INITIAL STUDY FOR:

COUNTY OF SAN

BERNARDINO

2008-2014

HOUSING

ELEMENT

prepared for:

COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO

Contact:
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THE PLANNING CENTER|DC&E

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AUGUST 2013

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1. Introduction

San Bernardino County is proposing an update to the current Housing Element of its General Plan. The Housing Element is one of the seven General Plan Elements mandated by the State of California, as articulated in Sections 65580 to 65589.8 of the California Government Code. To comply with state law, San Bernardino County prepares a housing element in conjunction with the release of the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) prepared by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). The San Bernardino County Housing Element must contain goals, policies, and programs to facilitate the development, improvement, and preservation of housing.

State law prescribes the scope and content of the housing element pursuant to Section 65583 of the California Government Codes. The Housing Element provides an assessment of housing needs, an analysis of constraints to meeting housing needs, an analysis of resources to addressing the RHNA, and a series of goals, objectives, and programs that directly address the housing needs of San Bernardino County residents. As the Housing Element is only one facet of the County's overall planning program; the goals, policies, and programs of the Housing Element must also be consistent with other chapters of the County's comprehensive General Plan.

San Bernardino County, as Lead Agency for the proposed update to the current Housing Element, is responsible for preparing environmental documentation in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), as amended, to determine if approval of the discretionary actions requested could have a significant impact on the environment. This Initial Study provides San Bernardino County with information to document potential impacts of the proposed 2008-2014 Housing Element.

1.1 PROJECT LOCATION

San Bernardino County is located in southern California and encompasses a total of 20,000 square miles, making it the largest county in the United States. As shown in Figure 1, *Regional Location*, the County is bounded on the north by Inyo County and on the south by Riverside County. It is bordered on the west by both Kern and Los Angeles Counties, and extends to the Arizona and Nevada state boundaries in the east. The Housing Element of the County of San Bernardino's General Plan includes only the unincorporated communities within the County.

1.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

1.2.1 Existing Land Use

The vast majority of the land within San Bernardino County is not unincorporated and thus not within the scope of the Housing Element. Over 82 percent of the land within the County is owned by governmental (federal or state agencies) or tribal agencies and is thus not available for private development. Incorporated cities account for another 4 percent of County land, leaving only 14 percent or approximately 2,800 square miles of unincorporated communities. Of that total, approximately 1,400 acres are zoned multiple-family (RM). As of 2011, 3.5 percent of the county or 700 remaining square miles are vacant and zoned for residential development.

The General Plan designates 56 percent of the total unincorporated County area as Resource Conservation (RC).This land use designation covers over 1million acres, or about 1,500 square miles of land. Most of the land within this designation is publicly owned (federal and state) and includes national parks, military bases, conservation areas, and lands owned by other federal and state agencies. Approximately 38 percent of the remaining land is designated for residential land uses. The remaining 6 percent are for Agricultural, Industrial, Floodway, Commercial, Institutional, and Specific Plan land use designations.

1.2.2 Surrounding Land Use

The unincorporated communities of San Bernardino County are not contiguous, but instead scattered throughout the County and surrounded by either undeveloped governmental land or incorporated cities. Undeveloped government land consisting primarily of military bases surrounds many of the unincorporated communities. Adjacent incorporated cities are more highly developed with a mix of residential, commercial, and industrial land uses. Undeveloped government land adjacent to unincorporated communities are shown in Figure 2, *Surrounding Land Use*s.

1.3 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The County of San Bernardino's General Plan Housing Element details the County's strategy for preserving the character of unincorporated communities; sets forth strategies to provide a broad range of housing opportunities for residents of all economic levels; and provides policy guidance for local decision making related to housing. The Housing Element provides the implementation strategies for effectively addressing the housing needs of the unincorporated communities of San Bernardino County from 2008 through 2014.

In previous decades, San Bernardino County was one of the fastest growing regions in the nations. The area has experienced a significant decline in development activity during the last decade, however, due in part to the national recession and downturn of

the housing market. Population growth within the unincorporated areas is generally substantially slower than surrounding incorporated areas because new development projects are typically annexed by an incorporated community as projects are proposed. Of critical concern is the preservation and development of housing options for all economic levels. The goals, policies, and programs within the Housing Element are designed to:

- Meet state-mandated regional housing needs goals
- Provide housing opportunities to accommodate social and economic diversity
- Preserve the rural character of the region
- Assist residents with special housing needs

The update to the County's General Plan Housing Element consists of a determination of housing needs and revisions to policies and programs necessary to address those needs. The Housing Element identifies adequate sites for potential residential development that could accommodate any unmet portion of the RHNA by 2014. The discretionary "project" for this Initial Study is the Housing Element, not the individual, subsequent housing development projects. This Initial Study, does, however, provide an overall evaluation of the impacts that could occur upon implementation of the Housing Element. Each individual development project or General Plan Update required to implement the Housing Element will be subject to its own subsequent review and processing under CEQA.

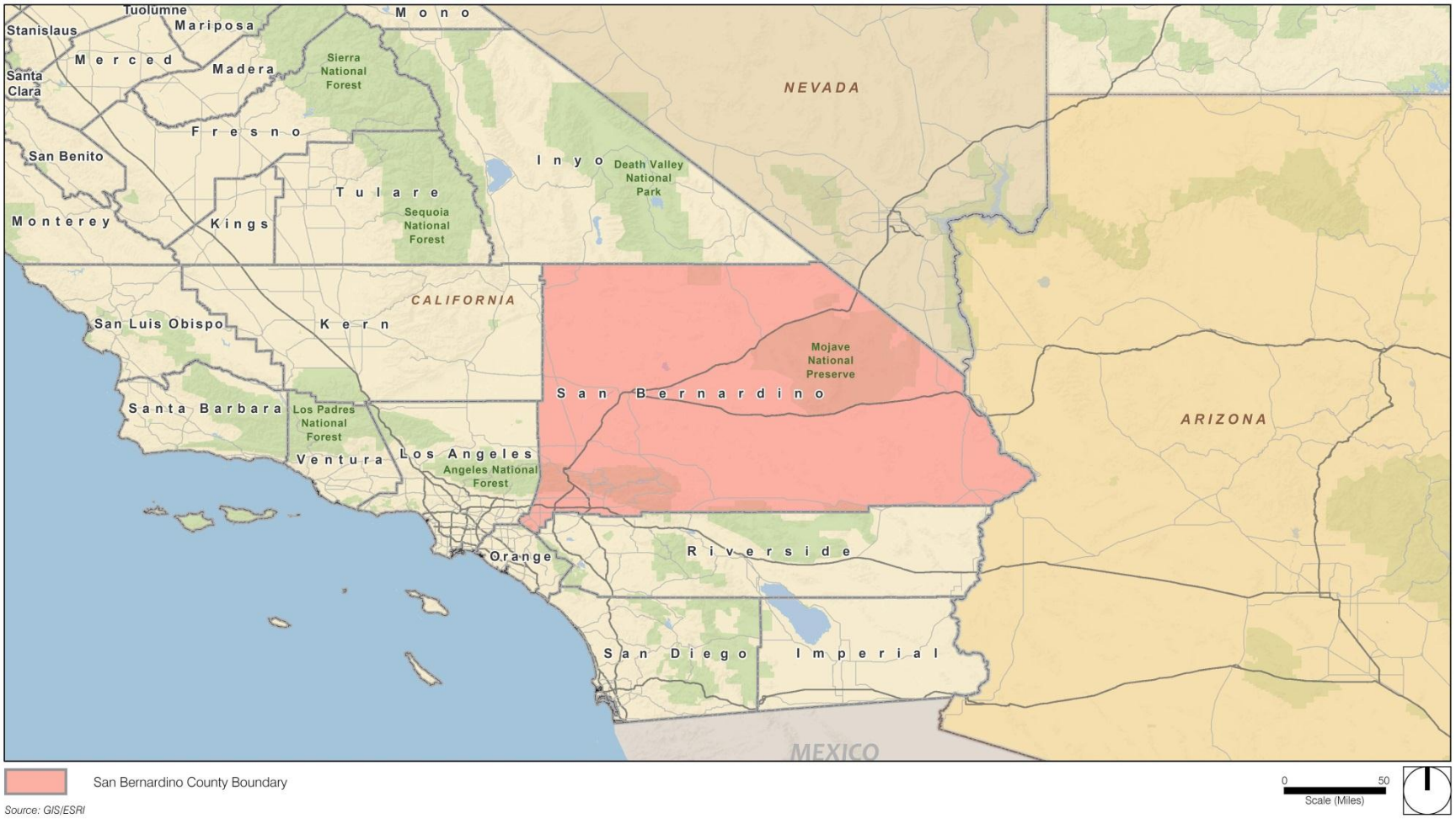

Figure 1 Regional Location

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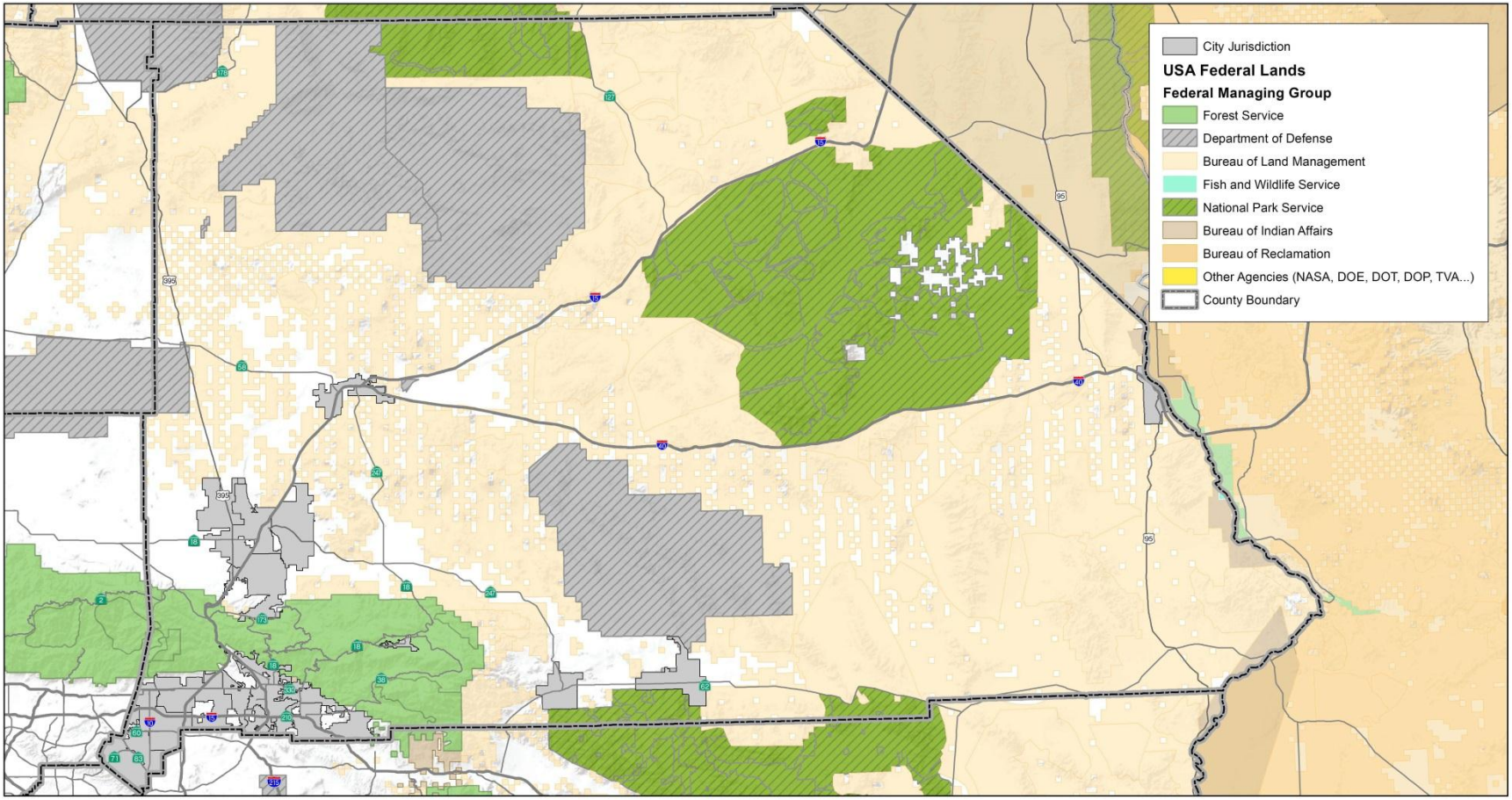

Source: GIS/ESRI

Figure 2 Surrounding Land Uses

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1.3.1 General Plan Consistency

State law requires that a general plan be internally consistent. Goals, policies, and implementation measures in the General Plan elements must support and be consistent with one another. The County of San Bernardino's draft Housing Element builds upon the other seven elements in the General Plan and is consistent with the goals and policies set forth therein. The County will continue to maintain consistency between General Plan elements by ensuring that proposed changes in one element will be reflected in the other elements through amendments of the General Plan. The draft Housing Element is designed to serve as a policy document that bridges implementation plans with the goals and policies in the General Plan. The draft Housing Element provides a guiding framework for housing throughout the County, as well as specific implementation tools for the preservation and development of housing.

1.3.2 San Bernardino Housing Element

The San Bernardino County Housing Element contains goals, policies, and programs to facilitate the development, improvement, and preservation of housing within the County's unincorporated communities. The Housing Element's goals are:

- Provide a broad range of housing types in sufficient quantity, location, and affordability levels to meet the lifestyle needs of current and future residents, including those with special needs.

- Establish an efficient administrative process that recognizes the need for efficient and timely review of residential projects while also ensuring and valuing the need for quality design, environmental review, and planning.

- Promote neighborhoods that protect the health, safety, and welfare of the community, and enhance public and private efforts in maintaining, reinvesting in, and upgrading the existing housing stock.

- Assist in the development, maintenance, modernization, and preservation of affordable housing; provide assistance where feasible for residents to rent or purchase adequate housing in San Bernardino County.

- Encourage a diversity of housing products that respect and complement the topography, character, and lifestyle of the Mountain Region.

- Maintain residential land use patterns in the Desert Region that enhance and preserve the rural character valued by the residents of the region.

- Encourage a diversity of housing and neighborhood improvement and preservation strategies that will address the needs of residents living in County islands and spheres of influence.

- Ensure an integrated planning and monitoring system whereby housing, employment, environmental, and other program data are integrated in a cohesive manner to implement the County's housing vision.

1.3.3 *Regional Housing Needs Assessment*

SCAG prepares housing construction needs goals for each jurisdiction in Southern California as part of the RHNA. The RHNA is meant to allocate a "fair share" of the regions existing and forecasted housing needs to each individual jurisdiction. As set forth in state law, all local governments are required to demonstrate the housing development capacity necessary to accommodate that need. The County of San Bernardino's RHNA for the 2006-2014 planning period is 20,623 units. Within this housing production goal, the County must demonstrate capacity to accommodate five housing income and affordability goals: Extremely Low, Very Low, Low, Moderate, and Above Moderate. The County's RHNA is shown in Table 1 below, as well as Appendix 4A of the Housing Element.

Table 1
Regional Housing Needs Assessment 2006–2014

Household Income/Affordability Group	***Production Goal***	***Percentage***
Extremely Low (0-30% of median)	2,401	12%
Very Low (30–50% of median)	2,401	12%
Low (51–80% of median)	3,324	16%
Moderate (81–120% of median)	3,899	18%
Above Moderate (120% above median)	8,598	42%
Total	**20,623**	**100%**

Source: Southern California Association of Governments 2007.

