate that the Los Angeles County has the reported case rate that are approximately 30 per 100,000 population.⁴

Sensitive Receptors

Sensitive populations are more susceptible to the effects of air pollution than the general population. Sensitive populations (sensitive receptors) that are in proximity to localized sources of toxics and CO are of particular concern. Some land uses are considered more sensitive to changes in air quality than others, depending on the population groups and the activities involved. The following types of people are most likely to be adversely affected by air pollution, as identified by CARB: children under 14, elderly over 65, athletes, and people with cardiovascular and chronic respiratory diseases. Locations that may contain a high concentration of these sensitive population groups are called sensitive receptors and include residential areas, hospitals, day-care facilities, elder-care facilities, elementary schools, and parks. The City currently has numerous sensitive land uses. These land uses will continue to exist, while new sensitive land uses would not occur as a result of the implementation of the project. Specifically, sensitive receptors within 1,000 feet of the East Side Overlay Zone include Enterprise Elementary School and residential uses.

5.13.2 REGULATORY SETTING

FEDERAL LEVEL

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

The EPA is responsible for implementing the Federal Clean Air Act (FCAA), which was first enacted in 1955 and amended numerous times after. The FCAA established Federal air quality standards known as the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). These standards identify levels of air quality for “criteria” pollutants that are considered the maximum levels of ambient (background) air pollutants considered safe, with an adequate margin of safety, to protect the public health and welfare; refer to Table 5.13-2 National and California Ambient Air Quality Standards.

³ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Sources of Valley Fever (Coccidioidomycosis)*, <https://www.cdc.gov/fungal/diseases/coccidioidomycosis/maps.html>, accessed July 25, 2022.

⁴ Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, *Acute Communicable Disease Control 2016 Annual Morbidity Report*, <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/docs/2011to2016.pdf>, accessed July 25, 2022.



Table 5.13-2
National and California Ambient Air Quality Standards

Pollutant	Averaging Time	California ¹		Federal ²	
		Standard ³	Attainment Status	Standards ^{3,4}	Attainment Status
Ozone (O ₃)	1 Hour	0.09 ppm (180 µg/m ³)	Nonattainment	N/A	N/A ⁵
	8 Hours	0.070 ppm (137 µg/m ³)	Nonattainment	0.070 ppm (137 µg/m ³)	Nonattainment
Particulate Matter (PM ₁₀)	24 Hours	50 µg/m ³	Nonattainment	150 µg/m ³	Unclassified/Attainment
	Annual Arithmetic Mean	20 µg/m ³	Nonattainment	N/A	Unclassified/Attainment
Fine Particulate Matter (PM _{2.5})	24 Hours	No Separate State Standard		35 µg/m ³	Unclassified/Attainment
	Annual Arithmetic Mean	12 µg/m ³	Unclassified	12 µg/m ³	Unclassified/Attainment
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	8 Hours	9.0 ppm (10 mg/m ³)	Attainment	9 ppm (10 mg/m ³)	Unclassified/Attainment
	1 Hour	20 ppm (23 mg/m ³)	Attainment	35 ppm (40 mg/m ³)	Unclassified/Attainment
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO ₂) ⁵	Annual Arithmetic Mean	0.030 ppm (57 µg/m ³)	Attainment	53 ppb (100 µg/m ³)	Unclassified/Attainment
	1 Hour	0.18 ppm (339 µg/m ³)	Attainment	100 ppb (188 µg/m ³)	Unclassified/Attainment
Lead (Pb) ^{7,8}	30 days Average	1.5 µg/m ³	Attainment	N/A	N/A
	Calendar Quarter	N/A	N/A	1.5 µg/m ³	Unclassified/Attainment
	Rolling 3-Month Average	N/A	N/A	0.15 µg/m ³	Unclassified/Attainment
Sulfur Dioxide (SO ₂) ⁶	24 Hours	0.04 ppm (105 µg/m ³)	Attainment	0.14 ppm (for certain areas)	Unclassified/Attainment
	3 Hours	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	1 Hour	0.25 ppm (655 µg/m ³)	Attainment	75 ppb (196 µg/m ³)	N/A
	Annual Arithmetic Mean	N/A	N/A	0.30 ppm (for certain areas)	Unclassified/Attainment
Visibility-Reducing Particles ⁹	8 Hours (10 a.m. to 6 p.m., PST)	Extinction coefficient = 0.23 km@<70% RH	Unclassified	No Federal Standards	
Sulfates	24 Hour	25 µg/m ³	Attainment		
Hydrogen Sulfide	1 Hour	0.03 ppm (42 µg/m ³)	Unclassified		



Table 5.13-2 [cont'd]
National and California Ambient Air Quality Standards

Pollutant	Averaging Time	California ¹		Federal ²	
		Standard ³	Attainment Status	Standards ^{3,4}	Attainment Status
Vinyl Chloride ⁷	24 Hour	0.01 ppm (26 µg/m ³)	Unclassified		
Notes: µg/m ³ = micrograms per cubic meter; ppm = parts per million; ppb = parts per billion; km = kilometer(s); RH = relative humidity; PST = Pacific Standard Time; N/A = Not Applicable					
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> California standards for ozone, carbon monoxide (except 8-hour Lake Tahoe), sulfur dioxide (1- and 24-hour), nitrogen dioxide, and particulate matter (PM₁₀, PM_{2.5}, and visibility reducing particles), are values that are not to be exceeded. All others are not to be equaled or exceeded. California ambient air quality standards are listed in the Table of Standards in Section 70200 of Title 17 of the California Code of Regulations. National standards (other than ozone, particulate matter, and those based on annual arithmetic mean) are not to be exceeded more than once a year. The ozone standard is attained when the fourth highest 8-hour concentration measured at each site in a year, averaged over three years, is equal to or less than the standard. For PM₁₀, the 24-hour standard is attained when the expected number of days per calendar year with a 24-hour average concentration above 150 µg/m³ is equal to or less than one. For PM_{2.5}, the 24-hour standard is attained when 98 percent of the daily concentrations, averaged over three years, are equal to or less than the standard. Concentration expressed first in units in which it was promulgated. Equivalent units given in parentheses are based upon a reference temperature of 25°C and a reference pressure of 760 torr. Most measurements of air quality are to be corrected to a reference temperature of 25°C and a reference pressure of 760 torr; ppm in this table refers to ppm by volume, or micromoles of pollutant per mole of gas. National Primary Standards: The levels of air quality necessary, with an adequate margin of safety, to protect the public health. To attain the 1-hour national standard, the 3-year average of the annual 98th percentile of the 1-hour daily maximum concentrations at each site must not exceed 100 ppb. Note that the national 1-hour standard is in units of parts per billion (ppb). California standards are in units of parts per million (ppm). To directly compare the national 1-hour standard to the California standards the units can be converted from ppb to ppm. In this case, the national standard of 100 ppb is identical to 0.100 ppm. On June 2, 2010, a new 1-hour SO₂ standard was established and the existing 24-hour and annual primary standards were revoked. To attain the 1-hour national standard, the 3-year average of the annual 99th percentile of the 1-hour daily maximum concentrations at each site must not exceed 75 ppb. The 1971 SO₂ national standards (24-hour and annual) remain in effect until one year after an area is designated for the 2010 standard, except that in areas designated nonattainment for the 1971 standards, the 1971 standards remain in effect until implementation plans to attain or maintain the 2010 standards are approved. Note that the 1-hour national standard is in units of ppb. California standards are in units of parts per million (ppm). To directly compare the 1-hour national standard to the California standard the units can be converted to ppm. In this case, the national standard of 75 ppb is identical to 0.075 ppm. CARB has identified lead and vinyl chloride as 'toxic air contaminants' with no threshold level of exposure for adverse health effects determined. These actions allow for the implementation of control measures at levels below the ambient concentrations specified for these pollutants. The national standard for lead was revised on October 15, 2008 to a rolling 3-month average. The 1978 lead standard (1.5 µg/m³ as a quarterly average) remains in effect until one year after an area is designated for the 2008 standard, except that in areas designated nonattainment for the 1978 standard, the 1978 standard remains in effect until implementation plans to attain or maintain the 2008 standard are approved. In 1989, CARB converted both the general statewide 10-mile visibility standard and the Lake Tahoe 30-mile visibility standard to instrumental equivalents, which are "extinction of 0.23 per kilometer" and "extinction of 0.07 per kilometer" for the statewide and Lake Tahoe Air MDAB standards, respectively. 					
Source: Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District, <i>Antelope Valley AQMD Attainment Status</i> , 2022. https://avaqmd.ca.gov/files/e0986ab83/AVAQMD+2017+Attainment+Status+Table.pdf , California Air Resources Board, <i>Ambient Air Quality Standards</i> , https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/aaqs2.pdf , May 2016					

STATE LEVEL

California Air Resources Board

CARB administers the air quality policy in California. The California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) were established in 1969 pursuant to the Mulford-Carrell Act. These standards, included



with the NAAQS in [Table 5.13-2](#), are generally more stringent and apply to more pollutants than the NAAQS. In addition to the criteria pollutants, CAAQS have been established for visibility reducing particulates, hydrogen sulfide, and sulfates. The California Clean Air Act (CCAA), which was approved in 1988, requires that each local air district prepare and maintain an AQMP to achieve compliance with CAAQS. These AQMPs also serve as the basis for the preparation of the State Implementation Plan for the State of California.

Like the EPA, CARB also designates areas within California as either attainment or nonattainment for each criteria pollutant based on whether the CAAQS have been achieved. Under the CCAA, areas are designated as nonattainment for a pollutant if air quality data show that a State standard for the pollutant was violated at least once during the previous three calendar years. Exceedances that are affected by highly irregular or infrequent events are not considered violations of a State standard and are not used as a basis for designating areas as nonattainment.

Air Toxics Programs

Toxic air contaminants are another group of pollutants of concern in southern California. There are hundreds of different types of toxic air contaminants, with varying degrees of toxicity. Sources of toxic air contaminants include industrial processes such as petroleum refining and chrome plating operations, commercial operations such as gasoline stations and dry cleaners, and motor vehicle engine exhaust. Public exposure to toxic air contaminants can result from emissions from normal operations, as well as accidental releases of hazardous materials during upset spill conditions. Health effects of toxic air contaminants include cancer, birth defects, neurological damage, and death.

California regulates toxic air contaminants through its air toxics program, mandated in Chapter 3.5 (Toxic Air Contaminants) of the Health and Safety Code (Health and Safety Code Section 39660 et seq.) and Part 6 (Air Toxics “Hot Spots” Information and Assessment) (Health and Safety Code Section 44300 et seq.). CARB, working in conjunction with the State Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, identifies toxic air contaminants. Air toxic control measures may then be adopted to reduce ambient concentrations of the identified toxic air contaminant to below a specific threshold, based on its effects on health, or to the lowest concentration achievable through use of best available control technology (BACT) for toxics. The program is administered by CARB. Air quality control agencies, including the AVAQMD, must incorporate air toxic control measures into their regulatory programs or adopt equally stringent control measures as rules within six months of adoption by CARB.

REGIONAL LEVEL

Southern California Association of Governments

On September 3, 2020, the Regional Council of SCAG formally adopted the *Connect SoCal: 2020–2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy* (2020-2045 RTP/SCS). The SCS portion of the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS highlights strategies for the region to reach the regional target of reducing greenhouse gases (GHGs) from autos and light-duty trucks by 8 percent per capita by 2020, and 19 percent by 2035 (compared to 2005 levels). Specially, these strategies are:



- Focus growth near destinations and mobility options;
- Promote diverse housing choices;
- Leverage technology innovations;
- Support implementation of sustainability policies; and
- Promote a green region.

Furthermore, the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS discusses a variety of land use tools to help achieve the state-mandated reductions in GHG emissions through reduced per capita VMT. Some of these tools include center-focused placemaking, focusing on priority growth areas, job centers, transit priority areas, as well as high quality transit areas and green regions.

LOCAL LEVEL

Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District

Air districts have the primary responsibility to control air pollution from all sources other than those directly emitted from motor vehicles, which are the responsibility of the CARB and the EPA. Air districts adopt and enforce rules and regulations to achieve State and Federal ambient air quality standards and enforce applicable State and Federal law.

The EPA designated the Western Mojave Desert Nonattainment Area (WMDONA) as nonattainment for the 2015 70 ppb 8-hour ozone NAAQS pursuant to the provisions of the Federal Clean Air Act. AVAQMD is included in the WMDONA. As such, the AVAQMD adopted the AVAQMD Federal 70 ppb Ozone Attainment Plan (Western Mojave Desert Nonattainment Area) (AVAQMD 70 ppb Plan) on January 17, 2023.⁵ The document sets forth a comprehensive program that would lead the area into compliance with Federal and State air quality standards. The AVAQMD 70 ppb Plan includes the latest planning assumptions regarding population, vehicle, and industrial activity and addresses all existing and forecasted ozone precursor-producing activities within the Antelope Valley through the year 2026. According to the AVAQMD 70 ppb Plan, AVAQMD would be in attainment of the 70 ppb ozone NAAQS by August 3, 2033.

In August 2016, the AVAQMD adopted the *California Environmental Quality Act and Federal Conformity Guidelines* (CEQA and Federal Conformity Guidelines) to provide direction on the preferred analysis approach in preparing environmental analysis or document review. The guidelines characterize the topography and climate of the MDAB, defines cumulative impacts, and provide emission thresholds for construction and operation. The CEQA and Federal Conformity Guidelines establish significance thresholds for projects. Any project is significant if it triggers or exceeds the most appropriate evaluation criteria. The evaluation criteria are: (1) generates total emissions (direct and indirect) in excess of the thresholds given in Table 5.13-3, *Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District Emissions Thresholds*; (2) generates a violation of any ambient air quality standard when added to the local background; (3) does not conform with the applicable attainment or maintenance plan(s); and (4) exposes sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations, including those resulting in a

⁵ Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District, *AVAQMD Federal 70 ppb Ozone Attainment Plan (Western Mojave Desert Nonattainment Area)*, January 17, 2023.



cancer risk greater than or equal to 10 in a million and/or a Hazard Index (HI) (non-cancerous) greater than or equal to 1. This air quality analysis is based on these four criteria.

**Table 5.13-3
Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District Emissions Thresholds**

Criteria Pollutant	Annual Threshold (tons/year)	Daily Thresholds (pounds/day)
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	100	548
Oxides of Nitrogen (NO _x)	25	137
Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs)	25	137
Oxides of Sulfur (SO _x)	25	137
Particulate Matter (PM ₁₀)	15	82
Particulate Matter (PM _{2.5})	12	65

Source: Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District, *California Environmental Quality Act and Federal Conformity Guidelines*, August 2016.

City of Lancaster General Plan 2030

The General Plan was adopted on July 14, 2009, and the horizon year for the adopted General Plan is 2030. The General Plan contains the vision, goals, objectives, policies, and specific actions for the City. The General Plan includes the following elements or plans: natural environment, public health and safety, active living, physical mobility, municipal services and facilities, economic development and vitality and physical development. The following objectives and policies related to air quality in the Plan for the Natural Environment Chapter of the General Plan would be applicable to the project:

- Objective 3.3: Preserve acceptable air quality by striving to attain and maintain national, State and local air quality standards.
- Policy 3.3.1: Minimize the amount of vehicular miles traveled.
- Policy 3.3.2: Facilitate the development and use of public transportation and travel modes such as bicycle riding and walking.
- Policy 3.3.3: Minimize air pollutant emissions generated by new and existing development.
- Policy 3.3.4: Protect sensitive uses such as homes, schools and medical facilities, from the impacts of air pollution.
- Policy 3.3.5: Cooperate with AVAQMD and other agencies to protect air quality in the Antelope Valley.
- Objective 14.2: Promote a roadway system which balances the need to move vehicles while protecting environmental, aesthetic, and quality of life issues.



Policy 14.2.1: Support and improve a roadway network that is sensitive to environmental issues such as, biological, land, and water resources, as well as air quality, while permitting continued development within the study area.

Lancaster Municipal Code

Chapter 10.12, Mobile Source Air Pollution Reduction

Municipal Code Chapter 12.10, *Mobile Source Air Pollution Reduction*, supports the AVAQMD's imposition of the vehicle registration fee and to bring the City into compliance with the requirements set forth in Section 44243 of the Health and Safety Code in order to receive fee revenues for the purpose of implementing programs to reduce air pollution from motor vehicles.

5.13.3 IMPACT THRESHOLDS AND SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

REGIONAL AIR QUALITY

AVAQMD Thresholds

Under CEQA, the AVAQMD is a responsible agency on air quality within its jurisdiction or impacting its jurisdiction. Under the FCAA, the AVAQMD has adopted attainment plans for O₃. The AVAQMD reviews projects to ensure that they would not: (1) cause or contribute to any new violation of any air quality standard; (2) increase the frequency or severity of any existing violation of any air quality standard; or (3) delay timely attainment of any air quality standard or any required interim emission reductions or other milestones of any Federal attainment plan. The AVAQMD has adopted an attainment plan for ozone pursuant to the FCAA.

For the purposes of this air quality analysis, actions that violate Federal standards for criteria pollutants (i.e., primary standards designed to safeguard the health of people considered to be sensitive receptors, and outdoor and secondary standards designed to safeguard human welfare) are considered significant impacts. Additionally, actions that violate State standards developed by the CARB or criteria developed by the AVAQMD, including thresholds for criteria pollutants, are considered significant impacts.

AVAQMD's CEQA and Federal Conformity Guidelines also provides significance thresholds to assess the impact of project related air pollutant emissions. [Table 5.13-3](#) provides the significance thresholds set forth by the AVAQMD. A project that generates total emissions (direct and indirect) in excess of the thresholds given in [Table 5.13-3](#) is considered significant.

Conformity Impacts

According to AVAQMD's CEQA and Federal Conformity Guidelines, a project is non-conforming if it conflicts with or delays implementation of any applicable attainment or maintenance plans. A project is conforming if it complies with all applicable AVAQMD rules and regulations, complies with all proposed control measures that are not adopted from applicable plan(s), and is consistent with the



growth forecasts in the applicable plan(s). Conformity with growth forecasts can be established by demonstrating that the project is consistent with the land use plan that was used to generate the growth forecast (i.e., General Plan).

CEQA SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

CEQA Guidelines Appendix G contains the Environmental Checklist Form that was used during the preparation of this EIR. Accordingly, a project may create a significant adverse environmental impact if it would:

- a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan (refer to Impact Statement AQ-4);
- b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable Federal or State ambient air quality standard (refer to Impact Statements AQ-1 and AQ-2);
- c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations (refer to Impact Statement AQ-3); and
- d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people (refer to Impact Statement AQ-5).

Based on these standards/criteria, the effects of the proposed project have been categorized as either a “less than significant impact” or “potentially significant impact.” Mitigation measures are recommended for potentially significant impacts. If a potentially significant impact cannot be reduced to a less than significant level through the application of mitigation, it is categorized as a significant and unavoidable impact.

5.13.4 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

SHORT-TERM (CONSTRUCTION) AIR EMISSIONS

AQ-1 SHORT-TERM CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROPOSED PROJECT COULD RESULT IN A CUMULATIVELY CONSIDERABLE NET INCREASE OF ANY CRITERIA POLLUTANT FOR WHICH THE PROJECT REGION IS NON-ATTAINMENT UNDER AN APPLICABLE FEDERAL OR STATE AMBIENT AIR QUALITY STANDARD.

Impact Analysis: The proposed project would introduce a new overlay zone in the eastern portion of Lancaster that would allow a number of light industrial uses. Potential uses include alternative energy uses, light manufacturing, distribution, and warehousing, among others; refer to Table 3-1, *East Side Overlay Zone Permitted Uses*. The proposed East Side Overlay Zone may result in both small- and large-scale development within the project site. However, the overlay project itself does not directly propose any demolition or development activities.



The thresholds of significance recommended by the AVAQMD for construction emissions were developed for individual development projects. Construction-related emissions are described as short-term or temporary in duration and have the potential to represent a significant impact with respect to air quality. As discussed above, implementation of the proposed overlay zone would not include construction activity. However, future construction-related activities associated with development within the East Side Overlay Zone would result in emissions of criteria air pollutants and precursors from site preparation (e.g., demolition, excavation, grading, and clearing); exhaust from off-road equipment, material delivery trucks, and worker commute vehicles; vehicle travel on roads; and other miscellaneous activities (e.g., building construction, asphalt paving, application of architectural coatings, and trenching for utility installation). Future development within the East Side Overlay Zone would be analyzed at a detailed level and be reviewed by the City to ensure that development occurs in a logical manner consistent with the project, General Plan, Municipal Code, and that additional environmental review is conducted under CEQA, as needed.

Because implementation of the proposed East Side Overlay Zone does not propose any specific development, construction-related emissions that may occur at any one time are speculative and cannot be accurately determined at this stage of the planning process. Assuming relatively robust economic conditions over the next 25 years, construction activities would occur throughout the project area, but the rate of development cannot be predicted. Environmental review shall be carried out in accordance with CEQA, the City's Environmental Guidelines, and other applicable regulations. Future development projects would be required to comply with all applicable AVAQMD rules and regulations as well as other control measures to reduce construction emissions; refer to Mitigation Measures AQ-1 and AQ-2. Specifically, Mitigation Measure AQ-1 would require future projects within the proposed East Side Overlay Zone to utilize construction equipment vehicles in proper condition and in tune per manufacturer's specifications to ensure ozone precursor emissions are reduced. Additionally, Mitigation Measure AQ-2 would require a Construction Management Plan and Traffic Control Plan be prepared and implemented to reduce traffic congestion during future temporary construction activities, thus reducing construction-related air quality emissions. Future project-specific environmental review under CEQA would be conducted pursuant to City guidelines and compliance with existing AVAQMD regulations and Mitigation Measures AQ-1 and AQ-2 would be required. Therefore, construction impacts related to implementation of the proposed East Side Overlay Zone would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures:

- AQ-1 Prior to issuance of any grading permit for future light industrial projects developed in accordance with the East Side Overlay Zone and subject to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review (meaning, subject to discretionary action and non-exempt under CEQA), the City of Lancaster Community Development Department shall confirm that the Grading Plan, Building Plans, and specifications require that ozone precursor emissions from construction equipment vehicles shall be controlled by maintaining equipment engines in good condition and in proper tune per manufacturer's specifications.
- AQ-2 Future light industrial projects developed in accordance with the East Side Overlay Zone and subject to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review (meaning, subject to



discretionary action and non-exempt under CEQA) shall submit a Construction Management Plan to the City of Lancaster Public Works Director prior to the issuance of a grading permit. To reduce traffic congestion during temporary construction activities, a Traffic Control Plan shall include, as deemed necessary by the Public Works Director, the following: temporary traffic controls such as a flag person during all phases of construction to maintain smooth traffic flow, dedicated turn lanes for movement of construction trucks and equipment on- and off-site, scheduling of construction activities that affect traffic flow on the arterial system to off-peak hour, consolidating truck deliveries, rerouting of construction trucks away from congested streets or sensitive receptors, and/or signal synchronization to improve traffic flow. Traffic control devices included in the Traffic Control Plan shall be developed in compliance with the requirements of the most current standards. The Construction Management Plan shall also include construction phasing, personnel parking, and material storage areas that will all contribute to reducing traffic congestion.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.

LONG-TERM (OPERATIONAL) AIR EMISSIONS

AQ-2 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT COULD RESULT IN INCREASED IMPACTS PERTAINING TO OPERATIONAL AIR EMISSIONS.

Impact Analysis: Implementation of the proposed East Side Overlay Zone would not directly generate operational emissions as no specific development is proposed. Additionally, the proposed overlay zone itself would not involve any building construction or land uses that may generate stationary or mobile source emissions. However, future light industrial developments would result in long-term operational air emissions. Operational emissions generated by both stationary and mobile sources would result from normal daily activities (i.e., increased concentrations of ROG, NO_x, SO_x, PM₁₀, and CO). Mobile source emissions would be generated by the motor vehicles traveling to and from the project area. Stationary area source emissions would be generated by consumption of natural gas for space and water heating devices, operation of landscape maintenance equipment, potential machinery, and use of consumer products. Stationary energy emissions would result from natural gas consumption associated with the project. All future light industrial uses would be required to comply with the air quality standards of the AVAQMD or the City, whichever is more restrictive. Additionally, future development within the East Side Overlay Zone would be analyzed at a detailed level and be reviewed by the City to ensure that development occurs in a logical manner consistent with the project, General Plan, Municipal Code, and that additional environmental review is conducted under CEQA, as needed. Future project-specific environmental review under CEQA would be conducted pursuant to City guidelines and compliance with existing AVAQMD regulations. Therefore, impacts related to implementation of the proposed East Side Overlay Zone would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.



LOCALIZED EMISSIONS

AQ-3 DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATED WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT COULD RESULT IN LOCALIZED EMISSIONS IMPACTS OR EXPOSE SENSITIVE RECEPTORS TO SUBSTANTIAL POLLUTANT CONCENTRATIONS.

Impact Analysis:

CARBON MONOXIDE HOTSPOTS

CO emissions are a function of vehicle idling time, meteorological conditions, and traffic flow. Under certain extreme meteorological conditions, CO concentrations near a congested roadway or intersection may reach unhealthful levels (i.e., adversely affecting residents, school children, hospital patients, the elderly, etc.).

