

4.1 Land Use

4.1.1 Methodology for Impact Evaluation

The land use impact evaluation of the WT alternatives began with a review of aerial photographs (June 2000) and maps of the project study area. Vehicle and pedestrian surveys of alternative routes in the study area were conducted. Several site surveys were conducted to gain broad perspective of the communities, to evaluate specific neighborhoods or smaller areas, and to ascertain information gathered from secondary sources.

Information was gathered from local community planning departments, the Riverside County Planning and Finance Departments, and the California Department of Conservation, including the most current information being used in the concurrent General Plan being developed as part of the RCIP. The information gathered from maps and aerial photographs, site visits, censuses, and agencies was evaluated using spreadsheets, figures, and GIS analysis to describe the potential impacts of each alternative. The affected area for each alternative is the approximately 150 to 300 m (500 to 1,000 ft) right-of-way preservation area previously described in the Chapter 2, Alternatives. All resources within the preservation area are considered to be potentially affected. Precise determination of impacts will be made at the Tier 2 level of analysis for the selected alternative based on the availability of more detailed project engineering.

4.1.2 Impacts

The WT Corridor alternatives will affect existing and future land uses in the WT study area. Planned land uses frequently vary from existing patterns, reflecting trends regarding growing municipalities, modified patterns of rural development, and continued conversion of agricultural lands. This analysis evaluates planned land uses reported by municipalities and Riverside County that would be converted to right-of-way for the transportation route proposed under CETAP. The analysis is based on a GIS database of existing land uses, City General Plans, and the new Riverside County General Plan.

4.1.2.1 County General Plan

The Riverside County Integrated Project (RCIP) is a joint undertaking by Riverside County and RCTC. The components of the RCIP include the CETAP corridors (a total of two corridors internal to Riverside County and two bi-county corridors) a new Riverside County General Plan, and a Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) for western Riverside County. The purpose of the RCIP is to integrate the processes of planning land uses, transportation improvements, and the preservation of habitat for endangered species. An important objective of the RCIP is to accommodate projected population growth by focusing development within areas that will be readily accessible, that will provide a good quality of life for future residents, and that will minimize environmental and community impacts.

The new Riverside County General Plan was released for public review in April, 2002. The intent of the General Plan is to effectively manage the overall pattern of development in Riverside County. Detailed Area Plans are included that provide opportunities