The California Department of Housing and Community Development allows jurisdictions to obtain construction credits toward its RHNA housing goals in three ways; housing construction, available land for housing, and housing preservation. The County of San Bernardino will meet its RHNA production goal through housing construction and available land for housing.

Housing Construction

The County of San Bernardino may obtain construction credits for any housing units built during the RHNA planning period. Housing units built since January 1, 2006, as

well as any pending projects expected to be completed by 2014 are eligible. Between 2006 and 2012, 4,483 new housing units were built within unincorporated San Bernardino County. An additional 2,222 housing units of planned development under the Rosena Ranch project will be completed by 2014. In total, the County may count 6,705 construction credits towards its RHNA goals. Constructed and planned housing units by household income affordability level, are town in Table 2, *Built and Approved Housing Units*, below.

Table 2
Built and Approved Housing Units

Household Income/Affordability Group	***Housing Units Built 2006-2012***	***Rosena Ranch Planned Housing Units***	***Total Housing Units by 2014***
Extremely Low (0-30% of median)	0	0	**0**
Very Low (30–50% of median)	355	0	**355**
Low (51–80% of median)	730	219	**949**
Moderate (81–120% of median)	1,376	1,468	**2,844**
Above Moderate (120% above median)	2,022	535	**2,557**

Source: County of San Bernardino Assessor, 2006–2012.

Available Land for Housing

Jurisdictions may obtain construction credits towards their RHNA goals by identifying vacant or underutilized sites for future housing development. To count towards housing need production goals, such sites must have adequate zoning, development standards, services, infrastructure, and public facilities such that housing could be built during the planning period. If underutilized sites are used, the housing element must also demonstrate the feasibility of these sites to redevelop into higher density residential uses. Land selected for inclusion toward the RHNA must also be free from topographical or environmental constraints that could preclude its development during the 2008-2014 planning period.

The Housing Element included a parcel-level inventory of land that could accommodate its RHNA. The land inventory included only vacant land currently zoned for Rural Living (RL), Residential Single (RS), or Residential Multi-Family (RM). Land that was not within a sphere of influence, community plan area, or census-designated place was assumed to have potentially inadequate services and infrastructure and was not included. Land restricted by earthquake or severe flood hazards, sensitive habitat, prime farmland, slopes in excess of 20 percent was assumed not developable during the planning

period and therefore excluded from the analysis. Parcels smaller than the minimum lot size requirement or lacking adequate water or sewer infrastructure were also excluded from the inventory.

Table 3, *Development Potential Summary*, summarizes the residential development potential, broken down by affordability level, within each of the regional statistical areas identified in the Housing Element. Shown below, the Vacant Land Inventory identifies the capacity to accommodate 63,649 new housing units at the following affordability levels: 10,055 low income units, 16,253 moderate income units, and 37,341 above moderate income units. It is important to note that this development capacity can be accommodated at existing zoning and development standards without changes to the general plan.

The affordability of the proposed housing units is determined by calculating the prior sales prices and rents of housing units built in different RSAs from 2006 through 2012, and then extrapolating the affordability patterns to vacant land selected for inclusion in the land inventory.

Table 3
Residential Development Potential Summary

	Affordability Levels		
	Lower Income	***Moderate Income***	***Above Moderate Income***
RSA 28	16	230	439
RSA 29	54	540	1,031
RSA 30	269	371	1,024
RSA 31	1,730	2,536	4,807
RSA 32	5,567	8,842	20,764
RSA 33	2,345	3,626	9,021
RSA 34	74	108	255
Total Units	**10,055**	**16,253**	**37,341**

Source: The Planning Center|DC&E, 2012.

Summary of Regional Housing Need Assessment Credits

The previously described housing production and development potential will allow San Bernardino County to meet the requirements of the RHNA. A summary of housing unit credits compared to the County's RHNA planning goal is shown in Table 4, *Regional Housing Need Assessment Summary*, below.

The housing development potential identified by the Housing Element exceeds the RHNA housing unit requirement less the units of housing construction for all affordability

levels. The County of San Bernardino has adequate capacity to meet RHNA housing goals under current zoning and conditions. Figure 3, *Residential Sites Identified to Address the RHNA*, shows the location of sites identified for residential development credited to the RHNA.

Table 4
Regional Housing Need Assessment Summary

	Affordability Income Level		
Projects	***Lower***	***Moderate***	***Above Moderate***
RHNA 2006-2014 Requirement[1]	8,126[4]	3,899	8,598
Housing Construction[2]	1,304[5]	2,844	2,557
Remaining RHNA Requirement	6,822	1,055	6,041
Housing Development Potential[3]	10,055	16,253	37,341
Surplus Development Potential	3,233	15,198	31,300

[1] Source: Southern California Association of Governments 2007.
[2] Source: County of San Bernardino Assessor, 2006–2012.
[3] Source: The Planning Center|DC&E, 2012.
[4] Sum of RHNA goals for extremely low (2,401), very low (2,401), and low (3,324) income levels.
[5] Sum of housing construction for extremely low (2,401), very low (2,401), and low (3,324) income levels.

1.4 GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING

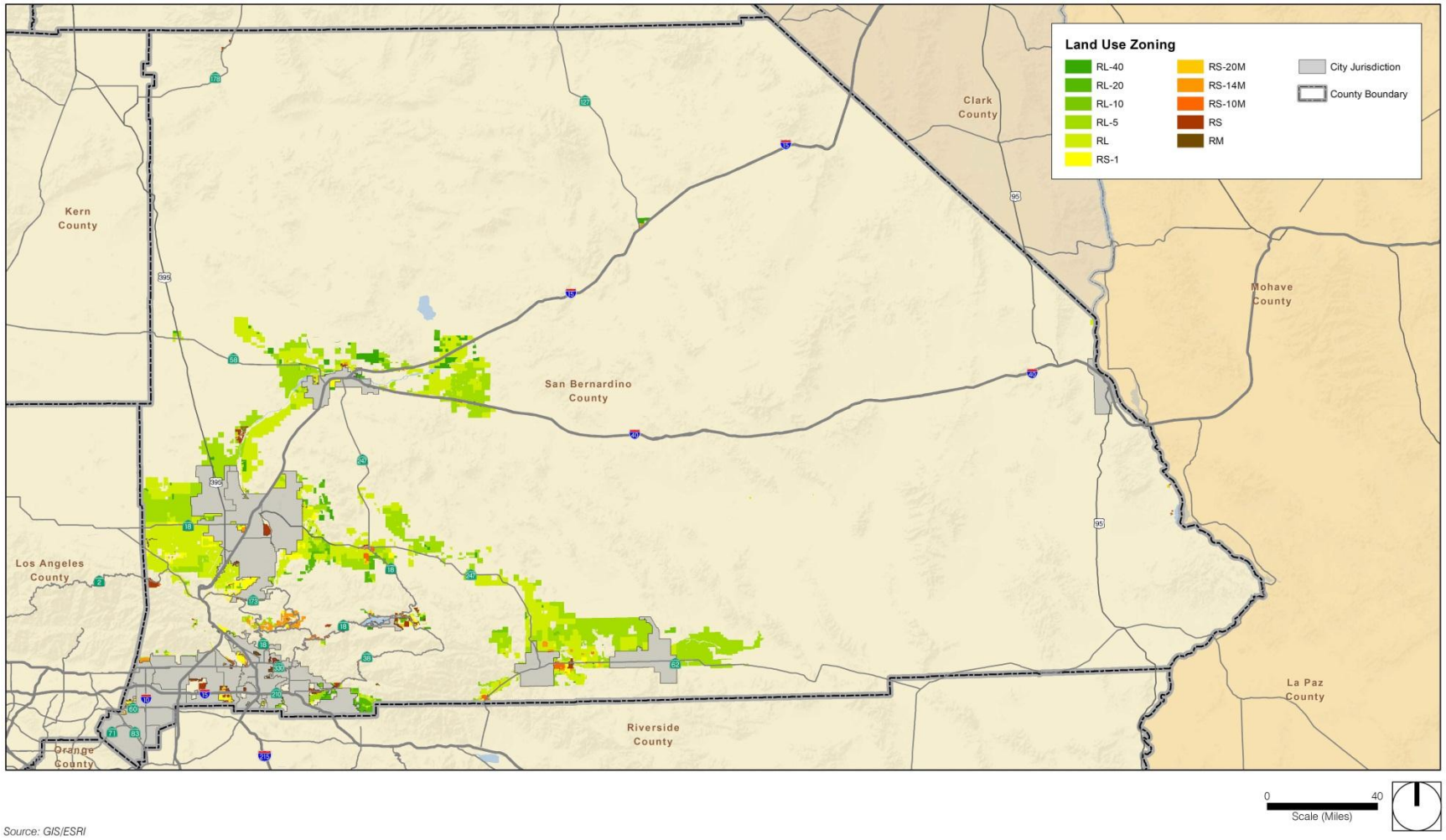
The County of San Bernardino General Plan designates 18 land use zoning districts: Resource Conservation (RC), Agriculture (AG), Rural Living (RL), Single Residential (RS), Multiple Residential (RM), Office Commercial (CO), Neighborhood Commercial (CN), Rural Commercial (CR), Highway Commercial (CH), General Commercial (CG), Service Commercial (CS), Community Industrial (IC), Regional Industrial (IR), Institutional (IN), Special Development (SD), Floodway (FW), Specific Plan (SP), and Open Space (OS).

The update to the County's General Plan Housing Element consists of an updated determination of housing needs within the County, as well as policies and programs necessary to address those needs. The Housing Element identifies adequate sites for potential residential development to meet RHNA planning goals. Each of these sites is currently zoned for Rural Living (RL), Single Residential (RS), or Multiple Residential

(RM) use. As such, implementation of the Housing Element does not require any changes to current land use or zoning within the County.

1.5 COUNTY ACTION REQUESTED

Approval of the County of San Bernardino 2008-2014 Housing Element and adoption of the Negative Declaration for compliance with CEQA by the County of San Bernardino.



Source: GIS/ESRI

Figure 3 Residential Sites Identified to Address the RHNA

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2. *Environmental Checklist*

2.1 *BACKGROUND*

1. **Project Title:** County of San Bernardino 2008-2014 Housing Element

2. **Lead Agency Name and Address:**
   County of San Bernardino
   Land Use Services Department
   385 N. Arrowhead Ave
   San Bernardino, CA 92415

3. **Contact Person and Phone Number:**
   Terri Rahhal, Planning Director
   909-387-4518

4. **Project Location:** County of San Bernardino (Countywide)

5. **Project Sponsor's Name and Address:**
   County of San Bernardino
   Land Use Services Department
   385 N. Arrowhead Ave
   San Bernardino, CA 92415

6. **General Plan Designation:**
   Implementation of the General Plan Housing Element as proposed would involve all residential and mixed-use General Plan land use designations within the County. Refer to Table 5.

7. **Zoning:**
   Implementation of the General Plan Housing Element as proposed would involve Rural Living (RL), Residential Single (RS), or Residential Multi-Family (RM) designated land.

8. **Description of Project:**
   The project consists of an update to the Housing Element of the County of San Bernardino General Plan (see detailed discussion under Section 1.3, *Project Description*, above).

9. **Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:**
The County of San Bernardino is surrounded by six other counties with various land uses. Surrounding land uses are shown in Figure 2 and discussed in Section 1.2.2, above.

10. **Other Public Agencies Whose Approval Is Required:**
No other public agencies have approval authority. The California Department of Housing and Community Development has authority to review and comment on the Housing Element.

2.2 ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact," as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

☐ Aesthetics	☐ Agricultural Resources	☐ Air Quality
☐ Biological Resources	☐ Cultural Resources	☐ Geology / Soils
☐ Hazards & Hazardous Materials	☐ Hydrology / Water Quality	☐ Land Use / Planning
☐ Mineral Resources	☐ Noise	☐ Population / Housing
☐ Public Services	☐ Recreation	☐ Transportation / Traffic
☐ Utilities / Service Systems	☐ Mandatory Findings of Significance	

2.3 EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

1) A brief explanation is required for all answers except "No Impact" answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors, as well as general standards (e.g., the project would not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).

2) All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.

3) Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.

4) "Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact." The lead

agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level.

5) Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063(c)(3)(D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:

   a) **Earlier Analysis Used.** Identify and state where they are available for review.

   b) **Impacts Adequately Addressed.** Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.

   c) **Mitigation Measures.** For effects that are "Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated," describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.

6) Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated. A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.

7) Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.

8) This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project's environmental effects in whatever format is selected.

9) The explanation of each issue should identify:

   a) the significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and

   b) the mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significant.

2.3.1 *Incorporation by Reference*

The Housing Element Update (the project) is a policy-level document that is consistent with existing San Bernardino County General Plan land use designations and densities. This Initial Study incorporates by reference all or portions of the San Bernardino County General Plan EIR and the technical documents that relate to the proposed project or provide additional information concerning the environmental setting of the proposed project. The information disclosed in this Initial Study is based on the following under the following California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) analyses, technical studies and/or planning documents:

- San Bernardino County General Plan, March 13, 2007
- Title 8 of the San Bernardino County Code, April 2007 (Development Code).
- General Plan EIR Draft EIR, September 2006
- General Plan EIR Final EIR, February 2007 (General Plan EIR)
- County of San Bernardino General Plan Amendment and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan, March 2011

This Negative Declaration incorporates by reference and tiers from these previously adopted CEQA analyses pursuant to CEQA Sections 21093-21094 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15183. Although the proposed project is intended to encourage and facilitate the development of housing through the 2008-2013 planning period, specific future projects are subject to regulations of the General Plan and applicable specific plans, community plans, performance standards and permitting processes of the Development Code and all mitigation measures contained in applicable CEQA documents.

Issues	***Potentially Significant Impact***	***Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated***	***Less Than Significant Impact***	***No Impact***
I. AESTHETICS. Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?			**X**	

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?			X	
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?			X	
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?			X	
II. AGRICULTURE AND FOREST 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 Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:				
a) 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?				X
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?				X

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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))?				X
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				X
e) 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?				X
III. AIR QUALITY. Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?			X	
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?			X	
c) 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 (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?			X	

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?			X	
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?				X
IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES. Would the project:				
a) 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?			X	
b) 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?			X	
c) 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?			X	

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) 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?			X	
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?			X	
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?			X	
V. CULTURAL RESOURCES. Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?			X	
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?			X	
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?			X	
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?			X	

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS. Would the project:				
a) Expose people or structures to 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.			X	
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?			X	
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?			X	
iv) Landslides?				X
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?				X
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?			X	
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?			X	

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?			X	
VII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS. Would the project:				
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?			X	
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?			X	
VIII.HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS. Would the project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?			X	
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonable foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?			X	
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?			X	

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?			X	
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 for people residing or working in the project area?			X	
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?			X	
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?			X	
h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?			X	
IX. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY. Would the project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?			X	

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?			X	
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in a substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site			X	
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?			X	
e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?			X	
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?			X	

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?			X	
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?			X	
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?				X
j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?			X	

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
X. LAND USE AND PLANNING. Would the project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?				X
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?				X
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?			X	
XI. MINERAL RESOURCES. Would the project:				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be a value to the region and the residents of the state?				X
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?				X
XII. NOISE. Would the project result in:				
a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?			X	
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?			X	

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?			X	
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?			X	
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 expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?			X	
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?			X	
XIII. POPULATION AND HOUSING. Would the project result in:				
a) Induce substantial 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)?			X	
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X
XIV. PUBLIC SERVICES. Would the project 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:				
a) Fire protection?			X	
b) Police protection?			X	
c) Schools?			X	
d) Parks?			X	
e) Other public facilities?			X	
XV. RECREATION.				
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?			X	
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?			X	

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVI. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC. Would the project:				
a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?			X	
b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?			X	
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?			X	
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?			X	
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?			X	

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
f) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?			X	

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVII. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS. Would the project:				
a) Exceed waste water treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?			X	
b) Require or result in the construction of new water or waste water treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?			X	
c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?			X	
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources or are new or expanded entitlements needed?			X	
e) Result in a determination by the waste water 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?			X	
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?			X	

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?			X	
XVIII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE.				
a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?			X	
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)			X	
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?			X	

2.4 REFERENCES

San Bernardino, County of. 2007, March. General Plan.