The MDAB is designated as an attainment/maintenance area for the Federal CO standards and an attainment area for State standards. There has been a decline in CO emissions even though vehicle miles traveled on U.S. urban and rural roads have increased. Nationwide estimated anthropogenic CO emissions have decreased 68 percent between 1990 and 2014. In 2014, mobile sources accounted for 82 percent of the nation's total anthropogenic CO emissions.⁶ CO emissions have continued to decline since this time. The MDAB was re-designated as attainment and is no longer addressed in the AVAQMD's AQMP. Three major control programs have contributed to the reduced per-vehicle CO emissions: exhaust standards, cleaner burning fuels, and motor vehicle inspection/maintenance programs.

Localized concentrations of CO are typically associated with the idling of vehicles, particularly in highly congested areas. For this reason, the areas of primary concern are congested roadway intersections that experience high levels of vehicle traffic with degraded levels of service (LOS). With regard to potential increases in CO concentrations that could potentially exceed applicable ambient air quality standards, signalized intersections that are projected to operate at an unacceptable LOS E or F are of particular concern. As future projects are proposed within the East Side Overlay Zone, the details of each individual project would be evaluated by the City on a case-by-case basis, and these individual projects would be required to analyze localized emissions associated with construction and operations through project-specific CEQA analysis. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

TOXIC AIR CONTAMINANTS

As noted above, implementation of the East Side Overlay Zone would not result in direct long-term operation of any stationary sources of TACs as no specific development is proposed. However, construction of future projects within the East Side Overlay Zone may result in temporary increases in emissions of diesel particulate matter (DPM) associated with the use of off-road diesel equipment.

⁶ United States Environmental Protection Agency, *Carbon Monoxide Emissions*, https://cfpub.epa.gov/roe/indicator_pdf.cfm?i=10, accessed July 25, 2022.



Health-related risks associated with diesel-exhaust emissions are primarily associated with long-term exposure and associated risk of contracting cancer. As such, the calculation of cancer risk associated with exposure to TACs are typically calculated based on a long-term (e.g., 70-year) period of exposure. The use of diesel-powered construction equipment, however, would be temporary and episodic and would occur over a relatively large area. In addition, as future projects are proposed within the East Side Overlay Zone, the details of each individual project would be evaluated by the City on a case-by-case basis, and these individual projects would be required to analyze localized emissions associated with construction through project-specific CEQA analysis. For these reasons, exposure to construction-generated DPM would not be anticipated to exceed applicable thresholds (i.e., incremental increase in cancer risk of 10 in one million). As such, impacts from toxic air contaminants would be less than significant in this regard.

VALLEY FEVER

Nearby sensitive receptors as well as workers could be exposed to Valley Fever from fugitive dust generated during construction of future projects within the East Side Overlay Zone. There is the potential that *Coccidioides* spores would be stirred up during excavation, grading, and earth-moving activities, exposing construction workers and nearby sensitive receptors to these spores and thereby, to the potential of contracting Valley Fever. However, all future development within the East Side Overlay Zone would be required to comply with AVAQMD Rules 401 and 403 emissions during construction and implement Mitigation Measure AQ-3 that would provide personal protective respiratory equipment to construction workers and provide information to all construction personnel and visitors about Valley Fever. As such, the risk of exposure to Valley Fever would be minimized to a less than significant level. With the implementation of Mitigation Measure AQ-3, dust from potential future construction activity would be limited and would not expose nearby sensitive receptors to the Valley Fever fungus. Impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: Refer to Mitigation Measures AQ-1, AQ-2, and:

AQ-3 Prior to any ground disturbance activities associated with construction of future light industrial projects developed in accordance with the East Side Overlay Zone, the project operator shall provide evidence to the Director of Community Development that the project operator and/or construction manager has developed a “Valley Fever Training Handout” training and schedule of sessions for education to be provided to all construction personnel. All evidence of the training session materials, handout(s), and schedule shall be submitted to the Director of Community Development within 24 hours of the first training session. Multiple training sessions may be conducted if different work crews come to the site for different stages of construction; however, all construction personnel shall be provided training prior to beginning work. The evidence submitted to the Director of Community Development regarding the “Valley Fever Training Handout” and session(s) shall include the following:

- A sign-in sheet (to include the printed employee names, signature, and date) for all employees who attended the training session.



- Distribution of a written flier or brochure that includes educational information regarding the health effects of exposure to criteria pollutant emissions and Valley Fever.
- Training on methods that may help prevent Valley Fever infection.
- A demonstration to employees on how to use personal protective equipment, such as respiratory equipment (masks), to reduce exposure to pollutants and facilitate recognition of symptoms and earlier treatment of Valley Fever. Where respirators are required, the equipment shall be readily available and shall be provided to employees for use during work. Proof that the demonstration is included in the training shall be submitted to the Director of Community Development. This proof can be via printed training materials/agenda, DVD, digital media files, or photographs.

The project operator also shall consult with the Los Angeles County Public Health to develop a Valley Fever Dust Management Plan (Plan) that addresses the potential presence of the *Coccidioides* spore and mitigates for the potential for *Coccidioidomycosis* (Valley Fever). Prior to issuance of permits, the project operator shall submit the Plan to the Los Angeles County Public Health for review and approval. The Plan shall include a program to evaluate the potential for exposure to Valley Fever from construction activities and to identify appropriate safety procedures that shall be implemented, as needed, to minimize personnel and public exposure to potential *Coccidioides* spores. Measures in the Plan shall include the following:

- Provide High Efficiency Particulate (HEP)-filters for heavy equipment equipped with factory enclosed cabs capable of accepting the filters. Require contractors utilizing applicable heavy equipment to furnish proof of worker training on proper use of applicable heavy equipment cabs (e.g., turning on the air conditioning prior to using the equipment).
- Provide communication methods, such as two-way radios, for use in enclosed cabs.
- Require National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)-approved half-face respirators equipped with minimum N-95 protection factor for use during worker collocation with surface disturbance activities, as required per the hazard assessment process.
- Require employees to be medically evaluated, fit-tested, and properly trained on the use of the respirators, and implement a full respiratory protection program in accordance with the applicable Cal/OSHA Respiratory Protection Standard (8 CCR 5144).
- Provide separate, clean eating areas with hand-washing facilities.



- Install equipment inspection stations at each construction equipment access/egress point. Examine construction vehicles and equipment for excess soil material and clean, as necessary, before equipment is moved off-site.
- Train workers to recognize the symptoms of Valley Fever, and to promptly report suspected symptoms of work-related Valley Fever to a supervisor.
- Work with a medical professional to develop a protocol to medically evaluate employees who develop symptoms of Valley Fever.
- Work with a medical professional, in consultation with the Los Angeles County Public Health, to develop an educational handout for on-site workers and surrounding residents within three miles of the project site and include the following information on Valley Fever: what are the potential sources/causes, what are the common symptoms, what are the options or remedies available should someone be experiencing these symptoms, and where testing for exposure is available. Prior to construction permit issuance, this handout shall have been created by the project operator and reviewed by the project operator and reviewed by the Director of Community Development. No less than 30 days prior to any work commencing, this handout shall be mailed to all existing residences within three miles of the project boundaries.
- When possible, position workers upwind or crosswind when digging a trench or performing other soil-disturbing tasks.
- Prohibit smoking at the worksite outside of designated smoking areas; designated smoking areas shall be equipped with handwashing facilities.
- Post warnings on-site and consider limiting access to visitors, especially those without adequate training and respiratory protection.
- Audit and enforce compliance with relevant Cal/OSHA health and safety standards on the job site.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.

CONSISTENCY WITH REGIONAL PLANS

AQ-4 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT COULD CONFLICT WITH OR OBSTRUCT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE APPLICABLE AIR QUALITY PLAN.

Impact Analysis: A potentially significant impact to air quality would occur if the project would conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable Air Quality Plan. Therefore, it is necessary to assess the project's consistency with the 2017 Attainment Plan as well as the General Plan and



growth forecasts. The purpose of the consistency finding is to determine if a project is inconsistent with the assumptions and objectives of the regional air quality plans, and thus, if it would interfere with the region's ability to comply with Federal and State air quality standards. It is important to note that even if a project is found consistent it could still have a significant impact on air quality under CEQA. Consistency with plans means that a project is consistent with the goals, objectives, and assumptions in the respective plan to achieve the Federal and State air quality standards.

The AVAQMD CEQA and Federal Conformity Guidelines notes the following with respect to conformity impacts:

According to AVAQMD CEQA and Federal Conformity Guidelines a project is consistent with applicable air quality plans if it complies with all applicable AVAQMD rules and regulations, complies with all proposed control measures that are not adopted from applicable plans, and is consistent with the growth forecasts in the applicable plan(s). Conformity with growth forecasts can be established by demonstrating that the project is consistent with the land use plan that was used to generate the growth forecast.

The proposed East Side Overlay Zone would increase the flexibility in allowed uses and development potential in the eastern portion of Lancaster beyond currently allowed uses. All future development associated with allowed uses in accordance with East Side Overlay Zone would be required to undergo project-level environmental review under CEQA on a case-by-case basis. As such, future development projects would be required to analyze project-specific impacts to the City's existing population and housing. Thus, the proposed East Side Overlay Zone would not induce substantial unplanned population growth and implementation of the East Side Overlay Zone would not affect SCAG's nor the 2017 Attainment Plan's buildout projections. All future development associated with allowed uses in accordance with East Side Overlay Zone would be required to undergo project-level environmental review under CEQA on a case-by-case basis. As such, future development projects would be required to analyze project-specific impacts to the City's existing population and housing. Thus, the proposed East Side Overlay Zone would not induce substantial unplanned population growth. Further, emissions would be reduced with implementation of Mitigation Measures AQ-1 through AQ-3, and the project would be required to comply with all AVAQMD rules and regulations to improve air quality. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan. A less than significant impact would occur in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: Refer to Mitigation Measures AQ-1, AQ-2, and AQ-3.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.

AQ-5 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT COULD CREATE OBJECTIONABLE ODORS AFFECTING A SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF PEOPLE.

Impact Analysis: According to the AVAQMD CEQA and Federal Conformity Guidelines, land uses associated with odor complaints typically include agricultural uses, wastewater treatment plants, food processing plants, chemical plants, composting, refineries, landfills, dairies, and fiberglass



molding. The proposed East Side Overlay Zone would increase the flexibility in allowed uses and development potential in the eastern portion of Lancaster beyond currently allowed uses, including food manufacturing and processing (with a conditional use permit). Therefore, implementation of the proposed East Side Overlay Zone could include future development identified by the AVAQMD as being associated with odors.

The project does not propose any demolition or development. Individual development projects within the East Side Overlay Zone would occur incrementally over time, based largely on economic considerations, market demand, and other planning considerations. Each future project would be evaluated by the City on a case-by-case basis.

Construction activities associated with future developments may generate detectable odors from heavy-duty equipment exhaust and architectural coatings. However, construction-related odors would be analyzed on a case-by-case basis. All future development projects would be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA to evaluate project-specific impacts and any required mitigation. In addition, developments within the East Side Overlay Zone would be required to comply with the California Code of Regulations, Title 13, Sections 2449(d)(3) and 2485, which minimizes the idling time of construction equipment either by shutting it off when not in use or by reducing the time of idling to no more than five minutes. This would further reduce the detectable odors from heavy-duty equipment exhaust. Improvements within the City would also be required to comply with the AVAQMD Regulation XI, *Rule 1120 – Asphalt Pavement Heaters*, which would minimize odor impacts from ROG emissions during asphalt paving activities. Thus, odors associated with project construction would be less than significant.

Potential operational airborne odors could be created by food processing activities associated with food processing plants permitted within the East Side Overlay Zone. These odors would be similar to existing food processing plants throughout the City and would be confined to the immediate vicinity of the new buildings. Food processing plants are also typically required to provide ventilation systems that avoid substantial adverse odor impacts. The other potential source of odors would be new waste receptacles within the community. The receptacles would be stored in areas and in containers, as required by City (Municipal Code Chapter 13.17, *Requirements for the Collection and Recycling of Recyclable Materials and Collection and Organics Processing of Organic Material Generated from Commercial Facilities, Multi-Family Dwellings, and Specific Events*) and Los Angeles County Health Department regulations, and be emptied on a regular or weekly basis, before potentially substantial odors have developed. The phasing and exact details of each project would be evaluated by the City on a case-by-case basis and each project would be required to analyze potential operational odor impacts. As such, the project would have a less than significant operational odor impact.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.



5.13.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

CEQA Guidelines Section 15355 requires an analysis of cumulative impacts, which are defined as, “two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable, or which compound or increase other environmental impacts.” The cumulative analysis below considers the proposed project’s impacts in conjunction with future buildout of the General Plan; refer to [Table 4-1, *General Plan 2030 – GPCAC Preferred Land Use Plan Alternative Buildout*](#).

According to the AVAQMD CEQA and Federal Conformity Guidelines, any proposed project that would individually have a significant air quality impact would also be considered to have a significant cumulative air quality impact. If a project impact is individually less than significant, the impacts of the surrounding past, present and future projects must be taken into account. The AVAQMD relies on SCAQMD guidelines to determine cumulative impacts, which states that the thresholds of significance for cumulative impacts are the same as those for the project-related impacts. Projects that exceed the project-specific significance thresholds are considered by the AVAQMD to be cumulatively considerable. The following discussions are included by topic area to determine whether a significant cumulative effect would occur.

SHORT-TERM (CONSTRUCTION) AIR EMISSIONS

- **SHORT-TERM CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROPOSED PROJECT AND OTHER RELATED CUMULATIVE PROJECTS, COULD RESULT IN INCREASED AIR POLLUTANT EMISSION IMPACTS OR EXPOSE SENSITIVE RECEPTORS TO INCREASED POLLUTANT CONCENTRATIONS.**

Impact Analysis: The AVAQMD neither recommends quantified analyses of cumulative construction emissions, nor does it provide separate methodologies or thresholds of significance to be used to assess cumulative construction impacts. The AVAQMD significance thresholds for construction are intended to meet the objectives of the AQMP to ensure the NAAQS and CAAQS are not exceeded. As the City has no control over the timing or sequencing of cumulative development in Lancaster, any quantitative analysis to ascertain the daily construction emissions that assumes multiple, concurrent construction would be speculative. In addition, construction-related criteria pollutant emissions are temporary in nature and cease following project completion.

Per AVAQMD rules and mandates, as well as the CEQA requirement that significant impacts be mitigated to the extent feasible, these same requirements (i.e., Rule 403 compliance, the implementation of all feasible mitigation measures, and compliance with adopted AQMP emissions control measures) would also be imposed on construction projects throughout the MDAB, which would include future development within the East Side Overlay Zone and the City of Lancaster. Based on the programmatic construction analysis above, construction-related emissions associated with future development projects within the City and surrounding area would be required to conduct project-specific CEQA analysis and comply with the applicable AVAQMD rules and regulations, as well as Mitigation Measures AQ-1 through AQ-3. Therefore, implementation of the proposed East



Side Overlay Zone would not result in cumulatively considerable impacts regarding construction air quality emissions.

Mitigation Measures: Refer to Mitigation Measures AQ-1 through AQ-3.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.

LONG-TERM (OPERATIONAL) AIR EMISSIONS

● IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT AND OTHER RELATED CUMULATIVE PROJECTS COULD RESULT IN INCREASED IMPACTS PERTAINING TO OPERATIONAL AIR EMISSIONS.

Impact Analysis: As discussed above, implementation of the proposed East Side Overlay Zone would not result in direct generation of operational emissions as no specific development is being proposed. As such, there would be no impact with regards to operational emissions. Future development within the East Side Overlay Zone would be analyzed at a detailed level and be reviewed by the City to ensure that development occurs in a logical manner consistent with the project, General Plan, Municipal Code, and that additional environmental review is conducted under CEQA, as needed. Future project-specific environmental review under CEQA would be conducted pursuant to City guidelines. Additionally, adherence to AVAQMD rules and regulations would alleviate potential impacts related to cumulative conditions on a project-by-project basis. Furthermore, emission reduction technology, strategies, and plans are constantly being developed. As a result, the proposed overlay zone would not contribute to a cumulatively considerable net increase of any nonattainment criteria pollutant. No cumulative operational impacts associated with the implementation of the proposed East Side Overlay Zone would occur in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

CUMULATIVE CARBON MONOXIDE HOTSPOTS

● IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT AND CUMULATIVE PROJECTS COULD RESULT IN CUMULATIVELY CONSIDERABLE CARBON MONOXIDE HOTSPOT IMPACTS.

Impact Analysis: Cumulative development is not expected to expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations such as CO hotspots. As described above, implementation of the proposed East Side Overlay Zone does not include any specific development that would result in the direct generation of localized operational emissions including mobile sources leading to CO hotspots. Individual development projects within the East Side Overlay Zone would occur incrementally over time. The details of potential future projects would be evaluated by the City on a case-by-case basis, and these individual projects would be required to analyze localized emissions associated with operations through project-specific CEQA analysis. Therefore, the project's contribution would not



be cumulatively considerable as the project would not directly result in the generation of vehicular trips that could contribute to CO concentrations. Cumulative impact would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

CUMULATIVE CONSISTENCY WITH APPLICABLE AIR QUALITY PLAN

- **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT AND RELATED PROJECTS COULD RESULT IN CUMULATIVELY CONSIDERABLE INCONSISTENCIES WITH THE APPLICABLE AIR QUALITY PLAN.**

Impact Analysis: As noted above, the AVAQMD considers any project with a significant project-level air quality impact to also have a significant cumulative air quality impact. As discussed above, the proposed East Side Overlay Zone would not affect SCAG's nor the 2017 Attainment Plan's buildout projections for the City. All future development within the project area would be required to comply with applicable General Plan policies and development standards implemented by the proposed project. Future project-specific environmental review under CEQA would be conducted pursuant to City guidelines and Mitigation Measures AQ-1 through AQ-3 would be required. Impacts were determined to be less than significant with regard to consistency with regional air quality plans. Additionally, the proposed overlay zone does not include a General Plan amendment and would remain consistent with SCAG's growth forecasts. Therefore, the proposed overlay zone would not have a cumulatively considerable impact in this regard. Cumulative impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: Refer to Mitigation Measures AQ-1 through AQ-3.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.

CUMULATIVE ODOR IMPACTS

- **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT AND RELATED PROJECTS COULD RESULT IN CUMULATIVELY CONSIDERABLE ODOR IMPACTS.**

Impact Analysis: Odors resulting from the construction activities associated with implementation of the projects that would occur within the City are not likely to affect a substantial number of people, since construction activities occur in a limited area and do not usually emit odors that are considered offensive. As discussed above, the proposed East Side Overlay Zone would increase the flexibility in allowed uses and development potential in the eastern portion of Lancaster beyond currently allowed uses, including food manufacturing and processing (with a conditional use permit), which is identified by the AVAQMD as being a land use associated with odors. Potential operational airborne odors could be created by food processing activities associated with the food processing plants permitted within the East Side Overlay Zone. Food processing plants are typically required to provide ventilation systems that avoid substantial adverse odor impacts. Individual development projects within the East



Side Overlay Zone would occur in incrementally over time and each future project would be evaluated by the City on a case-by-case basis. The individual developments would be required to analyze odors and mitigate any potential odor impacts. Thus, implementation of the proposed East Side Overlay Zone would not cumulatively result in significant or highly objectionable odor.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

5.13.6 SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

No significant unavoidable impacts related to air quality have been identified.



5.14 Greenhouse Gas Emissions



5.14 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

This section evaluates greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions impacts associated with the proposed project and analyzes project compliance with applicable regulations. Consideration of the project's consistency with applicable plans, policies, and regulations, as well as the introduction of new sources of GHGs, is included in this section.

5.14.1 EXISTING SETTING

The City lies within the Mojave Desert Air Basin (MDAB). The MDAB includes the desert portion of Los Angeles and San Bernardino Counties, the eastern desert portion of Kern County, and the northeastern desert portion of Riverside County.

SCOPE OF ANALYSIS FOR CLIMATE CHANGE

The study area for climate change and the analysis of GHG emissions is broad as climate change is influenced by world-wide emissions and their global effects. However, the study area is also limited by the *California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines* [Section 15064(d)] (*CEQA Guidelines*), which directs lead agencies to consider an “indirect physical change” only if that change is a reasonably foreseeable impact which may be caused by the project.

The baseline against which to compare potential impacts of the project includes the natural and anthropogenic drivers of global climate change, including world-wide GHG emissions from human activities that have grown more than 70 percent between 1970 and 2004. The State of California is leading the nation in managing GHG emissions. Accordingly, the impact analysis for this project relies on guidelines, analyses, policy, and plans for reducing GHG emissions established by the California Air Resources Board (CARB).

GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE – GREENHOUSE GASES

The natural process through which heat is retained in the troposphere is called the “greenhouse effect.”¹ The greenhouse effect traps heat in the troposphere through a threefold process as follows: short wave radiation emitted by the Sun is absorbed by the Earth; the Earth emits a portion of this energy in the form of long wave radiation; and GHG in the upper atmosphere absorb this long wave radiation and emit this long wave radiation into space and toward the Earth. This “trapping” of the long wave (thermal) radiation emitted back toward the Earth is the underlying process of the greenhouse effect.

The most abundant GHGs are water vapor (H₂O) and carbon dioxide (CO₂). Many other trace gases have greater ability to absorb and re-radiate long wave radiation; however, these gases are not as plentiful. For this reason, and to gauge the potency of GHGs, scientists have established a Global

¹ The troposphere is the bottom layer of the atmosphere, which varies in height from the Earth's surface to 10 to 12 kilometers.



Warming Potential (GWP) for each GHG based on its ability to absorb and re-radiate long wave radiation. GHGs normally associated with development projects include the following:²

- Water Vapor (H₂O). Although water vapor has not received the scrutiny of other GHGs, it is the primary contributor to the greenhouse effect. Natural processes, such as evaporation from oceans and rivers, and transpiration from plants, contribute 90 percent and 10 percent of the water vapor in our atmosphere, respectively. The primary human related source of water vapor comes from fuel combustion in motor vehicles; however, it does not contribute a significant amount (less than one percent) to atmospheric concentrations of water vapor. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has not determined a GWP for water vapor.
- Carbon Dioxide (CO₂). Carbon dioxide is primarily generated by fossil fuel combustion in stationary and mobile sources. Due to the emergence of industrial facilities and mobile sources in the past 250 years, CO₂ emissions from fossil fuel combustion increased by a total of 2.6 percent between 1990 and 2019.³ Carbon dioxide is the most widely emitted GHG and is the reference gas (GWP of 1) for determining GWPs for other GHGs.
- Methane (CH₄). Methane is emitted from biogenic sources, incomplete combustion in forest fires, landfills, manure management, and leaks in natural gas pipelines. The United States' top three methane sources are landfills, natural gas systems, and enteric fermentation. Methane is the primary component of natural gas, used for space and water heating, steam production, and power generation. The GWP of methane is 27.9.
- Nitrous Oxide (N₂O). Nitrous oxide is produced by both natural and human related sources. Primary human related sources include agricultural soil management, animal manure management, sewage treatment, mobile and stationary combustion of fossil fuels, adipic acid production, and nitric acid production. The GWP of nitrous oxide is 273.
- Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs). Typically used as refrigerants for both stationary refrigeration and mobile air conditioning, use of HFCs for cooling and foam blowing is increasing, as the continued phase out of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and HCFCs gains momentum. The 100-year GWP of HFCs range from 4.84 for HFC-161 to 14,600 for HFC-23.
- Perfluorocarbons (PFCs). PFCs are compounds consisting of carbon and fluorine and are primarily created as a byproduct of aluminum production and semiconductor manufacturing. PFCs are potent GHGs with a GWP several thousand times that of CO₂, depending on the specific PFC. Another area of concern regarding PFCs is their long atmospheric lifetime (up to 50,000 years). The GWP of PFCs range from 7,380 to 12,400.

² All GWPs are given as 100-year GWP. Generally, GWPs were obtained from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Fourth Assessment Report (AR4) and Fifth Assessment Report (AR5), with the addition of GWPs from the IPCC's Sixth Assessment Report for fluorinated GHGs that did not have GWPs in the AR4 and AR5.

³ United States Environmental Protection Agency, *Inventory of United States Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks 1990 to 2019, 2021*, <https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2021-04/documents/us-ghg-inventory-2021-main-text.pdf?VersionId=yu89kg1O2qP754CdR8Qmyn4RRWc5iodZ>, accessed September 14, 2022.



- Sulfur hexafluoride (SF₆). SF₆ is a colorless, odorless, nontoxic, nonflammable gas. SF₆ is the most potent GHG that has been evaluated by the IPCC with a GWP of 25,200. However, its global warming contribution is not as high as the GWP would indicate due to its low mixing ratio compared to CO₂ (4 parts per trillion in 1990 versus 365 parts per million, respectively).

