

SUMMARY

The City of San José is located in the easterly half of the Santa Clara Valley at the southern tip of San Francisco Bay. San José is the largest city in Santa Clara County, both in terms of population and area.

The proposed *Envision San José 2040 General Plan* provides a vision of future growth, development, and the provision of municipal services for San José. The *Envision San José 2040 General Plan* applies to those urban, unincorporated areas of Santa Clara County that are within San José's Urban Growth Boundary and Urban Service Area (approximately 143 square miles) and also plans for all areas within the city's Sphere of Influence (approximately 280 square miles).

The proposed *Envision San José 2040 General Plan* provides capacity for the development of up to 470,000 new jobs and 120,000 new dwelling units through 2035, supporting a population of approximately 1,313,811 people by 2035. This growth capacity would allow a total of 839,450 jobs and 429,350 dwelling units in San José, an increase of 127 percent and 39 percent, respectively, which if fully developed would result in a jobs to employed resident ratio (J/ER) of 1.3 to 1.

The *Envision San José 2040 General Plan* focuses new housing growth within identified Growth Areas and precludes large scale residential development from occurring on sites outside of these Growth Areas. Along with the city's Downtown, Specific Plan areas and employment lands, these Growth Areas include new "Urban Villages" which propose intensified urban redevelopment of underutilized commercial lands to accommodate new growth. New residential development within the Growth Areas for the most part is planned to occur at a density of at least 55 dwelling units per acre (55 DU/AC) with some allowance for 30 DU/AC at interfaces with existing single-family neighborhoods. These planned Growth Areas have been selected to promote transit use, address multiple environmental concerns and to align with the overall General Plan goals.

The General Plan street network is proposed to be altered in some locations to better accommodate multimodal streets. The new street typologies would, in some cases, reduce the automobile capacity of a street to allow for non-automotive transportation improvements. The *Envision San José 2040 General Plan* proposes a more balanced, multimodal transportation network throughout the City of San José.

Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures

The following table summarizes the significant environmental impacts identified and discussed within the text of this Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) and identifies mitigation measures to avoid or reduce those impacts. For a complete description of impacts and mitigation measures, the reader should refer to the text of this PEIR. Alternatives to the proposed project and known views of local groups and areas of controversy are also summarized at the end of the table. A complete description of the project and of its impacts and proposed mitigation measures can be found in the text of the PEIR which follows this summary.

SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	MITIGATION AND AVOIDANCE MEASURES	Significance After Mitigation
LAND USE IMPACTS		
<p>Impact LU-6: The proposed General Plan will allow new development on several sites designated as Prime Farmland. Although lands within the UGB have been planned and designated for urban uses for a number of years, loss of the remaining Prime Farmland in these areas would be a significant impact. (Significant Impact)</p>	<p>Policy LU-12.3 encourages, but does not require, the protection of agricultural lands through the use of Williamson Act contracts, agricultural conservation easements, and transfers of development rights. The methods discussed in Section 3.1.4.1 of this PEIR provide options for the implementation of this policy. As an alternative to providing individual agricultural easements, the City may also consider participation in an appropriate agricultural mitigation program established for the purpose of mitigating or avoiding loss of agricultural land.</p> <p>The protection of other existing farmland, such as through the use of agricultural easements or outright purchase, would not be considered mitigation under CEQA because the net result of such actions would still be a net loss of farmland acreage. However, such actions do benefit agriculture by preventing the conversion of otherwise vulnerable farmland to non-agricultural uses. If a project that results in the loss of farmland contributes to the protection of other farmland where the threat or likelihood of conversion to non-agricultural use is imminent, that fact can be taken into account when a Lead Agency adopts a statement of overriding considerations.</p> <p>In the case of remaining farmland within the City of San José, the sites currently planned for urban development have been designated for urban uses within the city’s UGB for a number of years. For properties without existing entitlements that include some Prime Farmland, agricultural easements could be considered at the time of future development; however, as noted above, easements would not reduce the impact to Prime Farmland to a less than significant level.</p> <p>The implementation of proposed land use policies to protect farmland in non-urban areas will reduce impacts to agricultural resources within the city, but not to a less than significant level. No feasible mitigation measures are available to reduce the loss of agricultural land within areas previously planned and designated for development within the city’s UGB. Therefore, the loss of agricultural land would remain significant. (Significant Unavoidable Impact)</p>	<p>SU</p>

SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	MITIGATION AND AVOIDANCE MEASURES	Significance After Mitigation
TRANSPORTATION IMPACTS		
<p>Impact TRANS-1: New development and redevelopment allowed under the proposed General Plan will generate a significant increase in traffic, resulting in what is currently forecast to be a level of VMT per service population of 16.08 which is a substantial increase over existing conditions. Implementation of the General Plan Policies and Actions will reduce VMT substantially over time. There is, however, no way to accurately quantify the benefits that can be achieved from those policies and actions using existing analytic tools. The impact is therefore significant. (Significant Impact)</p>	<p>While the proposed General Plan Policies and Actions identified in Section 3.2 Transportation, such as multi-modal infrastructure improvements, TDM programs for large employers and new development, and implementation of parking strategies in Tier 2, will decrease VMT substantially over time, a substantial (over nine percent) reduction in projected VMT would be required to reduce impacts to less than significant.</p> <p>The mix and location of land uses proposed and new street typologies, combined with design and infrastructure priorities represented in the above policies and actions can create a new dynamic that ultimately reduces the VMT generated by individuals' reliance on automobiles in all aspects of daily life.</p> <p>Given the program level of this EIR analysis and the accuracy of the tools currently available for evaluating impacts from traffic and greenhouse gas emissions, there are no further tools available for accurately calculating the degree of mitigation that can be achieved through 2035. (Significant Unavoidable Impact)</p>	SU
<p>Impact TRANS-3: Implementation of the proposed General Plan will result in significant increases in congestion on already congested roadways that cross most of the 27 identified screenlines. Increasing the capacity of these roadway facilities would create substantial secondary impacts for those screenlines that are located in developed areas and neighborhoods, and could induce unplanned growth in neighboring areas. Implementation of proposed General Plan policies and actions will serve to reduce the impacts, but not to less than significant levels. Roadway congestion along the screenlines will be significant. (Significant Impact)</p>	<p>Historic mitigation for congested roadways has been to increase their capacity. As described in Section 3.2.4.3, increasing the capacity of impacted roadway facilities such as those along the identified screenlines would create substantial secondary impacts, particularly along roadways that are located in developed areas and neighborhoods, and it would also likely induce unplanned growth in neighboring areas. The revised policies in this General Plan do not envision continually widening streets and expanding intersections to the detriment of neighborhoods and other transportation modes. (Significant Unavoidable Impact)</p>	SU
<p>Impact TRANS-4: Implementation of the proposed General Plan will result in traffic congestion that will have significant adverse impacts on 12 of 14</p>	<p>As discussed in Section 3.2.5, increased traffic congestion that will have significant adverse impacts on thirteen of fourteen designated Transit Priority Corridors may not be possible to offset given physical constraints for improvements within existing</p>	SU

SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	MITIGATION AND AVOIDANCE MEASURES	Significance After Mitigation
designated Transit Priority Corridors. Implementation of identified Policies and Actions will reduce these impacts, but the City is unable to ensure that the impacts can and will be reduced to a less than significant level by actions that are within the City's control. (Significant Impact)	roadways. Measures such as installing transit signal priority, queue jump lanes at congested intersections, and/or exclusive bus lanes could reduce impacts in some cases; however, there is no assurance that these techniques would reduce impacts to a less than significant level along constrained streets in areas with substantial increases in density, such as in Downtown San José. (Significant Unavoidable Impact)	
Impact TRANS-5: Implementation of the proposed General Plan will result in significant increases in traffic congestion on congested roadways in 13 of 14 neighboring cities and on County and Caltrans facilities. (Significant Impact)	As described in Section 3.2.5, widening roadways in 13 neighboring cities and on County and Caltrans facilities would not reduce the quantities of traffic, would not be environmentally preferable and given the degree of right-of-way acquisition that would be required along all of these streets and regional roadway facilities, would not be economically or physically feasible. (Significant Unavoidable Impact)	SU
NOISE AND VIBRATION IMPACTS		
Impact NV-3: The anticipated increase in vehicular traffic from implementation of the <i>Envision San José 2040 General Plan</i> would result in increased traffic noise at noise sensitive land uses adjacent to heavily traveled roadways throughout the city. Where roadways are expanded (e.g. Santa Teresa Blvd., Zanker Road) significant increases in noise levels at sensitive uses can be mitigated through the implementation of proposed General Plan policies and existing regulations (see also Section 3.3.5.1) but not in all cases due to the potential proximity of sensitive uses to the expanded roadway right-of-way. Therefore, the proposed <i>Envision San José 2040 General Plan</i> would result in significant impacts to sensitive land uses adjacent to roadways throughout the city due to increases in traffic-generated noise. (Significant Impact)	The implementation of measures associated with Policy EC-1.4 will not likely be able to reduce substantial noise increases to acceptable levels at all noise sensitive areas. Refer to Section 3.3.5 for a more detailed discussion of mitigation and avoidance measures. (Significant Unavoidable Impact)	SU
AIR QUALITY IMPACTS		
Impact AQ-1: The projected rates of both VMT and vehicle trip growth are greater than the rate of population growth. Therefore, the proposed <i>Envision San José 2040</i>	Implementation of the proposed <i>Envision San José 2040 General Plan</i> in accordance with proposed policies and actions would reduce emissions associated with vehicle trips through planned multi-modal improvements, trip reduction, and	SU

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<p><i>General Plan</i> would not be consistent with the Bay Area 2010 CAP threshold of significance. (Significant Impact)</p>	<p>local land use strategies. The proposed General Plan also includes Transportation Demand Measures, such as transit pass subsidies and free shuttle service by employers, consistent with the Clean Air Plan. While the City proposes to implement measures to reduce VMT and associated air pollutant emissions (such as multi-modal infrastructure improvements and implementation of parking strategies in Tier 2), there is no assurance that these measures would reduce the VMT per capita to a level at or below the current rate. The increased growth in VMT per capita could result in emissions beyond those anticipated in the region’s Clean Air Plan. With the projected increase in vehicle miles traveled, beyond or above the growth in population and employment, impacts associated with increased emissions of criteria pollutants would remain significant and unavoidable. (Significant Unavoidable Impact)</p>	
<p>Impact AQ-8: New development and redevelopment allowed under the proposed <i>Envision San José 2040 General Plan</i> could increase air pollutant emissions and concentrations within the Air Basin. Implementation of proposed policies and existing regulations and programs would reduce air pollutant emissions per capita, but not to a less than significant level. (Significant Impact)</p>		<p>SU</p>
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES		
<p>Impact BIO-2: New development and redevelopment allowed under the proposed General Plan would result in emissions of nitrogen compounds that could affect the species composition and viability of sensitive serpentine grasslands. Implementation of the proposed policies and existing regulations would substantially reduce or offset indirect effects from nitrogen oxide deposition from vehicular trips within the region upon serpentine grassland communities; however, there currently is no assurance that the HCP/NCCP program or other system of managed preserves would be established to offset new nitrogen deposition impacts from vehicular emissions. (Significant Impact)</p>	<p>The timeline for adoption of an HCP/NCCP that covers southern Santa Clara County, including portions of San José, has been delayed and the scope of the draft HCP/NCCP may be modified. While it is the City’s intent to address nitrogen deposition impacts from development within the city (refer to Actions ER 2.9 and ER 2.10), given current resources, the City cannot commit to designing and implementing an independent system of serpentine grassland preserves. Therefore, this impact, and the city’s contribution to it with build-out of the draft <i>Envision San José 2040 General Plan</i>, will be significant and unavoidable because there is no assurance that a program of managed serpentine preserves will be established as a part of implementation of an adopted Santa Clara Valley HCP or an independent program designed and implemented by the City of San José. (Significant Unavoidable Impact)</p>	<p>SU</p>
AESTHETICS IMPACTS		
<p>Impact AES-1: New development and redevelopment allowed under the proposed General Plan generally would occur on the valley floor and would not adversely affect scenic hillside resources. Where small-scale or</p>	<p>Build out of the Communications Hill Specific Plan area and the North Coyote Planning Area (in conformance with previously approved entitlements) would alter or block views of grassy or wooded hillsides through the construction of new, multiple-storied development. There are no measures that would fully eliminate</p>	<p>SU</p>