San Bernardino, County of. 2007, April. Title 8 Development Code (Development Code).

San Bernardino, County of. 2007, February. Final Environmental Impact Report and Appendices, SCH #2005101038 (General Plan EIR).

San Bernardino, County of. 2011, September. General Plan Amendment and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan Final Supplemental Program Environmental Impact Report SCH No. 2005101038.

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3. *Environmental Analysis*

Section 2.3 provided a checklist of environmental impacts. This section provides an evaluation of the impact categories and questions contained in the checklist and identifies mitigation measures, if applicable.

3.1 AESTHETICS

a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

Less than Significant. The County of San Bernardino contains vast undeveloped tracts of land that offer significant scenic vistas. This vast County consists of three distinct geographic regions – the Mountains, the Valley, and the Desert. These diverse geographies not only vary by terrain but also in visual character. The three areas, combined, encompass all the unincorporated lands within the County.

The proposed project consists of an updated determination of housing needs within the County and revisions to policies and programs the County would use to address those needs. Intensification and redevelopment pressures are primarily in cities (not in unincorporated areas), so new housing opportunities are typically in the unincorporated area on vacant land. As of 2011, 3.5 percent of the county or 700 remaining square miles are vacant and zoned for residential development. The Housing Element includes only vacant land already zoned for Rural Living (RL), Residential Single (RS), or Residential Multi-Family (RM) in the Vacant Land Inventory. Future development of vacant land zoned for residential land uses has the potential to impact scenic vistas. However, any future residential development would be subject to CEQA review. Further, the County General Plan, Community Plans, and Development Code have several goals and policies and development standards relating to aesthetics. Any future development would be subject to all applicable policies and development standards.

While scenic visas are normally associated with daytime viewing, Residents of San Bernardino County consider night sky viewing and nighttime vistas as important aesthetic qualities. Due to the valued night sky conditions of desert and mountain residents, the County of San Bernardino has Ordinance 3900, known as the Night Sky Ordinance in place. The ordinance outlines specific standards relating to glare and outdoor lighting. Those standards are included in Sections 87.0920 and 87.0921 of the Development Code.

Adoption of the Housing Element would not itself impact scenic vistas. Compliance with Open Space Element policies and existing program-level and future project-level CEQA mitigation measures will reduce impacts. Impacts to police protection due to adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element would be less than significant. Therefore, the project would not create any significant impacts and no mitigation measures are necessary.

b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

Less than Significant. General Plan policy OS 5.3 states that a "scenic route" is a roadway that has scenic vistas and other scenic and aesthetic qualities that over time have been found to add beauty to the County. The policy further designates routes as scenic highways and applies all applicable policies to development on these routes.

Within the County, numerous interstate routes, state highways, county roads and roads on federal lands are either designated scenic highways or byways. The Rim of the World Highway is a Scenic Byway that has been designated by the United States Forest Service (USFS) and includes portions of SR-138, 18 and 38. The BLM has also designated a number of remote desert roadways as Back Country Byway, which is intended to alert people to their scenic quality. There are also a number of other scenic routes designated by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and a number of locally designated scenic routes that are subject to land use and aesthetic controls, including portions of I-15, I-40, and SR-395.

The Housing Element itself does not create physical residential growth but only identifies available sites for residential development during the 2008-2014 planning period. Residential development pursuant to the Housing Element would be subject to General Plan and Development Code policies designed to protect scenic resources.

General Plan Policy OS 7.2 provides that construction of roads into or across natural open space areas be limited in natural open space areas that require separation from human activity to preserve their function and value. Policy M/CO 2.3 requires the re-vegetation of any graded surface with suitable native drought- and fire-resistant planting in the Mountain Region, and similarly Policy M/CO 2.7 requires replanting of ground cover in denuded Mountain Region areas with vegetation. Policy D/CO 1.2 requires future land development practices in the Desert Region to be compatible with the existing topography and scenic vistas and to protect the natural vegetation, while Policy D/CO 1.3 requires retention of existing native vegetation for new development projects, particularly Joshua trees, Mojave yuccas and creosote rings, and other species.

In addition to these General Plan policy provisions, Section 82.19.040 (Development Criteria within Scenic Areas) of the Development Code relates specifically to preserving aesthetic or scenic areas within the county. Development criteria within scenic areas were established with the intent to provide development standards that will protect, preserve, and enhance the aesthetic resources of the county. Design considerations can be incorporated in many instances to allow development to coexist and not substantially interfere with the preservation of unique natural resources, roadside views, and scenic corridors. Similarly, Chapter 83.01 of the Development Code establishes uniform performance standards for development in the county that promotes compatibility with surrounding areas and land uses.

Adoption of the Housing Element would not itself impact scenic resources. Compliance with Open Space Element policies, Development Code, and existing program-level and future project-level CEQA mitigation measures will reduce impacts. Impacts to scenic resources due to adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element would be less than significant. Therefore, the project would not create any significant impacts and no mitigation measures are necessary.

c) **Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?**

Less than Significant. Refer to response 3.1b. The Housing Element itself does not create physical residential growth but only identifies available sites for residential development during the 2008-2014 planning period. The Housing Element includes only vacant land already zoned for Rural Living (RL), Residential Single (RS), or Residential Multi-Family (RM) in the Vacant Land Inventory to meet the RHNA. These sites have been previously zoned for residential development under existing General Plan and Zoning designations. Potential visual character impacts have been evaluated at a program or policy-level in the CEQA documents listed in Chapter 2. General Plan Open Space Element goals policies are intended to minimize visual impacts and retain aesthetic value of natural landforms throughout the Mountain, the Valley, and the Desert regions.

Compliance with the County's General Plan, Development Code, and any CEQA review would reduce potential impacts relating to degrading the visual character of future development sites or their surrounding area. Impacts associated with adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element would be less than significant.

d) **Create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?**

Less than Significant. New residential development in response to the growth anticipated during the planning horizon of this Housing Element update may slowly and incrementally change conditions of nighttime (i.e., valley, mountain, or desert) within the County. Continued development will incrementally increase ambient light and glare, and could incrementally degrade "dark skies" conditions. However, the amount of changes to nighttime views can be significantly reduced by following the goals, policies, and ordinances already in effect within the County General Plan, Community Plans, Development Code and County Night Sky Ordinance. Development Code Chapter 83.07 regulates lighting practices and systems that minimize light pollution, glare, and light trespass; conserves energy and resources while maintaining nighttime safety, visibility, utility, and productivity; and curtails the degradation of the nighttime visual environment.

Compliance with the County's General Plan, development standards, Night Sky Ordinance, and any CEQA review would reduce potential impacts relating to degrading

nighttime views. Impacts associated with adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element would be less than significant.

3.2 AGRICULTURE AND FOREST 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 Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:

a) **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?**

No Impact. The County prepared the land inventory in GIS and used the latest available data from internal and external databases. The inventory of suitable parcels for new housing excludes land restricted located on Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, and land zoned for residential agriculture.

The County General Plan includes policies and programs that address potential impacts to agricultural lands. For instance, Policy CO 6.3 states that preservation of prime and statewide important soils types, as well as areas exhibiting viable agricultural operations, will be considered an integral portion of the Open Space Element when reviewing development proposals. Associated CO 6.3 Program 2 states that in the case of commercially viable agricultural areas, land uses that are compatible with agriculture and maintain a list of compatible uses allowed within agricultural preserves are preferable. Policy D/CO 4.2 states that the conversion of agricultural land to nonagricultural uses is to be discouraged within the Desert Region of the county unless the proposed use can be demonstrated to be preferable in terms of economic development and resource conservation.

In addition, the County Development Code addresses potential impacts to agricultural lands. Chapter 82.03 mandates the land uses that are allowed within the agricultural and resource management land use zoning districts established by the General Plan, determines the type of planning permit/approval required for each use, and provides basic standards for site layout and building size. Chapter 82.08 provides for the creation of agricultural preserves in certain areas of the county as defined in the California Land Conservation Act of 1965 (Williamson Act).

No impact would occur.

b) **Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?**

No Impact. There are no Williamson Act contracts on any lands identified in the Vacant Land Inventory. In addition, all sites have existing residential zoning designations in the County's General Plan and the Development Code. Therefore, no conflicts with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract are anticipated. No impact would occur.

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 Housing Element includes only vacant land already zoned for Rural Living (RL), Residential Single (RS), or Residential Multi-Family (RM) in the Vacant Land Inventory. No impact would occur.

d) **Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?**

No Impact. All vacant sites identified in the Vacant Land Inventory (Appendix 4E) of the Housing Element) to meet the RHNA have existing residential zoning designations and are not located within forest land.

The General Plan includes policies and programs that address potential impacts to forest lands. For instance, Policy M/OS 1.6 addresses the forest lands of the Mountain Region by ensuring that undeveloped privately owned lands within the National Forest which are proposed to be transferred from federal ownership are considered for open space values and either retained by the U.S. Forest Service or otherwise preserved as permanent, public open space by the County or other public agencies. Similarly, Policy M/OS 1.2 states that the County will work with the U.S. Forest Service to explore land exchange opportunities that would provide additional areas for open space, recreational opportunities, and watershed protection; and offer the County the first right of refusal on lands available for exchange prior to being offered to the general public. Policy M/LU 1.20 requires the County to closely review development projects on private land adjacent to National Forest lands to ensure that development projects are capable of meeting all development requirements within the project boundaries or other non-federal land.

Furthermore, Policy M/CO 2.3 of the General Plan requires the re-vegetation of any graded surface with suitable native drought- and fire-resistant planting. Policy M/CO 1.7 encourages conservation and sound management of the mountain forest character and

requires the planting of native or drought-tolerant cultivar species, capable of surviving the mountain environment and climate.

The County Development Code addresses potential impacts to forest lands. For instance, Chapter 82.19 of the Development Code regulates timber harvesting within or adjacent to public rights-of-way to be limited to that which is necessary to maintain and enhance the quality of the forest. Chapter 83.10 regulates forest lands within the Mountain Region of the county.

Existing trees that are removed to accommodate development are required to be replaced according to recommendations of a forest conservation plan. The intent of Chapter 88.01 of the Development Code is to promote plant life within the county through appropriate management techniques, conserve the native plant life heritage, and regulate native plant and tree removal activity. Chapter 88.01 requires the issuance of a permit prior to the removal of regulated trees and plants.

Implementation of the above General Plan policies and Development Code provisions would ensure that the proposed project would not result in an increase in severity of forest area impacts beyond what was addressed in the General Plan EIR. Accordingly, the Housing Element update would not result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use and, therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

e) **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?**

No Impact. All vacant sites identified in the Vacant Land Inventory to meet the RHNA have existing residential zoning designations. There are no impacts associated with adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element.

3.3 AIR QUALITY

Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations.

a) **Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?**

Less than Significant. The County of San Bernardino is within the South Coast Air Basin (SoCAB) and the Mojave Desert Air Basin (MDAB). The southwest non-desert portions of the County are within the SoCAB, which is under the jurisdiction of the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). The desert portions of the County are within the MDAB, which is under the jurisdiction of the Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District (MDAQMD).

The MDAB is a nonattainment area under the federal and state air quality standards (AAQS) for ozone (O_3), fine inhalable particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$) (California AAQS only), and coarse inhalable particulate matter (PM_{10}). The San Bernardino portion of the SoCAB is a nonattainment area under the federal and state air quality standards (AAQS) for O_3, NO_2, $PM_{2.5}$ (California AAQS only), and PM_{10}. The federal and California Clean Air Acts require areas designated nonattainment to reduce emissions until standards are met. The MDAQMD and SCAQMD have adopted attainment plan(s) for nonattainment pollutants to meet these standards. Projects are consistent with the AQMPs if it they are consistent with the existing land use plans used to forecast emissions. Zoning changes, specific plans, general plan amendments and similar land use plan changes that do not increase dwelling unit density, vehicle trips, or increase vehicle miles traveled are also deemed to be consistent with the AQMPs.

The draft Housing Element designates adequate sites for development that could potentially accommodate any unmet portion of the RHNA through 2014. Since the housing assessment in the RHNA is determined by SCAG, the proposed project would accommodate increases in population based on SCAG's demographic projections. The project would be consistent with the AQMP because it is based on demographic projections for the County of San Bernardino that form the basis of the regional emissions inventories for the MDAB and SoCAB. Therefore, impacts would not occur.

b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?

Less than Significant. The draft Housing Element designates adequate sites for potential future development that could accommodate any unmet portion of the RHNA through 2014. New development could potentially generate pollutant emissions due to new vehicle trips, use of equipment, and off-site power and natural gas generation. During the construction phases of individual development projects, emissions would also be generated by construction vehicles and activities. Air pollutant emissions associated with the project could occur over the short term for demolition, site preparation, and construction activities. In addition, emissions could result from the long-term operation of the potential additional units.

Construction Impacts

All construction projects can produce nuisance dust emissions. Air quality impacts may occur during the site preparation and construction activities of individual projects as anticipated under the Housing Element. Major sources of emissions during this phase include exhaust emissions generated during demolition of an existing structure, site preparation, and subsequent structure erection, and fugitive dust generated as a result of soil disturbances. General Plan Policy CO 4.1 states that the County will require mitigation measures for developments in areas identified as susceptible to wind hazards to address site-specific analysis of (a) grading restrictions and/or controls on the basis

of soil types, topography or season, (b) landscaping methods, plant varieties, and scheduling to maximize successful re-vegetation, and (c) dust control measures during grading, heavy truck travel, and other dust-generating activities. Additionally, Section 83.01.040 (Air Quality) of the Development Code requires new development to obtain various permits from either SCAQMD or MDAQMD (depending on the location of the new development) relating to construction equipment and construction activities. These permit requirements make it possible to establish uniform performance standards regarding air pollutant emissions for development in the county. Air district performance standards are designed to mitigate the air quality impacts of proposed land uses. In addition, Section 83.01.040 of the Development Code mandates emission control measures for all discretionary land use projects approved by the County. These measures primarily focus on off-road diesel construction vehicles and equipment (e.g., off road vehicle/construction equipment idling regulations, ultra-low sulfur diesel fuel for stationary construction equipment requirements, and the provision of temporary traffic control during all phases of construction).

Furthermore, at the time of specific project-level environmental review, the lead agency will ensure compliance with mitigation measures, through placement of conditions of approval on applicable projects, to reduce impacts consistent with the General Plan and Development Code provisions.

Operational Impacts

Long-term air quality impacts are those associated with the emissions produced from project-generated vehicle trips as well as from stationary sources related to the use of natural gas for heating and electricity for lighting and ventilation. Any future developments would be subject to CEQA review on a project-by-project basis, and impacts would be disclosed and mitigated as feasible. However, impacts to any air quality standard due to the adoption of the Housing Element would result in a less then significant impact.

The Housing Element is a policy-level document that is consistent with existing general plan land use designation and zoning and therefore does not include specific development proposals. Adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element will, therefore, not directly result in any pollutant emissions. The Housing Element establishes County direction for facilitating housing development pursuant to adopted land use plans. Residential development facilitated by implementation of Housing Element programs has the potential to result in pollutant emissions. These impacts have been evaluated at a program or policy-level in the CEQA documents listed in the Section 2.