In addition to the six major GHGs discussed above (excluding water vapor), many other compounds have the potential to contribute to the greenhouse effect. Some of these substances were previously identified as stratospheric ozone (O₃) depleters; therefore, their gradual phase out is currently in effect. The following is a listing of these compounds:

- Hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs). HCFCs are solvents, similar in use and chemical composition to CFCs. The main uses of HCFCs are for refrigerant products and air conditioning systems. As part of the Montreal Protocol, all developed countries that adhere to the Montreal Protocol are subject to a consumption cap and gradual phase out of HCFCs. The United States is scheduled to achieve a 100 percent reduction to the cap by 2030. The 100-year GWPs of HCFCs range from 56.4 for HCFC-122 to 2,300 for HCFC-142b.
- 1,1,1 trichloroethane (C₂H₃Cl₃). 1,1,1 trichloroethane or methyl chloroform is a solvent and degreasing agent commonly used by manufacturers. The GWP of methyl chloroform is 161 times that of CO₂.
- Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs). CFCs are used as refrigerants, cleaning solvents, and aerosols spray propellants. CFCs were also part of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Final Rule (57 Federal Register [FR] 3374) for the phase out of O₃ depleting substances. Currently, CFCs have been replaced by HFCs in cooling systems and a variety of alternatives for cleaning solvents. Nevertheless, CFCs remain suspended in the atmosphere contributing to the greenhouse effect. CFCs are potent GHGs with 100-year GWPs ranging from 3,550 for CFC-112a to 16,200 for CFC-13.

5.14.2 REGULATORY SETTING

FEDERAL LEVEL

To date, no national standards have been established for nationwide GHG reduction targets, nor have any regulations or legislation been enacted specifically to address climate change and GHG emissions reduction at the project level. However, various efforts have been promulgated at the Federal level to improve fuel economy and energy efficiency to address climate change and its associated effects as described below.

Energy Independence and Security Act Of 2007

The Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007, among other key measures, requires the following, which would aid in the reduction of national GHG emissions:



- Increase the supply of alternative fuel sources by setting a mandatory Renewable Fuel Standard requiring fuel producers to use at least 36 billion gallons of biofuel in 2022.
- Set a target of 35 miles per gallon for the combined fleet of cars and light trucks by model year 2020 and direct the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to establish a fuel economy program for medium- and heavy-duty trucks and create a separate fuel economy standard for work trucks.
- Prescribe or revise standards affecting regional efficiency for heating and cooling products and procedures for new or amended standards, energy conservation, energy efficiency labeling for consumer electronic products, residential boiler efficiency, electric motor efficiency, and home appliances.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Endangerment Finding

The EPA authority to regulate GHG emissions stems from the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Massachusetts v. EPA* (2007). The Supreme Court ruled that GHGs meet the definition of air pollutants under the existing Clean Air Act and must be regulated if these gases could be reasonably anticipated to endanger public health or welfare. Responding to the Court's ruling, the EPA finalized an endangerment finding in December 2009. Based on scientific evidence, it found that six GHGs (CO₂, CH₄, N₂O, HFCs, PFCs, and SF₆) constitute a threat to public health and welfare. Thus, it is the Supreme Court's interpretation of the existing Act and the EPA's assessment of the scientific evidence that form the basis for the EPA's regulatory actions.

Federal Vehicle Standards

In response to the U.S. Supreme Court ruling discussed above, the George W. Bush Administration issued Executive Order 13432 in 2007 directing the EPA, the Department of Transportation, and the Department of Energy to establish regulations that reduce GHG emissions from motor vehicles, non-road vehicles, and non-road engines by 2008. In 2009, the NHTSA issued a final rule regulating fuel efficiency and GHG emissions from cars and light-duty trucks for model year 2011, and in 2010, the EPA and NHTSA issued a final rule regulating cars and light-duty trucks for model years 2012 through 2016.

In 2010, President Barack Obama issued a memorandum directing the Department of Transportation, Department of Energy, EPA, and NHTSA to establish additional standards regarding fuel efficiency and GHG reduction, clean fuels, and advanced vehicle infrastructure. In response to this directive, the EPA and NHTSA proposed stringent, coordinated Federal GHG and fuel economy standards for model years 2017 through 2025 light-duty vehicles. The proposed standards projected to achieve 163 grams per mile of CO₂ in model year 2025, on an average industry fleet-wide basis, which is equivalent to 54.5 miles per gallon if this level were achieved solely through fuel efficiency. The final rule was adopted in 2012 for model years 2017 through 2021, and NHTSA intends to set standards for model years 2022 through 2025 in a future rulemaking. On January 12, 2017, the EPA finalized its decision to maintain the current GHG emissions standards for model years 2022 through 2025 cars and light trucks.



In addition to the regulations applicable to cars and light-duty trucks described above, in 2011, the EPA and NHTSA announced fuel economy and GHG standards for medium- and heavy-duty trucks for model years 2014 through 2018. The standards for CO₂ emissions and fuel consumption are tailored to three main vehicle categories: combination tractors, heavy-duty pickup trucks and vans, and vocational vehicles. According to the EPA, this regulatory program will reduce GHG emissions and fuel consumption for the affected vehicles by 6 to 23 percent over the 2010 baselines.

In August 2016, the EPA and NHTSA announced the adoption of the phase two program related to the fuel economy and GHG standards for medium- and heavy-duty trucks. The phase two program will apply to vehicles with model year 2018 through 2027 for certain trailers, and model years 2021 through 2027 for semi-trucks, large pickup trucks, vans, and all types and sizes of buses and work trucks. The final standards are expected to lower CO₂ emissions by approximately 1.1 billion metric tons and reduce oil consumption by up to 2 billion barrels over the lifetime of the vehicles sold under the program.

On April 2, 2018, the Administrator signed the Mid-term Evaluation Final Determination which finds that the model year 2022-2025 greenhouse gas standards are not appropriate in light of the record before EPA and, therefore, should be revised.⁴

On September 19, 2019, under the Safer, Affordable, Fuel-Efficient (SAFE) Vehicles Rule, the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the U.S. EPA issued the final "One National Program Rule." The rule states that federal law preempts state and local laws regarding tailpipe GHG emissions standards, zero emissions vehicle mandates, and fuel economy for automobiles and light duty trucks. The rule revokes California's Clean Air Act waiver and preempts California's Advanced Clean Car Regulations.^{5,6}

On September 20, 2019, a lawsuit was filed by California and a coalition of 22 other states, and the cities of Los Angeles, New York and Washington, D.C., in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia (Case 1:19-cv-02826) challenging the SAFE Rule and arguing that EPA lacks the legal authority to withdraw the California waiver. In April 2021, the EPA announced it would reconsider its previous withdrawal and grant California permission to set more stringent climate requirements for cars and SUVs. On March 9, 2022, the EPA restored California's 2013 waiver to full force, including both its GHG standards and zero-emissions vehicles sales requirements.

⁴ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, *Midterm Evaluation of Light-Duty Vehicle Greenhouse Gas Emissions Standards for Model Years 2022-2025*, <https://www.epa.gov/regulations-emissions-vehicles-and-engines/midterm-evaluation-light-duty-vehicle-greenhouse-gas>, accessed September 14, 2022.

⁵ U.S. Department of Transportation and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, *One National Program Rule on Federal Preemption of State Fuel Economy Standards*, <https://nepis.epa.gov/Exe/ZyPDF.cgi?Dockkey=P100XI4W.pdf>, accessed September 14, 2022.

⁶ Southern California Association of Governments, *Final Federal Safer, Affordable, Fuel-Efficient Vehicles Rule Part I (Supplemental Report)*, http://www.scag.ca.gov/committees/CommitteeDocLibrary/EEC_Item8_RC_Item10%20Supplemental%20Report.pdf, accessed September 14, 2022.



Presidential Executive Order 13783

Presidential Executive Order 13783, *Promoting Energy Independence and Economic Growth* (March 28, 2017), orders all Federal agencies to apply cost-benefit analyses to regulations of GHG emissions and evaluations of the social cost of carbon, N₂O, and CH₄.

STATE LEVEL

Various Statewide and local initiatives to reduce the State's contribution to GHG emissions have raised awareness that, even though the various contributors to and consequences of global climate change are not yet fully understood, global climate change is under way, and there is a real potential for severe adverse environmental, social, and economic effects in the long term.

Executive Order S-1-07

Executive Order S-1-07 proclaims that the transportation sector is the main source of GHG emissions in California, generating more than 40 percent of Statewide emissions. It establishes a goal to reduce the carbon intensity of transportation fuels sold in California by at least ten percent by 2020. This order also directs CARB to determine whether this Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS) could be adopted as a discrete early-action measure as part of the effort to meet the mandates in AB 32. The development of the 2017 Scoping Plan Update has identified the LCFS as a regulatory measure to reduce GHG emissions to meet the 2030 emissions target. In calculating Statewide emissions and targets, the 2017 Scoping Plan Update has assumed the LCFS be extended to an 18-percent reduction in carbon intensity beyond 2020. On September 27, 2018, CARB approved a rulemaking package that amended the Low Carbon Fuel Standard to relax the 2020 carbon intensity reduction from 10 percent to 7.5 percent and to require a carbon intensity reduction of 20 percent by 2030.

Executive Order S-3-05

Executive Order S-3-05 set forth a series of target dates by which Statewide emissions of GHGs would be progressively reduced, as follows:

- By 2010, reduce GHG emissions to 2000 levels;
- By 2020, reduce GHG emissions to 1990 levels; and
- By 2050, reduce GHG emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels.

The Executive Order directed the secretary of the California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA) to coordinate a multi-agency effort to reduce GHG emissions to the target levels. The secretary also submits biannual reports to the governor and California Legislature describing the progress made toward the emissions targets, the impacts of global climate change on California's resources, and mitigation and adaptation plans to combat these impacts. To comply with the executive order, the secretary of Cal/EPA created the California Climate Action Team, made up of members from various State agencies and commissions. The team released its first report in March 2006. The report proposed to achieve the targets by building on the voluntary actions of California businesses, local governments, and communities and through State incentive and regulatory programs.



Executive Order S-13-08

Executive Order S-13-08 seeks to enhance the State's management of climate impacts including sea level rise, increased temperatures, shifting precipitation, and extreme weather events by facilitating the development of the State's first climate adaptation strategy. This Executive Order results in consistent guidance from experts on how to address climate change impacts in the State of California.

Assembly Bill 1493

AB 1493 (Pavley Regulations and Fuel Efficiency Standards), enacted on July 22, 2002, required CARB to develop and adopt regulations that reduce GHGs emitted by passenger vehicles and light duty trucks. Implementation of the regulation was delayed by lawsuits filed by automakers and by the EPA's denial of an implementation waiver. The EPA subsequently granted the requested waiver in 2009, which was upheld by the by the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia in 2011. The regulations establish one set of emission standards for model years 2009–2016 and a second set of emissions standards for model years 2017 to 2025. By 2025, when all rules will be fully implemented, new automobiles will emit 34 percent fewer CO₂e emissions and 75 percent fewer smog-forming emissions.

Assembly Bill 32 (California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006)

California passed the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32; *California Health and Safety Code* Division 25.5, Sections 38500 - 38599). AB 32 establishes regulatory, reporting, and market mechanisms to achieve quantifiable reductions in GHG emissions and establishes a cap on Statewide GHG emissions. AB 32 requires that Statewide GHG emissions be reduced to 1990 levels by 2020. AB 32 specifies that regulations adopted in response to AB 1493 should be used to address GHG emissions from vehicles. However, AB 32 also includes language stating that if the AB 1493 regulations cannot be implemented, then CARB should develop new regulations to control vehicle GHG emissions under the authorization of AB 32.

Senate Bill 32

Signed into law on September 2016, SB 32 codifies the 2030 GHG reduction target in Executive Order B-30-15 (40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030). The bill authorizes CARB to adopt an interim GHG emissions level target to be achieved by 2030. CARB also must adopt rules and regulations in an open public process to achieve the maximum, technologically feasible, and cost-effective GHG reductions.

Senate Bill 100

SB 100 (Chapter 312, Statutes of 2018) requires that retail sellers and local publicly owned electric utilities procure a minimum quantity of electricity products from eligible renewable energy resources so that the total kilowatt-hours (kWh) of those products sold to their retail end-use customers achieve 44 percent of retail sales by December 31, 2024, 52 percent by December 31, 2027, 60 percent by December 31, 2030, and 100 percent by December 31, 2045. The bill would require the California



Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), California Energy Commission (CEC), State board, and all other State agencies to incorporate that policy into all relevant planning. In addition, SB 100 would require the CPUC, CEC, and State board to utilize programs authorized under existing statutes to achieve that policy and, as part of a public process, issue a joint report to the Legislature by January 1, 2021, and every 4 years thereafter, that includes specified information relating to the implementation of the policy.

CARB Scoping Plan

On December 11, 2008, CARB adopted its Scoping Plan, which functions as a roadmap to achieve the California GHG reductions required by AB 32 through subsequently enacted regulations. CARB's Scoping Plan contains the main strategies California would implement to reduce the projected 2020 "Business-as-Usual" (BAU) emissions to 1990 levels, as required by AB 32. These strategies are intended to reduce CO₂e emissions by 174 million metric tons. This reduction of 42 million metric tons carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO₂e), or almost ten percent from 2002 to 2004 average emissions, would be required despite the population and economic growth forecasted through 2020.

CARB's Scoping Plan calculates 2020 BAU emissions as those expected to occur in the absence of any GHG reduction measures. The 2020 BAU emissions estimate was derived by projecting emissions from a past baseline year using growth factors specific to each of the different economic sectors (e.g., transportation, commercial and residential, industrial, etc.). CARB used three-year average emissions, by sector, for 2002 to 2004 to forecast emissions to 2020. When CARB's Scoping Plan process was initiated, 2004 was the most recent year for which actual data was available. The measures described in CARB's Scoping Plan are intended to reduce the projected 2020 BAU to 1990 levels, as required by AB 32.

AB 32 requires CARB to update the Scoping Plan at least once every five years. CARB adopted the first major update to the Scoping Plan on May 22, 2014. The updated Scoping Plan summarizes recent science related to climate change, including anticipated impacts to California and the levels of GHG reduction necessary to likely avoid risking irreparable damage. It identifies the actions California has already taken to reduce GHG emissions and focuses on areas where further reductions could be achieved to help meet the 2020 target established by AB 32. The Scoping Plan update also looks beyond 2020 toward the 2050 goal, established in Executive Order S-3-05, and observes that "a mid-term Statewide emission limit will ensure that the State stays on course to meet our long-term goal." The Scoping Plan update did not establish or propose any specific post-2020 goals, but identified such goals in water, waste, natural resources, clean energy, transportation, and land use.

On January 20, 2017, CARB released the proposed Second Update to the Scoping Plan, which identifies the State's post-2020 reduction strategy. The Second Update was finalized in November 2017 and approved on December 14, 2017, and reflects the 2030 target of a 40 percent reduction below 1990 levels, set by Executive Order B-30-15 and codified by SB 32. The 2017 Scoping Plan Update establishes a new Statewide emissions limit of 260 million MTCO₂e for the year 2030, which corresponds to a 40 percent decrease in 1990 levels by 2030.



On December 15, 2022, CARB released the *2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality* (2022 Scoping Plan), which identifies the strategies achieving carbon neutrality by 2045 or earlier. The 2022 Scoping Plan contains the GHG reductions, technology, and clean energy mandated by statutes. The 2022 Scoping Plan was developed to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045 through a substantial reduction in fossil fuel dependence, while at the same time increasing deployment of efficient non-combustion technologies and distribution of clean energy. The plan would also reduce emissions of short-lived climate pollutants (SLCPs) and would include mechanical CO₂ capture and sequestration actions, as well as emissions and sequestration from natural and working lands and nature-based strategies. Under 2022 Scoping Plan, by 2045, California aims to cut GHG emissions by 85 percent below 1990 levels, reduce smog-forming air pollution by 71 percent, reduce the demand for liquid petroleum by 94 percent compared to current usage, improve health and welfare, and create millions of new jobs. This plan also builds upon current and previous environmental justice efforts to integrate environmental justice directly into the plan, to ensure that all communities can reap the benefits of this transformational plan. Specifically, this plan:

- Identifies a path to keep California on track to meet its SB 32 GHG reduction target of at least 40 percent below 1990 emissions by 2030.
- Identifies a technologically feasible, cost-effective path to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045 and a reduction in anthropogenic emissions by 85 percent below 1990 levels.
- Focuses on strategies for reducing California’s dependency on petroleum to provide consumers with clean energy options that address climate change, improve air quality, and support economic growth and clean sector jobs.
- Integrates equity and protecting California’s most impacted communities as driving principles throughout the document.
- Incorporates the contribution of natural and working lands (NWL) to the State’s GHG emissions, as well as their role in achieving carbon neutrality.
- Relies on the most up-to-date science, including the need to deploy all viable tools to address the existential threat that climate change presents, including carbon capture and sequestration, as well as direct air capture.
- Evaluates the substantial health and economic benefits of taking action.
- Identifies key implementation actions to ensure success.

Senate Bill 375

Acknowledging the relationship between land use planning and transportation sector GHG emissions, SB 375 was passed by the State Assembly on August 25, 2008 and signed by the Governor on September 30, 2008. The legislation links regional planning for housing and transportation with the GHG reduction goals outlined in AB 32. Reductions in GHG emissions can be achieved by, for



example, locating employment opportunities close to transit. Under SB 375, each Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is required to adopt a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) to encourage compact development that reduces passenger vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and trips so the region can meet a target, created by CARB, for reducing GHG emissions. If the SCS is unable to achieve the regional GHG emissions reduction targets, then the MPO is required to prepare an alternative planning strategy that shows how the GHG emissions reduction target can be achieved through alternative development patterns, infrastructure, and/or transportation measures.

REGIONAL LEVEL

Southern California Association of Governments

On September 3, 2020, the Regional Council of SCAG formally adopted the Connect SoCal: 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy of the Southern California Association of Governments (2020-2045 RTP/SCS). The SCS portion of the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS highlights strategies for the region to reach the regional target of reducing GHGs from autos and light-duty trucks by 8 percent per capita by 2020, and 19 percent by 2035 (compared to 2005 levels). Specially, these strategies are:

- Focus growth near destinations and mobility options;
- Promote diverse housing choices;
- Leverage technology innovations;
- Support implementation of sustainability policies; and
- Promote a green region.²

Furthermore, the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS discusses a variety of land use tools to help achieve the state-mandated reductions in GHG emissions through reduced per capita VMT. Some of these tools include center-focused placemaking, focusing on priority growth areas, job centers, transit priority areas, as well as high quality transit areas and green regions.

LOCAL LEVEL

City of Lancaster Climate Action Plan

The City of Lancaster adopted the *City of Lancaster Climate Action Plan* (CAP) in March 2017. The CAP documents the City's GHG emissions inventories and the progress the City has made through its alternative energy and sustainability programs. The CAP also identifies projects that would enhance the City's ability to further reduce GHG emissions. A focused working group made up of City staff worked to develop projects which would enhance the community, improve government operations, and ultimately reduce GHG emissions. A total of 61 projects across eight sectors were identified: traffic, energy, municipal operations, water, waste, built environment, community, and land use. Additionally, the CAP evaluates four different future scenarios, and the proposed measures were quantified for each scenario based upon the project descriptions, action items, and indicators. These scenarios assume that Lancaster Choice Energy (LCE) has varying amounts of alternative energy in



their portfolio by 2050, which result in different amounts of GHG reductions. Under all scenarios, the City meets the 2020 target by a wide margin and makes substantial progress towards achieving the post-2020 reduction targets.

5.14.3 IMPACT THRESHOLDS AND SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

Amendments to *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15064.4 were adopted to assist lead agencies in determining the significance of the impacts of GHG emissions. Consistent with existing CEQA practice, Section 15064.4 gives lead agencies the discretion to determine whether to assess those emissions quantitatively or qualitatively. This section recommends certain factors to be considered in the determination of significance (i.e., the extent to which a project may increase or reduce GHG emissions compared to the existing environment; whether the project exceeds an applicable significance threshold; and the extent to which the project complies with regulations or requirements adopted to implement a plan for the reduction or mitigation of GHGs). The amendments do not establish a quantified or performance-based threshold of significance; rather, lead agencies are granted discretion to establish significance thresholds for their respective jurisdictions, including looking to thresholds developed by other public agencies or suggested by other experts, such as the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA), so long as any threshold chosen is supported by substantial evidence (see *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15064.7(c)).

The California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) has also clarified that the *CEQA Guidelines* amendments focus on the effects of GHG emissions as cumulative impacts, and therefore GHG emissions should be analyzed in the context of CEQA's requirements for cumulative impact analyses (see *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15064(h)(3)).⁷ A project's incremental contribution to a cumulative impact can be found not cumulatively considerable if the project would comply with an approved plan or mitigation program that provides specific requirements to avoid or substantially lessen the cumulative problem within the geographic area of the project.⁸

CONSISTENCY WITH PLANS

The project's GHG impacts are evaluated by assessing the project's consistency with applicable local, regional, and Statewide GHG reduction plans and strategies. On a regional level, the SCAG 2020-2045 RTP/SCS contains measures to achieve VMT reductions required under SB 375. In addition, the City of Lancaster adopted a CAP in March 2017. The CAP outlines how the City would meet the State GHG reduction targets for 2020 and make substantial progress towards achieving the post-2020 targets. Thus, if the project complies with these plans, policies, regulations, and requirements, the project will result in a less than significant impact because it would be consistent with the overarching State and regional plans for GHG reduction. A consistency analysis is provided below and describes

⁷ California Natural Resources Agency, *Final Statement of Reasons for Regulatory Action*, December 2009, pp. 11-13, 14, 16; Letter from Cynthia Bryant, Director of the Office of Planning and Research to Mike Chrisman, Secretary for Natural Resources, April 13, 2009, <https://planning.lacity.org/eir/CrossroadsHwd/deir/files/references/C01.pdf>, accessed September 14, 2022.

⁸ 14 CCR Section 15064(h)(3).



the project's compliance with performance-based standards included in the regulations outlined in the applicable portions of the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS, 2022 Scoping Plan, and CAP.

QUANTIFICATION OF EMISSIONS

The intent of the proposed East Side Overlay Zone is to increase the flexibility in allowed uses and development potential in the eastern portion of Lancaster beyond currently allowed uses. Implementation of the proposed overlay zone would not directly result in the generation of emissions as no specific development is being proposed. Future development within the East Side Overlay Zone area would be analyzed at a detailed level and be reviewed by the City on a case-by-case basis to ensure that development occurs in a logical manner consistent with the General Plan, Municipal Code, and that additional environmental review is conducted under CEQA, as needed. Therefore, construction and operational GHG emissions from buildout of the East Side Overlay Zone are not quantified as part of this programmatic analysis.

ANTELOPE VALLEY AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT DISTRICT (AVAQMD) THRESHOLDS

According to the AVAQMD *California Environmental Quality Act and Federal Conformity Guidelines* (CEQA and Federal Conformity Guidelines), the annual emissions threshold for GHG emissions is 100,000 metric tons of CO₂ equivalent per year (MTCO₂e/yr). A project is considered significant if it triggers or exceeds this annual threshold.

CEQA SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

CEQA Guidelines Appendix G contains the Environmental Checklist Form that was used during the preparation of this EIR. Accordingly, a project may create a significant adverse environmental impact if it would:

- a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment (refer to Impact Statement GHG-1); and
- b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases (refer to Impact Statement GHG-2).

Based on these standards/criteria, the effects of the proposed project have been categorized as either a “less than significant impact” or “potentially significant impact.” Mitigation measures are recommended for potentially significant impacts. If a potentially significant impact cannot be reduced to a less than significant level through the application of mitigation, it is categorized as a significant and unavoidable impact.



5.14.4 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

GHG-1 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS GENERATED BY THE PROJECT COULD HAVE A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE.

GHG-2 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT COULD CONFLICT WITH AN APPLICABLE GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTION PLAN, POLICY, OR REGULATION.

Impact Analysis: The proposed project would introduce a new overlay zone in the eastern portion of Lancaster that would allow a number of light industrial uses. Potential uses include alternative energy uses, light manufacturing, distribution, and warehousing, among others; refer to [Table 3-1, *East Side Overlay Zone Permitted Uses*](#). The proposed East Side Overlay Zone would likely spur both small- and large-scale redevelopment within the City. Direct project-related GHG emissions include emissions from construction activities, area sources, and mobile sources, while indirect sources include emissions from electricity and natural gas consumption, water demand, and solid waste generation. However, the project does not propose demolition or development activities. Therefore, construction and operational GHG emissions are not quantified as part of this programmatic analysis.

The intent of the proposed overlay zone is to increase the flexibility in allowed uses and development potential in the eastern portion of Lancaster beyond currently allowed uses. Implementation of the proposed East Side Overlay Zone would not directly generate operational emissions as no specific development is being proposed. Future development within the East Side Overlay Zone would occur incrementally over time, based largely on funding availability, economic considerations, market demand, and other planning considerations. Future development within the East Side Overlay Zone area would be analyzed at a detailed level and be reviewed by the City on a case-by-case basis to ensure that development occurs in a logical manner consistent with the General Plan, Municipal Code, and that additional environmental review is conducted under CEQA, as needed. Future project-specific environmental review under CEQA would be conducted pursuant to City guidelines and compliance with existing AVAQMD regulations. Impacts would be less than significant.

CONSISTENCY WITH APPLICABLE GHG PLANS, POLICIES, OR REGULATIONS

Consistency with the SCAG 2020-2045 RTP/SCS

The 2020-2045 RTP/SCS includes performance goals that were adopted to help focus future investments on the best-performing projects and different strategies to preserve, maintain, and optimize the performance of the existing transportation system. The 2020-2045 RTP/SCS is forecasted to help California reach its GHG reduction goals by reducing GHG emissions from passenger cars by 8 percent below 2005 levels by 2020, and by 19 percent by 2035 in accordance with the most recent CARB targets adopted in March 2018. Five key SCS strategies are included in the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS to help the region meet its regional VMT and GHG reduction goals. [Table 5.14-1, *Project Consistency with the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS*](#), evaluates the project's consistency with the 2020-



2045 RTP/SCS strategies. As detailed, the proposed project would be consistent with the GHG emission reduction strategies contained in the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS.