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<p>larger-scale development (such as a retreat center, golf course or cemetery) does occur in hillside areas, implementation of the proposed policies and existing regulations and adopted plans would substantially reduce impacts to scenic resources on hillsides through careful siting and design. New development and redevelopment allowed under the proposed General Plan also would alter views from key roadways that serve as gateways to the city or currently provide substantial views of the natural environment within or adjacent to the city. Implementation of the proposed General Plan policies generally would avoid or substantially reduce impacts to natural scenic views from key gateways and roadways within the city. Build out of the Communications Hill Specific Plan area and the North Coyote Planning Area in conformance with previously approved entitlements, however, would alter or block views of grassy or wooded hillsides through the construction of new, multiple-storied development, which would result in a significant aesthetic impact at these locations. (Significant Impact)</p>	<p>these visual impacts (refer to Section 3.12 Aesthetics and Visual Resources). (Significant Unavoidable Impact)</p>	
<p>POPULATION AND HOUSING/GROWTH INDUCEMENT IMPACTS</p>		
<p>Impact PH -1: New development and redevelopment allowed under the proposed General Plan would not induce growth beyond that anticipated in ABAG projections for the San Francisco Bay Area in the near term. The anticipated level of job growth by 2035 will outpace housing development within the city, resulting in a new jobs/housing imbalance. The proposed <i>Envision San José 2040 General Plan</i> job growth could require substantial residential development elsewhere in the region to provide adequate housing opportunities for future workers. Traffic and the environmental effects of traffic, such as air pollution, noise, and greenhouse gases</p>	<p>The City proposes to implement measures to reduce VMT and associated air pollutant emissions (such as multi-modal infrastructure improvements and transit pass subsidies), but there is no assurance at this time that these measures would reduce air emissions and transportation congestion impacts related to population growth to a less than significant level. Potentially induced residential development outside San José, especially outside of Santa Clara County and southern Alameda County, could result in secondary impacts that are significant, but not within the City’s jurisdiction to address. (Significant Unavoidable Impact)</p>	<p>SU</p>

SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	MITIGATION AND AVOIDANCE MEASURES	Significance After Mitigation
<p>resulting from induced population growth in other jurisdictions will result in significant environmental impacts. (Significant Impact)</p>		
<p>GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS</p>		
<p>Impact GHG-2: The city’s projected 2035 GHG emissions, without further reductions, would constitute a cumulatively considerable contribution to global climate change by exceeding the average carbon-efficiency standard necessary to maintain a trajectory to meet statewide 2050 goals as established by Executive Order S-3-05. (Significant Impact)</p>	<p>The General Plan includes a program-level Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategy that provides the framework for implementing measures within the City’s purview and control. The Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategy consists of a phased approach to update GHG emission inventories and projections, refine and improve reduction strategies, and confirm that the City is on track to first meet targets per AB 32 and then move progressively towards meeting the more aggressive goal of an 80 percent reduction in GHG emissions by 2050 (or 40 percent by 2035) compared to a 1990 baseline. As discussed in Section 3.15, the comparison of projected emissions to desired future GHG emissions (i.e., using the Plan-level GHG emissions per service population methodology adopted by BAAQMD for assessing a comprehensive General Plan’s contribution to future GHG emissions) is a fundamentally different analysis than a comparison of the ‘project’ condition against existing conditions. Measures are identified in the inaugural version of the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategy that could result in GHG emission reductions of approximately 1.2 MMT beyond the business-as-usual emissions estimated for 2035. The emission reductions identified at this time are not large enough to meet the identified 3.04 MT CO₂e/SP efficiency metric. Given that much of the built environment currently in place will likely remain in 2035, significantly more “retrofit” measures in addition to the efficiencies of proposed new compact and transit oriented development will be needed.</p> <p>Achieving the substantial emissions reductions needed beyond 2020 will require a multiple-pronged approach that includes policy decisions at the federal and state level and new and substantially advanced technologies that cannot be anticipated or predicted with any accuracy at this time. Policy and regulatory decisions by other agencies and most technological advances (for example, in the area of motor vehicle emissions) are outside the City’s control, and therefore cannot be relied upon as feasible mitigation strategies. Given the uncertainties about the feasibility of achieving the needed 2035 emissions reductions, the city’s contribution to greenhouse gas emissions and climate change for the 2035 timeframe is</p>	<p>SU</p>