Any future development of vacant sites identified in the Housing Element will comply with all SCAQMD or MDAQMD requirements as well as any mitigation measures required as a result of project-level CEQA analysis, including those applicable to short-term construction activities. Implementation of the mitigation measures required from

past program-level and future project-level CEQA analyses will ensure short-term construction and long-term operation emissions will be below SCAQMD or MDAQMD regional and local thresholds. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

c) **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 (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?**

Less than Significant. The draft Housing Element designates adequate sites for potential future development that could accommodate any unmet portion of the RHNA through 2014. New development would generate pollutant emissions due to new vehicle trips, use of equipment, and off-site power and natural gas generation. Future projects would be subject to CEQA review and computer modeling would be completed for each development to track whether any emissions would be in excess of State or Federal Ambient Air Quality Standards. Additionally, any new development would be required to comply with SCAQMD regulations to mitigate or prevent the generation of criteria pollutant emissions or GHG emissions. Impacts to air quality due to the adoption of the Housing Element would be less than significant.

d) **Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?**

Less than Significant. Approval of the Housing Element would not modify land uses and would not result in an air quality impact. Implementation of the Housing Element relies, however, on future development assumptions. The potential future development of additional housing units through 2014 could lead to fugitive emissions and other pollutants affecting adjacent sensitive land uses. Increased traffic volumes on County streets could also lead to increases in associated vehicle emissions. Air quality analysis would be completed on a project-by-project basis to determine whether emissions from proposed development would expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. Impacts to air quality due to the adoption of the Housing Element would be less than significant.

e) **Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?**

No Impact. Land uses that are sources of objectionable odors that may affect substantial numbers of people include wastewater treatment facilities, landfills, refineries, chemical manufacturing facilities, feed lots, and dairies. Approval of the Housing Element would not create objectionable odors and would not result in an impact. Implementation of the Housing Element is reliant, however, on future development assumptions. It is unlikely that any future residential development proposed would create objectionable odors, however, any project would be subject to CEQA review. Adoption of the Housing Element would not create odors and no impact would occur.

3.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

a) **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?**

Less than Significant. The County prepared the land inventory in GIS and used the latest available data from internal and external databases. The inventory of suitable parcels for new housing excludes land restricted sensitive or critical habitat. Implementation of the Housing Element would not directly impact any riparian, wetland, or other sensitive natural community, because the Housing Element does not infer direct development rights. However, the residential development consistent with General Plan land use designations that is anticipated and encouraged by the Housing Element could impact existing riparian, wetland, or other sensitive natural communities if located on a site which contained these resources.

Due to the conceptual nature of the future residential development, site specific proposals would require individual assessments of potential impacts to biological resources, including impacts to endangered, threatened, rare, or locally designated species and their habitats. Policies CO 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, and 2.4 that support General Plan Conservation Element Goal CO2 are intended to reduce impacts to biotic resources. All projects would be subject to General Plan Conservation Element policies, the County's entitlement review process, and project level environmental review to adequately address, and mitigate if necessary, any impacts to biological resources.

The County's Development Code (Chapter 88.01 Plant Protection and Management) provides regulations and guidelines for the management of plant resources in the unincorporated areas of the county on property or combinations of property under private or public ownership. The intent of Chapter 88.01 is to promote plant life within the County through appropriate management techniques, conserve the native plant life heritage, regulate native plant and tree removal activity, protect and maintain local watersheds, and preserve habitats for rare, endangered, or threatened plants and to protect animals with limited or specialized habitats. Chapter 88.01 of the Development Code requires the issuance of a permit prior to the removal of regulated trees and plants.

Compliance with Conservation Element policies, Community Plans, Development Code as well as existing program-level and future project-level CEQA mitigation measures related to protection of candidate, sensitive, or special status species located will reduce impacts. Adoption of the Housing Element would have no direct impact on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species. Impacts associated with adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element will therefore be less than significant.

b) **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?**

Less than Significant. Refer to response 3.4a.

c) **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?**

Less than Significant. Refer to response 3.4a. Additionally, a number of regulatory mechanisms address various types of construction-related impacts to wetlands. Disturbance within any water of the U.S. would require a Section 404 permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which would place certain requirements for avoidance or replacement of lost wetland habitat. When a project would alter the natural flow or bed, channel, or bank of any river, stream, or lake, a Section 1601 streambed alteration agreement would need to be obtained from the California Department of Fish and Game. Like the 404 permit, this agreement would be expected to include measures that alleviate impacts to riparian habitats. Preparation and implementation of the stormwater pollution prevention plans (SWPPPs) required under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act would alleviate potential indirect impacts relating to increased erosion, sedimentation, and runoff.

General Plan Policy M/CO 1.7 encourages conservation and sound management of natural resources in the Mountain Region of the county, including water, streams, and vegetation, through the requirement of planting native or drought-tolerant cultivar species capable of surviving the mountain environment and climate. Policy M/CO 3.6 mandates the minimization of construction site runoff to surface water and establishes controls for soil erosion and sedimentation in the Mountain Region through (a) the requirement of replanting ground cover in denuded areas with re-vegetation, either indigenous to the area or compatible with the climate and soil characteristics of the region, during the development review process; (b) the provision that when development occurs, natural drainage channels are retained where feasible; and (c) the requirement that developers, through the development review process, maintain existing percolation and surface water runoff rate by discouraging the paving of large surface areas.

General Plan Policy CO 2.4 requires that all discretionary approvals requiring mitigation measures for impacts to biological resources, including riparian habitat and wetland areas, include the condition that the mitigation measures be monitored and modified, if necessary. CO 2.4 Program 3 states that the County will not permit land conversion until adequate mitigation is provided to reduce biological impacts to less than significant in

cases where a Mitigated Negative Declaration is used for CEQA compliance. Impacts associated with adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element would therefore be less than significant.

d) **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?**

Less than Significant. The residential development consistent with General Plan land use designations could remove natural areas that presently allow relatively unrestricted wildlife movement through a variety of habitats, if located on a site which contained movement corridors. These impacts have been evaluated at a program or policy-level in the CEQA documents listed in Chapter 2.

Policies that support General Plan Conservation Element Goal CO2 are intended to reduce impacts to biotic resources. Residential development on any sites identified in the sites inventory would be subject to the County's entitlement review process, and project level environmental review to adequately address, and mitigate if necessary, any impacts to wildlife.

Compliance with Conservation Element policies as well as existing program-level and future project-level CEQA mitigation measures related to protection of wildlife corridors and use of native wildlife nursery sites will reduce impacts. Impacts associated with adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element would be less than significant.

e) **Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?**

Less than Significant. Refer to response 3.4c. The project itself would not involve clearance of vegetation, ground-disturbing activities, or changes in land use. However, future development would be evaluated for potential impacts to biological resources on an individual basis as it is proposed. Impacts on biological resources due to the adoption of the Housing Element would be less than significant.

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?**

Less than Significant. The County took a lead role in the preparation of a Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) for the San Bernardino Valley in 1995 and there are several other habitat conservation plans within the boundaries of San Bernardino County. The Housing Element designates adequate sites for potential future development that could accommodate any unmet portion of the RHNA through 2014. The inventory of suitable parcels for new housing excludes land restricted sensitive or critical habitat.

In order to mitigate adverse effects of development on biological resources, the General Plan relies on the development of habitat conservation plans and mitigation sites for the County to participate in. Policy CO 2.3 states that in addition to conditions of approval that may be required for specific future development proposals, the County will establish long-term comprehensive plans [such as habitat conservation plans or natural community conservation plans] for the County's role in the protection of native species. CO 2.3 Program 1 requires the County to prepare or participate in habitat conservation plans when there is sufficient support of such plans, adequate funding for their preparation, and a strong likelihood of success.

Implementation of projects located in an area within the regulatory jurisdiction of a habitat conservation plan would be required to implement all applicable mitigation and pay any additional fees as outlined in the MSHCP. This would occur after a project-specific environmental review considers specific mitigation measures and/or alternative alignments needed to avoid or minimize conflicts with the habitat conservation plan and the protected species and habitats within the plan.

Compliance with Conservation Element policies, the Development Code, MSHCP, as well as existing program-level and future project-level CEQA mitigation measures related to protection of candidate, sensitive, or special status species would reduce impacts. Impacts due to the adoption of the Housing Element would be less than significant.

3.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in § 15064.5?

Less than significant. The draft Housing Element designates adequate sites for potential future development that could accommodate any unmet portion of the RHNA through 2014. The anticipated development would occur on vacant parcels throughout the County. Any future development would be reviewed to determine if any historical resources are present onsite. If necessary, appropriate mitigation measures designed to protect historic structures would be implemented.

Adverse effects on historic were addressed in the previous environmental documents prepared for the General Plan (General Plan EIR), which found that development of the plan area would result in a potentially significant impact to historic resources. It was determined that with mitigation measures, these impacts can be reduced to less than significant. Impacts to historical resources due to adoption of the Housing Element would be less than significant.

b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?

Less than significant. The General Plan currently identifies Cultural Resource Preservation Overlay. The Housing Element itself would not involve ground-disturbing activities and would have no potential to adversely affect archaeological resources. Implementation of the Housing Element would not directly impact any archaeological because the Housing Element does not infer direct development rights. However, the residential development consistent with General Plan land use designations that is anticipated and encouraged by the Housing Element has the potential to impact known or not yet discovered archaeological resources if located on a site which contained these resources.

San Bernardino Development Code Chapter 82.12 (Cultural Resource Preservation Overlay) is intended to provide for the identification and preservation of important archaeological and historical resources in the County. The application for a new development project proposed within a Cultural Resource Preservation Overlay is required to include a report prepared by a qualified professional that determines through appropriate investigation the presence or absence of archaeological and/or historical resources on the project site and within the project area, and recommends appropriate data recovery or protection measures. The measures may include site recordation, mapping and surface collection of artifacts with appropriate analysis and curation, preservation in an open space easement and/or dedication to an appropriate institution with provision for any necessary maintenance and protection, and/or proper curation of archeological and historical resource data and artifacts collected within a project area pursuant to federal repository standards.

Adverse effects on archeological resources were addressed in the previous environmental documents prepared for the General Plan EIR, which found that development of the plan area would result in a potentially significant impact to historic resources. It was determined that with mitigation measures, these impacts can be reduced to less than significant. Compliance with the General Plan, Development Code and through the County's environmental review process, future development projects would be evaluated for potential impacts to archaeological resources. Impacts to archaeological resources due to the adoption of the Housing Element would be less than significant.

c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

Less than significant. Refer to response 3.5b. Chapter 82.20 (Paleontological Resource Overlay) of the Development Code is intended to provide for the identification and preservation of important paleontological resources in the County and when a land use is proposed within a Paleontological Resource Overlay, the project is evaluated for

compliance with the intent of the overlay. Impacts to paleontological resources due to the adoption of the Housing Element would be less than significant.

d) **Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?**

Less than significant. There are no known human remains on the vacant sites identified in the Vacant Sites Inventory. However, future grading activities from housing development consistent with General Plan land use designations could uncover previously unknown human remains.

If human remains were found, those remains would require proper treatment, in accordance with applicable laws. State of California Public Resources Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5-7055 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 in the vicinity of the find and any area that is reasonably suspected to overly adjacent remains until the County coroner has been called out, and the remains have been investigated and appropriate recommendations have been made for the treatment and disposition of the remains. Following compliance with state regulations, which details the appropriate actions necessary in the event human remains are encountered, impacts in this regard would be considered less than significant.

Adverse effects on human remains were addressed in the previous environmental documents prepared for the General Plan EIR, which found that development of the plan area would result in a potentially significant impact to historic resources. It was determined that with mitigation measures, these impacts can be reduced to less than significant. Compliance with the Development Code and existing program-level and future project-level CEQA mitigation measures related to protection of human remains will reduce impacts. Impacts associated with adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element would be less than significant.

3.6 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

a) **Expose people or structures to 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.

Less than significant. There are at least 46 active or potentially active faults within or near the County with the potential to create a magnitude earthquake of 3.7 or greater up to approximately magnitude 7.5-8.0. In addition to strong ground shaking from earthquakes on faults located within the County, large earthquakes on faults near the County boundaries also have and will impact property within the County. Many of the other potential geologic hazards in the County are associated with earthquake activity including surface fault rupture, flooding due to potential dam failure, soil liquefaction, seismically induced landslides, and the potential for seiches to occur within lakes and reservoirs. Surface fault rupture can directly impact properties traversed by or adjacent to an active fault. The other seismic hazards may be triggered by more remote earthquakes up to several tens of kilometers from a site. In the County's Development Code, one overlay district has been established relating specifically to protect County citizens from geological hazards. These areas are designated Geologic Hazard "GH" Overlay District which identifies areas that are subject to potential geologic problems, including active faulting, landsliding, debris flow, rockfall and liquefaction. The GH Overlay District was created to provide greater public safety by establishing investigation requirements for areas that are subject to potential geologic problems.

The inventory of suitable parcels for new housing excludes land restricted by earthquake hazards. However, any residential development that occurs in conjunction with the Housing Element would be designed to resist seismic forces in accordance with the criteria and design parameters contained in the GH Overlay District, the most current version of the Uniform Building Code Title 24 of the California Building Code (CBC), and the standards of the Structural Engineers Association of California. Compliance with these building standards and site-specific recommendations (if any) would mitigate project-level impacts related to rupture of earthquake faults. Impacts resulting from rupture of known earthquake faults due to the adoption of the Housing Element would be less than significant.

ii) **Strong seismic ground shaking?**

Less than significant. Residential development consistent with General Plan land use designations is located in seismically active Southern California and is subject to ground shaking from regional earthquake activity. Virtually the entire County is potentially subject to some level of strong seismic ground shaking with potential levels being greatest in the western portion of the County and at sites in close proximity to a known earthquake (i.e., active) or potentially active fault.

The inventory of suitable parcels for new housing excludes land restricted by earthquake hazards. The presence or absence of other potential hazards and

presence of poor or erosion susceptible soil conditions would be assessed on a site-specific basis. Additionally, any residential development that occurs in conjunction with the Housing Element would be designed to resist seismic forces in accordance with the criteria and design parameters contained in the GH Overlay District, the most current version of the CBC, and the standards of the Structural Engineers Association of California. Compliance with these building standards and site-specific recommendations (if any) would mitigate project-level impacts related to rupture of earthquake faults. Impacts to seismic ground shaking due to the adoption of the Housing Element would be less than significant.

iii) **Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?**

Less than significant. Liquefaction refers to loose, saturated sand or silt deposits that lose their load supporting capability when subjected to intense shaking. Liquefaction susceptible sites are limited to areas of the County underlain by loose, unconsolidated granular soils and shallow groundwater (typically 50 feet or less below ground surface).

Any future development that occurs under the draft Housing Element would be subject to future CEQA review and consideration of potential soil related impacts. Residential development would be designed to resist seismic forces in accordance with the criteria and design parameters contained in the GH Overlay District, the most current version of the CBC, and the standards of the Structural Engineers Association of California. Compliance with these building standards and site-specific recommendations (if any) would mitigate project-level impacts

iv) **Landslides?**

No Impact. Landslides and mudflow hazards exist throughout the County, on steep hillsides and in creek and streambed areas. These can be triggered by earthquakes, heavy rain events, and other causes. Potential hazards associated with landslides (both seismic and non-seismic) are limited to sites situated on and near the crest and base of slopes.