Table 5.14-1
Project Consistency with the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS

Reduction Strategy	Applicable Land Use Tools	Project Consistency Analysis
Focus Growth Near Destinations and Mobility Options		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasize land use patterns that facilitate multimodal access to work, educational and other destinations • Focus on a regional jobs/housing balance to reduce commute times and distances and expand job opportunities near transit and along center-focused main streets • Plan for growth near transit investments and support implementation of first/last mile strategies • Promote the redevelopment of underperforming retail developments and other outmoded nonresidential uses • Prioritize infill and redevelopment of underutilized land to accommodate new growth, increase amenities and connectivity in existing neighborhoods • Encourage design and transportation options that reduce the reliance on and number of solo car trips (this could include mixed uses or locating and orienting close to existing destinations) • Identify ways to 'right size' parking requirements and promote alternative parking strategies (e.g., shared parking or smart parking) 	<p>Center Focused Placemaking, Priority Growth Areas (PGA), Job Centers, High Quality Transit Areas (HQTAs), Transit Priority Areas (TPA), Neighborhood Mobility Areas (NMAs), Livable Corridors, Spheres of Influence (SOIs), Green Region, Urban Greening.</p>	<p>Consistent. The project would increase flexibility in allowed uses and development potential in the eastern portion of Lancaster beyond currently allowed uses. The project would allow for greater development near an urban area and help accommodate new growth in the City.</p>



Table 5.14-1 [cont'd]
Project Consistency with the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS

Reduction Strategy	Applicable Land Use Tools	Project Consistency Analysis
Promote Diverse Housing Choices		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserve and rehabilitate affordable housing and prevent displacement • Identify funding opportunities for new workforce and affordable housing development • Create incentives and reduce regulatory barriers for building context sensitive accessory dwelling units to increase housing supply • Provide support to local jurisdictions to streamline and lessen barriers to housing development that supports reduction of greenhouse gas emissions 	<p>PGA, Job Centers, HQTAs, NMA, TPAs, Livable Corridors, Green Region, Urban Greening.</p>	<p>Not Applicable. Land uses allowed within the East Side Overlay Zone would not include residential uses. As such, the strategy is not applicable to the project.</p>
Leverage Technology Innovations		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote low emission technologies such as neighborhood electric vehicles, shared rides hailing, car sharing, bike sharing and scooters by providing supportive and safe infrastructure such as dedicated lanes, charging and parking/drop-off space • Improve access to services through technology—such as telework and telemedicine as well as other incentives such as a “mobility wallet,” an app-based system for storing transit and other multi-modal payments • Identify ways to incorporate “micro-power grids” in communities, for example solar energy, hydrogen fuel cell power storage and power generation 	<p>HQTA, TPAs, NMA, Livable Corridors.</p>	<p>Consistent. Potential development within the East Side Overlay Zone would be required to comply with all applicable Title 24 and CALGreen building codes at the time of construction. These building codes would require electric vehicle (EV) charging stations, designated EV parking, as well as bike parking and storage. Additionally, allowable uses within the East Side Overlay Zone include solar photovoltaic electric generation facility (solar farms) and hydrogen production and generation facilities. Therefore, proposed development within the project would leverage technology innovations and help the City, County, and State meet its GHG reduction goals. The project would be consistent with this reduction strategy.</p>
Support Implementation of Sustainability Policies		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pursue funding opportunities to support local sustainable development implementation projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions • Support Statewide legislation that reduces barriers to new construction and that incentivizes development near transit corridors and stations • Support local jurisdictions in the establishment of Enhanced Infrastructure Financing Districts (EIFDs), Community Revitalization and Investment Authorities (CRIAs), or other tax increment or value capture tools to finance sustainable infrastructure and development projects, including parks and open space 	<p>Center Focused Placemaking, Priority Growth Areas (PGA), Job Centers, High Quality Transit Areas (HQTAs), Transit Priority Areas (TPA), Neighborhood Mobility Areas (NMAs), Livable Corridors, Spheres of Influence (SOIs), Green Region, Urban Greening.</p>	<p>Consistent. The project would increase flexibility in allowed uses and development potential in the eastern portion of Lancaster beyond currently allowed uses. Future development within the East Side Overlay Zone would analyze sustainability policies and would be required to comply with the most recent version of the Title 24 and CALGreen Code. Thus, the project would be consistent with this reduction strategy.</p>



Table 5.14-1 [cont'd]
Project Consistency with the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS

Reduction Strategy	Applicable Land Use Tools	Project Consistency Analysis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with local jurisdictions/communities to identify opportunities and assess barriers to implement sustainability strategies • Enhance partnerships with other planning organizations to promote resources and best practices in the SCAG region • Continue to support long range planning efforts by local jurisdictions • Provide educational opportunities to local decisions makers and staff on new tools, best practices and policies related to implementing the Sustainable Communities Strategy 		
<p>Promote a Green Region</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support development of local climate adaptation and hazard mitigation plans, as well as project implementation that improves community resiliency to climate change and natural hazards • Support local policies for renewable energy production, reduction of urban heat islands, and carbon sequestration • Integrate local food production into the regional landscape • Promote more resource efficient development focused on conservation, recycling, and reclamation • Preserve, enhance, and restore regional wildlife connectivity • Reduce consumption of resource areas, including agricultural land • Identify ways to improve access to public park space 	<p>Green Region, Urban Greening, Greenbelts and Community Separators.</p>	<p>Consistent. The project would promote new development within the East Side Overlay Zone. Future proposed development would be required to comply with all applicable Title 24 and CALGreen code measures, which would help reduce energy consumption and reduce GHG emissions. Additionally, the project supports local policies for renewable energy production by expanding allowable uses within the overlay zone to include alternative energy uses (i.e., solar farms and hydrogen production and generation facilities). The project would also integrate local food production into the regional landscape by supporting food manufacturing and processing uses within the East Side Overlay Zone. Overall, the project would support climate change resilience and local policies for efficient development that reduces energy consumption and GHG emissions. The project would be consistent with this reduction strategy.</p>
<p>Source: Southern California Association of Governments, 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy – Connect SoCal, September 3, 2020.</p>		

Consistency with the 2022 Scoping Plan

The 2022 Scoping Plan identifies reduction measures necessary to achieve the goal of carbon neutrality by 2045 or earlier. Actions that reduce GHG emissions are identified for each AB 32 inventory sector.



Provided in Table 5.14-2, *Project Consistency with the 2022 Scoping Plan: AB 32 GHG Inventory Sectors*, is an evaluation of applicable reduction actions/strategies by emissions source category to determine how the project would be consistent with or exceed reduction actions/strategies outlined in the 2022 Scoping Plan.

**Table 5.14-2
Project Consistency with the 2022 Scoping Plan: AB 32 Inventory Sectors**

Actions and Strategies	Project Consistency Analysis
Smart Growth / Vehicles Miles Traveled (VMT)	
Reduce VMT per capita to 25% below 2019 levels by 2030, and 30% below 2019 levels by 2045.	Consistent. The project would promote new development within the East Side Overlay Zone to increase the flexibility in allowed uses and development potential. The project would allow for greater development near an urban area which would reduce VMT. As such, the project would be consistent with the action.
New Residential and Commercial Buildings	
All electric appliances beginning 2026 (residential) and 2029 (commercial), contributing to 6 million heat pumps installed statewide by 2030.	Consistent. The City of Lancaster has not adopted an ordinance or program limiting the use of natural gas on-site cooking and/or heating. However, if adopted, the new development associated with the project would comply with the applicable goals or policies limiting the use of natural gas equipment in the future. Furthermore, future proposed development would be required to comply with all applicable Title 24 and CALGreen code measures, which would help reduce energy consumption. As such, the project would be consistent with the action.
Food Products	
Achieve 7.5% of energy demand electrified directly and/or indirectly by 2030 and 75% by 2045.	Consistent. The project would allow food manufacturing under conditional use permits. As discussed above, the City of Lancaster has not adopted an ordinance or program to promote electric appliances and limit the use of natural gas. However, if adopted, the new development associated with the project would comply with the applicable goals or policies. As such, the project would be consistent with the action.
Non-combustion Methane Emissions	
Divert 75% of organic waste from landfills by 2025.	Consistent. The project would promote new development within the East Side Overlay Zone. Future proposed development would be required to recycle and compose 75 percent of waste per AB 341. As such, the project would be consistent with the action.
Source: California Air Resources Board, 2022 Scoping Plan, November 16, 2022.	

Consistency with the City of Lancaster CAP

The City of Lancaster adopted a CAP in March 2017. The CAP documents the City’s GHG emissions inventories and the progress the City has made through its alternative energy and sustainability



programs. The CAP outlines how the City would meet the State GHG reduction targets for 2020 and make substantial progress towards achieving the post-2020 targets. The CAP contains various measures aimed at reducing GHG emissions. The CAP measures cover the following key areas: transportation, water introduction, built environment, community, and land use.

The intent of the proposed overlay zone is to increase the flexibility in allowed uses and development potential in the eastern portion of Lancaster beyond currently allowed uses. The project would support the CAP measures aimed at reducing GHG emissions by supporting alternative energy uses (i.e., solar photovoltaic electric generation and hydrogen production and generation facilities). Future development within the East Side Overlay Zone area would be analyzed at a detailed level and be reviewed by the City on a case-by-case basis to ensure that development occurs in a logical manner consistent with the CAP, and that additional environmental review is conducted under CEQA, as needed. Impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

5.14.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

CEQA Guidelines Section 15355 requires an analysis of cumulative impacts, which are defined as, “two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable, or which compound or increase other environmental impacts.” The cumulative analysis below considers the proposed project’s impacts in conjunction with future buildout of the General Plan; refer to Table 4-1, *General Plan 2030 – GPCAC Preferred Land Use Plan Alternative Buildout*.

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS AND CONSISTENCY WITH APPLICABLE GHG PLANS, POLICIES, OR REGULATIONS

- **GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS GENERATED BY THE PROJECT AND OTHER RELATED CUMULATIVE PROJECTS COULD HAVE A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE.**
- **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT AND OTHER RELATED CUMULATIVE PROJECTS COULD CONFLICT WITH AN APPLICABLE GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTION PLAN, POLICY, OR REGULATION.**

Impact Analysis: The proposed project would introduce a new overlay zone in the eastern portion of Lancaster that would allow a number of light industrial uses. The project does not propose demolition or development activities. Therefore, implementation of the East Side Overlay Zone would not contribute to cumulative GHG emissions. In addition, future development within the East Side Overlay Zone, as well as other cumulative projects developed in accordance with the General Plan would be subject to all applicable regulatory requirements (e.g., California Energy Code and CALGreen Code), which would further reduce GHG emissions. As stated above, the East Side



Overlay Zone would be consistent with the City's CAP. Thus, the project would not cumulatively contribute to GHG impacts and impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

5.14.6 SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

No significant unavoidable impacts related to GHG emissions have been identified in this section.



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5.15 Energy



5.15 ENERGY

This section analyzes potential project impacts related to energy consumption and energy plan consistency. Potential direct and indirect environmental impacts associated with the proposed project are evaluated in this section. Such impacts include the depletion of nonrenewable resources (e.g., oil, natural gas, coal, etc.) during both construction and operational activities.

5.15.1 EXISTING SETTING

ELECTRICITY/NATURAL GAS SERVICES

While Southern California Edison (SCE) is the default electricity service provider in the region, Lancaster Choice Energy (LCE) provides electric generation services in the City with higher renewable energy content. LCE is supported by SCE who continues to deliver the electricity, provide billing, customer service, and power line maintenance and repair. LCE only replaces the electric generation services with higher renewable energy content at more affordable rates. Over the past 15 years, electricity generation in California has undergone a transition. Historically, California has relied heavily on oil- and gas-fired plants to generate electricity. Spurred by regulatory measures and tax incentives, California's electrical system has become more reliant on renewable energy sources, including cogeneration, wind energy, solar energy, geothermal energy, biomass conversion, transformation plants, and small hydroelectric plants. Unlike petroleum production, generation of electricity is usually not tied to the location of the fuel source and can be delivered great distances via the electrical grid. The generating capacity of a unit of electricity is expressed in megawatt (MW). One MW provides enough energy to power 1,000 average California homes per day. Net generation refers to the gross amount of energy produced by a unit, minus the amount of energy the unit consumes. Generation is typically measured in megawatt-hours (MWh), kilowatt-hours (kWh), or gigawatt-hours (GWh).

The Southern California Gas Company (SCGC) provides natural gas services to the City. Natural gas is a hydrocarbon fuel found in reservoirs beneath the earth's surface and is composed primarily of methane (CH₄). It is used for space and water heating, process heating and electricity generation, and as transportation fuel. Use of natural gas to generate electricity is expected to increase in coming years because it is a relatively clean alternative to other fossil fuels like oil and coal. In California and throughout the western United States, many new electrical generation plants that are fired by natural gas are being brought online. Thus, there is great interest in importing liquefied natural gas from other parts of the world. Nearly 45 percent of the electricity consumed in California was generated using natural gas.¹ While the supply of natural gas in the United States and production has increased greatly, California produces little, and imports 90 percent of its natural gas.²

¹ California Energy Commission, *Supply and Demand of Natural Gas in California*, <https://www.energy.ca.gov/data-reports/energy-almanac/californias-natural-gas-market/supply-and-demand-natural-gas-california>, accessed July 26, 2022.

² Ibid.



ENERGY USAGE

Energy usage is typically quantified using the British Thermal Unit (BTU). Total energy usage in California was 6,923 trillion BTU in 2020 (the most recent year for which this specific data is available), which equates to an average of 175 million BTU per capita.³ Of California's total energy usage, the breakdown by sector is 34.0 percent transportation, 24.6 percent industrial, 19.6 percent commercial, and 21.8 percent residential.⁴ Electricity and natural gas in California are generally consumed by stationary users such as residences and commercial and industrial facilities, whereas petroleum consumption is generally accounted for by transportation-related energy use. In 2021, taxable gasoline sales (including aviation gasoline) in California accounted for approximately 14 billion gallons of gasoline.⁵

The electricity consumption attributable to Los Angeles County from 2010 to 2020 is shown in Table 5.15-1, *Electricity Consumption in Los Angeles County, 2010-2020*.⁶ As indicated in Table 5.15-1, electricity consumption in Los Angeles County remained relatively constant between 2010 to 2013, peaked in 2014, and started to decline since 2015.

Table 5.15-1
Electricity Consumption in Los Angeles County, 2010-2020

Year	Electricity Consumption (in millions of kilowatt hours)
2010	68,244
2011	68,180
2012	69,248
2013	68,342
2014	69,924
2015	69,503
2016	69,390
2017	68,632
2018	67,887
2019	66,805
2020	65,650

Source: California Energy Commission, *Electricity Consumption by County*, <http://www.ecdms.energy.ca.gov/elecbycounty.aspx>, accessed July 26, 2022.

³ U.S. Energy Information Administration, *California State Energy Profile*, <https://www.eia.gov/state/print.php?sid=CA>, accessed July 26, 2022.

⁴ U.S. Energy Information Administration, *California Energy Consumption by End-Use Sector, 2020*, <https://www.eia.gov/state/?sid=CA#tabs-2>, accessed July 26, 2022.

⁵ California Department of Tax and Fee Administration, *Net Taxable Gasoline Gallons*, <https://www.cdtfa.ca.gov/taxes-and-fees/MVF-10-Year-Report.xlsx>, accessed July 26, 2022.

⁶ Electricity consumption data is not available for the City. The year 2020 is the most recent year for which the County's electricity consumption data is available.



The natural gas consumption in Los Angeles County from 2010 to 2020 is shown in Table 5.15-2, *Natural Gas Consumption in Los Angeles County, 2010-2020*.⁷ As indicated in Table 5.15-2, natural gas consumption in Los Angeles County remained relatively constant between 2010 and 2020, with no substantial increase or decrease.

**Table 5.15-2
Natural Gas Consumption in Los Angeles County, 2010-2020**

Year	Natural Gas Consumption (in millions of therms)
2010	3,047
2011	3,055
2012	2,985
2013	3,065
2014	2,794
2015	2,761
2016	2,878
2017	2,956
2018	2,922
2019	3,048
2020	2,937

Source: California Energy Commission, *Gas Consumption by County*, <http://www.ecdms.energy.ca.gov/gasbycounty.aspx>, accessed July 26, 2022.

GASOLINE/DIESEL FUELS

Automotive fuel consumption in Los Angeles County from 2011 to 2021 is shown in Table 5.15-3, *Automotive Fuel Consumption in Los Angeles County, 2011-2021* (projections for the year 2022 are also shown). As shown in Table 5.15-3, from 2017 to 2020, on-road automotive and heavy-duty vehicle fuel consumption in Los Angeles County has generally declined.

**Table 5.15-3
Automotive Fuel Consumption in Los Angeles County, 2011-2021**

Year	On-Road Automotive Fuel Consumption (Gallons)	Heavy-Duty Vehicle/Diesel Fuel Consumption (Gallons)
2011	3,745,485,930	434,920,563
2012	3,714,743,617	430,477,995
2013	3,720,160,331	453,247,552
2014	3,754,124,477	457,345,104
2015	3,864,098,889	462,749,587
2016	3,990,292,164	489,895,770
2017	3,961,448,725	506,904,226

⁷ Natural gas consumption data is not available for the City. The year 2020 is the most recent year for which the County's natural gas consumption data is available.



Table 5.15-3 [cont'd]
Automotive Fuel Consumption in Los Angeles County, 2011-2021

Year	On-Road Automotive Fuel Consumption (Gallons)	Heavy-Duty Vehicle/Diesel Fuel Consumption (Gallons)
2018	3,914,668,171	494,484,395
2019	3,844,847,561	492,605,543
2020	3,381,588,164	491,579,947
2021	3,816,162,983	507,214,212
2022 (Projected)	3,774,778,086	516,229,424

Source: California Air Resources Board, EMFAC2021.

5.15.2 REGULATORY SETTING

STATE LEVEL

Senate Bill 100

Senate Bill (SB) 100 (Chapter 312, Statutes of 2018) requires that retail sellers and local publicly owned electric utilities procure a minimum quantity of electricity products from eligible renewable energy resources so that the total kilowatt-hours of those products sold to their retail end-use customers achieve 44 percent of retail sales by December 31, 2024; 52 percent by December 31, 2027; 60 percent by December 31, 2030; and 100 percent by December 31, 2045. SB 100 requires the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), California Energy Commission (CEC), State board, and all other State agencies incorporate this policy into all relevant planning. In addition, SB 100 requires the CPUC, CEC, and State board to utilize programs authorized under existing statutes to achieve such renewable energy goals.

California's Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings (Title 24)

California's Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings (CCR Title 24, Part 6), was first adopted in 1978 in response to a legislative mandate to reduce California's energy consumption. The standards are updated periodically to allow consideration and possible incorporation of new energy efficient technologies and methods. Energy efficient buildings require less electricity; therefore, increased energy efficiency reduces fossil fuel consumption and decreases GHG emissions. The 2016 Building Energy Efficiency Standards were approved on January 19, 2016 and went into effect on January 1, 2017. The 2019 Building Energy Efficiency Standards were adopted on May 9, 2018 and took effect on January 1, 2020. Under the 2019 standards, residential dwellings will be required to use approximately 53 percent less energy and nonresidential buildings will be required to use approximately 30 percent less energy than buildings under the 2016 standards.

On August 11, 2021, the CEC adopted the 2022 Title 24 Standards. In December 2021, it was approved by the California Building Standards Commission for inclusion into the California Building Standards Code. The 2022 Title 24 Standards encourages efficient electric heat pumps, establishes



electric-ready requirements for new homes, expands solar photovoltaic and battery storage standards, strengthens ventilation standards, and more. Buildings whose permit applications are applied for on or after January 1, 2023, must comply with the 2022 Title 24 Standards.

California Green Building Code

The California Green Building (CALGreen) Code (California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 11) is a Statewide mandatory construction code that was developed and adopted by the California Building Standards Commission and the California Department of Housing and Community Development. CALGreen standards require new residential and commercial buildings to comply with mandatory measures under five topical areas: planning and design; energy efficiency; water efficiency and conservation; material conservation and resource efficiency; and environmental quality. CALGreen also provides voluntary tiers and measures that local governments may adopt which encourage or require additional measures in the five green building topics. The most recent update to the CALGreen Code was adopted in 2021 and went into effect on January 1, 2023. CALGreen requires that new buildings employ water efficiency and conservation, increase building system efficiencies (e.g., lighting, heating/ventilation and air conditioning [HVAC], and plumbing fixtures), divert construction waste from landfills, and incorporate electric vehicles charging infrastructure. There is growing recognition among developers and retailers that sustainable construction is not prohibitively expensive, and that there is a significant cost-savings potential in green building practices and materials.⁸

California Public Utilities Commission Energy Efficiency Strategic Plan

The CPUC prepared an Energy Efficiency Strategic Plan in 2011 with the goal of promoting energy efficiency and a reduction in greenhouse gases. Assembly Bill 1109, adopted in 2007, also serves as a framework for lighting efficiency. This bill requires the State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission to adopt minimum energy efficiency standards as a means to reduce average Statewide electrical energy consumption by not less than 50 percent from the 2007 levels for indoor residential lighting and not less than 25 percent from the 2007 levels for indoor commercial and outdoor lighting by 2018. According to the Energy Efficiency Strategic Plan, lighting comprises approximately one-fourth of California's electricity use while non-residential sector exterior lighting (parking lot, area, walkway, and security lighting) usage comprises 1.4 percent of California's total electricity use, much of which occurs during limited occupancy periods.

California Energy Commission Integrated Energy Policy Report

In 2002, the California State legislature adopted Senate Bill (SB) 1389, which requires the CEC to develop an Integrated Energy Policy Report (IEPR) every two years. SB 1389 requires the CEC to conduct assessments and forecasts of all aspects of energy industry supply, production, transportation, delivery and distribution, demand, and prices, and use these assessments and forecasts to develop

⁸ U.S. Green Building Council, *Green Building Costs and Savings*, <https://www.usgbc.org/articles/green-building-costs-and-savings>, accessed July 26, 2022.



energy policies that conserve resources, protect the environment, ensure energy reliability, enhance the State’s economy, and protect public health and safety.

The CEC adopted *the 2021 Integrated Energy Policy Report (2021 IEPR)* Volume I, II, and IV in February 2022, and Volume III in March 2022. The 2021 IEPR provides the results of the CEC’s assessments of a variety of energy issues facing California, many of which will require action if the State is to meet its climate, energy, air quality, and other environmental goals while maintaining reliability and controlling costs. The year of 2021 was unprecedented as the State continues to face the impacts and repercussions of challenging events, including the continued effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, extreme summer weather, and drought conditions. In addition to these events, the 2021 IEPR covers a broad range of topics, including building decarbonization, energy efficiency, challenges with decarbonizing California’s gas system, quantifying the benefits of the Clean Transportation Program, and the California Energy Demand Forecast. Overall, the 2021 IEPR identifies actions the State and others can take that would strengthen energy resiliency, reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions that cause climate change, improve air quality, and contribute to a more equitable future.

LOCAL LEVEL

City of Lancaster General Plan 2030

The General Plan was adopted on July 14, 2009 and has a horizon year of 2030. The General Plan includes the following elements or plans: natural environment, public health and safety, active living, physical mobility, municipal services and facilities, economic development and vitality and physical development. The Plan for the Natural Environment chapter includes goals, objectives, policies, and actions related to energy resources and efficiency. The objectives and policies related to the proposed project are listed in the following:

- Objective 3.6: Encourage efficient use of energy resources through the promotion of efficient land use patterns and the incorporation of energy conservation practices into new and existing development, and appropriate use of alternative energy.
- Policy 3.6.1: Reduce energy consumption by establishing land use patterns which would decrease automobile travel and increase the use of energy efficient modes of transportation.
- Policy 3.6.2: Encourage innovative building, site design, and orientation techniques which minimize energy use.
- Policy 3.6.3: Encourage the incorporation of energy conservation measures in existing and new structures.
- Policy 3.6.4: Support State and Federal legislation that would eliminate wasteful energy consumption in an appropriate manner.
- Policy 3.6.5: Promote the amount of energy consumed by City operations and assist residents and businesses in reducing their energy consumption rates.



Policy 3.6.6: Consider and promote the use of alternative energy such as wind energy and solar energy.

5.15.3 IMPACT THRESHOLDS AND SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

CEQA Guidelines Appendix G contains the Environmental Checklist Form that was used during the preparation of this EIR. Accordingly, a project may create a significant adverse environmental impact if it would:

- a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation (refer to Impact Statement EN-1); and
- b) Conflict with or obstruct a State or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency (refer to Impact Statement EN-2).

Based on these standards/criteria, the effects of the proposed project have been categorized as either a “less than significant impact” or a “potentially significant impact.” If a potentially significant impact cannot be reduced to a less than significant level through the application of goals, policies, standards, or mitigation, it is categorized as a significant and unavoidable impact. The standards used to evaluate the significance of impacts are often qualitative rather than quantitative because appropriate quantitative standards are either not available for many types of impacts or are not applicable for some types of projects.