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	conservatively identified as cumulatively considerable. (Significant Unavoidable Impact)	
CUMULATIVE IMPACTS		
Impact C-LU-1: Build-out of the proposed General Plan in the north Coyote Valley area in conjunction with other planned or proposed development would be a cumulatively considerable contribution to cumulative impacts to agricultural resources. (Significant Cumulative Impact)	While conservation easements or strengthened zoning protections for agriculture could be used to limit future loss of Prime Farmland in other parts of the County, no feasible mitigation measures are available to offset the cumulative loss of agricultural land, especially prime agricultural land, within areas previously planned and designated for development within the city's UGB or areas of the County already planned and approved for development. Conversion of developed rural or suburban areas (e.g., "ranchettes" or residences on lots of five to 20 acres) back to farmland may be possible in limited areas as housing stock ages; however opportunities to convert sizeable areas back to prime farmland are limited by the challenges of assembling a sizeable group of properties, removing physical improvements (such as buildings, pavement, and underground utility lines), and cost. Therefore, the contribution to the cumulative loss of agricultural land would remain significant. (Significant Unavoidable Cumulative Impact)	SU
Impact C-TRANS-2: Build-out of the proposed General Plan in conjunction with other planned development in the South Bay would cause a substantial contribution to cumulatively significant regional transportation impacts. (Significant Cumulative Impact)	While ultimately the only way to reduce the significant local and regional transportation impacts is to reduce dependency on the automobile, near term efforts by local and regional agencies to facilitate multimodal facilities, including bicycle paths and trails and mass transit, will be an increasingly vital component of the regional transportation system. As discussed in Section 3.2.5, it may not be possible to offset cumulative transportation impacts given physical constraints for improvements within existing roadways. Also, given the degree of right-of-way acquisition that would be required along streets and regional roadway facilities, roadway widening would not be economically or physically feasible. (Significant Unavoidable Cumulative Impact)	SU
Impact C-NV-3: Increased development in the South Bay Area will result in a significant increase in traffic noise levels on roadway segments throughout the region, beyond accepted thresholds in various communities. (Significant Cumulative Impact)	While implementation of noise attenuation measures as a part of the design of new development (as required under local building codes and ordinances) would reduce interior noise levels, adequate mitigation measures for all outdoor areas and existing development near busy transportation corridors may not be feasible to implement without constructing high walls that would block light and exterior views from both interior and outdoor areas. This impact, and the city's contribution to it with build-out of the draft <i>Envision San José 2040 General Plan</i> , will be cumulatively	SU

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	significant and unavoidable because there are not feasible measures to mitigate noise levels for all outdoor areas and existing development. (Significant Unavoidable Cumulative Impact)	
<p>Impact C-BIO-4: Cumulative development would result in emissions of nitrogen compounds that could affect the species composition and viability of sensitive serpentine grasslands. Implementation of existing regulations and proposed policies for VMT reduction would reduce or offset indirect effects to serpentine grassland communities; however there currently is no assurance that a system of managed preserves would be established to offset new nitrogen deposition impacts from vehicular emissions. (Significant Cumulative Impact)</p>	<p>The draft Santa Clara Valley Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP) and various power plant projects in Santa Clara County identify acquisition and management of serpentine grassland habitats (including grazing to remove non-native grasses) as suitable mitigation to offset nitrogen deposition impacts to these sensitive habitats. The timeline for adoption of an HCP/NCCP that covers southern Santa Clara County, including portions of San José, has been delayed and the scope of the draft HCP/NCCP may be modified. While it is the City’s intent to address nitrogen deposition impacts from development within the city (refer to Actions ER 2.9 and ER 2.10 in the proposed General Plan), given current resources, the City cannot commit to designing and implementing an independent system of serpentine grassland preserves. Therefore, this impact, and the city’s contribution to it with build-out of the draft <i>Envision San José 2040 General Plan</i>, will be significant and unavoidable because there is no assurance that a program of managed serpentine preserves will be established as a part of implementation of an adopted Santa Clara Valley HCP or an independent program unilaterally designed and implemented by the City of San José. (Significant Unavoidable Cumulative Impact)</p>	<p>SU</p>
<p>Impact C-PH-5: Build-out of the proposed General Plan in conjunction with other planned development would contribute cumulatively to impacts arising from a regional jobs-housing imbalance. (Significant Cumulative Impact)</p>	<p>Mitigation for a jobs-housing imbalance and associated physical environmental effects could use one of several approaches. The amount of employment in a community could be limited so that each community is in balance with the housing it provides. This approach is not proposed in any of the General Plans in Santa Clara County and would be inconsistent with project objectives. A second approach, more consistent with the project objectives, is to reduce the physical effects of a jobs-housing imbalance. An example of this approach would be providing services and increasing housing near transit systems in all contributing communities, that could reduce environmental effects associated with commuting between housing and jobs for those residents employed locally.</p> <p>As discussed in detail in the Transportation, Air Quality, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions sections of this PEIR, the City proposes to implement measures to reduce</p>	<p>SU</p>

SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	MITIGATION AND AVOIDANCE MEASURES	Significance After Mitigation
	<p>VMT and associated air pollutant emissions. There is at present no assurance that these measures would reduce air emissions and transportation congestion impacts to a less than significant level. Residential development outside San José, especially outside of Santa Clara County and southern Alameda County, could contribute to regional growth inducing impacts that are not reduced to a less than significant level. Therefore, the identified cumulative population and housing impact related to the jobs/housing balance and induced growth is significant and unavoidable.</p> <p>(Significant Unavoidable Cumulative Impact)</p>	
<p>Notes:</p> <p>Several impacts identified as impacts of the <i>Envision San José 2040 General Plan</i> are in fact cumulative impacts. The increased growth in VMT per capita could result in air emissions beyond those anticipated in the region's Clean Air Plan. These impacts are also identified as Impact AQ-1 and Impact AQ-8 in Section 3.4 Air Quality.</p> <p>Given that new technologies and the adoption of new and as yet unidentified measures under the City's Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategy and the feasibility of achieving the substantial 2035 emissions reductions are uncertain, the city's contribution to GHG emissions for the 2035 timeframe is conservatively determined to be cumulatively considerable. This impact is also identified as Impact GHG-1 in Section 3.15 Greenhouse Gas Emissions.</p>		

SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVES

CEQA requires that an EIR identify alternatives to a project as it is proposed. The CEQA Guidelines specify that the EIR should identify alternatives that “will feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but will avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project.” The purpose of this section is to determine whether there are alternatives of design, scope or location that will substantially lessen the significant impacts, even if those alternatives “impede to some degree the attainment of the project objectives,” or are more expensive. [Section 15126.6]

In order to comply with the purposes of CEQA, it is important to identify alternatives that reduce the significant impacts that are anticipated to occur if the project is implemented and to try to meet as many of the project’s objectives as possible. The Guidelines emphasize a common sense approach -- the alternatives should be reasonable, should “foster informed decision making and public participation,” and should focus on alternatives that avoid or substantially lessen the significant impacts. The project’s objectives are listed on page 101 of this PEIR.

As discussed in this PEIR, the project has significant unmitigated or unavoidable impacts associated with loss of prime farmland, transportation, roadway noise, air quality, biological resources (nitrogen deposition on sensitive serpentine habitats), aesthetics, climate change/greenhouse gas emissions in 2035, and growth inducement. Much of the impacts discussion in this PEIR revolves around the direct or indirect effects of automobile travel, characterized as Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), which contribute to or cause almost all of the significant unavoidable impacts, including air quality, transportation, roadway noise, nitrogen deposition on sensitive serpentine habitats, and greenhouse gas impacts.

Given that this PEIR evaluates the proposed General Plan for the entire City of San José, it would not be feasible or meaningful to evaluate an alternative location (i.e., development in another city) for purposes of informing a decision about the City of San José General Plan. Therefore, this PEIR evaluates the environmental effects of various alternatives to the proposed *Envision San José 2040 General Plan* in the City of San José. Several of the alternatives described below, however, do include modifications of how much new growth would or should occur within the city, and variations on the intensity and mix of development within Urban Village areas, commercial corridors, and some Specific Plan and Employment Land areas.

Key objectives of the project are for the city to become more of a regional job center, to increase utilization of regional transportation systems, and support the City’s fiscal health. Given the ongoing problems with providing services to a community that has had far more housing than jobs for decades and in conformance with General Plan objectives for fiscal sustainability, scenarios which would allow job and housing growth corresponding to a J/ER ratio of less than 1.0 would not meet the basic objectives of the project and were not considered further.

An alternative which would accelerate implementation of parking strategies, such as reducing on-site parking and/or charging employees and customers for parking, to the first tier of implementation of the General Plan was considered and rejected. While it has been shown that such strategies can be highly effective in reducing congestion and motor vehicle trips at prime locations (such as attractive commercial areas and institutions), implementation of these strategies by the City of San José alone within the South Bay Area would put the city at a substantial disadvantage in attracting industrial and commercial employers in the near term. As an acceleration of parking strategy implementation would not be consistent with several of the basic objectives of the project (e.g., increasing the J/ER

ratio for fiscal sustainability in the near term of the Plan), this alternative is not addressed further. Although not considered further as a CEQA alternative, the City recognizes that parking strategies and similar pricing measures are likely to be important tools for reducing motor vehicle travel in the future, especially as part of regional planning implementation efforts.

The following alternatives are evaluated as alternatives to the proposed General Plan.

- No Project/Retain Existing General Plan
- Scenario 1 Low Growth Alternative
- Scenario 2 More Housing/Fewer Jobs Alternative
- Scenario 3 ABAG (Association of Bay Area Governments) Projections Alternative
- Scenario 4 More Jobs/Less Housing Alternative
- Scenario 5 Slightly More Housing/Slightly Fewer Jobs Alternative

The basic differences between these alternatives are summarized in Table S-1.

CEQA Alternative	Type of Alternative					
	No Project	Less Growth	Housing		Jobs/Housing Ratio 1:1	Reduced Jobs
			More	Less		
No Project/Retain Existing General Plan	X	X		X		X
Scenario 1: Low Growth		X		X		X
Scenario 2: More Housing/Fewer Jobs			X			X
Scenario 3: ABAG Projections			X		X	X
Scenario 4: More Jobs/Less Housing				X		
Scenario 5: Slightly More Housing/Less Jobs			X			X

NO PROJECT/RETAIN EXISTING GENERAL PLAN ALTERNATIVE

The purpose of this alternative is to identify what development and associated environmental impacts would occur if the City does not adopt a comprehensive update of its General Plan, in other words, how the city would continue to grow and evolve under the current General Plan's goals and policies. This alternative would include:

1. The remaining development potential associated with the current *Focus on the Future San José 2020 General Plan* projected through 2035;

2. All 'in process' residential and non-residential development allowed under the existing General Plan.

The No Project/Retain Existing General Plan Alternative assumes the new residential and non-residential development identified above would occur through 2035, as projected in a straight line from past growth patterns. The Villages and Corridors would remain primarily commercial areas and would not be redeveloped with as much mixed use, transit-oriented development as called for under the proposed General Plan because of the underlying land use designations. Intensification in the Alviso, Berryessa, Communications Hill, Jackson-Taylor, Midtown, Rincon South and Tamien Station Specific Plan areas and in identified Employment Lands (above what is currently allowed) would not occur because the land use designations in these areas would not change. If the currently defined thresholds/triggers are met, development could occur in the Coyote Valley and Almaden Valley Urban Reserves at the edge of the city.