The inventory of suitable parcels for new housing excludes land restricted by earthquake hazards and slopes in excess of 20 percent. It is anticipated that cut-and-fill grading would be necessary during project development, but no significant slopes are anticipated to occur as a result of project development.

Impacts related to landslides have been evaluated at a program or policy-level in the CEQA documents listed in Chapter 2. Additionally, future projects would be required to comply with CBC standards. Landslide impacts are not anticipated as a result of the 2008-2014 Housing Element. No impact would occur.

b) **Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?**

Less than significant. Grading on slopes and ridgelines results in impacts to the topography and increase the likelihood of erosion. As discussed above, the inventory of suitable parcels for new housing excludes land restricted by earthquake hazards and slopes in excess of 20 percent.

Future developments anticipated by the Housing Element would involve the removal of any unsuitable surface soils and the replacement of these soils with compacted fills. The presence or absence of potential hazards and presence of poor or erosion susceptible soil conditions would be assessed on a site-specific basis. Future development projects would be required to prepare erosion control plans and/or incorporate best management practices to minimize potential erosion and sedimentation impacts. Impacts to soil erosion due to the adoption of the Housing Element would be less than significant.

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?**

Less than significant. Potential residential development sites identified in the Housing Element consist of small and large parcels of vacant land. Depending on its location and site characteristics, future residential development of these sites consistent with General Plan land use designations could expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects involving unstable geologic units. These impacts have been evaluated at a program or policy-level in the CEQA documents listed in Chapter 2.

Development of properties in these areas would be subject to compliance with the goals and policies of the General Plan. Additionally, all grading operations would be conducted in conformance with the County's Grading Ordinance and the most recent version of the CBC. Specifically, as part of the County's development review process, geotechnical studies would be prepared to identify necessary improvements to ensure long-term geotechnical stability. Any residential development that occurs in conjunction with the Housing Element would be designed to resist seismic forces in accordance with the criteria and design parameters contained in the most current version of the CBC, and the standards of the Structural Engineers Association of California. Compliance with these building standards and site-specific recommendations (if any) would mitigate project-level impacts related to unstable geologic units and landslides.

Compliance with existing program-level and future project-level CEQA mitigation measures related to seismic ground failure, including liquefaction will reduce impacts. Impacts associated with adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element would be less than significant.

d) **Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?**

Less than Significant. Expansive soils shrink or swell as the moisture content decreases or increases. Structures built on these soils may experience shifting, cracking, and breaking as soils shrink and subside or expand. Any future development that occurs under the draft Housing Element would be subject to future CEQA review and consideration of potential soil-related impacts. Necessary improvements to ensure long-term geotechnical stability would be required. Impacts related to soil due to the adoption of the Housing Element would be less than significant.

e) **Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?**

Less than Significant. In a vast region like San Bernardino County, water and sewer availability impacts the feasibility of development. Connection to a sewer system is required for any parcel smaller than one-half acre (RS, RS-10M, and RM). The land inventory excluded parcels that lack adequate water and sewer infrastructure. The land inventory removed any lands that were not within a quarter mile of an existing sewer system and were not already served by roads. This filter was used because the cost for a sewer extension or a small, onsite batch plant to serve a project would make it financially infeasible. A significant amount of RM-zoned land (nearly 1,000 acres) was removed from the inventory based on these criteria. Land otherwise zoned for housing could rely on septic systems for wastewater service. And in rural county areas, septic service is quite common for residential areas.

Any future development that occurs under the draft Housing Element would be subject to future CEQA review and consideration of potential soil-related impacts. Necessary improvements to ensure long-term geotechnical stability would be required. Impacts related to soil adequacy due to the adoption of the Housing Element would be less than significant.

3.7 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Scientists have concluded that human activities are contributing to global climate change by adding large amounts of heat-trapping gases, known as greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions, into the atmosphere. The primary source of these GHG emissions is fossil fuel use. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has identified four major GHG emissions—water vapor, carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane (CH_4), and ozone (O_3)—that are the likely cause of an increase in global average temperatures observed within the 20th and 21st centuries. Other GHG identified by the IPCC that contribute to global warming to a lesser extent include nitrous oxide (N_2O), sulfur hexafluoride (SF_6), hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and chlorofluorocarbons.[1]

a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

Less than Significant. The draft Housing Element designates adequate sites for potential future development that could accommodate any unmet portion of the RHNA through 2014. New development could potentially generate pollutant emissions due to new vehicle trips, use of stationary equipment, natural gas use, and indirect emissions from use of electricity, water demand and wastewater treatment, and solid waste disposal. Any future developments would be subject to CEQA review on a project-by-project basis, and impacts would be disclosed and mitigated as feasible. However, impacts to GHG emissions due to the adoption of the Housing Element would result in a less then significant impact.

The Housing Element is a policy-level document that is consistent with existing general plan land use designation and zoning and therefore does not include specific development proposals. Adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element will, therefore, not directly result in any GHG emissions. The Housing Element establishes County direction for facilitating housing development pursuant to adopted land use plans. Residential development facilitated by implementation of Housing Element programs has the potential to result in GHG emissions. These impacts have been evaluated at a program or policy-level in the CEQA documents listed in the Section 2.

[1] Water vapor (H_2O) is the strongest GHG and the most variable in its phases (vapor, cloud droplets, ice crystals). However, water vapor is not considered a pollutant.

In addition, the County of San Bernardino has established procedures to implement the Development Review Process (DRP) for new projects in the County pursuant to the County's GHG Reduction Plan. All development projects, including projects exempt from CEQA are subject to the applicable Development Code Provisions, including GHG performance standards, and state requirements (e.g., California Building Code).

Any future development of vacant sites identified in the Housing Element will comply with all SCAQMD, MDAQMD, and County of San Bernardino DRP requirements for GHG emissions as well as any mitigation measures required as a result of project-level CEQA analysis, including those applicable to short-term construction activities. Implementation of the mitigation measures required from past program-level and future project-level CEQA analyses will ensure that GHG emissions from construction and long-term operation of the future project will be below SCAQMD or MDAQMD regional and local thresholds. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

b) **Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?**

Less than Significant. Assembly Bill 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32) requires the state to reduce GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. The California Air Resources Board (CARB) adopted the Scoping Plan to identify state regulations and programs that would be adopted by state agencies to achieve the 1990 target of AB 32. In addition, Senate Bill 375, the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008 (SB 375) was adopted by the legislature to reduce per capita vehicle miles traveled and associated GHG emissions from passenger vehicles. The Southern California Association of Government's (SCAG) 2012 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy identifies the per capita GHG reduction goals for the SCAG region.

The County of San Bernardino has adopted a GHG Reduction Plan to assure compliance with the GHG reduction strategies identified by the California Air Resources Board in the 2008 Scoping Plan. The County of San Bernardino has established procedures to implement the DRP for new projects in the County pursuant to the County's GHG Reduction Plan. All development projects, including projects exempt from CEQA are subject to the applicable Development Code Provisions, including GHG performance standards, and state requirements (e.g., California Building Code). Any future development of vacant sites identified in the Housing Element will comply with all SCAQMD, MDAQMD, and County of San Bernardino DRP requirements for GHG emissions as well as any mitigation measures required as a result of project-level CEQA analysis, including those applicable to short-term construction activities. Implementation of the mitigation measures required from past program-level and future project-level CEQA analyses will ensure that GHG emissions from construction and long-term operation of the future project will be below SCAQMD or MDAQMD regional and local thresholds. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

SCAG's 2012 RTP/SCS is a regional growth management strategy that targets per capita GHG reduction from passenger vehicles and light duty trucks in the Southern California region. The 2012 RTP/SCS incorporates local land use projections and circulation networks in the cities' and counties' general plans. The projected regional development pattern, including location of land uses and residential densities included in local general plans, when integrated with the proposed regional transportation network identified in the 2012 RTP/SCS, would reduce per capita vehicular travel-related GHG emissions and achieve the subregional GHG reduction per capita targets for the SCAG region. The draft Housing Element designates adequate sites for development that could potentially accommodate any unmet portion of the RHNA through 2014. Since the housing assessment in the RHNA is determined by SCAG, the proposed project would accommodate increases in population based on SCAG's demographic projections. The project would be consistent with the 2012 RTP/SCS because it is based on demographic projections for the County of San Bernardino that form the basis of the 2012 RTP/SCS. The proposed project would not conflict with the 2012 RTP/SCS goals Therefore, impacts would not occur.

3.8 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use or disposal of hazardous materials?

Less than Significant. Adverse effects related to the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment were addressed in the previous environmental documents prepared for the General Plan EIR, which found that with mitigation, development of the plan area would result in a less than significant impact related to the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment.

The Housing Element does not result in any new development potential or construction of facilities that require the routine transportation of hazardous materials that would be impacted by these conditions beyond what the General Plan EIR considered. Implementation of projects and activities under the Housing Element would be subject to all local, state and federal standards regarding the transportation, use and disposal of hazardous materials.

Construction activities associated with future development would involve the use of chemical substances such as solvents, paints, fuel for equipment, and other potentially hazardous materials. These materials are common to typical construction activities and do not pose a significant hazard to the public or the environment. Long-term operation of the future residential land uses would not involve substantial amounts of hazardous substances during operation. Future development of the sites would be consistent with the type and intensity of surrounding residential development, and typical hazardous

substances that may be used include household cleaning agents, building maintenance and pool chemicals, and motor vehicle fuels and lubricants.

The San Bernardino County General Plan includes policies and programs that are intended to address hazards to the public and environment and guide future development in a way that lessen impacts. For instance, the General Plan requires the application of program review and permitting procedures for proposed land uses potentially introducing hazardous substances as well as the inspection of hazardous material handlers and hazardous waste generators.

Chapter 82.16 (Hazardous Waste Overlay) of the Development Code ensures that hazardous waste facilities are sited in areas that protect public health, safety, welfare, and the environment by buffering hazardous waste facilities so that incompatible uses are not permitted to be developed in the vicinity. Chapter 84.11 (Hazardous Waste Facilities) of the Development Code provides provisions that apply to hazardous waste facilities where allowed in compliance with Chapter 82.16 described above. Chapter 84.11 states that an approved Special Use Permit is required for the establishment of a hazardous waste facility. The purpose of the Special Use Permit shall be to evaluate the operation and monitoring plan of the facility, ensure the facility has adequate measures for monitoring on-going impacts to air quality, groundwater, and environmentally sensitive resources, evaluate the types and quantities of wastes that will be treated or disposed of at the facility, and require periodic inspections of the facility to ensure conditions of approval are implemented and monitored.

Future residential development would be subject to the County's General Plan, Development Code, subsequent CEQA review, and regulatory requirements. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

b) **Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonable foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?**

Less than Significant. The Housing Element does not result in any new development potential or outright authorize any residential projects. Accidental releases of hazardous materials are those releases that are unforeseen or that result from unforeseen circumstances, while reasonably foreseeable upset conditions are those release or exposure events that can be anticipated and planned for. Facilities that use hazardous materials are required to obtain permits and comply with appropriate local, state, and federal regulatory agency standards designed to avoid hazardous waste releases. These regulations provide a comprehensive regulatory system for handling hazardous materials in a manner that protects human health and the environment. In addition, Chapter 82.16 (Hazardous Waste Overlay) of the Development Code ensures that hazardous waste facilities are sited in areas that protect public health, safety, welfare, and the environment by buffering hazardous waste facilities so that incompatible uses

are not permitted to be developed in the vicinity. These requirements would also reduce the number of persons exposed to any hazardous material incidents. As such, both accidental and reasonably foreseeable hazardous materials releases would be expected to occur infrequently and result in minimal hazard to the public or the environment. Future residential development would be subject to the County's General Plan, Development Code, subsequent CEQA review, and regulatory requirements. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

c) **Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?**

Less than Significant. The proposed project consists of an updated determination of housing needs within the County's and revisions to the policies and procedures the County uses in addressing those needs. The proposed project would not directly emit hazardous emissions, and would not involve the handling of hazardous or acutely hazardous materials. Through the County's environmental review process, future development projects would be evaluated for the potential release of hazardous materials into the environment. Therefore, impacts associated with hazardous materials due to the adoption of the Housing Element would be less than significant.

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?**

Less than Significant. Future residential development that is consistent with the General Plan land use and zoning designations may be located in the vicinity of known hazardous materials sites. Through the County's environmental review process, it would be determined if a potential development site is on or within the immediate vicinity of any known hazardous material site. Where appropriate, mitigation measures would be required for specific projects to reduce potential hazards to the public. Compliance with existing program-level and future project-level CEQA mitigation measures related to development on hazardous materials sites would reduce impacts. Impacts associated with adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element would be less than significant.

e) **For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles or a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?**

Less than Significant. The potential impacts related to this issue have been evaluated at a program or policy-level in the CEQA documents listed in Chapter 2. Adverse effects related to being located near a public or private airport were addressed in the in the previous environmental documents prepared for the General Plan EIR. It was

determined by the General Plan EIR, all impacts associated with public or private airport could be mitigated to below a level of significance.

The update to the County's General Plan Housing Element consists of an updated determination of housing needs within the County, as well as policies and programs necessary to address those needs. The Housing Element identifies adequate sites for potential residential development to meet RHNA planning goals. Each of these sites is currently zoned for Rural Living (RL), Single Residential (RS), or Multiple Residential (RM) use. As such, implementation of the Housing Element does not require any changes to current land use or zoning within the County. Adoption of the Housing Element would have a less than significant impact on safety hazards.

f) **For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?**

Less than Significant. Refer to response 3.8e.

g) **Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?**

Less than Significant. The potential impacts related to this issue have been evaluated at a program or policy-level in the CEQA documents listed in Chapter 2. Adverse effects related interference with an adopted emergency response plan addressed in the in the previous environmental documents prepared for the General Plan EIR. It was determined by the General Plan EIR, all impacts associated with public or private airport could be mitigated to below a level of significance.

The update to the County's General Plan Housing Element consists of an updated determination of housing needs within the County, as well as policies and programs necessary to address those needs. The Housing Element identifies adequate sites for potential residential development to meet RHNA planning goals. Each of these sites is currently zoned for Rural Living (RL), Single Residential (RS), or Multiple Residential (RM) use. As such, implementation of the Housing Element does not require any changes to current land use or zoning within the County. Housing Element would not interfere with the implementation of the County's current emergency evacuation plan. Should an emergency occur on the project sites that would necessitate evacuation, the internal street system would provide egress points along which would provide access to the outlying arterial roadway system. Adoption of the Housing Element would have a less than significant impact.

h) **Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?**

Less than Significant. Development in high fire hazard areas will be subject to periodic wildland fires that occur in these areas. Wildland fires represent safety hazards in brushy, undeveloped hillsides. Dense chaparral vegetation burns quickly and can cause fires to spread to adjacent development. Residential development consistent with General Plan land use designations could expose people or structures to a significant risk involving wildland fires. The potential impacts of future residential development related to this issue have been evaluated at a program or policy-level in the CEQA documents listed in Chapter 2.

Any residential development that occurs in conjunction with the Housing Element would be designed to minimize fire risks by meeting or exceeding current Fire Code requirements. Future development located within or adjacent to a wildland fire area would be required to prepare and implement a comprehensive fuel modification program in accordance County and San Bernardino County Fire Department regulations. Compliance with Safety Element policies and existing program-level and future project-level CEQA mitigation measures related to wildfire hazards will reduce impacts. Impacts associated with adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element would be less than significant.

3.9 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

a) **Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?**

Less than Significant. Three different Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCB) cover the County: the Santa Ana Region, Lahontan Region and Colorado River Region.