Appendix F of the CEQA Guidelines is an advisory document that assists EIR preparers in determining whether a project will result in the inefficient, wasteful, and unnecessary consumption of energy. The analysis in Impact Statement EN-1 relies upon Appendix F of the CEQA Guidelines, which includes the following criteria to determine whether this threshold of significance is met:

- **Criterion 1:** The project’s energy requirements and its energy use efficiencies by amount and fuel type for each stage of the project including construction, operation, maintenance and/or removal. If appropriate, the energy intensiveness of materials may be discussed.
- **Criterion 2:** The effects of the project on local and regional energy supplies and on requirements for additional capacity.
- **Criterion 3:** The effects of the project on peak and base period demands for electricity and other forms of energy.
- **Criterion 4:** The degree to which the project complies with existing energy standards.
- **Criterion 5:** The effects of the project on energy resources.
- **Criterion 6:** The project’s projected transportation energy use requirements and its overall use of efficient transportation alternatives.



5.15.4 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

ENERGY CONSUMPTION

EN-1 THE PROJECT COULD RESULT IN WASTEFUL, INEFFICIENT, OR UNNECESSARY CONSUMPTION OF ENERGY RESOURCES.

Impact Analysis: The proposed project would introduce a new overlay zone in the eastern portion of Lancaster that would allow a number of light industrial uses. Potential uses include alternative energy uses, light manufacturing, distribution, and warehousing, among others; refer to [Table 3-1, *East Side Overlay Zone Permitted Uses*](#). The intent of the proposed overlay zone is to increase the flexibility in allowed uses and development potential in the eastern portion of Lancaster beyond currently allowed uses. The proposed East Side Overlay Zone would likely spur both small- and large-scale redevelopment within the City. No specific development is being proposed. As such, construction details of future projects are unknown at this stage of the planning process, and these projects could be built at any time in the future as funding provided by the proposed program becomes available. Therefore, construction-related energy consumption that may occur at any one time is speculative and cannot be accurately determined at this time.

The proposed East Side Overlay Zone would not result in direct increases in building energy consumption, and therefore would not cause changes to the City's or County's electricity or natural gas consumption. Implementation of the proposed East Side Overlay Zone would not directly result in construction activities associated with future projects as no specific development is proposed and construction details of future potential projects are unknown at this stage of the planning process. Therefore, the associated building energy and construction fuel consumption associated with implementation of the East Side Overlay Zone cannot be quantified at this time. Future development within the East Side Overlay Zone would occur incrementally over time, based largely on funding availability, economic considerations, market demand, and other planning considerations. Future development within the East Side Overlay Zone area would be analyzed at a detailed level and be reviewed by the City on a case-by-case basis to ensure that development occurs in a logical manner consistent with the General Plan, Municipal Code, and that additional environmental review is conducted under CEQA, as needed. Future project-specific environmental review under CEQA would be conducted pursuant to City guidelines.

Construction-Related Energy

Implementation of the proposed East Side Overlay Zone would not directly result in construction activities associated with future projects as no specific development is proposed and construction details of future potential projects are unknown at this stage of the planning process. Notwithstanding, some incidental energy conservation would occur during construction through compliance with State requirements that equipment not in use for more than five minutes be turned off. Construction equipment would also be required to comply with the latest U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and California Air Resources Board (CARB) engine emissions standards. These emissions standards require highly efficient combustion systems that maximize fuel efficiency and reduce unnecessary fuel consumption. In addition, because the cost of fuel and transportation is a significant



aspect of construction budgets, contractors have a strong financial incentive to avoid wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary consumption of energy during construction.

Significant reductions in energy inputs for construction materials can be achieved by selecting construction materials composed of recycled materials that require less energy to produce than non-recycled materials.⁹ The integration of resource-efficient construction materials can help reduce environmental impacts associated with the extraction, transport, processing, fabrication, installation, reuse, recycling, and disposal of these construction materials.¹⁰ It is noted that construction fuel use is temporary and would cease upon completion of construction activities. There are no unusual characteristics associated with future development within the East Side Overlay Zone that would necessitate the use of construction equipment, materials, or methods that would be less energy efficient than at comparable construction sites in the region or State. Therefore, fuel energy and construction materials consumed during construction would not represent a significant demand on energy resources.

Operational Energy

Future projects within the East Side Overlay Zone would result in operational energy demand. Future projects would be required to comply with the most current version of the Title 24 Building Energy Efficiency Standards, which provide minimum efficiency standards related to various building features, including appliances, water and space heating and cooling equipment, building insulation and roofing, and lighting. The Title 24 Building Energy Efficiency Standards are updated every three years and become more stringent between each update; therefore, implementation of the proposed East Side Overlay Zone would not result in excessive long-term operational energy consumption or result in unique or more intensive peak or base period electricity demand. Furthermore, the electricity provider is subject to California's Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS). The RPS requires investor-owned utilities, electric service providers, and community choice aggregators to increase procurement from eligible renewable energy resources to 100 percent of total procurement by 2045. Renewable energy is generally defined as energy that comes from resources which are naturally replenished within a human timescale such as sunlight, wind, tides, waves, and geothermal heat. The increase in reliance of such energy resources further ensures that future development within the proposed East Side Overlay Zone would not result in the waste of finite energy resources.

The key drivers of transportation-related fuel consumption are job locations/commuting distance and many personal choices on when and where to drive for various purposes. As discussed above, future development within the East Side Overlay Zone area would be analyzed at a detailed level and be reviewed by the City on a case-by-case basis. Operational energy consumption associated with future projects would be analyzed prior to development and VMT-reducing improvements encouraging residents, workers, and visitors of the City to use alternative transportation methods, including walking, biking, and transit would be implemented as appropriate. Therefore, implementation of the proposed East Side Overlay Zone would contribute towards improving the overall traffic flow throughout the City and contribute towards reducing Citywide fuel consumption. Overall, fuel

⁹ California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery, *Green Building Materials*, <https://www.calrecycle.ca.gov/greenbuilding/materials#Material>, accessed July 26, 2022.

¹⁰ Ibid.



consumption associated with the proposed overlay zone would not be considered inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary in comparison to other developments in the region. Therefore, implementation of the proposed East Side Overlay Zone would not cause wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary consumption of energy during project operation, or preempt future energy development or future energy conservation. A less than significant impact would occur.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

CONFLICT WITH APPLICABLE ENERGY PLAN

EN-2 THE PROJECT COULD CONFLICT WITH OR OBSTRUCT A STATE OR LOCAL PLAN FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY OR ENERGY EFFICIENCY.

Impact Analysis: The General Plan contains energy resources and efficiency objectives and policies that would help implement renewable energy and energy efficient measures and would subsequently reduce energy consumption within the City. As the proposed East Side Overlay Zone would not affect the City's building energy consumption, the Title 24 standards, CALGreen Code, and RPS do not apply to the implementation of the overlay zone. Therefore, the proposed East Side Overlay Zone would result in less than significant impacts associated with renewable energy or energy efficiency plans.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

5.15.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

CEQA Guidelines Section 15355 requires an analysis of cumulative impacts, which are defined as, “two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable, or which compound or increase other environmental impacts.” The cumulative analysis below considers the proposed project's impacts in conjunction with future buildout of the General Plan; refer to Table 4-1, *General Plan 2030 – GPCAC Preferred Land Use Plan Alternative Buildout.*



ENERGY CONSUMPTION AND PLAN CONSISTENCY

- **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT AND OTHER CUMULATIVE PROJECTS COULD RESULT IN WASTEFUL, INEFFICIENT, OR UNNECESSARY CONSUMPTION OF ENERGY RESOURCES.**
- **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT AND OTHER CUMULATIVE PROJECTS COULD CONFLICT WITH OR OBSTRUCT A STATE OR LOCAL PLAN FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY OR ENERGY EFFICIENCY.**

Impact Analysis: The geographic context for cumulative energy consumption impacts for electricity and natural gas is Countywide and relative to LCE and SCGC's service areas. While the geographic context for the transportation-related energy use is more difficult to define, it is meaningful to consider the project in the context of Countywide consumption. Future growth within the County is anticipated to increase the demand for electricity, natural gas, and transportation energy, as well as the need for energy infrastructure. As discussed above, the proposed East Side Overlay Zone would not result in direct energy consumption and energy demand of future projects within the East Side Overlay Zone would be evaluated on a project-by-project basis. Additionally, all future projects within the East Side Overlay Zone and other cumulative projects developed in accordance with the General Plan would be subject to all applicable energy standards, as well as objectives and policies of the General Plan. Cumulative development projects also would be required to implement any required mitigation measures on a project-by-project basis, as applicable, pursuant to CEQA provisions. Thus, the proposed East Side Overlay Zone and related projects would comply with energy conservation plans and efficiency standards required to ensure that energy is used efficiently. As such, implementation of the East Side Overlay Zone and other cumulative projects would not result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

5.15.6 SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

No significant unavoidable impacts related to energy have been identified.



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5.16 Noise



5.16 NOISE

This section evaluates short-term construction-related and long-term operational impacts associated with implementation of the proposed project. Mitigation measures are also recommended to avoid or lessen project-related noise impacts.

5.16.1 EXISTING SETTING

NOISE SCALES AND DEFINITIONS

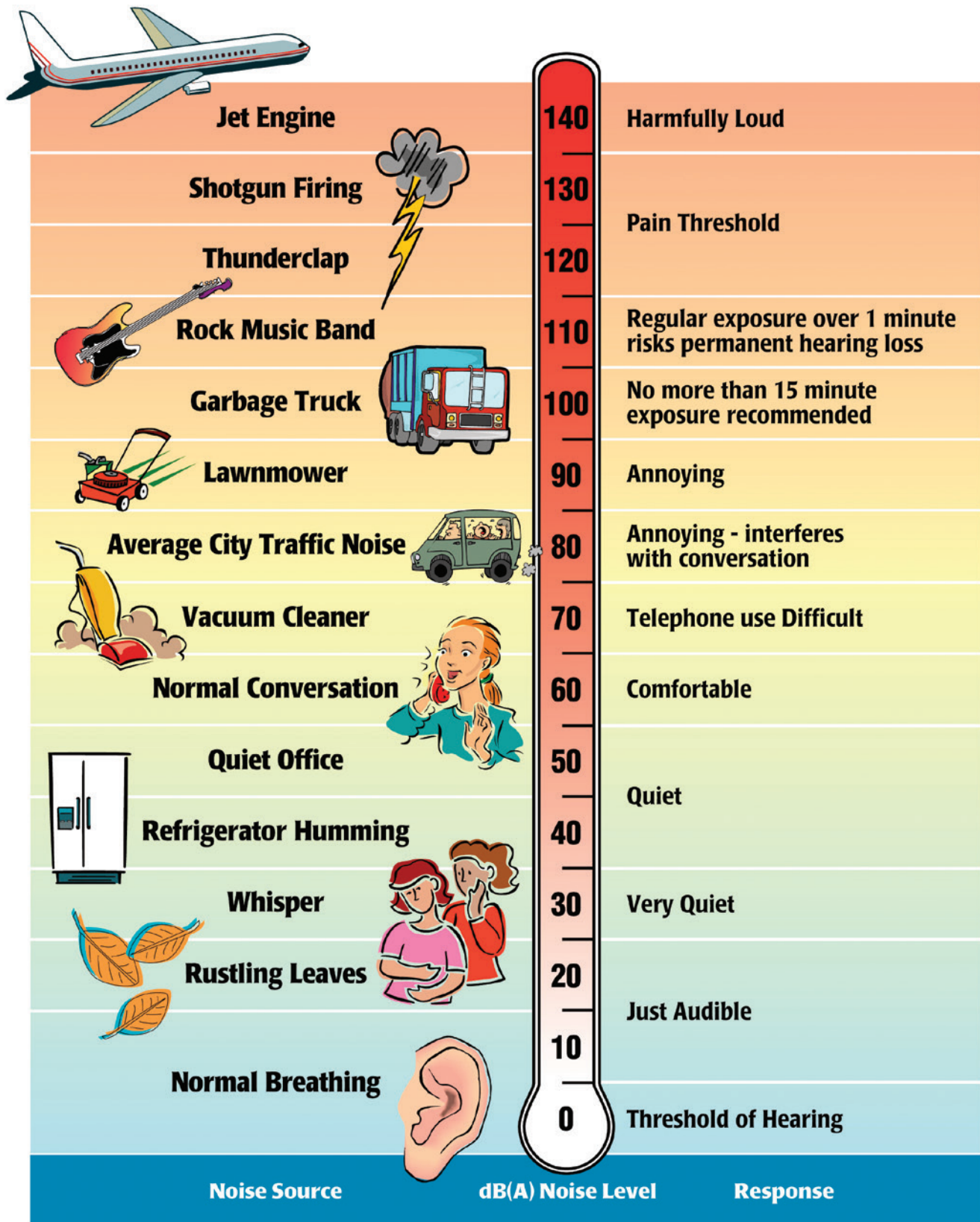
Sound is described in terms of the loudness (amplitude) of the sound and frequency (pitch) of the sound. The standard unit of measurement of the loudness of sound is the decibel (dB). Since the human ear is not equally sensitive to sound at all frequencies, a special frequency-dependent rating scale has been devised to relate noise to human sensitivity. The A-weighted decibel scale (dBA) performs this compensation by discriminating against frequencies in a manner approximating the sensitivity of the human ear.

Decibels are based on the logarithmic scale. The logarithmic scale compresses the wide range in sound pressure levels to a more usable range of numbers in a manner similar to the Richter scale used to measure earthquakes. In terms of human response to noise, a sound 10 dBA higher than another is judged to be twice as loud, and 20 dBA higher four times as loud, and so forth. Everyday sounds normally range from 30 dBA (very quiet) to 100 dBA (very loud). Examples of various sound levels in different environments are illustrated on [Exhibit 5.16-1, *Common Environmental Noise Levels*](#).

Many methods have been developed for evaluating community noise to account for, among other things:

- The variation of noise levels over time;
- The influence of periodic individual loud events; and
- The community response to changes in the community noise environment.

Numerous methods have been developed to measure sound over a period of time; refer to [Table 5.16-1, *Noise Descriptors*](#).



Source:

Melville C. Branch and R. Dale Beland, *Outdoor Noise in the Metropolitan Environment*, 1970.

Environmental Protection Agency, *Information on Levels of Environmental Noise Requisite to Protect Public Health and Welfare with an Adequate Margin of Safety (EPA/ONAC 550/9-74-004)*, March 1974.

Common Environmental Noise Levels



**Table 5.16-1
Noise Descriptors**

Term	Definition
Decibel (dB)	The unit for measuring the volume of sound equal to 10 times the logarithm (base 10) of the ratio of the pressure of a measured sound to a reference pressure (20 micropascals).
A-Weighted Decibel (dBA)	A sound measurement scale that adjusts the pressure of individual frequencies according to human sensitivities. The scale accounts for the fact that the region of highest sensitivity for the human ear is between 2,000 and 4,000 cycles per second (hertz).
Equivalent Sound Level (L_{eq})	The sound level containing the same total energy as a time varying signal over a given time period. The L_{eq} is the value that expresses the time averaged total energy of a fluctuating sound level.
Maximum Sound Level (L_{max})	The highest individual sound level (dBA) occurring over a given time period.
Minimum Sound Level (L_{min})	The lowest individual sound level (dBA) occurring over a given time period.
Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL)	A rating of community noise exposure to all sources of sound that differentiates between daytime, evening, and nighttime noise exposure. These adjustments are +5 dBA for the evening, 7:00 PM to 10:00 PM, and +10 dBA for the night, 10:00 PM to 7:00 AM.
Day/Night Average (L_{dn})	The L_{dn} is a measure of the 24-hour average noise level at a given location. It was adopted by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for developing criteria for the evaluation of community noise exposure. It is based on a measure of the average noise level over a given time period called the L_{eq} . The L_{dn} is calculated by averaging the L_{eq} 's for each hour of the day at a given location after penalizing the "sleeping hours" (defined as 10:00 PM to 7:00 AM) by 10 dBA to account for the increased sensitivity of people to noises that occur at night.
Exceedance Level (L_n)	The A-weighted noise levels that are exceeded 1%, 10%, 50%, and 90% (L_{01} , L_{10} , L_{50} , L_{90} , respectively) of the time during the measurement period.

Source: Cyril M. Harris, *Handbook of Noise Control*, 1979.

HEALTH EFFECTS OF NOISE

Human response to sound is highly individualized. Annoyance is the most common issue regarding community noise. However, many factors influence people's response to noise. The factors can include the character of the noise, the variability of the sound level, the presence of tones or impulses, and the time of day of the occurrence. Additionally, non-acoustical factors, such as the person's opinion of the noise source, the ability to adapt to the noise, the attitude towards the source and those associated with it, and the predictability of the noise, all influence people's response. As such, response to noise varies widely from one person to another and with any particular noise, individual responses will range from "not annoyed" to "highly annoyed."

The effects of noise are often only transitory, but adverse effects can be cumulative with prolonged or repeated exposure. The effects of noise on the community can be organized into six broad categories:

- Noise-Induced Hearing Loss;
- Interference with Communication;
- Effects of Noise on Sleep;



- Effects on Performance and Behavior;
- Extra-Auditory Health Effects; and
- Annoyance.

According to the United States Public Health Service, nearly ten million of the estimated 21 million Americans with hearing impairments owe their losses to noise exposure. Noise can mask important sounds and disrupt communication between individuals in a variety of settings. This process can cause anything from a slight irritation to a serious safety hazard, depending on the circumstance. Noise can disrupt face-to-face communication and telephone communication, and the enjoyment of music and television in the home. It can also disrupt effective communication between teachers and pupils in schools and can cause fatigue and vocal strain in those who need to communicate in spite of the noise.

Interference with communication has proved to be one of the most important components of noise-related annoyance. Noise-induced sleep interference is one of the critical components of community annoyance. Sound level, frequency distribution, duration, repetition, and variability can make it difficult to fall asleep and may cause momentary shifts in the natural sleep pattern, or level of sleep. It can produce short-term adverse effects on mood changes and job performance, with the possibility of more serious effects on health if it continues over long periods. Noise can cause adverse effects on task performance and behavior at work, and non-occupational and social settings. These effects are the subject of some controversy, since the presence and degree of effects depends on a variety of intervening variables. Most research in this area has focused mainly on occupational settings, where noise levels must be sufficiently high and the task sufficiently complex for effects on performance to occur.

Annoyance can be viewed as the expression of negative feelings resulting from interference with activities, as well as the disruption of one's peace of mind and the enjoyment of one's environment. Field evaluations of community annoyance are useful for predicting the consequences of planned actions involving highways, airports, road traffic, railroads, or other noise sources. The consequences of noise-induced annoyance are privately held dissatisfaction, publicly expressed complaints to authorities, and potential adverse health effects, as discussed above. In a study conducted by the United States Department of Transportation, the effects of annoyance to the community were quantified. In areas where noise levels were consistently above 60 dBA CNEL, approximately nine percent of the community is highly annoyed. When levels exceed 65 dBA CNEL, that percentage rises to 15 percent. Although evidence for the various effects of noise have differing levels of certainty, it is clear that noise can affect human health. Most of the effects are, to a varying degree, stress related.

GROUNDBORNE VIBRATION

Sources of groundborne vibrations include natural phenomena (earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, sea waves, landslides, etc.) or man-made causes (explosions, machinery, traffic, trains, construction equipment, etc.). Vibration sources may be continuous (e.g., factory machinery) or transient (e.g., explosions).

Ground vibration consists of rapidly fluctuating motions or waves with an average motion of zero. Several different methods are typically used to quantify vibration amplitude. One is the peak particle



velocity (PPV); another is the root mean square (RMS) velocity. The PPV is defined as the maximum instantaneous positive or negative peak of the vibration wave. The RMS velocity is defined as the average of the squared amplitude of the signal. PPV is typically used for evaluating potential building damage, whereas PPV and RMS vibration velocity amplitudes are used to evaluate human response to vibration. Typically, groundborne vibration, generated by man-made activities, attenuates rapidly with distance from the source of vibration. Man-made vibration issues are therefore usually confined to short distances (i.e., 500 feet or less) from the source. Both construction and operation of development projects can generate groundborne vibration.

Table 5.16-2, Human Reaction and Damage to Buildings for Continuous Vibration Levels, displays the reactions of people and the effects on buildings produced by continuous vibration levels. The annoyance levels shown in *Table 5.16-2* should be interpreted with care since vibration may be found to be annoying at much lower levels than those listed, depending on the level of activity or the sensitivity of the individual. To sensitive individuals, vibrations approaching the threshold of perception can be annoying. Low-level vibrations frequently cause irritating secondary vibration, such as a slight rattling of windows, doors, or stacked dishes. The rattling sound can give rise to exaggerated vibration complaints, even though there is very little risk of actual structural damage. In high noise environments, which are more prevalent where groundborne vibration approaches perceptible levels, this rattling phenomenon may also be produced by loud airborne environmental noise causing induced vibration in exterior doors and windows.

**Table 5.16-2
Human Reaction and Damage to Buildings for Continuous Vibration Levels**

Maximum Peak Particle Velocity (inch/second) from Continuous/Frequent Intermittent Sources	Human Reaction	Effect on Buildings
0.006-0.019	Range of threshold of perception	Vibrations unlikely to cause damage of any type
0.08	Vibrations readily perceptible	Recommended upper level to which ruins and ancient monuments should be subjected
0.1	Level at which continuous vibrations may begin to annoy people, particularly those involved in vibration sensitive activities	Virtually no risk of architectural damage to normal buildings
0.2	Vibrations may begin to annoy people in buildings	Threshold at which there is a risk of architectural damage to normal dwellings ¹
0.4-0.6	Vibrations considered unpleasant by people subjected to continuous vibrations and unacceptable to some people walking on bridges	Architectural damage and possibly minor structural damage
Note:		
1. Historic and some old buildings have a threshold of 0.25 PPV (in/sec).		
Source: California Department of Transportation, <i>Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual, Table 20, April 2020.</i>		



SENSITIVE RECEPTORS

Sensitive populations are more susceptible to the effects of noise than are the general population. Land uses considered sensitive by the State of California include residences, schools, playgrounds, athletic facilities, hospitals, rest homes, rehabilitation centers, long-term care and mental care facilities. Generally, a sensitive receptor is identified as a location where human populations (especially children, senior citizens, and sick persons) are present.

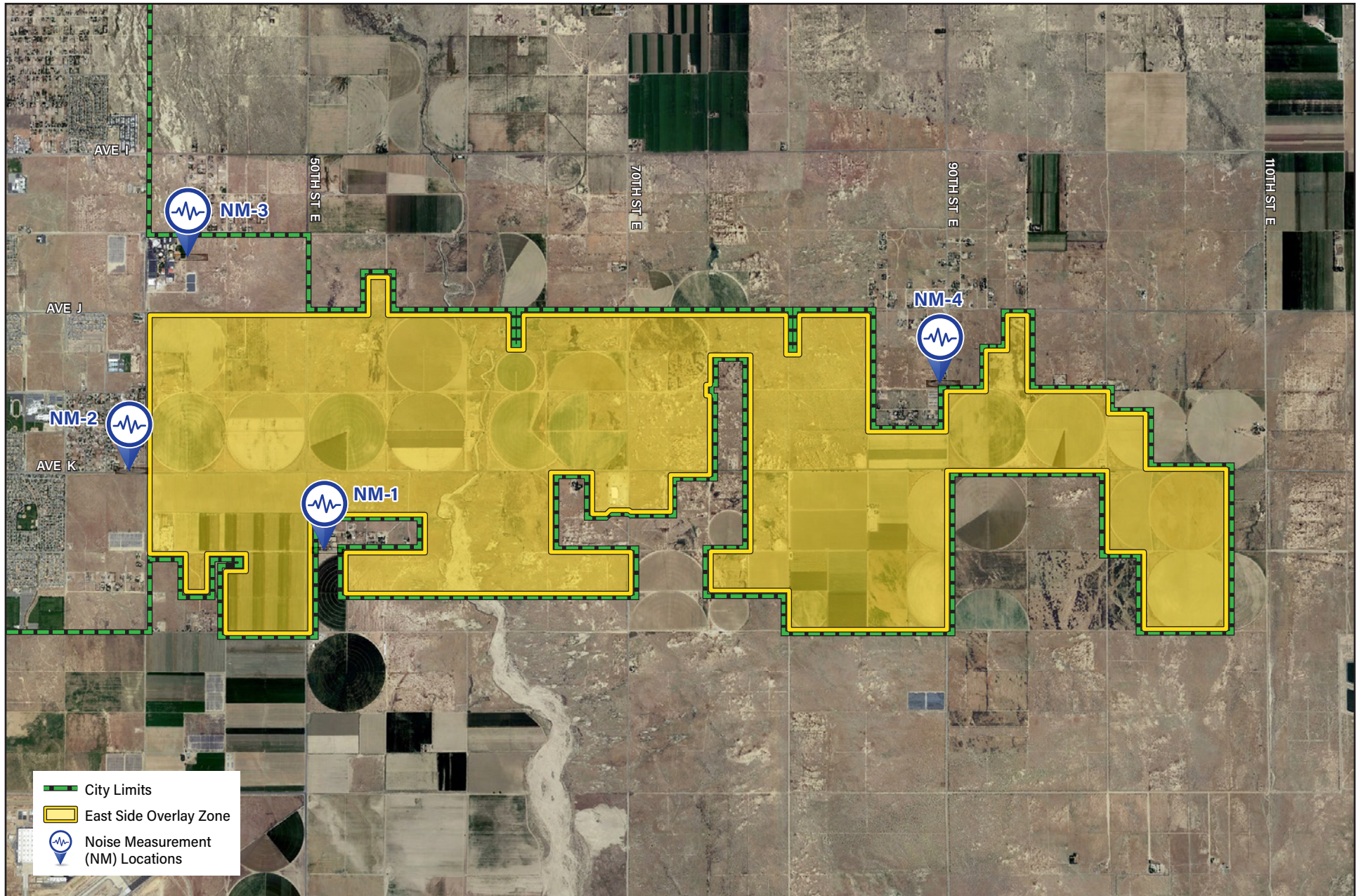
Land uses less sensitive to noise are business, commercial, and professional developments. Noise receptors categorized as being least sensitive to noise include industrial, manufacturing, utilities, agriculture, natural open space, undeveloped land, parking lots, warehousing, and transit terminals. These types of land uses often generate high noise levels. Moderately sensitive land uses typically include multi-family dwellings, hotels, motels, dormitories, and outpatient clinics. Current land uses surrounding the project site that are sensitive to intrusive noise include existing rural residences on all sides of the overlay zone.