Utilizing the standards and land use designations in the current 2020 General Plan, the population of the city under this Alternative would be approximately 116,000 fewer people than is supported by the proposed General Plan in 2035, and the number of jobs would be 214,000 fewer. The service population (jobs+residents) under the No Project/Retain Existing General Plan Alternative in 2035 is projected to be 1,822,868 (residents+jobs), which is approximately 15 percent less than accommodated by the proposed *Envision San José 2040 General Plan*. This also represents substantially less new development occurring within the city than projected by ABAG through 2035 (see Scenario 3 below).

Comparison of Environmental Impacts: The No Project/Existing General Plan Alternative would incrementally reduce, but not avoid the significant impacts from the project associated with Noise, Air Quality, Growth Inducement, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions. Impacts resulting from traffic volumes crossing screenlines and on roadways in other jurisdictions would be less. Some traffic impacts would be greater but the efficiencies of moving people to and from jobs that would come from intensified infill would not be realized, resulting in significant air quality impacts even with significantly fewer jobs. Development of the Urban Reserves under the No Project/Existing General Plan would result in impacts from the loss of Agricultural Resources (prime farmland) because it is assumed the triggers for development in these reserves would eventually be met under the existing General Plan. Impacts to prime farmland would be avoided under the proposed General Plan because it precludes development of the Urban Reserves. Likewise, Aesthetics impacts would also be more extensive and more significant when urban development occurs in the Urban Reserves of mid-Coyote and Almaden Valleys. This Alternative would be somewhat superior in some areas of environmental impact, but would have greater impacts in others.

Feasibility of the No Project/Retain Existing General Plan Alternative: The No Project/Retain Existing General Plan Alternative is feasible from the standpoint that no changes to the General Plan would be required. However, General Plans are intended to be an integrated, internally consistent and compatible statement of city policies. State law requires that General Plans be periodically reviewed and revised as necessary (Government Code §65040.5, §65300, §65300.5). Retaining the current General Plan, last comprehensively updated in 1994, without an update to reflect changes in the City's vision for its development would not be consistent with state planning law.

Relationship to Project Goals and Objectives: The No Project/Retain Existing General Plan Alternative would not meet the basic project objectives of the City of San José in terms of creating an interconnected city where activities of daily life are in close proximity and easily accessible by

walking, bicycling and public transit; or promoting public health through a Land Use/Transportation Diagram that promotes walking, biking, and public transit use. The existing General Plan would fall short of the proposed General Plan in “providing for an innovative economy with job opportunities for a demographically diverse population and ample fiscal resources to support a vibrant community and the city’s emerging leadership role as the Silicon Valley region’s employment center.” The proposed General Plan not only includes space for many more jobs, it allows those jobs in a wider range of locations and in close proximity to a substantially greater supply of potentially affordable housing connected by a more intensive transit system. Additionally, the existing General Plan provides far less opportunity for “a wide variety of housing types, both throughout the city as well as within individual communities, which meet the needs of an economically, demographically and culturally diverse population”, compared to the proposed General Plan.

SCENARIO 1: LOW GROWTH ALTERNATIVE

The Scenario 1 Alternative is a reduced scale alternative. Pursuant to CEQA, the purpose of examining reduced scale alternatives is to determine if a reduction in the number of units or intensity of land use would avoid significant impacts or reduce significant impacts to less than significant levels. Under the Scenario 1 Alternative, San José’s population could increase above existing conditions by approximately 24 percent (232,573 additional residents) to 1,217,880 persons in 2035. Employment could increase by 346,550, to 716,000 jobs. This Alternative allows somewhat less housing and substantially fewer jobs than the proposed General Plan, however (see Table 8.5-1).

This is one of the scenarios evaluated that would provide for a jobs/employed residents ratio greater than one (1.0). Under this Alternative, the J/ER ratio would be 1.2. As with the proposed General Plan, the purpose of allowing substantially more jobs than employed residents is to produce a positive economic improvement in the City’s fiscal condition (e.g., to generate more fiscal resources for the City from various sources). This Alternative also assumes a rate of housing growth of approximately 3,500 dwelling units per year, a rate comparable to the city’s annual housing production between 1999 and 2008. This Alternative has the lowest total Service Population (residents+jobs) of any alternative evaluated other than the No Project (the existing General Plan) Alternative.

Comparison of Environmental Impacts: The Scenario 1 Alternative would reduce, but not to a less than significant level the impacts from Transportation, Noise, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Growth Inducement, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions. The significant impacts to Agricultural Resources and Aesthetics would be the same as those from the proposed General Plan. This Alternative would be environmentally superior to the proposed project.

Feasibility of the Low Growth Alternative: The Scenario 1 Low Growth Alternative is assumed to be a full scale General Plan considered with the same set of revised goals, policies and actions as the *Envision San José 2040 General Plan*. It is not anticipated to result in land use compatibility impacts or inconsistency with adopted plans or policies substantially different from those evaluated in this PEIR. This Alternative is feasible, based only on the information in this PEIR.

Relationship to Project Goals and Objectives: The Scenario 1 Alternative would meet the basic project objectives of the City of San José to promote job growth in Downtown and on employment lands at the center of regional transportation systems, promote the expansion of commercial activity throughout the city in mixed use Urban Villages, and promote public health through a Land Use/Transportation Diagram that promotes walking, biking, and public transit use, although it would

not provide for the opportunity of developing Urban Villages within proximity to various neighborhoods more distant from the city center and would not support the degree of employment growth sought in order to achieve the objective of promoting San José as a regional employment center.

SCENARIO 2: MORE HOUSING/FEWER JOBS ALTERNATIVE

The Scenario 2 More Housing/Fewer Jobs Alternative is a reduced scale alternative in terms of jobs with a J/ER ratio closer to one (1.0). The purpose of examining this Alternative is to determine if a reduction in projected employment and an increase in projected housing would avoid significant impacts or reduce significant impacts to less than significant levels. Under the Scenario 2 Alternative, San José's population could increase by approximately 38 percent over existing conditions to 1,361,700 persons in 2035. Employment could almost double compared with 2008 figures, with a projected increase of 360,550 jobs to 730,000 jobs.

