

incorporated areas of Corona, Lake Elsinore, Canyon Lake, Hemet, San Jacinto, Perris, Moreno Valley, and Riverside. Combined, the cities account for a population of over 300,000 and for over 170,000 jobs. Development also has been occurring rapidly within the unincorporated portions of the corridor.

Table 1.A shows the year 2000 and projected 2025 population and employment for cities within the study area and for the unincorporated areas of Riverside County, as provided by the cities to the Western Riverside Council of Governments (WRCOG). The table shows the growth for cities as a whole, not just the portion of the cities located within the immediate study area. The growth projection shows increases in population in the range of eight percent to almost 400 percent, and increases associated with the HCLE Corridor in employment in the range of 32 percent to over 400 percent. The greatest percentage increase associated with the HCLE Corridor is in the cities of Lake Elsinore, Perris, and San Jacinto. The corridor also serves a substantial part of western Riverside County's unincorporated area, where population and employment are expected to nearly double between now and 2025.

1.5 Project Need

The rapid land use conversion from vacant and agricultural to developed subdivisions and commercial properties has outpaced improvements to the transportation infrastructure in western Riverside County. In western Riverside County overall, the population is expected to increase by over one million persons between 2000 and 2025, a more than 70 percent increase. Although currently funded transportation improvements will address some of the current and projected increased future demand, additional transportation improvements are needed to provide for the efficient mobility of goods and people over the long-term planning horizon to 2025 and beyond.

Without transportation improvements beyond those currently planned in western Riverside County, there will be inadequate access to the regional transportation system, increased local and regional traffic congestion, and inadequate mobility on existing facilities, including regional highways and local arterials within the study area in the future. There is a lack of an efficient east-west connection to address the projected movement of people and goods 25 years from now within the interior of western Riverside County.

1.5.1 Problem of Limitations in East-West Access to Current and Future Employment Locations

Transportation infrastructure improvements are necessary within the HCLE Corridor to address the projected job growth in western Riverside County, and to improve access to future employment centers. Traffic patterns on the major east-west transportation

Table 1.A - Current and Projected Population and Employment for Cities in Western Riverside County

	Population			Employment		
	2000	2025	% Increase	2000	2025	% Increase
Banning	23,562	47,328	101%	8,387	15,342	83%
Beaumont	11,384	56,450	396%	4,162	22,291	436%
Calimesa	7,139	29,554	314%	1,345	5,273	292%
Canyon Lake	9,952	10,702	8%	1,973	2,875	46%
Corona	124,966	156,522	25%	45,000	69,905	55%
Hemet	58,812	127,899	117%	18,344	29,095	59%
Lake Elsinore	28,928	81,820	183%	7,821	25,562	227%
Moreno Valley	142,381	221,343	55%	29,860	71,859	141%
Murrieta	44,282	96,382	118%	7,852	28,205	259%
Norco	24,157	30,568	27%	9,184	12,140	32%
Perris	36,189	109,377	202%	11,058	32,300	192%
Riverside	255,166	340,328	33%	120,915	232,326	92%
San Jacinto	23,779	67,115	182%	5,968	15,455	159%
Temecula	57,716	86,000	49%	25,200	46,260	84%
Unincorporated	342,568	771,595	125%	100,307	192,918	92%
Total	1,190,981	2,232,983	87%	397,376	801,806	102%

Source: Western Riverside COG and SCAG, 2001

Note: The shaded rows highlight the cities most closely associated with the HCLE Corridor.

routes indicate that Riverside County serves as a bedroom community that supplies a substantial portion of the labor pool for the Los Angeles-Orange County metropolitan area. Statistics for 1990 and 1997 show that Riverside County's jobs-household balance is slowly improving, however, from 0.80 jobs per household in 1990 to 0.90 jobs per household in 1997 (County of Riverside General Plan, Public Hearing Draft, April, 2002).

The co-location of jobs and housing, or a jobs/housing balance, is supported by the policies in the new Riverside County General Plan. For example, Land Use policy 7.12 is "Improve the relationship and a ratio between jobs and housing so that residents have an opportunity to live and work within the County." Other Land Use Element Policies support the development of a balance of land uses that maintains and enhances the County's fiscal viability and economic diversity (Policy LU 7.1), and promotes the development of businesses that would result in a better balance between housing and employment opportunities in the County (LU7.2, 7.3, 7.6, 7.7, and 7.8). However, while western Riverside County will experience a growth in employment, the imbalance of job opportunities relative to housing between western Riverside County and Orange County will continue in the future. Transportation infrastructure will be needed to accommodate the movement of a growing population in Riverside County to jobs both within and outside of Riverside County.

Adequate transportation infrastructure is needed to support the projected job growth in the Hemet/San Jacinto, Temecula, Murrieta, Banning/Beaumont/Calimesa, and the I-215 Corridor areas. The particular need in the HCLE Corridor is for high-speed access to I-15, I-215, and SR-79. For example, there are currently no reasonable transportation facilities for the movement of goods from the SR-91 corridor into the areas being designated for commercial development along I-215. Trucks must be routed along SR-91 and SR-60/215, which are highly congested now and are predicted to be more congested in the future. Existing arterials are not designed to support the anticipated goods movement activity. Even though SR-74 between I-15 and I-215 will be widened to four lanes within the next two years, the route passes through the middle of downtown Perris, and is not suitable for the movement of trucks or higher volume traffic. Also, Cajalco Road is a two-lane rural, winding roadway between I-15 and I-215, and passes through the Stephens' Kangaroo Rat reserve to the south of Lake Mathews. SR-60/I-215 in the Box Springs area serves as the only other freeway access into the area, and this route is heavily congested and is only an indirect route from the Corona area and points to the west.

Some of the specific employment locations for which east-west access is a concern include March Air Reserve Base, the Sun City/Menifee employment area, the employment areas immediately north and east of the City of Perris, and the I-215 corridor. These areas will require improved connections to Interstate 10 to and from the east, to I-15 toward Corona and Ontario, and SR-91 with connections to Orange County and Los Angeles.

1.5.2 Problem of Inadequate Future Mobility on Existing Facilities Within the Study Area

One of the fundamental goals of CETAP and RCIP is to provide the transportation infrastructure needed to support the substantial increase in population and employment expected in Riverside County in the future. In western Riverside County overall, the population is expected to increase by over one million persons between 2000 and year