Discharge from construction and occupancy of future residential development consistent with General Plan land use designations could violate water quality standards or waste discharge requirements. All individual projects implemented under the Housing Element will be required to comply with applicable federal, state, and local water quality regulations. Currently, the County of San Bernardino follows state standards for water quality, and does not have their own specific standards. During construction, projects will be required to obtain coverage under the state's General Permit for Construction Activities that is administered by the California Regional Board, RWQCB. Storm water management measures will be required to be identified and implemented that will effectively control erosion and sedimentation and other construction based pollutants during construction. Other management measures, such as construction of detention basins, will be required to be identified and implemented that will effectively treat pollutants that would be expected for the post-construction land use. Because projects will be subject to regulatory requirements, impacts to water

quality standards or waste discharge requirements related to implementation of the Housing Element are considered less than significant.

Potential water quality and waste water discharge impacts have been evaluated at a program or policy-level in the CEQA documents listed in Chapter 2. The proposed project consists of an updated determination of housing needs within the County and revisions to policies and programs the County would use to address those needs. The proposed project does not result in any new development potential or construction of facilities that would impact water quality beyond what the General Plan EIR considered and which found that with mitigation, development of the plan area would result in a less than significant impact. Implementation of Housing Element would be subject to all of the County development standards regarding water quality. Impacts associated with adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element would be less than significant.

b) **Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?**

Less than Significant. Adverse effects related to the depletion of groundwater requirements were addressed in the previous environmental documents prepared for the General Plan EIR, which found that with mitigation, development of the plan area would result in a less than significant impact related to groundwater supplies and interference with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level. Adopted mitigation measures and conditions of approval prepared for the General Plan and General Plan EIR reduce this impact to less than significant.

Long-term implementation of development pursuant to the Housing Element could add impervious surfaces that could impact water quality through discharge of pollutants into groundwater basins. The County General Plan includes policies and programs that address potential impacts to water quality. Policy CI 11.1 requires new development to apply federal and state water quality standards for surface and groundwater and wastewater discharge requirements in the review of development proposals that relate to type, location, and size to safeguard public health. CI 11.6 Program 1 establishes setbacks from ephemeral and perennial streams regulating impervious or potentially polluting uses.

The update to the County's General Plan Housing Element consists of an updated determination of housing needs within the County, as well as policies and programs necessary to address those needs. The Housing Element identifies adequate sites for potential residential development to meet RHNA planning goals. Each of these sites is currently zoned for Rural Living (RL), Single Residential (RS), or Multiple Residential

(RM) use. As such, implementation of the Housing Element does not require any changes to current land use or zoning within the County. The inventory of suitable parcels for new housing excludes land restricted by severe flood hazards.

Anticipated development under the Housing Element update would increase water consumption in the County over existing conditions; however, impacts would remain less than significant. Any future residential development would be subject to CEQA review. Potential impacts to groundwater supply and recharge would be analyzed and, if necessary, mitigated. General Plan Policy CO 5.2 requires continued monitoring of the county's adjudicated groundwater basins to ensure a balanced hydrological system in terms of withdrawal and replenishment of water from groundwater basins. Compliance with Conservation Element policies and existing program-level and future project-level CEQA mitigation measures related to groundwater recharge will reduce impacts. Impacts associated with adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element would be less than significant.

c) **Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in a substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site.**

Less than Significant. Refer to response 3.9a and 3.9b. Development of future residential units will require grading and installation of additional drainage infrastructure to connect to existing drainage facilities. Section 85.11.030 of the Development Code states that a Soil Erosion Pollution Prevention Plan is to be approved by the County Building Official prior to issuance of any development permit or authorization of any land-disturbing activity of more than 1 acre. Projects disturbing more than 1 acre are also required to have coverage under the State General Construction Permit issued by the State Water Resources Control Board and develop a stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWPPP). The property owner is required to abide by all provisions of the State General Construction Permit and obtain a Waste Discharge Identification (WDID) number prior to the issuance of building or grading permits when the disturbance is more than 1 acre. The provisions of Development Code Section 85.11.030 were enacted to control soil erosion pollution and the potential for incremental long-term degradation of water quality. In addition, at the time of specific project-level environmental review, the County will ensure compliance with Section 85.11.030 of the Development Code to reduce impacts. Impacts associated with adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element would be less than significant.

d) **Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?**

Less than Significant. Development of future residential units will require grading and installation of additional drainage infrastructure to connect to existing drainage facilities. Residential development pursuant to the Housing Element implemented in low-lying areas may be subject to flood hazards, or could result in the placement of structures that would impede or redirect flood flows. The effects of flooding could include temporary inundation of a facility that impedes its use or causes long-term damage to the facility; immediate damage to roadways, bikeways, and bridges, typically those adjacent to rising rivers or streams, and particularly during high velocity flood events that wash away or erode facilities; and/or, people or structures could be exposed to flood hazard in the event of dam or levee failure. Indirect impacts of flooding include threats to lives or property, including cars or bicycles parked adjacent to flooded facilities.

At the time of specific project-level environmental review, the County will ensure individual project compliance with General Plan policies and programs which ensure flood hazards are identified, addressed and mitigated. For instance, General Plan Policy S 5.1 mandates that the County participate in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), which provides flood insurance within designated floodplains and S 5.1 Program 1 designates Floodway and Floodplain areas, as identified by the FEMA on flood insurance rate maps and flood boundary maps. These two provisions provide that flood prone areas are identified and recognized ahead of any development.

Chapter 82.14 of the Development Code establishes regulations for development and construction within flood prone areas. The Overlays described in Chapter 82.14 are applied to areas of special flood hazard identified by FEMA on flood insurance rate maps and flood boundary maps or the Federal Insurance Administration. Any project proposed in one of these areas is subject to a Flood Hazard Development Review. This review ensures that the proposed project complies with this Development Code regarding flood protection measures and requires the submittal of an Elevation Certificate completed by a land surveyor, engineer, or architect who is authorized by State or local law to certify elevation information.

These potential impacts have been evaluated at a program or policy-level in the CEQA documents listed in Chapter 2. Compliance with Conservation Element policies and existing program-level and future project-level CEQA mitigation measures related to erosion and siltation will reduce impacts. Impacts associated with adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element would be less than significant

e) **Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?**

Less than Significant. The County of San Bernardino consists of three separate land area types: mountain, desert and valley. Each land area type has its own distinct flooding risks and challenges. The Mountainous area consists of steep terrain that can create a potential risk for high velocity flood flows. The Desert area consists of relatively flat terrain that can create a potential risk for broad, shallow flood flows which can also be of high velocity. The Valley area consists of relatively flat terrain with a higher degree of urbanization and population. Flood flows from the mountain and desert area are typically contained within flood control structures that are located within the Valley area.

Approval of the Housing Element would not modify land uses, but implementation relies on future development assumptions. Future developments consistent with General Plan land use designations will contribute runoff to the stormwater drainage systems. The San Bernardino County Flood Control District is the responsible agency for the planning, design, operations and maintenance of the current and future stormwater and/or flood control system. According to the General Plan EIR, any type of proposed development within these land areas shall be coordinated with this agency. Such coordination ensures that adequate drainage facilities are provided for all new development. The General Plan EIR determined that implementation of the General Plan would result in a less than significant impact to drainage and flooding issues. Adoption of the Housing Element does not result in any new development potential or construction of facilities that would trigger additional flooding and drainage hazards beyond what the General Plan EIR considered because implementation of individual residential projects would be subject to all of the County development standards regarding drainage. Impacts would be less than significant.

f) **Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?**

Less than Significant. Refer to response 3.9a, 3.9b, and 3.9c.

g) **Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?**

Less than Significant. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) prepares and maintains Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs), which show the extent of Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs) and other thematic features related to flood risk, in participating jurisdictions. Portions of the County are located within the 100-year flood zone where the potential for private property flooding exists. The 100-year flood (one percent annual chance flood), also known as the base flood, is the flood that has a one percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year. Implementation of projects and activities under the Housing Element would be subject to all of the County

development standards regarding drainage and placement of structures within the 100-year floodplain.

The Housing Element's inventory of suitable parcels for new housing excludes land restricted by severe flood hazards. Therefore, impacts are less than significant.

h) **Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?**

Less than Significant. Refer to response 3.9g.

i) **Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?**

No Impact. Residential development anticipated by implementation of the Housing Element will be not located within a dam inundation area, therefore no impacts would occur.

j) **Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?**

Less than Significant. A seiche is a to and fro vibration of a waterbody that is similar to the slopping of water in a basin. Once initiated, oscillation within the waterbody can continue independently. Seiches are often triggered by earthquakes. According to the County of San Bernardino General Plan, the most likely area that could be subject to seiche is mountain area that includes various lakes. Tsunamis are tidal waves that occur in coastal areas; therefore, since the County boundary is not located in a coastal area, no impacts due to tsunamis will occur. The County includes a large desert area which, when stormwater and sand sediment are combined, would typically create mudflow conditions. The San Bernardino County Flood Control District operates/maintains flood control and sediment detention basins within areas that are populated. Potential seiche, tsunami, or mudflows impacts have been evaluated at a program or policy-level in the CEQA documents listed in Chapter 2. Although it is unlikely that anticipated development would be impacted by seiche, tsunami or mudflows, any future development would be evaluated on an individual basis. Compliance with existing regulations, program-level, and future project-level CEQA mitigation measures related to seiche, tsunami, or mudflows results in less than significant impacts.

3.10 LAND USE AND PLANNING

a) **Physically divide an established community?**

No Impact. The residential development anticipated by the Housing Element would be accommodated within vacant land currently designated by the General Plan for residential use. The update to the County's General Plan Housing Element consists of

an updated determination of housing needs within the County, as well as policies and programs necessary to address those needs. The Housing Element identifies adequate sites for potential residential development to meet RHNA planning goals. Each of these sites is currently zoned for Rural Living (RL), Single Residential (RS), or Multiple Residential (RM) use. As such, implementation of the Housing Element does not require any changes to current land use or zoning within the County.

Future residential development anticipated by the Housing Element would replace some vacant lands with residential land use designations throughout the County. Adverse effects related to physically dividing an established community, were addressed in the previous environmental documents prepared for the General Plan EIR, which found that development of the plan area would result in no impacts related to physically dividing an established community. Furthermore, potential future housing development as identified in the draft Housing Element would be subject to project-specific CEQA review, including an evaluation of conflicts with applicable land use plans, policies, and regulations. Therefore, housing development anticipated by the Housing Element would not physically divide an established community. No impact would occur

b) **Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?**

No Impact. Refer to response 3.10a. Implementation of the Housing Element does not require any changes to current land use or zoning within the County. Adverse effects related to conflict with applicable land use plans, policies or regulations were addressed in the previous environmental documents prepared for the General Plan EIR, which found that development of the plan area would result in no impacts. Therefore, housing development pursuant to the Housing Element would have no impact.

c) **Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?**

Less than significant. Conflicts with applicable land use plans, policies or regulations and impacts to habitat conservation plans or natural community conservation plans were addressed in the previous environmental documents prepared for the General Plan EIR, which found that development of the plan area would result in no impacts related to physically dividing an established community. The reader is referred to 3.4f *Biological Resources* for an analysis of consistency with a habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan. Impacts due to the adoption of the Housing Element would be less than significant.

3.11 MINERAL RESOURCES

a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be a value to the region and the residents of the state?

No Impact. Important mineral resource areas are recognized at the federal and State levels through environmental resource management plans and adopted mineral resource mapping; they are recognized at the local level through land use planning documents such as general plans that incorporate such information. Adverse effects on mineral resources were addressed in the previous environmental documents prepared for the General Plan EIR, which found that development of the plan area would result in a less than significant impact to the loss of availability of a known mineral resource or resource recovery site with the implementation of mitigation measures. No impacts are anticipated to result from any future project development. However, future development would be required to go through the CEQA process and any impacts would be assessed at that time.

The Housing Element does not result in any new development potential or construction of facilities that would propose changes to designated mineral resource areas beyond what the General Plan EIR considered. There are no impacts.

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 3.11a.

3.12 NOISE

a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?

Less than significant. Development of additional housing units consistent with General Plan land use designations would generate both short-term and long-term noise impacts. Short-term noise impacts could occur during grading and construction. Future construction and operation activities would increase noise levels throughout the County. Construction activities have the potential to expose adjacent land uses to noise levels between 70 and 90 decibels at 50 feet from the noise source. Construction activities associated with future residential projects are anticipated to temporarily exceed the County's noise standards. The degree of noise impact would be dependent upon the distance between the construction activity and the noise sensitive receptor. Long-term noise impacts would be associated with vehicular traffic to/from the site (including residents and visitors), outdoor activities, and stationary mechanical equipment on site.

Predicted noise levels would vary depending on multiple factors, such as the number and type of equipment used, equipment usage rates, area of activity, and shielding provided by intervening terrain and structures. Delivery vehicles, construction employee vehicle trips, and haul truck trips may also contribute to overall construction noise levels. Although construction-generated noise levels would be short term, significant increases in ambient noise levels at nearby noise-sensitive land uses could potentially occur. For noise-sensitive land uses, such as residential dwellings, activities occurring during the more noise-sensitive evening and nighttime hours are of particular concern. Construction activities occurring during these more noise-sensitive hours may result in increased levels of annoyance and potential sleep disruption to occupants of nearby residential dwellings.

Future residential development facilitated by the proposed adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element would be required to comply with all applicable standards and regulations related to construction noise. Section 83.01.080 of the Development Code sets forth performance standards for affected (receiving) land uses from noise sources, during daytime (7 AM to 10 PM) and nighttime (10 PM to 7 AM) periods. Exemptions from these standards include temporary construction and repair or demolition activities taking place between the hours of 7 AM and 7 PM Monday through Saturday, yet for nighttime periods there are no exemptions, thus limiting construction activities to daytime periods.

In addition, the County has promulgated and implemented noise policies and requirements for construction projects by requiring construction to provide specific noise analyses and implement any necessary measures to reduce noise to an acceptable level (N 1.3 Program 1 and N 1.3 Program 2). Specific techniques may include, but are not limited to, restrictions on construction timing, use of sound blankets on construction equipment, the use of temporary walls and noise barriers to block and deflect noise, and as mentioned above, the use of steam blow piping silencers. Policy N 1.6 enforces the hourly noise-level performance standards for locally regulated sources, such as construction activities and mechanical and electrical equipment.

Due to the short-term nature of construction noise, the intermittent frequency of construction noise, and required compliance with the construction noise standards established as part of the County Development Code and General Plan policy provisions noted above, construction noise level increases will not likely result in a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the county above existing levels that would result in exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established.

Noise impacts have been evaluated at a program or policy-level in the CEQA documents listed in Section 2. Impacts associated with noise were addressed in the previous environmental documents prepared for the General Plan EIR, which found that

development of the General Plan would result in less than significant impacts with the implementation of mitigation measures.

Future developments would be subject to CEQA review and noise impacts would be considered on a project-by-project basis. General Plan policies, Development Code, and existing program-level and future project-level CEQA mitigation measures would reduce impacts due to adoption of the Housing Element would be less than significant.

b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

Less than significant. It is possible that groundborne vibration or groundborne noise would occur during the construction phase of future development projects consistent with General Plan land use designations. These potential impacts have been evaluated at a program or policy-level in the CEQA documents listed in the Section 2. Although ground-borne vibration and noise are common results of the construction phase, each development would be subject to CEQA review and consideration of potential groundborne vibration and groundborne noise impacts. The Housing Element itself does not create physical residential growth but only identifies available sites for residential development during the 2008-2014 planning period.