This is also one of the alternatives designed to provide for a jobs/employed residents ratio greater than one (1.0). Under this scenario, the J/ER ratio would be 1.1 (the same ratio as the No Project Alternative). Although the J/ER ratio is lower for the Scenario 2 Alternative than for Scenario 1 Alternative, there are 47,000 more dwelling units allowed in the Scenario 2 Alternative (12 percent) and 14,000 more jobs (2 percent) than in the Scenario 1 Alternative. The ratio and the quantity of jobs are both lower in the Scenario 2 Alternative than in the proposed project, but the Scenario 2 Alternative does support more housing growth than the proposed project.

The purpose underlying a plan that produces a greater number of jobs than employed residents in the long-term is to make a positive improvement in the City's fiscal condition (e.g., generate more fiscal resources for the City compared to the higher costs of serving a proportionally greater residential population). This scenario assumes a rate of housing growth of approximately 5,400 dwelling units per year, a rate of production that has historically never been sustained for any substantial period of time in San José.

Comparison of Environmental Impacts: : The Scenario 2 Alternative would reduce, but not completely avoid those significant impacts from the proposed project identified as occurring from Transportation, Noise, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Growth Inducement, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions. The significant impacts to Agricultural Resources and Aesthetics would be the same as the impacts from the proposed General Plan.

Feasibility of the More Housing/Fewer Jobs Alternative: This Alternative assumes a rate of building and growth in the residential sector that has rarely been achieved or even approached by the City of San José. Considering that a strong housing market supported the production of approximately 3,100 housing units per year between 1999 and 2008, it may not be feasible for the residential development industry to support the level of activity necessary for housing to be developed, constructed and sold at the rate of 5,400 dwelling units per year for any protracted period of time, or to average that number for 25 years. Since the total housing proposed and the rate of housing construction are both only slightly more than would be required to implement the proposed General Plan, it is likely as feasible as the proposed project.

Relationship to Project Goals and Objectives: The Scenario 2 More Housing/Fewer Jobs Alternative would meet the basic project objectives of the City of San José to promote job growth in Downtown and on employment lands at the center of regional transportation systems, promote the

expansion of commercial activity throughout the city in mixed use Urban Villages, and promote public health through a Land Use/Transportation Diagram that promotes walking, biking, and public transit use. It does not however support the amount of employment growth sought in order to achieve the objective of promoting San José as a regional employment center.

SCENARIO 3: ABAG PROJECTIONS ALTERNATIVE

The Scenario 3: ABAG Projections Alternative is a reduced scale alternative in terms of jobs with a J/ER ratio of one (1.0). The purpose of examining this Alternative is to determine if a reduction in projected employment and an increase in housing would avoid significant impacts or reduce significant impacts to less than significant levels.

The Scenario 3 Alternative generally corresponds to the 2009 ABAG projected overall demand for job and housing growth for the City of San José through 2035; however, the location of that growth within the city is distributed differently than was done by ABAG for their projections. Under the Scenario 3 Alternative, San José's population could increase by approximately 45 percent to 1,433,059 persons in 2035. Employment could increase by 339,530 jobs to 708,980 jobs. As shown in Table 8.5-1, build-out of the Scenario 3 Alternative would result in a Jobs/Employed Resident ratio of 1.0, a value that is considered balanced and theoretically, in isolation of existing land use and transportation development patterns, could provide a greater opportunity for the reduction of GHG emissions, provided that development is compact and includes mixed uses, that transportation facilities allow for increased use of transportation modes such as walking, bicycling, and transit, and that a greater share of residents chose to live within the same community as their workplace.

This Alternative assumes a growth rate of approximately 6,400 dwelling units and 13,600 jobs per year for the next 25 years.

Comparison of Environmental Impacts: The Scenario 3 Alternative would result in slightly fewer total VMT than the proposed General Plan and would have both lower VMT/capita and VMT/SP ratios. This alternative would also avoid significant growth inducement impacts. It would incrementally reduce, the significant impacts of the project associated with Transportation, Noise, Biological Resources, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions. The significant impacts to Agricultural Resources and Aesthetics would be the same as those from the proposed General Plan.

Feasibility of the ABAG Projections 2009 Alternative: This Alternative assumes a sustained 25-year rate of building and growth in the residential sector significantly greater than the rate that has been achieved during the past 20 years in the City of San José. Considering that a strong housing market supported the production of approximately 3,100 housing units per year between 1999 and 2008, it may not be feasible for the residential development industry to support the level of activity necessary for housing to be developed, constructed and sold at the rate of 6,400 dwelling units per year for any protracted period of time or to average that number for 25 years.

Relationship to Project Goals and Objectives: The Scenario 3 Alternative would meet some of the basic project objectives of the City of San José to promote job growth in Downtown and on employment lands at the center of regional transportation systems, promote the expansion of commercial activity throughout the city in mixed use Urban Villages, and promote public health through a Land Use/Transportation Diagram that promotes walking, biking, and public transit use. The Scenario 3 Alternative does not support transit use to the same degree as the Preferred Scenario. Given that the growth in jobs would be smaller and would not exceed a ratio of 1.0 jobs per

employed resident, it would not fully meet the City's objectives regarding fiscal sustainability, the creation of job opportunities and the city's emerging role as the employment center for the Silicon Valley region.

SCENARIO 4: MORE JOBS/LESS HOUSING GROWTH ALTERNATIVE

The Scenario 4: More Jobs/Less Housing Alternative is a reduced scale alternative in terms of housing with a greater intensification of planned employment within the city. The purpose of examining this Alternative is to determine if a shift in the mix of land uses, including an intensification of employment with less housing, would avoid any significant impacts or reduce significant impacts to less than significant levels.

