

The Harvest Valley/Winchester Area Plan provides land use direction for the area around the eastern terminus of Alternatives 1, 7a and 7b, and the northern terminus of Alternatives 3, 5a, and 5b. The planning area is transected by two major transportation routes, SR-74 running east-west, north of the WT study area, and SR-79 running north-south. A portion of Diamond Valley Lake, the largest freshwater lake in Southern California, is also within the plan area. Double Butte is a steep, dual peaked mountain that is a prominent visual feature in the area.

The land use plan for the Harvest Valley/Winchester area reflects a land use shift from the existing rural character to a mix of urban, suburban, and rural land use focused around core, community, and village centers. The impetus for this shift is the presence of Diamond Valley Lake and the recreational opportunities it presents, combined with the transit opportunities presented by the presence of the rail line, State Route 74, and State Route 79.

The Community Center land use designation immediately west of the Diamond Valley Lake accommodates an entertainment center that is intended to capitalize on the proximity of the lake and its intensive recreation opportunities. The new Riverside County General Plan states that a transit station should be incorporated into the planned entertainment center. This transit station could be connected to a transit system, such as the Oasis Concept, which is described in the Circulation Element of the General Plan. The transit line would then follow Winchester Avenue south into the Temecula Valley, providing a convenient tourism connection for the major attractions of the region. The Community Center at this location coincides with the northern terminus of WT Alternatives 1, 3, 5a, and 5b.

The community of Winchester is located south of Double Butte and north of Salt Creek. Winchester is ideally situated to accommodate significant intensification of land usage due to its proximity to the Diamond Valley Lake, as well as the presence of the rail line, State Route 79, and the Domenigoni Parkway. The new Riverside County General Plan applies a Community Center overlay to this area, which is located near the eastern terminus of Alternatives 7a and 7b.

Another Community Center Overlay can be found in the Winchester Hills Specific Plan that lies directly south of Salt Creek, west of State Route 79. This Community Center Designation seeks changes in the adopted specific plan to intensify its commercial center and add a mixture of retail, office, and residential uses. The Community Center designation is around Alternatives 7a and 7b.

The WT study area is located in the area subject to nighttime lighting requirements for the Mount Palomar Observatory. The General Plan supports the application of County requirements that are intended to limit light leakage and spillage that may interfere with the operations of the Palomar Observatory.

### **3.1.2 City General Plans**

The incorporated cities within the study area are Temecula and Murrieta (Figure 3.1.2). The City of Hemet's sphere of influence also extends into the study area. The General Plans for these cities call for improved mobility in the area. Neither General Plan includes a specific reference to the CETAP process.

Figure 3.1.2 - Affected Jurisdictions

The City of Temecula Circulation Element (1993) calls for “A regional transportation system that accommodates the safe and efficient movement of people and goods to and from the community” (Goal 3). The Circulation Element also supports the provision of a new freeway interchange north of Winchester Road, and fixed route transit service along major transportation corridors connecting to regional employment and commercial areas. Policy 3.6 of the Circulation Element seeks to pursue “opportunities for a light rail transit along major transportation corridors which connect Temecula to other population centers.” The goal of the City of Murrieta Circulation Element (1994) is to provide “A circulation system that serves the internal circulation needs of the City, while also addressing the inter-community or through travel needs.” The implementation of a WT alternative is consistent with the policies of these two General Plans.

The corporate boundaries of the City of Murrieta comprise a portion of the western part of the WT study area, near the junction of Alternatives 1, 3, and 7b with the I-215, and along the I-15 as included in Alternative H near Scott Road and the area south of Murrieta Hot Springs Road. The area along the I-215 north of Clinton Keith Road (near the junction of Alternatives 1 and 3 with the I-215, and a portion of Alternative H along the freeway) is characterized by planned business park and regional commercial uses. The area south of Murrieta Hot Springs Road is characterized by planned business park and multiple use/industrial uses in the General Plan.

The City of Temecula includes both sides of I-15 generally south of Date Street, and as included in Alternative H. This area is planned for a Village Center, as reflected in the City of Temecula General Plan (1993). The Village Centers are similar to the Community Centers identified in the Riverside County General Plan, and would be characterized by a concentration and mixture of compatible land uses providing a sense of place and focal points for community activity. A portion of Alternative 5b where it connects with SR-79 is also within the City of Temecula. This area is also planned for a “village center” in the Temecula General Plan. The City of Temecula boundaries coincide with Butterfield Stage Road south of Buck Road and include both sides of Butterfield Stage Road south of Pauba Road. This area is generally planned for low and medium density residential development.

### **3.1.3 Existing Land Use**

Across the WT Corridor study area, agricultural land (includes all agricultural uses, as differentiated from the more selective "Farmland" categories discussed subsequently) predominates existing land use in every alternative except Alternative H. Existing land uses are shown in Figure 3.1.3 and Table 3.1.A. For example, in all but Alternative H, land used for agriculture measures from two to ten times more than the next highest category of land use, and from almost 50 percent to almost 90 percent of total identified existing land use. (Note: Much of the land identified as used for utilities is within the existing highway rights-of-way.)

#### **3.1.3.1 Alternative 1**

There are 201 ha (496 ac) of existing agricultural land in locations west of SR-79 north of Craig Road and along the west half of the Scott Road segment of Alternative 1. There are also 23 ha (57 ac) of existing residential property, primarily rural residences