Section 83.01.080 of the Development Code establishes hourly restrictions and noise standards pertaining to construction-related activities that would address vibration impacts as well. In addition, Development Code Section 83.01.090 establishes a vibration standard in the county. No ground vibration is allowed that can be felt without the aid of instruments at or beyond the lot line, nor is any vibration allowed which produces a particle velocity greater than or equal to two-tenths inches per second measured at or beyond the lot line. Vibration velocity is measured with a seismograph or other instrument capable of measuring and recording displacement and frequency, particle velocity, or acceleration. Readings are to be made at points of maximum vibration along any lot line next to a parcel within a residential, commercial, and industrial land use zoning district.

Compliance with existing regulations, existing program-level and future project-level CEQA mitigation measures related to noise levels will reduce impacts. Impacts regarding groundborne vibration due to the adoption of the Housing Element would be less than significant.

c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?

Less than significant. The Housing Element designates adequate sites for potential future development that could accommodate any unmet portion of the RHNA through 2014. Traffic related associated with future developments consistent with General Plan land use designations would result in long-term increases in ambient noise levels.

However, depending on the size of each development, this increase may be noticeable for some people but may not significantly impact surrounding sensitive uses and may not generate a substantial increase in ambient noise levels. These potential impacts have been evaluated at a program or policy-level in the CEQA documents listed in Section 2.

The General Plan noise policies promote the elimination of land use conflicts with respect to noise. Policies and programs include specific numeric noise level standards for new projects, including both transportation and non-transportation noise sources, as well as guidance in evaluating noise impacts and identifying noise mitigation measures. For example, General Plan Policy N 1.3 states that when land uses, including locally regulated noise sources, are proposed for areas containing noise-sensitive land uses, noise levels generated by the proposed use will not exceed the established performance standards in outdoor activity areas. Noise levels must not exceed the performance standards listed in Chapter 83.01 of the Development Code at the boundary of areas planned or zoned for noise-sensitive land uses. Similarly, Policy N 1.6 enforces the hourly noise-level performance standards for stationary and other locally regulated sources, and Chapter 82.18 of the Development Code establishes noise hazard overlays to be applied to those areas where the day-night average (L_{dn}) is 65 decibels, 65 dBA or greater. When a land use application or development permit is proposed within a noise hazard overlay, a set of standards is applied to the project to ensure noise impacts do not negative affect sensitive receptors.

Policy N 1.5 limits truck traffic in residential and commercial areas to designated truck routes and limits construction, deliveries, and through-truck traffic to designated routes. The County has promulgated and implemented noise policies and requirements for land development projects, which would include GHG reduction measures, by requiring these projects to provide specific noise analyses and implement any necessary measures to reduce noise to an acceptable level (N 1.3 Program 1 and N 1.3 Program 2).

The Housing Element itself does not create physical residential growth but only identifies available sites for residential development during the 2008-2014 planning period. The Housing Element includes only vacant land already zoned for Rural Living (RL), Residential Single (RS), or Residential Multi-Family (RM) in the Vacant Land Inventory to meet the RHNA. Future development would be subject to CEQA review and consideration of potential noise impacts. Compliance with Noise Element and Land Use Element policies and existing program-level and future project-level CEQA mitigation measures related to ambient noise levels will reduce impacts. Therefore, the impacts regarding noise due to the adoption of the Housing Element would be less than significant.

d) **A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?**

Less than significant. Refer to response 3.12a. Construction activities associated with the future residential projects consistent with General Plan land use designations are anticipated to temporarily exceed the County's noise standards. Noise levels associated with project-related construction activities would be higher than the County's present ambient noise levels, but would subside once construction activities conclude. These potential impacts have been evaluated at a program or policy-level in the CEQA documents listed in Section 2. The existing program-level and future project-level CEQA mitigation measures is anticipated to reduce potential construction-related noise impacts. Impacts associated with adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element would be less than significant.

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 expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?**

Less than significant. Adverse impacts associated with airport noise were addressed in the previous environmental documents prepared for the General Plan EIR, which found that development would result in a less than significant impact to the sensitive receptors due to airport noise with the implementation of mitigation measures. The Housing Element would not alter land uses in the vicinity of public or private airports that could expose people to airport noise. Impacts associated with adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element would be less than significant.

f) **For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?**

Less than significant. Refer to response 3.12e.

3.13 POPULATION AND HOUSING

a) **Induce substantial 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)?**

Less than significant. A project could induce 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). Implementation of the Housing Element would not induce direct population growth in the County, because the Housing Element does not infer direct development rights. However, the residential development consistent with General Plan land use designations would induce population growth in the County directly through the construction of housing. These

potential impacts have been evaluated at a program or policy-level in the CEQA documents listed in Chapter 2. The Housing Element does not result in any new development potential or construction of facilities and it would function as an implementation tool of the General Plan and does not modify designated land uses or patterns or policy provisions.

Project-specific development to meet the goals identified in the Housing Element would be subject to CEQA review, including an assessment of population and housing impacts. Compliance with existing program-level and future project-level CEQA mitigation measures, if necessary, will reduce impacts. Impacts associated with adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element would be less than significant.

b) **Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?**

No Impact. The Housing Element anticipates accommodating the County's share of the regional housing need with development on vacant sites. No displacement of housing is anticipated during the planning period. No impact would occur.

c) **Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?**

No Impact. Refer to response 3.13a. No impact would occur.

3.14 PUBLIC SERVICES

Would the project 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:

a) **Fire protection?**

Less than significant. Fire protection services are collaboratively provided through various agencies in San Bernardino County. The San Bernardino County Fire Department provides services through 63 fire stations located throughout the four divisions of the Department: Mountain, North Desert, South Desert, and Valley Division. There are six County governed fire protection districts and 24 County Service Areas (CSAs) with fire protection authority. These help make up the overall County fire districts.

Residential development consistent with General Plan land use designations would increase the demand for fire protection services and may require improvements to existing facilities or increases in staffing and equipment. However, the Housing Element does not result in any new development potential, population increase, or construction

of facilities that would propose land use changes beyond what the General Plan EIR considered that would trigger additional or altered need for these public services. Residential development pursuant to the Housing Element would be accommodated within vacant land currently designated by the General Plan for residential use. As such, implementation of the Housing Element does not require any changes to current land use or zoning within the County.

Potential fire protection impacts have been evaluated at a program or policy-level in the CEQA documents listed in Chapter 2. Adverse effects related to fire protection services were analyzed in the previous environmental documents prepared for the General Plan EIR, which found that development under the General Plan will result in growth and development in the unincorporated communities of San Bernardino County that will result in an increase in demand for fire protection services and this impact can be reduced to less than significant with mitigation.

The General Plan includes several policies and programs to ensure that fire protection services will continue to maintain acceptable service levels. Implementation of the proposed project will not accommodate additional growth beyond what has been anticipated by the General Plan, and all General Plan policies and programs apply to any future development. All individual projects will be subject to these mitigation policies. For instance, S 3.1 Program 7 requires new development to prepare a site-specific fire protection plan, with special emphasis in areas of high and very high fire risk. The primary purpose of a fire protection plan is actually to prevent a fire from occurring. A fire protection plan should identify the fuel sources (hazardous or other materials) on site that could initiate or contribute to the spread of a fire as well as plan for the implementation of fire protection building systems, such as fixed fire extinguishing systems and alarm systems to control the ignition or spread of a fire.

The specific environmental impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered fire protection facilities would be dependent upon the location and nature of the proposed facilities, and would be subject to CEQA review and evaluation of potential impacts to the fire protection services. Compliance with Circulation and Infrastructure Element policies and existing program-level and future project-level CEQA mitigation measures will reduce impacts. Impacts to fire protection due to adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element would be less than significant.

b) **Police protection?**

Less than significant. The San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department, in collaboration with various cities and other agencies having jurisdiction in the County, provides law enforcement services to the incorporated and the unincorporated communities in the County. Many cities have contracted police protection services to the County Sheriff's Department.

Impacts related to law enforcement services were addressed in the previous environmental documents prepared for the General Plan EIR, which found that development under the General Plan will result in an increase in population and human activity in the area and will result in an increase in the need for law enforcement services and this impact can be reduced to less than significant with mitigation.

Future residential development consistent with General Plan land use designations would increase police protection service needs in the County, and may require improvements to existing facilities or increases in staffing and equipment. However, the Housing Element does not result in any new development potential, population increase, or construction of facilities that would propose land use changes beyond what the General Plan EIR considered that would trigger additional or altered need for these public services.

Each future development would be subject to CEQA review and evaluation of potential impacts on the police department. Compliance with Circulation and Infrastructure Element policies and existing program-level and future project-level CEQA mitigation measures will reduce impacts. Impacts to police protection due to adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element would be less than significant.

c) **Schools?**

Less than significant. Population growth in the County shall increase the number of school age children needing to be served by the various school districts along the County. This will require the expansion of existing school sites/facilities and the construction of new schools. The new school sites will need to be located in proximity to the areas they will serve. Schools are not under County control. The budget cuts for schools and community colleges due to the state's economic difficulties during the last several years are the most critical issues faced by the San Bernardino County education system. The proposed fee increases and enrollment freezes in the state budget will affect the total enrollment in colleges for County residents. Another concern for schools is the decreasing rate of enrollments within the school districts.

School districts are under the jurisdiction of the state government and are subject to the regulations of the California Education Code and governance of the State Board of Education. School facility funds come from state funding, state bonds, local general obligation bonds, developer fees, surplus property sale proceeds, and School Facility Improvement and Community Facilities Districts (CFD). Funding is also available for school facilities from the federal government.

Historically, the State has been responsible for passing legislation for the funding of public schools. To assist in providing school facilities to serve students generated by new development projects, the State passed Assembly Bill 2926 (AB 2926) in 1986. This bill allows school districts to collect impact fees from developers of new residential and commercial/industrial building space. Development impact fees were also

referenced in the 1987 Leroy Greene Lease-Purchase Act, which requires school districts to contribute a matching share of costs for construction, modernization, and reconstruction projects.

Senate Bill 50 (SB 50), which passed in 1998, provides a comprehensive school facilities financing and reform program and enables statewide bond measures to be placed on the ballot. The provisions of SB 50 allow the State to offer funding to school districts to acquire school sites, construct new school facilities, and modernize existing school facilities. SB 50 also establishes a process for determining the amount of fees developers can be charged to mitigate the impact of development on school facilities. Under this legislation, a school district could charge fees above the statutory cap only under specified conditions, and then only up to the amount of funds that the district would be eligible to receive from the State. According to Section 65995 of the California Government Code, the development fees authorized by SB 50 are deemed to be "full and complete school facilities mitigation."

In accordance with SB 50, construction of new schools requires the school district to match State funds. The local match is typically provided by such funds as developer fees; local general obligation bonds; and/or Mello-Roos Community Facilities District fees (CFDs) ("special taxes" that can be levied on property owners of newly constructed homes within a CFD).

These potentially adverse effects related to public schools, were addressed in the previous environmental documents prepared for the General Plan EIR, which found that development under the General Plan will result in an increase in population and human activity in the area and will result in an increase in the need for schools and this impact can be reduced to less than significant with mitigation.

Less than significant. Residential development consistent with General Plan land use designations would increase the demand on schools; therefore, additional facilities and staffing may be necessary to accommodate the growth. However, residential development pursuant to the Housing Element would be accommodated within vacant land currently designated by the General Plan for residential use. Implementation of the Housing Element does not require any changes to current land use or zoning within the County. Therefore, the Housing Element does not result in any new development potential, population increase, or construction of facilities that would propose land use changes beyond what the General Plan EIR considered that would trigger additional or altered need for these public services. Future development would be subject to CEQA review and impacts on school facilities would be considered. Compliance with Circulation and Infrastructure Element policies and existing program-level and future project-level CEQA mitigation measures will reduce impacts. Impacts to schools due to adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element would be less than significant.

d) Parks?

Less than significant. Residential development consistent with General Plan land use designations would increase the demands for parkland and recreational facilities, and usage of existing facilities. However, the Housing Element does not result in any new development potential, population increase, or construction of facilities that would propose land use changes beyond what the General Plan EIR considered that would trigger additional or altered need for recreational facilities. Potential impacts to park facilities have been evaluated at a program or policy-level in the CEQA documents listed in Chapter 2. Policies that support the General Plan's Open Space Element are intended to reduce impacts to park facilities. Future developments would be subject the County's local park, neighborhood park and community park requirements, and to CEQA review to evaluate impacts on local parks and recreational facilities. Compliance with General Plan policies and existing program-level and future project-level CEQA mitigation measures will reduce impacts. Impacts on parks due to adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element would be less than significant.

e) Other public facilities

Less than significant. Future growth within the County will result in need for additional library facilities to serve the needs of future County residents. However, the Housing Element does not result in any new development potential, population increase, or construction of facilities that would propose land use changes beyond what the General Plan EIR considered that would trigger additional or altered need for additional library facilities. The San Bernardino County Library Facilities Master Plan presents the library's need for new facilities over the next 20 years. The Facilities Master Plan establishes three levels of facilities priorities, encompassing renovation, expansion, and replacement of the 29 facilities. The Facilities Master Plan will serve as a major analytical tool for the library's applications for funds from the Library Bond Act of 2000 (Proposition 14). The Master Plan will result in a total of 666,556 square feet of space, or 0.36 square feet per capita for an approximate service area population of 1,866,146. Provision of additional library facilities as provided by the Facilities Master Plan will provide for future County residents' library needs, reducing the impact of the future population growth.

These potential impacts have been evaluated at a program or policy-level in the CEQA documents listed in Chapter 2. Future developments would be subject to CEQA review and impacts on other public facilities would be considered. Compliance with Circulation and Infrastructure Element policies and existing program-level and future project-level CEQA mitigation measures will reduce impacts. Impacts on other public facilities due to adoption of the Housing Element would be less than significant.

3.15 RECREATION

a) **Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities, such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?**

Less than significant. Refer to response 3.14d. Residential development consistent with General Plan land use designations would increase the demands for parks and recreation facilities. However, the Housing Element does not result in any new development potential, population increase, or construction of facilities that would propose land use changes beyond what the General Plan EIR considered that would trigger additional or altered need for recreational facilities. These potential impacts have been evaluated at a program or policy-level in the CEQA documents listed in Chapter 2 and were found to be less than significant. Compliance with Open Space Element policies and existing program-level and future project-level CEQA mitigation measures will reduce impacts. Impacts on parks due to adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element would be less than significant.

b) **Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?**

Less than significant. Refer to response 3.15a.

3.16 TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC

a) **Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?**

Less than Significant. The proposed project consists of an updated assessment of housing needs within the County, and changes to the policies and procedures the County uses in addressing those needs. Future development consistent with existing General Plan land use designations would result in an increase in vehicle trips that would have the potential to affect traffic service levels and result in congestion at intersections within the County. These potential impacts have been evaluated at a program or policy-level in the CEQA documents listed in Chapter 2. Impacts associated with traffic performance standards and policies were addressed in the General Plan EIR, which found that the General Plan may result in roadway operations at LOS E or F in the Valley or Mountain Regions, or at LOS D, E, or F in the Desert Region. The General Plan EIR found this impact can be fully mitigated.