This Alternative provides lands designated for more employment than any other alternative evaluated. Both the total number of jobs (895,500) and the J/ER ratio (1.5) are higher than any of the other alternatives. As with under the Scenario 1, 2, and 5 Alternatives as well as the proposed General Plan, a higher job to employed resident ratio is expected to make a positive contribution to the City's fiscal condition and to further promote the city as a regional employment center. This Alternative also assumes a rate of housing growth of approximately 3,500 dwelling units per year, a rate comparable to the city's annual housing production between 1999 and 2008.

Comparison of Environmental Impacts: The Scenario 4 Alternative would generate more total VMT than the proposed General Plan and would have both higher VMT/capita and VMT/SP ratios. This Alternative could also have more significant growth inducement impacts. It would incrementally increase the significant impacts of the project associated with Transportation, Noise, Biological Resources, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions. The significant impacts to Agricultural Resources and Aesthetics would be the same as those from the proposed General Plan. Overall, this Alternative is not environmentally superior to the proposed project.

Feasibility of the More Jobs/Less Housing Growth Alternative: This Alternative assumes higher job creation and a rate of building and growth in the residential sector that has occurred for limited time periods. While the city has never sustained such a high rate of growth for a protracted period, there is no basis for assuming it cannot be achieved within San José over the long-term if either San José supports a greater share than projected of regional economic growth or the regional economy as a whole grows at a greater than projected rate.

Relationship to Project Goals and Objectives: The Scenario 4 Alternative would meet the basic project objectives of the City of San José to promote job growth in Downtown and on employment lands at the center of regional transportation systems, promote the expansion of commercial activity throughout the city in mixed use Urban Villages, and promote public health through a Land Use/Transportation Diagram that promotes walking, biking, and public transit use.

SCENARIO 5: SLIGHTLY MORE HOUSING/SLIGHTLY FEWER JOBS ALTERNATIVE

The Scenario 5: Slightly More Housing/Slightly Fewer Jobs Alternative is a reduced scale alternative in terms of jobs with a J/ER ratio of 1.2. Assumptions for job growth are between those of the proposed project and the Scenario 2 Alternative, which has fewer jobs (refer to Table 8.5-1). The purpose of examining this Alternative is to determine if an intermediate reduction in projected employment and an increase in housing (compared to the proposed project) would avoid significant impacts or reduce significant impacts to less than significant levels.

This is one of the alternatives with a jobs/employed residents ratio greater than one (1.0). Under this scenario, the J/ER ratio would be 1.2, which is very close to the ratio in the Scenario 1 Alternative, but with 12 percent more housing and 12 percent more jobs than would occur with the Scenario 1 Alternative. This Alternative also requires a rate of housing construction of approximately 5,400 dwelling units per year, a rate that is greater than the city has ever experienced over a sustained period of time.

Under the Scenario 5 Alternative, San José's population could increase by approximately 38 percent to 1,361,700 persons in 2035, which is less than the increase assumed in the Scenario 3 Alternative (the "ABAG Projections Alternative") but more than in the proposed General Plan. Employment could more than double, with an increase of approximately 431,550 jobs to 801,000 jobs, which is still less than under the proposed General Plan.

Comparison of Environmental Impacts: The Scenario 5 Alternative would reduce, but not completely avoid the significant impacts of the project associated with Transportation, Noise, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Growth Inducement, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions. The significant impacts of Land Use (Agricultural Resources) and Aesthetics would be the same as under the proposed General Plan and Biological Resources impacts would be similar.

Feasibility of the Slightly More Housing/Slightly Fewer Jobs Alternative: This Alternative assumes a rate of building and growth in the residential sector that has rarely been achieved or even approached by the City of San José. While it may not be feasible for the housing market to support housing to be developed, constructed, and sold at the rate of 5,400 dwelling units per year for a protracted period of time there is no definitive proof that it cannot be done.

Relationship to Project Goals and Objectives: The Scenario 5 Alternative would meet the basic project objectives of the City of San José to promote job growth in Downtown and on employment lands at the center of regional transportation systems, promote the expansion of commercial activity throughout the city in mixed use Urban Villages, and promote public health through a Land Use/Transportation Diagram that promotes walking, biking, and public transit use although it would not support the regional employment objective to the same degree as the proposed project.

KNOWN AREAS OF CONTROVERSY

Pursuant to Section 15123(b)(2) of the state CEQA Guidelines, an EIR shall identify areas of controversy known to the lead agency including issues raised by agencies and the public. The *Envision San José 2040 General Plan* Task Force was convened in September 2007 and has been holding public meetings regularly since that time to develop the General Plan and solicit public input. The Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the *Envision San José 2040 General Plan Update* PEIR was circulated starting on July 31, 2009. Public scoping meetings were held on August 12, 2009 and August 19, 2009. Key issues raised by residents of the City of San José and members of community, environmental, and business or trade organizations during the Scoping and Task Force Meetings for the proposed General Plan project include:

- Feasibility of accommodating and realizing both forecast job and housing growth amounts
- Provision of adequate lands planned for new single-family home construction
- Conversion of Employment Lands to other uses
- Adequacy of water supply to support planned job and housing growth
- Provisions for Siting of Private Community Gathering Facilities

- Specification of minimum setbacks from riparian corridors
- Allowing growth beyond the Urban Growth Boundary and in the Urban Reserves at certain locations, including the potential development of golf courses and/or cemeteries
- Adjacent land uses and building proportions along corridors, especially near historic structures
- Agriculture policy related to preservation of mid-Coyote Valley
- Proposed conversions of the industrial iStar and municipal Rancho del Pueblo golf course sites to residential use

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