AMBIENT NOISE MEASUREMENTS

In order to quantify existing ambient noise levels on-site and immediately adjacent to the project site, Michael Baker International conducted noise measurements on June 30, 2022; refer to [Exhibit 5.16-2, *Noise Measurement Locations*](#), and [Table 5.16-3, *Noise Measurements*](#). The noise measurement sites were representative of typical existing noise exposure within and immediately adjacent to the project site. Short-term measurements were taken at each site between 8:30 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. Meteorological conditions were clear skies, warm temperatures, with wind speeds of approximately 9 to 14 miles per hour, and low humidity.

**Table 5.16-3
Noise Measurements**

Measurement Location Number	Location	L _{eq} (dBA)	L _{min} (dBA)	L _{max} (dBA)	Peak (dBA)	Time
1	In front of 43214 50th Street East	69.1	37.6	83.3	102.8	8:30 a.m.
2	In front of driveway at 3819 East Avenue K	67.9	39.5	82.0	102.2	8:40 a.m.
3	Southwest corner of 42nd Street East and East Lancaster Boulevard	63.8	38.7	86.5	103.4	9:31 a.m.
4	Northeast corner of East Avenue J 8 and 90th Street East	65.9	31.0	88.4	103.3	9:56 a.m.
Notes: dBA = A-weighted decibels; L _{eq} = Equivalent Sound Level; L _{min} = Minimum Sound Level; L _{max} = Maximum Sound Level						
Source: Refer to Appendix 11.5, <i>Noise Data</i> , for a detailed description of noise measurements-related information.						



Source: Google Earth Pro, June 2022





MOBILE SOURCES

The primary sources of mobile noise in the project vicinity are generated by vehicle traveling through the project site and surrounding roadways, including Avenue J, 110th Street East, Avenue L, 40th Street East, and Avenue K. The noise associated with these sources usually represent a continuous occurrence.

STATIONARY NOISE SOURCES

The project site generally consists of residential and agricultural uses and vacant, undeveloped land. The primary sources of stationary noise in the project vicinity are non-urban and urban-related activities (e.g., mechanical equipment associated with agricultural uses and pedestrians). The noise associated with these sources may represent a single-event or a continuous occurrence.

5.16.2 REGULATORY SETTING

FEDERAL LEVEL

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) offers guidelines for community noise exposure in the publication *Noise Effects Handbook – A Desk Reference to Health and Welfare Effects of Noise*. These guidelines consider occupational noise exposure as well as noise exposure in homes. The EPA recognizes an exterior noise level of 55 decibels day-night level (dB L_{dn}) as a general goal to protect the public from hearing loss, activity interference, sleep disturbance, and annoyance. The EPA and other federal agencies have adopted suggested land use compatibility guidelines that indicate that residential noise exposures of 55 to 65 dB L_{dn} are acceptable. However, the EPA notes that these levels are not regulatory goals, but are levels defined by a negotiated scientific consensus, without concern for economic and technological feasibility or the needs and desires of any particular community.

STATE LEVEL

California Environmental Quality Act

The State Office of Planning and Research (OPR) *Noise Element Guidelines* include recommended exterior and interior noise level standards for local jurisdictions to identify and prevent the creation of incompatible land uses due to noise. The *Noise Element Guidelines* contain a land use compatibility table that describes the compatibility of various land uses with a range of environmental noise levels in terms of the CNEL. [Table 5.16-4, *Land Use Compatibility for Community Noise Environments*](#), presents guidelines for determining acceptable and unacceptable community noise exposure limits for various land use categories. The guidelines also present adjustment factors that may be used to arrive at noise acceptability standards that reflect the noise control goals of the community, the particular



community’s sensitivity to noise, and the community’s assessment of the relative importance of noise pollution.

**Table 5.16-4
Land Use Compatibility for Community Noise Environments**

Land Use Category	Community Noise Exposure (CNEL)			
	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
Residential-Low Density, Single-Family, Duplex, Mobile Homes	50 – 60	55 - 70	70 – 75	75 – 85
Residential – Multiple Family	50 – 65	60 – 70	70 – 75	70 – 85
Transient Lodging – Motel, Hotels	50 – 65	60 – 70	70 – 80	80 – 85
Schools, Libraries, Churches, Hospitals, Nursing Homes	50 – 70	60 – 70	70 – 80	80 – 85
Auditoriums, Concert Halls, Amphitheaters	NA	50 – 70	NA	65 – 85
Sports Arenas, Outdoor Spectator Sports	NA	50 – 75	NA	70 – 85
Playgrounds, Neighborhood Parks	50 – 70	NA	67.5 – 77.5	72.5 – 85
Golf Courses, Riding Stables, Water Recreation, Cemeteries	50 – 70	NA	70 – 80	80 – 85
Office Buildings, Business Commercial and Professional	50 – 70	67.5 – 77.5	75 – 85	NA
Industrial, Manufacturing, Utilities, Agriculture	50 – 75	70 – 80	75 – 85	NA
Notes: CNEL = community noise equivalent level; NA = not applicable				
<u>NORMALLY ACCEPTABLE:</u> Specified land use is satisfactory, based upon the assumption that any buildings involved are of normal conventional construction, without any special noise insulation requirements.				
<u>CONDITIONALLY ACCEPTABLE:</u> New construction or development should be undertaken only after a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements is made and needed noise insulation features have been included in the design. Conventional construction, but with closed windows and fresh air supply systems or air conditioning, will normally suffice.				
<u>NORMALLY UNACCEPTABLE:</u> New construction or development should be discouraged. If new construction or development does proceed, a detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements must be made and needed noise-insulation features must be included in the design.				
<u>CLEARLY UNACCEPTABLE:</u> New construction or development should generally not be undertaken.				
Source: Office of Planning and Research, California, <i>General Plan Guidelines</i> , July 2017.				

As depicted in [Table 5.16-4](#), the range of noise exposure levels overlap between the normally acceptable, conditionally acceptable, normally unacceptable, and clearly unacceptable categories. OPR’s *State General Plan Guidelines* note that noise planning policy needs to be rather flexible and dynamic to reflect not only technological advances in noise control, but also economic constraints governing application of noise-control technology and anticipated regional growth and demands of the community. In project-specific analyses, each community must decide the level of noise exposure its residents are willing to tolerate within a limited range of values below the known levels of health impairment. Therefore, the City may use their discretion to determine which noise levels are considered acceptable or unacceptable, based on land use, project location, and other project factors.



LOCAL LEVEL

City of Lancaster General Plan 2030

PLAN FOR PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Noise section of the Plan for Public Health and Safety (i.e., Noise Element/Safety Element) was adopted by the City to control and abate environmental noise, and to protect the citizens of the City from excessive exposure to noise. The Noise section specifies the maximum exterior noise levels allowable for new developments impacted by transportation noise sources such as arterial roads, freeways, airports and railroads. To protect City residents from excessive noise, the Noise section contains the following noise-related objectives and policies relevant to the proposed project:

- Objective 4.3: Promote noise compatible land use relationships by implementing the noise standards identified in Table 3-1 (Table 5.16-5, *Noise Compatible Land Use Objectives*, below) to be utilized for design purposes in new development, and establishing a program to attenuate existing noise problem[s].
- Policy 4.3.1: Ensure that noise-sensitive land uses and noise generators are located and designed in such a manner that City noise objectives will be achieved.
- Policy 4.3.2: Wherever feasible, manage the generation of single event noise levels (SENL) from motor vehicles, trains, aircraft, commercial, industrial, construction, and other activities such that SENL levels are no greater than 15 dBA above the noise objectives included in the Plan for Public Health and Safety.
- Policy 4.3.3: Ensure that the provision of noise attenuation does not create significant negative visual impacts.

**Table 5.16-5
Noise Compatible Land Use Objectives**

Land Use Category	Community Noise Exposure (CNEL)	
	Maximum Exterior	Maximum Interior
Rural, Single-Family, Multiple-Family Residential	65 dBA	45 dBA
Schools:		
Classrooms	65 dBA	45 dBA
Playgrounds	70 dBA	-
Libraries	-	50 dBA
Hospitals/Convalescent Facilities:		
Living Areas	-	50 dBA
Sleeping Areas	-	40 dBA
Commercial and Industrial	70 dBA	-
Office Areas	-	50 dBA

Source: City of Lancaster, *City of Lancaster General Plan 2030*, July 14, 2009.



Lancaster Municipal Code

The City's standards governing environmental noise are set forth in Chapter 8.24, *Noise Regulations*, of the Municipal Code. Specifically, the City has set restrictions with respect to the hours during which construction activity may take place: Municipal Code Section 8.24.040, *Loud, unnecessary and unusual noises prohibited - Construction and Building*, indicates that:

"...a person at any time on Sunday or any day between the hours of 8:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. shall not perform any construction or repair work of any kind upon any building or structure or perform any earth excavating, filling or moving where any of the foregoing entails the use of any air compressor, jack hammer, power-driven drill, riveting machine, excavator, diesel-powered truck, tractor or other earth moving equipment, hard hammers on steel or iron or any other machine tool, device or equipment which makes loud noises within 500 feet of an occupied dwelling, apartment, hotel, mobile home or other place of residence."

5.16.3 IMPACT THRESHOLDS AND SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines* contains the Environmental Checklist Form that was used during the preparation of this EIR. Accordingly, a project may create a significant adverse environmental impact if it would:

- a) Generate a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies (refer to Impact Statements NOI-1 and NOI-3);
- b) Generate excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels (refer to Impact Statement NOI-2); and/or
- c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels (refer to Section 8.0, *Effects Found Not To Be Significant*).

Based on these standards/criteria, the effects of the proposed project have been categorized as either a "less than significant impact" or "potentially significant impact." Mitigation measures are recommended for potentially significant impacts. If a potentially significant impact cannot be reduced to a less than significant level through the application of mitigation, it is categorized as a significant and unavoidable impact.

NOISE IMPACT CRITERIA

Significance of Changes in Noise Levels

As discussed above, development projects shall adhere to the noise standards established by the General Plan identified in [Table 5.16-5](#). Specifically, the City established a 65 dBA CNEL maximum



noise standard at sensitive uses (e.g., residential and school uses). Thus, any future light industrial development associated with the East Side Overlay Zone would result in a significant noise impact if the resulting noise level from future developments exceeded the applicable noise standard established for a noise sensitive use.

5.16.4 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

SHORT-TERM CONSTRUCTION NOISE IMPACTS

NOI-1 CONSTRUCTION-RELATED ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATED WITH PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION COULD RESULT IN SUBSTANTIAL TEMPORARY NOISE IMPACTS TO NEARBY NOISE SENSITIVE RECEIVERS.

Impact Analysis: Noise from construction activities is generated by two primary sources: (1) the transport of workers and equipment to construction sites and (2) the noise related to active construction equipment. These noise sources can be a nuisance to local residents and businesses or unbearable to sensitive receptors (i.e., residences, hospitals, senior centers, schools, day care facilities, etc.).

Construction of future light industrial development associated with the East Side Overlay Zone could temporarily increase the ambient noise environment in the vicinity of each individual project. Construction noise levels are dependent upon the specific locations, site plans, and construction details of each new future development; given the programmatic level of the proposed overlay zone, construction-related noise impacts that may occur from future new development are speculative and cannot be accurately determined at this stage of the planning process. It should be noted that all future new development projects capable of generating substantial construction noise would be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA to evaluate project-specific construction noise impacts to nearby sensitive receptors and identify any required mitigation. To further reduce potential construction noise impacts associated with the proposed overlay zone, the project would be required to implement Mitigation Measure NOI-1. Mitigation Measure NOI-1 would require the implementation of construction best management practices (BMPs) for construction activities associated with future new development within the proposed overlay zone that are capable of generating substantial construction noise to nearby sensitive receptors. Specifically, Mitigation Measure NOI-1 would require that construction contractors equip all construction equipment with properly operating and maintained mufflers, locate stationary construction equipment so that emitted noise is directed away from the nearest noise sensitive receptors, locate equipment staging in areas furthest away from sensitive receptors, and limit haul truck deliveries to the same hours specified for construction equipment (between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday).

Further, pursuant to Municipal Code Section 8.24.040, *Loud, unnecessary and unusual noises prohibited - Construction and building*, construction of future new development located within 500 feet of an occupied dwelling, apartment, hotel, mobile home or other place of residence would be limited to the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday and would be prohibited on Sundays and holidays. Compliance with Municipal Code Section 8.24.040 and implementation of Mitigation Measure NOI-



1 would ensure short-term construction noise impacts associated with future light industrial development within the overlay zone are reduced to less than significant levels.

Mitigation Measures:

NOI-1 Future light industrial projects developed in accordance with the overlay zone and subject to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review (meaning, subject to discretionary action and non-exempt from CEQA) shall ensure, through contract specifications, that construction best management practices (BMPs) are implemented by construction contractors to reduce construction noise levels for construction activities that are capable of generating substantial construction noise to nearby sensitive receptors. Contract specifications shall be included in construction documents, which shall be reviewed and approved by the City of Lancaster Community Development Director prior to issuance of a grading or building permit (whichever is issued first). BMPs to reduce construction noise levels may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Ensure that construction equipment is properly muffled according to industry standards and is in good working condition.
- Place noise-generating construction equipment and construction staging areas away from sensitive uses.
- Construction activities shall occur between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday, pursuant to Section 8.24.040, *Loud, unnecessary and unusual noises prohibited - Construction and building*, of the *Lancaster Municipal Code*.
- Implement noise attenuation measures, as needed, which may include, but are not limited to, temporary noise barriers or noise blankets around stationary construction noise sources.
- Use electric air compressors and similar power tools rather than diesel equipment, where feasible.
- Construction-related equipment, including heavy-duty equipment, motor vehicles, and portable equipment, shall be turned off when not in use for more than five minutes.
- The construction contractor shall limit haul truck deliveries to the same hours specified for construction equipment (between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday). The haul route exhibit shall design delivery routes to minimize the exposure of sensitive land uses or residential dwellings to delivery truck-related noise.
- Construction hours, allowable workdays, and the phone number of the job superintendent shall be clearly posted at all construction entrances to allow



surrounding owners and residents to contact the job superintendent. If the City or the job superintendent receives a complaint, the superintendent shall investigate, take appropriate corrective action, and report the action taken to the reporting party and the Community Development Director.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.

LONG-TERM OPERATIONAL NOISE IMPACTS

NOI-2 FUTURE NOISE LEVELS ASSOCIATED WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT COULD RESULT IN A SUBSTANTIAL PERMANENT INCREASE IN AMBIENT NOISE LEVELS IN THE PROJECT VICINITY AND EXPOSE PERSONS TO OR GENERATE NOISE LEVELS IN EXCESS OF STANDARDS ESTABLISHED IN THE LOCAL GENERAL PLAN OR NOISE ORDINANCE, OR APPLICABLE STANDARDS OF OTHER AGENCIES.

Impact Analysis:

MOBILE SOURCES

The purpose of the East Side Overlay Zone is to allow more flexibility and development potential in the underutilized eastern portion of Lancaster. Anticipated allowed light industrial uses would include, but are not limited to, alternative energy, distribution, light manufacturing, research and development, and warehousing. Future buildout of the overlay zone could result in increased traffic and thus, increased traffic noise levels on-site and on adjacent roadways.

According to the *Highway Traffic Noise Analysis and Abatement Policy and Guidance*, a doubling of traffic volumes would result in a 3.0 dB increase in traffic noise levels, which is barely detectable by the human ear.¹ It should be noted that all future new development projects capable of generating substantial mobile noise would be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA to evaluate project-specific impacts on a project-by-project basis, as the extent of impacts become known through the design process. Further, these future new development projects would be required to implement any required mitigation measures on a project-by-project basis, as applicable, pursuant to CEQA provisions. Impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

STATIONARY SOURCES

Stationary noise would occur as a result of future new development associated with buildout of the East Side Overlay Zone. Stationary noise sources anticipated include mechanical equipment, loading areas, parking areas, heating, and ventilation units, etc. Given the programmatic level of the proposed overlay zone, stationary noise impacts that may occur from future new development in this overlay

¹ U.S. Department of Transportation, *Highway Traffic Noise Analysis and Abatement Policy and Guidance*, updated August 24, 2017, https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environMent/noise/regulations_and_guidance/polguide/polguide02.cfm, accessed on July 6, 2022.



zone are speculative and cannot be accurately determined at this stage of the planning process. Further, all future new development projects would be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA to evaluate project-specific stationary noise impacts to nearby sensitive receptors and identify any required mitigation. Additionally, future new development associated with buildout of the overlay zone would be required to adhere to the proposed overlay zone development standards pertaining to noise. Based on the proposed development standards, uses which generate noise by the nature of their function and/or processes shall be required to demonstrate that the noise levels emitted from the use do not exceed 65 dBA at any property line which abuts a commercial or residential zone or use. A detailed noise attenuation study by a qualified acoustical engineer may be required by the City Community Development Director or designated representative to determine appropriate mitigation and methods to incorporate into the project design. Additionally, the site and any buildings thereon shall be designed to locate noise-generating equipment and activity in a manner which will have a minimal impact on abutting residentially zoned property. Such techniques may include, but are not limited to, prohibiting windows on the building wall(s) facing residentially zoned property, insulating structures housing equipment against noise, limitations on the hours of equipment operations, and other controls designed for specific problems. It shall be the burden of the applicant to prove that a project will not have a detrimental effect on neighboring residential property at the time of site plan review. Implementation of these standards would ensure that noise levels in the overlay zone and surrounding areas are maintained within acceptable standards that prevent excessive disturbance, annoyance, or disruption. Therefore, a less than significant impacts would occur in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

VIBRATION IMPACTS

NOI-3 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION COULD RESULT IN SUBSTANTIAL VIBRATION IMPACTS TO NEARBY SENSITIVE RECEPTORS AND STRUCTURES.

Impact Analysis: Project construction can generate varying degrees of groundborne vibration, depending on the construction procedure and the construction equipment used. Operation of construction equipment generates vibrations that spread through the ground and diminish in amplitude with distance from the source. Construction vibration impacts include human annoyance and building damage. Human annoyance occurs when construction vibration rises significantly above the threshold of human perception for extended periods of time. Building damage can be cosmetic or structural. Ordinary buildings that are not particularly fragile would not experience any cosmetic damage (e.g., plaster cracks) at distances beyond 30 feet. This distance can vary substantially depending on the soil composition and underground geological layer between vibration source and receiver. In addition, not all buildings respond similarly to vibration generated by construction equipment. Groundborne vibrations from construction activities rarely reach levels that damage structures.



CONSTRUCTION

Construction of future development associated with the proposed overlay zone could result in temporarily construction-related vibration impacts in the vicinity of each individual project. Construction vibration impacts are dependent upon the specific locations, site plans, and construction details of each new future development. Given the programmatic level of the proposed overlay zone, construction-related vibration impacts that may occur from future new development in this overlay zone are speculative and cannot be accurately determined at this stage of the planning process. It should be noted that all future new development projects capable of generating substantial construction vibration impacts would be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA to evaluate project-specific construction vibration impacts to nearby sensitive receptors and identify any required mitigation. To further reduce potential construction vibration impacts associated with the overlay zone, the project would be required to implement Mitigation Measure NOI-2. Mitigation Measure NOI-2 would require any construction activities requiring operation of groundborne vibration generating equipment (i.e., vibratory compactor/roller, large bulldozer, caisson drilling, loaded trucks, and jackhammer) within 25 feet of an existing structure to prepare a project-specific vibration impact analysis to evaluate potential construction vibration impacts associated with the project, and to determine any specific vibration control mechanisms that shall be incorporated into the project's construction bid documents to reduce such impacts. With compliance with existing regulations (e.g., individual projects undergoing separate environmental review under CEQA) and implementation of Mitigation Measure NOI-2, construction-related vibration impacts that would occur as a result of future buildout of the overlay zone would be reduced to less than significant levels.

OPERATIONS

Given the programmatic level of the proposed overlay zone, operation-related vibration impacts that may occur from future new development in this overlay zone are speculative and cannot be accurately determined at this stage of the planning process. However, overlay zone development standards have been established for light industrial uses that will abut a residential use (i.e., a masonry wall of not less than six feet in height and not taller than 10 feet in height shall be provided at the property line). Additionally, any buildings thereon shall be designed to locate noise-generating equipment and activity in a manner which will have a minimal impact on abutting residentially zoned property. A minimum ten-foot wide landscape setback would be required along property lines abutting or adjacent to a residential use. Light industrial uses within the East Side Overlay Zone will also be required to be compatible with adjacent existing uses through proper site planning, building design, and landscaping. All future new development projects capable of generating substantial operational vibration impacts would be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA and be required to comply with applicable regulations minimizing vibration impacts during operations. Operational impacts would be less than significant in this regard.

Mitigation Measures:

NOI-2 Prior to issuance of a grading permit, each new development project associated with the proposed overlay zone and subject to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review (meaning, subject to discretionary action and non-exempt from CEQA) with



construction activities requiring operation of groundborne vibration generating equipment (i.e., vibratory compactor/roller, large bulldozer, caisson drilling, loaded trucks, and jackhammer) within 25 feet of an existing structure shall be required to prepare a project-specific vibration impact analysis to evaluate potential construction vibration impacts associated with the project, and to determine any specific vibration control mechanisms that shall be incorporated into the project's construction bid documents to reduce such impacts. Contract specifications shall be included in construction documents, which shall be reviewed and approved by the City of Lancaster City Public Works Director.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.

5.16.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

CEQA Guidelines Section 15355 requires an analysis of cumulative impacts, which are defined as, “two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable, or which compound or increase other environmental impacts.” The cumulative analysis below considers the proposed project's impacts in conjunction with future buildout of the General Plan; refer to Table 4-1, *General Plan 2030 – GPCAC Preferred Land Use Plan Alternative Buildout*.

SHORT-TERM CONSTRUCTION NOISE IMPACTS

- **CONSTRUCTION-RELATED ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE PROJECT AREA COULD RESULT IN SIGNIFICANT TEMPORARY NOISE IMPACTS TO NEARBY NOISE SENSITIVE RECEIVERS.**

Impact Analysis: Construction activities associated with the proposed overlay zone and cumulative projects may overlap, resulting in construction noise in the area. However, construction noise impacts primarily affect the areas immediately adjacent to the construction site. As previously discussed, future buildout of the proposed overlay zone would generate noise during construction activities. However, all future new development would undergo environmental review under CEQA to evaluate project-specific construction noise impacts and identify any required mitigation. Further, implementation of Mitigation Measure NOI-1 would ensure BMPs related to construction noise are implemented to further reduce such impacts. Future construction activities associated with cumulative development projects in accordance with the General Plan would also be required to comply with the Municipal Code and incorporate mitigation measures on a project-by-project basis, as applicable, to reduce construction noise pursuant to CEQA provisions. Therefore, the proposed overlay zone contribution to cumulative noise impacts would be less than significant with implementation of Mitigation Measure NOI-1.

Mitigation Measures: Refer to Mitigation Measure NOI-1.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.



LONG-TERM OPERATIONAL NOISE IMPACTS

- **THE PROPOSED PROJECT COULD RESULT IN A SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN TRAFFIC AND LONG-TERM STATIONARY AMBIENT NOISE LEVELS.**

Impact Analysis:

MOBILE NOISE

As discussed above, mobile noise associated with buildout of the overlay zone would be required to undergo environmental review on a project-by-project basis and implement any required mitigation measures, as applicable, pursuant to CEQA provisions. Therefore, mobile noise associated with buildout of the East Side Overlay Zone, in combination with any cumulative development in the project vicinity, would result in less than significant impacts in this regard.

STATIONARY NOISE

As discussed above, future new development associated the proposed overlay zone would not result in significant noise impacts in regard to stationary noise with implementation of the proposed development standards, which would require a detailed noise attenuation study be prepared to determine appropriate mitigation and noise reducing methods to incorporate into the project design. Compliance with the proposed development standards would ensure that noise levels in the project site are maintained within acceptable standards. Although cumulative development projects could occur in proximity to the proposed overlay zone, each cumulative project would require separate discretionary approval and CEQA analysis, which would address potential noise impacts and identify necessary attenuation measures, where appropriate. Lastly, as noise dissipates as it travels away from its source, noise impacts from stationary sources would be limited to each of the respective sites and their vicinities. Therefore, the proposed East Side Overlay Zone, in combination with any cumulative development in the project vicinity, would result in less than significant impacts in this regard.

Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact.

VIBRATION IMPACTS

- **PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION COULD RESULT IN SIGNIFICANT VIBRATION IMPACTS TO NEARBY SENSITIVE RECEPTORS AND STRUCTURES.**

Impact Analysis: As discussed above, future buildout of the proposed overlay zone could generate groundborne vibration during construction activities. However, all future new development would undergo environmental review under CEQA to evaluate project-specific vibration impacts and identify any required mitigation. Further, implementation of Mitigation Measure NOI-2 would ensure vibration monitoring and control measures are implemented to further reduce such impacts. Groundborne vibration generated from cumulative projects developed in accordance with the General



Plan would be required to undergo environmental review under CEQA to determine project-specific impacts and any required mitigation measures on a project-by-project basis. Therefore, buildout of the East Side Overlay Zone and its contribution to cumulative vibration impacts would be less than significant with implementation of Mitigation Measure NOI-2.

Mitigation Measures: Refer to Mitigation Measure NOI-2.

Level of Significance: Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.

5.16.6 SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

No significant unavoidable impacts related to noise have been identified.



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6.0 Other CEQA Considerations



6.0 OTHER CEQA CONSIDERATIONS

Pursuant to *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.2, the following is a discussion of short- and long-term implications of the project; irreversible environmental changes that would occur if the project is implemented; and growth-inducing impacts resulting from project implementation.

6.1 LONG-TERM IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

If the proposed project is approved and implemented, a variety of short- and long-term impacts would occur on a local level. For example, future light industrial uses implemented in accordance with the proposed East Side Overlay may temporarily impact adjacent uses from dust and noise during future construction activities. Short-term soil erosion may also occur during grading activities. There may also be an increase in emissions caused by grading and construction activities. However, these disruptions would be temporary and may be avoided or lessened to a large degree through mitigation cited in this EIR and through compliance with the established regulatory framework; refer to [Section 5.0, *Environmental Analysis*](#), and [Section 8.0, *Effects Found Not To Be Significant*](#).

The project would create long-term environmental consequences associated with future redevelopment of eastern Lancaster with light industrial uses. Project development and the subsequent long-term effects may impact the physical, aesthetic, and human environments. Long-term physical consequences of the project include, but are not limited to, increased traffic volumes, increased noise from project-related mobile (traffic) and stationary (landscaping, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning, etc.) sources, hydrology and water quality impacts, and increased energy and natural resource consumption. Incremental degradation of local and regional air quality would also occur as a result of mobile source emissions generated from project-related traffic, and stationary source emissions generated from the consumption of natural gas and electricity.

6.2 IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES THAT WOULD BE INVOLVED IN THE PROPOSED ACTION SHOULD IT BE IMPLEMENTED

According to *CEQA Guidelines* Sections 15126(c) and 15126.2(c), an EIR is required to address any significant irreversible environmental changes that would occur should the proposed project be implemented. As stated in *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.2(d):

“Uses of nonrenewable resources during the initial and continued phases of the project may be irreversible since a large commitment of such resources makes removal or nonuse thereafter likely, Primary impacts and, particularly, secondary impacts [such as highway improvement which provides access to a previously inaccessible area] generally commit future generations to similar uses. Also



irreversible damage can result from environmental accidents associated with the project. Irretrievable commitments of resources should be evaluated to assure that such current consumption is justified.”

The environmental impacts associated with implementation of the proposed project are analyzed in [Section 5.0](#) and [Section 8.0](#). Future light industrial development implemented in accordance with the proposed East Side Overlay Zone would consume limited, slowly renewable, and non-renewable resources. This consumption would occur during each individual project’s construction phase and would continue throughout its operational lifetime. Future development would require a commitment of resources including building materials; fuel and operational materials/resources; and transportation of goods and people to and from individual project sites. Construction would require the consumption of resources that are not renewable or which may renew so slowly as to be considered non-renewable. These resources include, but are not limited to, lumber and other forest products; aggregate materials used in concrete and asphalt; metals; and water. Fossil fuels such as gasoline and oil would also be consumed in the use of construction vehicles and equipment.

Future light industrial developments would consume resources similar to those currently consumed within the City (e.g., energy resources such as electricity and natural gas, petroleum-based fuels required for vehicle trips, fossil fuels, and water). Fossil fuels would represent the primary energy source associated with construction activities, and the existing, finite supplies of these natural resources would be incrementally reduced. Future operational activities would occur in accordance with Title 24, Part 6 of the *California Code of Regulations*, which sets forth conservation practices that would limit energy consumption. The project’s energy requirements would, nonetheless, represent a long-term commitment of essentially non-renewable resources.

Additionally, future construction activities associated with future light industrial developments could release hazardous materials into the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions; refer to [Section 5.8, *Hazards and Hazardous Materials*](#). All potential demolition, grading, and excavation activities would be subject to the established regulatory framework to ensure that hazardous materials are not released into the environment. Compliance with the established regulatory framework would protect against a significant and irreversible environmental change resulting from the accidental release of hazardous materials.

In conclusion, future development accommodated through project implementation would result in the irretrievable commitment of limited, slowly renewable, and nonrenewable resources, which would limit the availability of these resource quantities for future generations or for other uses. However, consumption of these resources would occur with any development in the region and are not unique to the proposed project. As such, although irreversible environmental changes would result from the project, such changes would not be considered significant.



6.3 GROWTH-INDUCING IMPACTS

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(d) requires that an EIR analyze a project's growth inducing impacts. Specifically, CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(e) requires that an EIR:

“Discuss the ways in which the proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Included in this are projects which would remove obstacles to population growth [a major expansion of a waste water treatment plant might, for example, allow for more construction in service areas]. Increases in the population may tax existing community service facilities, requiring construction of new facilities that could cause significant environmental effects. Also discuss the characteristic of some projects which may encourage and facilitate other activities that could significantly affect the environment, either individually or cumulatively. It must not be assumed that growth in any area is necessarily beneficial, detrimental, or of little significance to the environment.”

In general, a project may foster spatial, economic, or population growth in a geographic area, if it meets any one of the following criteria:

- Removes an impediment to growth (e.g., establishes an essential public service and provision of new access to an area);
- Fosters economic expansion or growth (e.g., changes in revenue base and employment expansion);
- Fosters population growth (e.g., construction of additional housing or employment-generating land uses), either directly or indirectly;
- Establishes a precedent-setting action (e.g., an innovation, a change in zoning and general plan amendment approval); or
- Develops or encroaches on an isolated or adjacent area of open space (being distinct from an infill project).

Should a project meet any one of the above-listed criteria, it may be considered growth inducing under CEQA. Generally, growth inducing projects are either located in isolated, undeveloped, or underdeveloped areas, necessitating the extension of major infrastructure such as sewer and water facilities or roadways, or encourage premature or unplanned growth.

It is noted that while CEQA does require an EIR to “discuss the ways” a project could be growth inducing and “discuss the characteristics of some projects that may encourage...activities that could significantly affect the environment,” CEQA does not require an EIR to predict (or speculate) specifically where such growth would occur, in what form it would occur, or when it would occur. Answering such questions would require speculation, which CEQA discourages; see CEQA Guidelines Section 15145, *Speculation*.



In accordance with the *CEQA Guidelines* and based on the above-listed criteria, the project's potential growth inducing impacts are analyzed below.

IMPACT ANALYSIS

Removal of an Impediment to Growth

The proposed East Side Overlay Zone would not establish an essential public service in eastern Lancaster. As analyzed in Section 5.10, *Public Services and Recreation*, and Section 5.11, *Utilities and Service Systems*, the proposed project would not significantly increase demands for public services (i.e., fire and police protection, schools, parks and recreational facilities, and libraries) or utility and service systems (i.e., water, wastewater, stormwater, and solid waste). Therefore, the project would not establish an essential public service that could remove an impediment to growth in the project area.

However, a primary objective of the project is to increase flexibility in allowed uses and development potential in the eastern portion of Lancaster beyond currently allowed uses under the RR-2.5 (Rural Residential, 1 du/ac) zone and to incentivize new light industrial development to occur in the underutilized eastern portion of the City. Thus, the proposed overlay zone would remove an impediment to growth from a land use policy standpoint with regards to permitting new uses (i.e., light industrial) in an area of the City that is currently restricted to RR-2.5 zone uses.

Economic Growth

Future light industrial uses implemented in accordance with the proposed East Side Overlay Zone would result in economic growth within the City by generating employment and increasing revenue base. As such, the project is considered growth inducing in regard to economic growth.

Population Growth

A project can induce population growth in an area either directly (i.e., by proposing new homes or businesses) or indirectly (i.e., through the extension of roads or other infrastructure). As analyzed in Section 5.9, *Population and Housing*, future light industrial uses implemented in accordance with the proposed overlay zone are employment-generating and could indirectly foster population growth (i.e., from future employees moving into the City from other jurisdictions). Thus, the proposed project would induce indirect population growth.

Precedent-Setting Action

The project would not involve any innovation or change in the City's zoning and general plan amendment approval process. While the project would adopt the proposed East Side Overlay Zone, all future light industrial development in the overlay zone would be required to undergo separate environmental review under CEQA and the City's discretionary review process for land use and zoning consistency. As such, the project is not considered growth inducing with regards to establishing a precedent-setting action.



Development or Encroachment of Open Space

The eastern portion of Lancaster is remote and predominantly agriculture and undeveloped, vacant lands; refer to Exhibit 3-2, *Site Vicinity*. It is acknowledged that the project site is not designated or zoned open space; however, much of the area is vacant and undeveloped. Therefore, the proposed East Side Overlay Zone would allow future light industrial uses to develop or encroach into existing undeveloped, open space areas in eastern Lancaster. Therefore, the project is considered growth inducing in this regard.

SUMMARY

In summary, project implementation is considered growth inducing with respect to removing an impediment to growth, fostering economic growth, inducing population growth, and developing and encroaching on open space. The project is not considered growth inducing with respect to developing a precedent-setting action.



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7.0 Alternatives to the Proposed Project



7.0 ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

Under CEQA, the identification and analysis of alternatives to a project is a fundamental part of the environmental review process. CEQA Public Resources Code Section 21002.1(a) establishes the need to address alternatives in an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) by stating that in addition to determining a project’s significant environmental impacts and indicating potential means of mitigating or avoiding those impacts, “the purpose of an environmental impact report is ... to identify alternatives to the project.”

Direction regarding the definition of project alternatives is provided in the *CEQA Guidelines* as follows:

An EIR shall describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project, and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives.¹

The *CEQA Guidelines* emphasize that the selection of project alternatives be based primarily on the ability to reduce significant effects relative to the proposed project, “even if these alternatives would impede to some degree the attainment of the project objectives, or would be more costly.”² The *CEQA Guidelines* further direct that the range of alternatives be guided by a “rule of reason,” such that only those alternatives necessary to permit a reasoned choice are addressed.³

In selecting project alternatives for analysis, potential alternatives must pass a test of feasibility. *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.6(f)(1) states that:

Among the factors that may be taken into account when addressing the feasibility of alternatives are site suitability, economic viability, availability of infrastructure, general plan consistency, other plans or regulatory limitations, jurisdictional boundaries (projects with a regionally significant impact should consider the regional context), and whether the proponent can reasonably acquire, control or otherwise have access to the alternative site ...

Beyond these factors, *CEQA Guidelines* require the analysis of a “no project” alternative and an evaluation of alternative location(s) for the project, if feasible. Based on the alternatives analysis, an environmentally superior alternative is to be designated. If the environmentally superior alternative is the No Project Alternative, then the EIR shall identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives.⁴ In addition, *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.6(c) requires that an EIR identify any alternatives that were considered for analysis but rejected as infeasible and discuss the reasons for their rejection.

The range of feasible alternatives shall be selected and discussed in a manner to foster meaningful public participation and informed decision making. The range of potential alternatives to the proposed

¹ *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.6(a).

² *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.6(b).

³ *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.6(f).

⁴ *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.6(e)(2).



project shall also include those that could feasibly accomplish most of the basic objectives of the project and could avoid or substantially lessen one or more of the significant effects. Among the factors that may be considered when addressing the feasibility of alternatives are site suitability, economic viability, availability of infrastructure, General Plan consistency, other plans or regulatory limitations, jurisdictional boundaries, and whether the proponent can reasonably acquire, control, or otherwise have access to the alternative site (or the site is already owned by the proponent). Only locations that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the project's significant effects need be considered for inclusion. An alternative whose effect cannot be reasonably ascertained and whose implementation is remote and speculative need not be considered.

Potential environmental impacts associated with the following alternatives are compared to the project's impacts:

- Alternative 1 – No Project/Existing Zoning Alternative; and
- Alternative 2 – Light Industrial Rezone Alternative.

These alternatives were selected based on their potential to implement certain components of the project, to accomplish some or most of the basic objectives of the project, and avoid or substantially lessen one or more of the proposed project's significant effects. For example, the No Project/Existing Zoning Alternative is considered to enable the decision-makers to compare the impacts of approving the project with the impacts of not approving the project. Throughout the following analysis, the alternatives' impacts are analyzed for each environmental issue area, as examined in [Section 5.1, *Land Use and Planning*](#), through [Section 5.16, *Noise*](#), of this Draft EIR. In this manner, each alternative can be compared to the project on an issue-by-issue basis. A table is included at the end of this section that provides an overview of the alternatives analyzed and a comparison of each alternative's impact in relation to the project. This section also identifies alternatives that were considered by the lead agency but were rejected as infeasible during the scoping process. Among the factors used to eliminate alternatives from detailed consideration include failure to meet most of the basic project objectives, infeasibility, or inability to avoid significant environmental impacts. [Section 7.6, *"Environmentally Superior" Alternative*](#), identifies the "environmentally superior" alternative, as required by the *CEQA Guidelines*.

7.1 SUMMARY OF PROJECT OBJECTIVES

An EIR must only discuss in detail an alternative that is capable of feasibly attaining most of the basic objectives associated with the action, while at the same time avoiding or substantially lessening any of the significant effects associated with the proposed project. Below is a summary of the project objectives, as provided in [Section 3.5, *Goals and Objectives*](#).

1. Increase flexibility in allowed uses and development potential in the eastern portion of Lancaster beyond currently allowed uses under the RR-2.5 (Rural Residential, 1 du/ac) zone.
2. Incentivize new light industrial development to occur in the underutilized eastern portion of the City.



3. Encourage new development in Lancaster that provides economic benefits to the City and its residents.
4. Ensure that a variety of sites are available for a diversity of light industrial users.
5. Provide light industrial-based employment-generating lands which are highly accessible and compatible with other uses in the community.

7.2 SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS

Pursuant to *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.6(a), an EIR shall describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project and would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project, and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives. Only those impacts found significant and unavoidable are relevant in making the final determination of whether an alternative is environmentally superior or inferior to the proposed project. As detailed in [Section 5.1](#) through [Section 5.16](#) of this Draft EIR, upon compliance with existing regulations and mitigation measures, project implementation would not result in any significant and unavoidable impacts.

7.3 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT REJECTED

In accordance with *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.6(c), an EIR should identify any alternatives that were considered for analysis but rejected as infeasible and briefly explain the reasons for their rejection. According to *CEQA Guidelines*, among the factors that may be used to eliminate alternatives from detailed consideration are the alternative's failures to meet most of the basic project objectives, the alternative's infeasibility, or the alternative's inability to avoid significant environmental impacts.

7.3.1 ALTERNATIVE SITE ALTERNATIVE

CEQA requires a discussion of alternatives to the project or its location that are capable of avoiding or substantially lessening any significant effects of the project. The key question and first step in the analysis is evaluating whether any of the significant effects of the project would be avoided or substantially lessened by developing the project in another location. Only locations that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project need be considered for inclusion in the EIR (*CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126[5][B][1]). In general, any light industrial development allowed by the overlay zone would have similar impacts related to construction and operational air quality and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Further, potential impacts related to energy, population and housing, public services, and utilities and service systems would generally be similar regardless of where it is developed within Lancaster. Without a site-specific analysis, impacts on aesthetics, cultural resources, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology/water quality, land use and planning, noise, and transportation cannot be adequately evaluated.

The eastern portion of the City was selected as an appropriate location for future light industrial development given that a large portion of it consists of vacant, underutilized land. Additionally, there



is currently light industrial development interest in the eastern portion of the City, including potential hydrogen facilities and other alternative energy facilities. In general, industrial uses can result in adverse land use compatibility, air quality, transportation, and noise issues for nearby sensitive receptors. Therefore, the location of the proposed East Side Overlay Zone in the underutilized and primarily undeveloped eastern portion of Lancaster would allow development of future light industrial uses while minimizing and/or eliminating these potential environmental issues.

It is acknowledged that the western portion of the City is also primarily undeveloped and vacant and could be an alternative location for the proposed overlay zone. However, there is currently a substantive trend in housing development interest in the western portion of Lancaster. Thus, introducing a light industrial overlay zone in an area with potential future housing developments would result in land use compatibility issues as well as air quality, transportation, and noise issues for sensitive receptors (i.e., future residents). As such, the western portion of the City would not be a viable location for the proposed overlay zone.

Due to the lack of viable and comparable sites in the City that would allow for the establishment of the overlay zone in a manner that would avoid or substantially lessen the project's potentially significant impacts while achieving the majority of the project objectives, an alternative site alternative has been eliminated from consideration.

7.3.2 CONSTRUCTION TRIP VMT REDUCTION ALTERNATIVE

The Construction Trip VMT Reduction Alternative was developed in response to general concerns expressed on other recent projects within the City of Lancaster. Generally, comments have been received by the City requesting that development projects utilize local hire and skilled and trained workforce to construct projects. It is suggested that local hire provisions can reduce the length of construction worker trips and vendor trips, and thereby reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and associated GHG emissions and provide localized economic benefits.

As such, this alternative assumes the East Side Overlay Zone is not adopted and instead, the City adopts an ordinance requiring developers to hire a certain percentage of construction workers within 10 miles or less of the project site. The intent of this alternative is to reduce construction-related VMT and associated emissions from development projects within Lancaster. While some development projects may require multi-year construction activities with construction workers traveling far distances, construction-related VMT is temporary and would cease upon project completion. Further, project-generated VMT analyzed under CEQA pursuant to Senate Bill 743 is tied to proposed land use(s) (e.g., residential, commercial, mixed-use, industrial) and the VMT generated during long-term operations of the land use(s) (i.e., the lifetime of the development). Neither the City's *Lancaster Local Transportation Assessment Guidelines* nor the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) *Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA* recommend analyzing short-term construction VMT, nor do they cite or suggest any means of reducing construction-related VMT as it is a temporary condition. As such, this alternative would not eliminate or reduce the severity of any significant impact under CEQA. Moreover, given that the proposed East Side Overlay Zone would not result in any significant and unavoidable impacts, this alternative would not reduce or eliminate any project-related



significant and unavoidable impacts. Thus, this alternative was considered but rejected from additional analysis.

7.4 NO PROJECT/EXISTING ZONING ALTERNATIVE

In accordance with the *CEQA Guidelines*, “the no project analysis shall discuss the existing conditions ..., as well as what would be reasonably expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the project were not approved, based on current plans and consistent with available infrastructure and community services.”⁵ The *CEQA Guidelines* continue to state that “in certain instances, the no project alternative means ‘no build’ wherein the existing environmental setting is maintained.”⁶ The No Project/Existing Zoning Alternative includes a discussion and analysis of the existing baseline conditions at the time the Notice of Preparation was published on October 28, 2022. The No Project scenario is described and analyzed to enable the decision-makers to compare the impacts of approving the proposed project with the impacts of not approving the proposed project.

DESCRIPTION

Under the No Project/Existing Zoning Alternative, the East Side Overlay Zone would not be adopted. The current zoning of the project site (RR-2.5 [Rural Residential, 1 du/ac] and R-7,000 [Single Family Residential, minimum lot size 7,000 square feet]) would remain and no light industrial uses would be permitted on the project site. It is assumed that future residential development would continue to occur under the site’s existing RR-2.5 and R-7,000 zoning.

The following discussion evaluates the potential environmental impacts associated with the No Project/Existing Zoning Alternative, as compared to impacts from the proposed project.

IMPACT COMPARISON TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

Land Use and Planning

The proposed overlay zone would result in less than significant impacts with regards to land use and planning and would be consistent with applicable land use planning policies, including the General Plan, Municipal Code, and the Southern California Association of Governments’ (SCAG) *Connect SoCal: 2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy* (2020-2045 RTP/SCS). Under the No Project/Existing Zoning Alternative, the overlay zone would not be adopted. Thus, no City discretionary approval to adopt the overlay zone would be required. The existing RR-2.5 and R-7,000 zoning would apply to the project site and future residential developments would be permitted. Given that no future light industrial developments would occur, potential land use compatibility issues associated with locating light industrial uses near predominantly rural residences would not occur. Additionally, future residential development would be required to comply with RR-2.5 and R-7,000 development standards and thus, would be consistent with existing zoning and land use plans. As

⁵ *CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)(2)*.

⁶ *CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)(3)(B)*.



such, impacts with regards to land use and planning would be reduced, and this alternative would be environmentally superior.

Aesthetics/Light and Glare

This alternative would allow residential development under the site's existing RR-2.5 and R-7,000 zoning to occur, similar to existing conditions. Compared to permitted light industrial uses under the proposed project, future rural and single-family residential development would be similar in visual character and quality as existing residences in the project area and would comply with the same residential development standards. Additionally, new sources of light and glare would be reduced compared to potential light industrial development. Thus, impacts with regards to aesthetics/light and glare under this alternative would be reduced, and this alternative would be environmentally superior.

Agriculture and Forestry Resources

Farmland of Statewide importance is located within the project site. Thus, the proposed overlay zone would allow future light industrial developments to occur on important farmland. Under the No Project/Existing Zoning Alternative, residential development could also occur on important farmland and convert agricultural land to non-agricultural uses (i.e., residential). However, given the low allowed density of RR-2.5 (one dwelling unit per acre) and R-7,000 (minimum lot size of 7,000 square feet), this alternative would disturb less land, including land identified as important farmland, than light industrial uses permitted under the overlay zone. Thus, the project's less than significant impacts with regards to agricultural resources would be reduced under this alternative. This alternative would be environmentally superior.

Biological Resources

Residential development would be permitted under this alternative. In comparison to the proposed project, future rural and single-family residential projects are likely to disturb less land than light industrial developments. For example, residential developments would have smaller development footprints and be more scattered within the project site and result in less dense development. Thus, potential impacts to sensitive species or habitat in the project area would be reduced compared to under the proposed project. The project's less than significant impacts with regards to biological resources would be reduced, and this alternative would be environmentally superior.

Tribal and Cultural Resources

As stated, future rural and single-family residential projects are likely to disturb less land than light industrial developments permitted by the proposed overlay zone. Thus, the potential to impact previously undiscovered tribal or cultural resources would be reduced under this alternative, and this alternative would be environmentally superior.



Geology and Soils

While this alternative would allow future rural and single-family residential development to occur in the project area, future residences would have smaller development footprints and grading requirements compared to light industrial uses permitted by the overlay zone. Potential impacts to geological hazards (e.g., liquefaction, expansive soils, erosion, lateral spreading) would be reduced given that rural and single-family residences do not require substantial excavation or building foundations compared to light industrial structures. The project's less than significant impact in this regard would be reduced, and this alternative would be environmentally superior.

Hydrology and Water Quality

Under the No Project/Existing Zoning Alternative, future rural and single-family residential developments would have smaller development footprints and be less dense than light industrial uses permitted under the proposed overlay zone. Construction and operations of residences would also result in less potential stormwater pollutants compared to light industrial uses. Thus, potential impacts to hydrology and water quality would be reduced, and this alternative would be environmentally superior.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Both future light industrial uses under the proposed overlay zone and future rural and single-family residential uses under the existing zoning could involve the release of hazardous materials into the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions or the transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. However, compared to light industrial uses, residential uses would require the use of fewer hazardous materials for construction and operations. Thus, the potential to create a significant hazard to the public or the environment would be reduced. The project's less than significant impacts would be reduced under this alternative, and this alternative would be environmentally superior.

Population and Housing

Under existing zoning, rural residential uses at a density of one dwelling unit per acre and single-family residential uses with a minimum lot size of 7,000 square feet would be permitted. Residential development would directly result in population and housing growth. In comparison, the proposed overlay zone would permit light industrial uses that could indirectly result in future employees and their families to relocate to Lancaster from other jurisdictions. However, it is speculative to determine how many employees would relocate as future employees may also commute into the City to work or already reside within Lancaster. Thus, given that this alternative would directly increase population and housing within the City with future residential developments, population and housing impacts would be greater under this alternative. This alternative would be environmentally inferior.



Public Services and Recreation

As stated, future residential developments permitted under existing zoning would directly increase population within Lancaster. Thus, new residents would increase demand on existing public services and recreation, including fire, police, school, library, and park services. In comparison to the project, potential impacts to public services and recreation would be greater under this alternative. This alternative would be environmentally inferior.

Utilities and Service Systems

In comparison to light industrial uses, residential uses would generate less water demand, wastewater, and solid waste. Thus, impacts to utilities and service systems, including water, wastewater, storm drains, and solid waste, would be reduced. This alternative would be environmentally superior.