The Housing Element does not result in any new development potential or construction of facilities that would propose land use changes beyond what the General Plan EIR considered that would generate substantial new traffic. Policies that support General Plan Circulation Element are intended to reduce traffic impacts. Specific development proposals are subject to CEQA review and would be required to evaluate potential traffic impacts in comparison to applicable level of service standards for the County of San Bernardino and neighboring jurisdictions. Roadway and circulation improvements proposed as part of the entitlements and projects would also be reviewed. Compliance with Circulation Element policies and existing program-level and future project-level CEQA mitigation measures would reduce traffic impacts. Impacts associated with adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element would be less than significant.

b) **Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?**

Less than Significant. Development anticipated by the Housing Element could contribute to cumulative countywide traffic impacts. However, specific development proposals are subject to CEQA review and would be required to evaluate potential traffic impacts in comparison to applicable level of service standards for San Bernardino County and neighboring jurisdictions and appropriate mitigation measures may be required, as necessary. Roadway and circulation improvements proposed as part of the entitlements and projects would also be reviewed. Compliance with Circulation Element policies and existing program-level and future project-level CEQA mitigation measures will reduce traffic impacts. Impacts associated with adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element would be less than significant.

c) **Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?**

Less than significant. Adverse impacts associated with additional demand at Ontario International Airport and an increase in demand for air freight services will also result in increased air traffic levels at the Southern California Logistics Airport and San Bernardino International Airport were addressed in the General Plan EIR, which found these impacts could be reduced to less than significant with mitigation.

The Housing Element does not result in any new development potential or construction of facilities that would propose land use changes that would alter air traffic patterns. The Housing Element itself would not involve building any structures and thus would not result in any changes to air traffic patterns and in any substantial safety risks related to aircraft traffic. Additionally, future development anticipated under the draft Housing Element would comply with applicable Airport Land Use Plans and would not result in changes to air traffic patterns. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

d) **Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?**

Less than significant. Impacts associated with potentially increasing hazardous conditions on roadways were addressed in the environmental documents prepared for the General Plan EIR, which found these impacts could be reduced to less than significant with mitigation.

The Housing Element does not result in any new development potential or construction of facilities that would propose land use changes that are expected to alter roadway designs that would increase hazards. All roadway improvements under the reduction measures would still be subject to County roadway design standards. Compliance with Circulation Element policies and existing program-level and future project-level CEQA mitigation measures will reduce traffic impacts. Impacts associated with adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element would be less than significant.

e) **Result in inadequate emergency access?**

Less than significant. Any future development consistent with General Plan land use designations would be required to conform to traffic and safety regulations that specify adequate emergency access measures. Adverse impacts associated with potentially emergency access were addressed in the environmental documents prepared for the General Plan EIR, which found these impacts could be reduced to less than significant with mitigation.

The Housing Element does not result in any new development potential or construction of facilities that would increase these types of hazardous conditions beyond what the General Plan EIR considered. Because adequate emergency access is impossible to determine with any precision without specific details regarding each development, any future development would be evaluated to determine adequacy of emergency access on a project by project basis. Implementation of projects and activities under the Housing Element would be subject to all local, state and federal policies and standards regarding emergency response and evacuation plans. Compliance with General Plan policies and existing program-level and future project-level CEQA mitigation measures will reduce impacts. Impacts regarding inadequate emergency access due to the adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element would be less than significant.

f) **Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?**

Less than significant. Development consistent with General Plan land use designations would increase the demand for bus service, bicycle and pedestrian facilities. These potential impacts have been evaluated at a program or policy-level in the CEQA documents listed in Chapter 2. Adverse impacts associated with proposed

land uses conflicting with conflict with transit, bicycle or pedestrian facilities were addressed in the environmental documents prepared for the General Plan EIR, which found these impacts could be reduced to less than significant with mitigation.

The Housing Element does not result in any new development potential or construction of facilities that would propose land use changes beyond what the General Plan EIR considered that would conflict with transit, bicycle or pedestrian facilities. Compliance with Circulation and Infrastructure Element policies and existing program-level and future project-level CEQA mitigation measures will reduce impacts. Impacts associated with adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element would be less than significant.

3.17 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

a) Exceed waste water treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?

Less than significant. Development consistent with General Plan land use designations has the potential to increase the demand for wastewater services. Impacts associated with violating water quality standards were addressed in the environmental documents prepared for the General Plan EIR, which found these impacts could be reduced to less than significant with mitigation.

The Housing Element does not result in any new development potential or construction of facilities that would violate water quality standards beyond what the General Plan EIR considered. Implementation of residential projects and activities under the Housing Element would be subject to all of the County development standards regarding water quality. Through the County's environmental review process, future development would be evaluated for potential impacts to wastewater treatment facilities. Compliance with Circulation and Infrastructure Element policies and existing program-level and future project-level CEQA mitigation measures will reduce impacts. Impacts associated with adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element would be less than significant.

b) Require or result in the construction of new water or waste water treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?

Less than significant. The draft Housing Element designates adequate sites for potential future development that could accommodate any unmet portion of the RHNA through 2014. Connection to a sewer system is required for any parcel smaller than one-half acre (RS, RS-10M, and RM). The land inventory removed any lands that were not within a quarter mile of an existing sewer system and were not already served by roads. This filter was used because the cost for a sewer extension or a small, onsite batch plant to serve a project would make it financially infeasible. A significant amount of RM-zoned land (nearly 1,000 acres) was removed from the inventory based on these criteria. Land otherwise zoned for housing could rely on septic systems for wastewater

service. And in rural county areas, septic service is quite common for residential areas. The County's physical and environmental constraints eliminate very large portions of the unincorporated lands from consideration for development potential. Infrastructure constraints remove additional lands—due primarily to a lack of sewer systems for higher density zones and water infrastructure for lower density zones.

Impacts related to the requirement of new water and wastewater treatment facilities were addressed in the previous environmental documents prepared for the General Plan EIR, which found that development of the plan area would require the construction of new water, wastewater treatment facilities or storm drain facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects, but the impacts can be reduced to below a level of significance with mitigation. Construction of residential uses pursuant to the Housing Element could require expanding or constructing new wastewater conveyance systems. However, the Housing Element does not result in any new development potential, population increase, or construction of facilities that would propose land use changes beyond what the General Plan EIR considered that would trigger additional or altered need for water and wastewater treatment facilities. New residential development would be required to undergo separate environmental review, including analysis of impacts related to demand for and provision of water and wastewater treatment, supply, and infrastructure.

Policy CI 12.3 requires the County to work with local responsible wastewater authorities and verify that suitable arrangements have been made to safely dispose of sewage, septage, or sludge for all new development (subdivisions and conditional use permits). In addition, Policy CI 12.11 states that prior to approval of new development, the County will ensure that adequate and reliable wastewater systems will be available to support the development, and CI 12.11 Program 2 mandates the consideration of the effects of development proposals on wastewater treatment facilities. Additionally, Chapter 89.01 of the Development Code requires the payment of drainage fees for most new construction that is within an adopted Local Area Drainage Plan.

Compliance with Circulation and Infrastructure Element policies, the Development Code, and existing program-level and future project-level CEQA mitigation measures will reduce impacts. Impacts associated with adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element would be less than significant.

c) **Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?**

Less than significant. Several drainage plans have been prepared for the different cities in the county. Master Drainage Plans are used as guidelines for future flood control facility improvements, for future planning and coordinating with the San

Bernardino County Flood Control District, local cities, and future development activities, and as a basis for developing funding mechanisms.

The previous environmental documents prepared for the General Plan EIR, which found that development of the plan area would require the construction of storm drain facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects, but the impacts can be reduced to below a level of significance with mitigation. Construction of residential uses pursuant to the Housing Element could require expanding or constructing new storm water conveyance systems. However, the Housing Element does not result in any new development potential, population increase, or construction of facilities that would propose land use changes beyond what the General Plan EIR considered that would trigger additional or altered need for storm water drainage facilities. New residential development would be required to undergo separate environmental review, including analysis of impacts related to demand for and provision of water and wastewater treatment, supply, and infrastructure.

The General Plan contains policy provisions designed to minimize impacts associated with the need for drainage infrastructure. Policy CI 13.1 requires new development to utilize site-design, source-control, and treatment control best management practices (BMPs) on applicable projects, to achieve compliance with the County Municipal Stormwater National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit. The stipulations of Policy CI 13.1 require site-specific, case-by-case analysis for all needed stormwater drainage infrastructure, which will result in the most efficient infrastructure placement. Policy CI 13.2 promotes the implementation of low impact design principles to help control urban runoff. Examples of these principles include the minimization of changes in hydrology and pollutant loading in order to ensure that postdevelopment runoff rates and velocities from a site do not adversely impact downstream erosion and also to minimize the quantity of stormwater directed to impermeable surfaces.

Additionally, Chapter 89.01 of the Development Code requires the payment of drainage fees for most new construction that is within an adopted Local Area Drainage Plan. The fees are paid prior to the issuance of building permits for the purposes of defraying the actual or estimated costs of constructing planned drainage facilities. Compliance with existing regulations, Circulation and Infrastructure Element policies, the Development Code, and existing program-level and future project-level CEQA mitigation measures will reduce impacts. Impacts associated with adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element would be less than significant.

d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?

Less than significant. The county's domestic water sources are supplied through both local and imported water. San Bernardino County's geographic challenges impact water sourcing and distribution. For the entire county, it is estimated that, on average, 85

percent of the domestic water is supplied by local sources while the balance is imported purchased water. There are supply percentage differences depending on geographic area.

Impacts related to the requirement of additional water supply were addressed in the previous environmental documents prepared for the General Plan EIR, which found that development of the plan area would require the construction of new water treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects, but the impacts can be reduced to below a level of significance with mitigation. General Plan policies and programs contained in the Circulation and Infrastructure Element address water supply and are designed to guide future development in a way that lessens impacts to water supply resources. The County of San Bernardino elected to implement the mitigation monitoring requirements of CEQA by incorporating all mitigation measures presented in the General Plan EIR directly into the General Plan as policies.

The Countywide Water Element Working Group recently (August 2012) reported that the County has sufficient water resources through 2035 and beyond (source: Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District, Inland Empire Utilities Agency, and Mojave Water Agency). The land inventory removes lands that may have adequate water supply in the future, but not by the year 2013.

Chapter 83.10 of the Development Code regulates landscape development in the county and requires that at least 75 percent of the plants selected in non-turf areas be well suited to the climate of the region and require minimal water once established in the landscape. Plants that require similar water needs are mandated to be grouped together and irrigated separately. Native plant materials or locally adaptable drought-tolerant plantings capable of surviving the prevailing climatic and soil conditions with a minimum of supplemental water are emphasized under Chapter 83.10, and in order to reduce evaporation and competition for water a minimum of three inches of mulch must be added to the soil surface in non-turf areas after planting and within 18 inches of tree trunks.

General Plan Policy CO 5.2 requires continued monitoring of the county's adjudicated groundwater basins to ensure a balanced hydrological system in terms of withdrawal and replenishment of water from groundwater basins. Policy CI 11.12 states that prior to approval of new development, the County will ensure that adequate and reliable water supplies and conveyance systems will be available to support the development. Project-level CEQA review of future water supply infrastructure would identify and mitigate significant environmental impacts. Compliance with Circulation and Infrastructure Element policies, the Development Code, and existing program-level and future project-level CEQA mitigation measures will reduce impacts.

The Housing Element identifies adequate sites for potential residential development to meet RHNA planning goals. Each of these sites is currently zoned for Rural Living (RL), Single Residential (RS), or Multiple Residential (RM) use. As such, implementation of the Housing Element does not require any changes to current land use or zoning within the County. All new residential development is required to comply with applicable state and local laws and regulations governing conservation of water supply resources. For example, plumbing fixtures that reduce water usage (i.e., low volume toilet tanks, flow control devices for faucets and shower heads) are required in accordance with Title 24 of the California Administrative Code; and ultra-low flush toilets must be installed in accordance with Health and Safety Code Section 17921.3. The use of drought tolerant plant species, drip irrigation systems, the use of inert materials and minimal use of turf areas could also be considered in order to reduce water usage. Compliance with existing program-level and future project-level CEQA mitigation measures would reduce impacts.

The net increase in water demand anticipated as a result of implementation of the Housing Element will be met by existing entitlements, therefore water supply impacts associated with adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element would be less than significant.

e) **Result in a determination by the waste water 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?**

Less than significant. Refer to response 3.17b.

f) **Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?**

No Impact. Adverse impacts associated with solid waste generation were addressed in the environmental documents prepared for the General Plan EIR, which found these impacts could be reduced to less than significant with mitigation. General Plan policies and the Development Code are intended to facilitate compliance with federal, state, and local solid waste requirements. Future residential development facilitated by the proposed project adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element would be required to comply with all applicable standards and regulations related to solid waste, including local regulations requiring recycling/deconstruction of existing buildings and materials. No impact would occur.

g) **Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?**

No Impact. Any future development would comply with federal and state laws regulating solid waste disposal. No adverse impact would occur, and no further analysis of this issue is required.

3.18 MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

a) **Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?**

Less than Significant. The proposed project is the San Bernardino County Housing Element, which is a policy document addressing demographic issues and local housing needs in the County for the planning period from 2008 to 2014. Existing General Plan land use designations and zoning is adequate to accommodate development of all RHNA units within the planning period. Wildlife impacts associated with residential development consistent with General Plan land use designations have been evaluated at a program or policy-level in the CEQA documents listed in Chapter 2. Implementation of the Housing Element would not directly remove sensitive vegetation communities or species, because the Housing Element does not infer direct development rights. Development anticipated by the Housing Element would be subject to compliance with the regulations and guidelines set forth in the County's General Plan, Development Code, and development review process.

Since the County has designated a substantial amount of open space to be preserved in perpetuity, potential impacts to sensitive biological resources would be reduced. Similarly, potential impacts to archaeological or paleontological resources attributed to the Housing Element would be reduced with adherence to the regulatory requirements and mitigation, which provides instructions in the event a material of potential cultural significance is uncovered. Notwithstanding, due to the conceptual nature of the future residential development, proposals would require individual assessments of potential impacts to biological and cultural resources. If necessary, additional mitigation would be required to reduce potential impacts to a less than significant level. Compliance with existing program-level and future project-level CEQA mitigation measures would reduce impacts.

Adoption of the proposed Housing Element would not significantly degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory. Therefore the proposed 2008-2014 Housing Element's contribution to adverse impacts on wildlife resources, individually or cumulatively, would be less than significant.

b) **Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)**

Less than Significant. The proposed project involves the implementation of the Housing Element for the County of San Bernardino. The draft Housing Element is a policy document designed to assist the County in future planning. Through the County's environmental review process, future development projects would be evaluated for potential cumulative impacts. Where needed, appropriate mitigation measures would be required to reduce potential impacts to a level that is less than significant. No mitigation measures are necessary.

c) **Does the project have environmental effects, which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?**

Less than Significant. The proposed project consists of an updated determination of housing needs within the County, and revisions to policies and procedures the County uses in addressing those needs. The Housing Element is a policy document designed to assist the County in future planning. Environmental impacts with potential to adversely affect people that may result from development that is consistent with the General Plan have been evaluated at a program or policy-level in the CEQA documents listed in Chapter 2. Furthermore, through the County's environmental review process, future development projects would be evaluated for potential adverse effects on people. Where needed, appropriate mitigation measures would be required to reduce potential impacts. Compliance with existing program-level and future project-level CEQA mitigation measures will reduce impacts. Impacts associated with adoption of the 2008-2014 Housing Element would be less than significant.

4. *Consultant Recommendation*

Based on the information and environmental analysis contained in this Initial Study, we recommend that the County of San Bernardino adopt a Negative Declaration for this project. We recommend that the first category be selected for the County's determination (See Section 5, *Lead Agency Determination*).

Date	Dwayne S. Mears, AICP, for The Planning Center|DC&E

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5. *Lead Agency Determination*

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

☒ I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

☐ I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

☐ I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.

☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Signature	*Date*
Printed Name	*For*

5. Lead Agency Determination

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Appendix A
San Bernardino County 2008-2014 Housing Element

Appendix

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