Transportation

Future rural and single-family residential development would be consistent with the site's existing RR-2.5 and R-7,000 zoning and thus, would not conflict with existing program plans, ordinances, or policies addressing the circulation system, substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature or incompatible use, or result in inadequate emergency access. However, development of rural and single-family residences in eastern Lancaster where other ancillary uses (e.g., commercial, service, and institutional uses) are lacking may result in increased vehicle miles traveled (VMT). While total VMT would likely be reduced with less development occurring, total VMT per service population would be greater given that this alternative would not introduce employment-generating uses in the project area. Overall, the No Project/Existing Zoning Alternative would result in greater transportation impacts and be environmentally inferior to the proposed project.

Air Quality

Construction and operational air quality emissions associated with rural and single-family residential development would be reduced compared to that of light industrial uses under the proposed overlay zone. Thus, air quality impacts associated with the No Project/Existing Zoning Alternative would be reduced compared to the proposed project's less than significant impacts. This alternative would be environmentally superior.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Future rural and single-family residential development would generate fewer GHG emissions compared to light industrial uses. Thus, GHG impacts associated with the No Project/Existing Zoning Alternative would be reduced compared to the proposed project. This alternative would be environmentally superior to the proposed project.



Energy

Energy consumption associated with rural and single-family residential developments would be less than light industrial uses. Thus, energy impacts associated with this alternative would be reduced compared to the proposed project. This alternative would be environmentally superior to the proposed project.

Noise

Compared to light industrial uses, construction of future residential developments would take less time and require less heavy construction equipment. Thus, it can be assumed that construction noise associated with development under this alternative would be reduced compared to the project. Similarly, operational noise impacts of rural and single-family residences would be less than that of light industrial developments. Therefore, the project's less than significant impacts related to noise would be reduced, and this alternative would be environmentally superior.

RELATIONSHIP TO THE PROJECT OBJECTIVES

As detailed in Table 7-1, *No Project/Existing Zoning Alternative and Project Objectives*, the No Project/Existing Zoning Alternative would not achieve any of the project's basic objectives.

**Table 7-1
No Project/Existing Zoning Alternative and Project Objectives**

Project Objective	Discussion
1. Increase flexibility in allowed uses and development potential in the eastern portion of Lancaster beyond currently allowed uses under the RR-2.5 (Rural Residential, 1 du/ac) zone.	The East Side Overlay Zone would not be adopted under the No Project/Existing Zoning Alternative. Therefore, this alternative would not increase the flexibility in allowed uses and development potential in the project area. The underlying RR-2.5 and R-7,000 zoning would remain and only rural and single-family residential development would be permitted. Thus, this alternative would not achieve Project Objective 1.
2. Incentivize new light industrial development to occur in the underutilized eastern portion of the City.	Given that no overlay zone would be adopted, no light industrial uses would be permitted in the underutilized eastern portion of the City. This alternative would not achieve Project Objective 2.
3. Encourage new development in Lancaster that provides economic benefits to the City and its residents.	Rural and single-family residential development would be permitted in the project site under this alternative. Thus, this alternative would not encourage new development that could provide economic benefits to the City and would not achieve Project Objective 3.
4. Ensure that a variety of sites are available for a diversity of light industrial users.	No industrial uses would be permitted in the project area under this alternative. Thus, this alternative would not achieve Project Objective 4.
5. Provide light industrial-based employment-generating lands which are highly accessible and compatible with other uses in the community.	The No Project/Existing Zoning Alternative would not permit or construct any industrial-base employment-generating uses. This alternative would not achieve Project Objective 5.



7.5 LIGHT INDUSTRIAL REZONE ALTERNATIVE

The Light Industrial Rezone Alternative would not involve adopting an overlay zone. Rather, the project site would be entirely redesignated and rezoned to Light Industrial (LI). Specifically, the existing Non-Urban Residential (NU) and Urban Residential (UR) land use designations would be redesignated to the LI designation. The existing RR-2.5 (Rural Residential, 1 du/ac) and R-7,000 (Single Family Residential, minimum lot size 7,000 square feet) zoning would be rezoned to the LI zone.

According to the General Plan, the LI designation and zone is intended for clean, non-polluting industrial and office uses with support commercial with maximum floor area ratios of 0.5. Municipal Code Chapter 17.16, *Industrial Zones*, defines permitted uses and development standards for industrial zones within Lancaster. According to Section 17.16.040, *Permitted Uses – I Zones*, permitted LI zone uses include Automobile, Boat, Equipment, Motorcycle, Truck, Tractor, Service, Repair, Accessories and Parts; Building Trades and Related Uses; Communication Facilities and Services, Public and Private; Manufacturing; Public Safety Facilities and Services; Public Services and Utilities; Research and Development; and Warehousing, among others. Further, it is acknowledged that commercial cannabis uses (e.g., cultivation, manufacturing, distribution, retail sales, delivery, and testing laboratories) are permitted within LI zones in accordance with Municipal Code Chapter 17.43, *Commercial Cannabis Activity*. Anticipated City discretionary approvals for this alternative include a General Plan Amendment and Zone Change.

The following discussion evaluates the potential environmental impacts associated with the Light Industrial Rezone Alternative, as compared to impacts from the proposed project.

IMPACT COMPARISON TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

Land Use and Planning

As stated, the proposed overlay zone would result in less than significant impacts with regards to land use and planning and would be consistent with applicable land use planning policies, including the General Plan, Municipal Code, and SCAG's 2020-2045 RTP/SCS. Under the Light Industrial Rezone Alternative, the overlay zone would not be adopted, and the project site would instead be redesignated and rezoned to Light Industrial. Thus, a General Plan Amendment and Zone Change would be required. Existing rural residential uses on-site would become legal non-conforming uses. It is anticipated that future light industrial uses permitted under Municipal Code Section 17.16.040, *Permitted Uses – I Zones*, would be developed and no future residential uses (currently permitted under the project site's RR-2.5 and R-7,000 zones) would be permitted. This alternative would allow similar light industrial uses that the proposed overlay zone would permit. It is noted that commercial cannabis uses would also be permitted under this alternative, which would not be allowed under the proposed overlay zone. This alternative also would result in a loss of a substantial area within the City for rural residential development, which could conflict with General Plan policies. Specifically, this alternative would not, to the extent of the proposed project, maintain an adequate inventory of land for residential, commercial, employment, quasi-public, public and open space uses (General Plan Policy 17.1.1), provide sufficient land to accommodate a variety of housing types (General Plan Policy



17.1.2), or encourage development that is compatible with the City's designated rural and non-urban areas (General Plan Policy 18.1.2). As such, this alternative would be environmentally inferior.

Aesthetics/Light and Glare

Similar to the proposed project, this alternative would allow light industrial uses on the project site. Similar light industrial development standards would apply to future light industrial projects under the proposed overlay zone and this Light Industrial Rezone Alternative. Future developments would be required to comply with applicable Municipal Code requirements governing scenic quality and light and glare. Thus, this alternative would result in similar less than significant impacts in this regard and would be neither environmentally superior nor inferior.

Agriculture and Forestry Resources

As shown on Exhibit 5.3-1, *Important Farmlands within the Project Site*, important farmlands are mapped throughout the project site. Thus, the proposed project and this alternative both have the potential to convert important farmland to non-agricultural uses (i.e., light industrial). Overall, impacts would be similarly less than significant, and this alternative would be neither environmentally superior nor inferior.

Biological Resources

Similar to the proposed project, this alternative would allow future light industrial development on the project site. Thus, future light industrial projects developed under either scenario have the same potential to impact special-status species, sensitive habitat, and/or jurisdictional resources. Impacts would be similarly less than significant in this regard, and this alternative would be neither environmentally superior nor inferior.

Tribal and Cultural Resources

The project site would remain the same under both scenarios. Thus, the potential for future light industrial projects to adversely impact previously unknown and undiscovered cultural or tribal cultural resources on a given project site would be similar. This alternative would result in similar less than significant impacts in this regard and would be neither environmentally superior nor inferior.

Geology and Soils

Future light industrial developments on the project site under the proposed East Side Overlay Zone or Light Industrial Rezone Alternative would result in similar impacts to geology and soils given that the allowed uses would be similar, and the project site would remain the same. This alternative would result in similar less than significant impacts in this regard and would be neither environmentally superior nor inferior.



Hydrology and Water Quality

While this alternative would redesignate and rezone the project site to entirely Light Industrial, the anticipated light industrial uses would be similar. Thus, potential impacts to hydrology and water quality impacts would be the same and further evaluated under separate environmental review. This alternative would be neither environmentally superior nor inferior.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Similar light industrial uses would be permitted under the proposed project and this alternative. Therefore, impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials would be similar under both scenarios and result in less than significant impacts. This alternative would be neither environmentally superior nor inferior.

Population and Housing

Under this alternative, the existing NU and UR land use designations would be redesignated to LI, and the existing RR-2.5 and R-7,000 zoning would be rezoned to LI. Thus, no residential development would be permitted on-site under this alternative. The proposed overlay zone would still allow for future residential development based on the underlying RR-2.5 and R-7,000 zoning. Thus, this alternative would remove the potential for future residential development and associated population and housing growth. The project's less than significant impacts in this regard would not occur, and this alternative would be environmentally superior.

Public Services and Recreation

Similar light industrial uses would be permitted under the proposed overlay zone and this alternative. Thus, potential impacts to public services and recreation would be the same and further evaluated under separate environmental review. This alternative would be neither environmentally superior nor inferior.

Utilities and Service Systems

As stated, this alternative would allow similar light industrial uses as the proposed project. Thus, construction and operational impacts to utilities and service systems, including water, wastewater, storm drains, and solid waste, would be similar to the proposed project. This alternative would be neither environmentally superior nor inferior.

Transportation

While the land use mechanism utilized to allow light industrial development on-site is different (i.e., an overlay zone under the proposed project and a rezone under this alternative), the anticipated light industrial uses would be similar. Thus, impacts with regards to conflicting with a program plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, increasing vehicle miles traveled, substantially increasing hazards due to a geometric design feature or incompatible uses, or resulting in inadequate



emergency access would be similar. Specifically, the project's reduced VMT impacts would similarly occur under this alternative. Thus, the Light Industrial Rezone Alternative would be neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed project.

Air Quality

Both the proposed overlay zone and Light Industrial Rezone Alternative would allow similar light industrial developments on the project site. Therefore, future construction and operational air quality impacts associated with such developments would be similar and evaluated under separate environmental review. Thus, this alternative would result in similar less than significant impacts and would be neither environmentally superior nor inferior.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

As stated, similar light industrial developments would be permitted under the proposed project and this alternative. Therefore, GHG emissions generated during construction and operations would also be similar and evaluated under separate environmental review at a later date. Overall, this alternative would be neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed project.

Energy

Energy consumption from construction and operational activities of future light industrial developments would be similar under the proposed project and this alternative. Thus, the project's less than significant impacts would also occur. This alternative would be neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed project.

Noise

This alternative would allow similar light industrial uses to develop on the project site as the proposed overlay zone. Thus, construction and operational noise impacts associated with such uses would be similar under both scenarios and be evaluated under separate environmental review at a later date. Overall, the project's less than significant noise impacts would also occur, and this alternative would be neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed project.

RELATIONSHIP TO THE PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The Light Industrial Rezone Alternative would achieve the project's basic objectives but not to the extent of the proposed project; refer to Table 7-2, *Light Industrial Rezone Alternative and Project Objectives*.



**Table 7-2
Light Industrial Rezone Alternative and Project Objectives**

Project Objective	Discussion
1. Increase flexibility in allowed uses and development potential in the eastern portion of Lancaster beyond currently allowed uses under the RR-2.5 (Rural Residential, 1 du/ac) zone.	The Light Industrial Rezone Alternative would redesignate and rezone the entire project site to Light Industrial and thus, would increase flexibility in allowed uses in the eastern portion of Lancaster. However, this alternative would remove the existing RR-2.5 zone on-site and thus, would eliminate the flexibility for future rural residential development to also occur in the area. Thus, this alternative would only partially meet Project Objective 1.
2. Incentivize new light industrial development to occur in the underutilized eastern portion of the City.	This alternative would meet Project Objective 2 and incentivize new light industrial development to occur in the underutilized eastern portion of the City by redesignating and rezoning the site to Light Industrial.
3. Encourage new development in Lancaster that provides economic benefits to the City and its residents.	This alternative would encourage new light industrial development to occur in the project area and therefore, provide economic benefits to the City and its residents. The Light Industrial Rezone Alternative would meet Project Objective 3.
4. Ensure that a variety of sites are available for a diversity of light industrial users.	This alternative would open the eastern portion of Lancaster to future light industrial development and thus, would meet Project Objective 4.
5. Provide light industrial-based employment-generating lands which are highly accessible and compatible with other uses in the community.	As stated, the Light Industrial Rezone Alternative would allow light industrial development in the eastern portion of Lancaster and thereby provide industrial-base employment-generating lands. This alternative would meet Project Objective 5.

7.6 ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

Table 7-3, *Comparison of Alternatives*, summarizes the comparative analysis presented above (i.e., the alternatives compared to the proposed project).

**Table 7-3
Comparison of Alternatives**

Sections	No Project/Existing Zoning Alternative	Light Industrial Rezone Alternative
Land Use and Planning	▼	▲
Aesthetics/Light and Glare	▼	=
Agriculture and Forestry Resources	▼	=
Biological Resources	▼	=
Tribal and Cultural Resources	▼	=
Geology and Soils	▼	=
Hydrology and Water Quality	▼	=
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	▼	=
Population and Housing	▲	▼
Public Services and Recreation	▲	=
Utilities and Service Systems	▼	=
Transportation	▲	=



**Table 7-3 [cont'd]
Comparison of Alternatives**

Sections	No Project/Existing Zoning Alternative	Light Industrial Rezone Alternative
Air Quality	▼	=
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	▼	=
Energy	▼	=
Noise	▼	=
▲ Indicates an impact that is greater than the proposed project (environmentally inferior). ▼ Indicates an impact that is less than the proposed project (environmentally superior). = Indicates an impact that is equal to the proposed project (neither environmentally superior nor inferior).		

Review of Table 7-3 indicates the No Project/Existing Zoning Alternative is the environmentally superior alternative, as it would avoid or lessen most of the project’s environmental impacts. According to *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.6(e), “if the environmentally superior alternative is the ‘no project’ alternative, the EIR shall also identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives.” Accordingly, the Light Industrial Rezone Alternative is considered environmentally superior to the proposed project. The Light Industrial Rezone Alternative would be environmentally superior to the proposed project with regards to population and housing, environmentally inferior to the project with regards to land use and planning, and result in similar environmental impacts to the remaining topical areas; refer to Table 7-3.

The Light Industrial Rezone Alternative would redesignate and rezone the entire project site to Light Industrial and thus, would increase flexibility in allowed uses in the eastern portion of Lancaster. However, this alternative would remove the existing RR-2.5 zone on-site and thus, would eliminate the flexibility for future rural residential development to also occur in the area. Thus, this alternative would only partially meet Project Objective 1.

This alternative would meet the remaining project objectives. Specifically, this alternative would incentivize new light industrial development to occur in the underutilized eastern portion of the City (Project Objective 2), encourage new light industrial development that would provide economic benefits to the City and its residents (Project Objective 3), open the eastern portion of Lancaster to future light industrial users (Project Objective 4), and increase industrial-base employment-generating lands (Project Objective 5).

Overall, the Light Industrial Rezone Alternative would achieve the project’s basic objectives but not to the extent of the proposed project.



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8.0 Effects Found Not To Be Significant



8.0 EFFECTS FOUND NOT TO BE SIGNIFICANT

During preparation of this EIR, the City of Lancaster (City) conducted an analysis of the proposed project's effect on specific environmental topic areas, included as part of the Environmental Checklist form presented in *CEQA Guidelines* Appendix G. Through the course of this evaluation, certain impacts were identified as “less than significant” or “no impact” due to the inability of a project of this scope to yield such impacts or the absence of project characteristics producing effects of this type. These effects are not required to be included in the EIR's primary environmental analysis sections (Section 5.1 through 5.16). In accordance with *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15128, the following discussion includes a brief description of potential impacts found to be less than significant or result in no impact. The lettered analyses under each topical area directly correspond to their order in *CEQA Guidelines* Appendix G.

AESTHETICS. *Would the project:*

- b) *Substantially damage scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State scenic highway?*

No Impact. According to the California Department of Transportation's California State Scenic Highway System Map, there are no officially designated or eligible State scenic highways within or near the City.¹ The nearest designated State scenic highway is State Route 2 in the San Gabriel Mountains, located approximately 22 miles south of the City. Additionally, there are no priority scenic drives designated by the County of Los Angeles' *Antelope Valley Area Plan* located within or adjacent to the project area.² Therefore, the proposed project would not be visible from a State scenic highway, and no impact would occur.

AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES. *In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest*

¹ California Department of Transportation, *Scenic Highways*, <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/design/lap-landscape-architecture-and-community-livability/lap-liv-i-scenic-highways>, accessed June 14, 2022.

² Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, *Antelope Valley Area Plan, Map 4.2 Antelope Valley Scenic Drives*, <https://planning.lacounty.gov/tnc/documents/>, accessed June 14, 2022.



Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:

b) *Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?*

No Impact. The City does not have an existing zoning district for agricultural use. Additionally, according to the California Department of Conservation, there are no Williamson Act contracts in effect within or near the City.³ Thus, project implementation would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract. No impact would occur in this regard.

c) *Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?*

No Impact. The City does not have existing zoning districts for forest land, timberland, or timberland production. Thus, project implementation would not result in the rezoning of forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production. No impact would occur in this regard.

d) *Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?*

No Impact. Refer to response to Agriculture and Forestry Resources (c).

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES. *Would the project:*

e) *Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?*

Less Than Significant Impact. Municipal Code Chapter 15.66, *Biological Impact Fee*, establishes a biological impact fee to mitigate long-term incremental impacts of new development on biological resources on a regional basis. Specifically, the fee applies to all new development on vacant land which has not been previously developed.

The proposed East Side Overlay Zone is located in an area consisting of scattered rural development predominantly surrounded by agricultural use and vacant, undeveloped land. As such, future light industrial development associated with the overlay zone would be required to comply with Municipal Code Chapter 15.66, *Biological Impact Fee*, where applicable. Compliance with existing regulatory requirements related to the protection of biological resources would reduce project-related impacts to less than significant levels.

³ California Department of Conservation, *California Important Farmland Finder*, <https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/DLRP/CIFF/>, accessed July 26, 2022.



- f) *Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan?*

No Impact. The West Mojave Plan (WMP) is a Natural Community Conservation Plan/Habitat Conservation Plan (NCCP/HCP) prepared by the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) which covers approximately 9.3 million acres in the western portion of the Mojave Desert, including parts of San Bernardino, Los Angeles, Kern, and Inyo Counties. The WMP provides a comprehensive strategy for conserving and protecting nearly 100 sensitive plants and animals and the natural communities which they inhabit. However, no other agencies adopted the HCP proposed in the WMP to cover their jurisdictions, including the City of Lancaster. Thus, the adopted plan only applies to BLM lands.

The proposed project is located within the City's jurisdiction. Given that the WMP only governs BLM lands, the project would not conflict with the provisions of the WMP, and no impact would occur in this regard.

CULTURAL RESOURCES. *Would the project:*

- c) *Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?*

Less Than Significant Impact. Due to the level of past disturbance within the project site, it is not anticipated that human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries, would be encountered during earth removal or ground-disturbing activities. Nonetheless, if human remains are found, those remains would require proper treatment, in accordance with applicable laws. State of California Public Resources Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 through 7055 describe the general provisions for human remains. Specifically, Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 describes the requirements if any human remains are accidentally discovered during excavation of a site. As required by State law, the requirements and procedures set forth in Section 5097.98 of the California Public Resources Code would be implemented, including notification of the County Coroner, notification of the Native American Heritage Commission, and consultation with the individual identified by the Native American Heritage Commission to be the most likely descendant. If human remains are found during excavation, excavation must stop near the find and any area that is reasonably suspected to overlay adjacent remains until the County Coroner has been called out, the remains have been investigated, and appropriate recommendations have been made for the treatment and disposition of the remains. Following compliance with the aforementioned regulations, impacts related to the disturbance of human remains are less than significant.

GEOLOGY AND SOILS. *Would the project:*

- a)(i) *Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault?*



No Impact. The City, like the rest of Southern California, is located within a seismically active margin between the North American and Pacific tectonic plates. Faults that have historically produced earthquakes or show evidence of movement within the past 11,000 years are known as “active faults.” According to the California Geological Survey, no known active faults cross the City and no areas of the City are located within a currently designated Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone. The project site is approximately seven miles from the San Andres Fault. Additionally, the Plan for Public Health and Safety in the General Plan acknowledges impacts related to fault rupture within Lancaster and provides goals, objectives, policies, and specific actions to reduce seismic impacts to acceptable levels. Further, future development within the project site would be required to comply with federal and State laws, the City’s Building and Zoning Codes, and the requirements identified in the General Plan’s Plan for Public Health and Safety. Therefore, due to the distance of the San Andres Fault from the project site and the adherence to federal, State, and local regulations, the potential for surface rupture of a known active fault is considered very low. No impact would occur.

a)(iv) *Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides?*

No Impact. As previously discussed, landslides, slope failures, and mudflows of earth materials generally occur where slopes are steep and/or the earth materials are too weak to support themselves. Earthquake-induced landslides may also occur due to seismic ground shaking. However, only the southwest areas within the City directly below the north slopes of Quartz Hill and along the slopes of Portal Ridge are susceptible to landslide hazards. Therefore, the project site does not have the potential for earthquake induced landslides. As such, project implementation would not expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides. No impact would occur.

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS. *Would the project:*

e) *For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?*

No Impact. The Palmdale Regional Airport, located at 41000 20th Street East in the City of Palmdale, is located within two miles of the project site. However, the Palmdale Regional Airport is not currently operational. As such, the proposed project would not result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area. No impacts would occur in this regard.

g) *Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?*

No Impact. Refer to response to Wildfire (a), below.



LAND USE AND PLANNING. *Would the project:*

- a) *Physically divide an established community?*

No Impact. The parcels within the East Side Overlay Zone comprise scattered areas of rural development predominantly surrounded by agricultural use and vacant, undeveloped land. Due to the scattered nature of rural development, there are no cohesive, consolidated communities established in the project area. Additionally, the proposed overlay zone would not directly involve the construction of new development. Following adoption of the East Side Overlay Zone, any future development projects would be required to undergo separate CEQA environmental review, as well as site plan and design review by the City, as applicable, to ensure that projects would not disrupt access to or between land uses or result in permanent closures of streets or sidewalks that could physically divide established communities. As such, the project would not physically divide an established community, and no impacts would occur in this regard.

MINERAL RESOURCES. *Would the project:*

- a) *Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the State?*

No Impact. According to the California Department of Conservation, no active mining operations currently occur within the project site or entire City.⁴ As such, project implementation would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the State's residents. No impact would occur in this regard.

- b) *Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?*

No Impact. Refer to response to Mineral Resources (a). No locally-important mineral resource recovery sites are located within the project site. Thus, project implementation would not result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site and no impact would occur.

NOISE. *Would the project:*

- c) *For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?*

No Impact. The Palmdale Regional Airport, located at 41000 20th Street East in the City of Palmdale, is located within two miles of the project site. However, the Palmdale Regional Airport is not currently operational. The General William J. Fox Field Airport is located approximately nine miles northwest

⁴ California Department of Conservation Division of Mine Reclamation, *Mines Online*, <https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/mol/index.html>, accessed July 26, 2022.



of the project site at 4725 William J. Barnes Avenue. Thus, the project would not expose people to excessive noise levels. No impact would occur in this regard.

POPULATION AND HOUSING. *Would the project:*

- b) *Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?*

No Impact. Although there are existing rural residences within the project site, the majority of the project site consists of either agricultural use or vacant/undeveloped land. The proposed East Side Overlay Zone does not propose any new development that could displace existing residences. All future development associated with the proposed overlay zone would be required to undergo project-level environmental review under CEQA on a case-by-case basis. No impacts would occur in this regard.

WILDFIRE. *If located in or near State Responsibility Areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:*

- a) *Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?*

No Impact. According to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's *Los Angeles County Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones in SRA*, the entire City, including the project site, is not located in or near a State Responsibility Area (SRA).⁵ Further, according to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's *Los Angeles County Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones in LRA*, the nearest Local Responsibility Area (LRA) is situated greater than 0.5-mile south, in the City of Palmdale.⁶ As such, future development in the proposed overlay zone would not be located in or near any very high fire hazard severity zones and no impact would occur in this regard.

- b) *Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?*

No Impact. Refer to response to Wildfire (a).

- c) *Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?*

No Impact. Refer to response to Wildfire (a).

⁵ California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, *Los Angeles County Fire Hazard Severity Zones in SRA*, November 7, 2007, https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/media/6705/fhszs_map19.pdf, accessed July 26, 2022.

⁶ California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, *Los Angeles County Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones in LRA, As Recommended by CAL FIRE*, <https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/media/7280/losangelescounty.pdf>, accessed July 26, 2022.



- d) *Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?*

No Impact. Refer to response to Wildfire (a).



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9.0 Organizations and Persons Consulted



9.0 ORGANIZATIONS AND PERSONS CONSULTED

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