

In addition to the proposed General Plan, the proposed project includes the amendment of Riverside County Land Use Ordinance No. 348. The amending of this ordinance will revise the map of County Zoning Districts¹ to correspond with the boundaries of the proposed Area Plans. Zoning Districts represent a method of organizing zoning maps based on location within the County. The new Zoning District map will supercede the boundaries of existing Zoning Districts and zoning areas within Riverside County. The County's action will be limited to the reorganization of Zoning Districts' boundaries and will not change the zoning for any parcel as it currently exists.

4. PRELIMINARY ALTERNATIVES

CEQA requires that an EIR include a discussion of reasonable project alternatives that are “capable of avoiding or substantially lessening any significant effects of the project, even if these alternatives would impede to some degree the attainment of the project objectives, or would be more costly” (CEQA Section 15126.6).

To achieve the goals identified by the County, the EIR will consider a range of alternatives to the proposed Plan. Summaries of proposed alternatives to the Plan follow:

With the **NO PROJECT, EXISTING GENERAL PLAN ALTERNATIVE**, the proposed General Plan would not be adopted by the County, and the existing General Plan, Specific Plans, and Area Plans would remain in place. There would be no western Riverside County MSHCP or Coachella Valley Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan. There would also be no CETAP corridors. It is assumed for this alternative that there would be build out of the existing General Plan circulation map. Cities would build out according to their General Plans. No annexations of spheres of influence of Cities would be assumed; therefore, spheres of influence would be built out based on the existing Riverside County General Plan. Development would take place in unincorporated eastern Riverside County as proposed in the existing General Plan.

Under the **RURAL EMPHASIS ALTERNATIVE**, the County would adopt a General Plan that would eliminate future urban development within unincorporated areas to the extent feasible. Thus, with the Rural Emphasis Alternative, except for existing approved Specific Plans, tract maps, and commercial/industrial site plans, unincorporated areas would be planned for and built out with rural residential, agricultural, and open space uses. In this alternative, it is assumed that an MSHCP would be adopted for western Riverside County. It would provide for a smaller reserve area than that which is proposed in the MSHCP and would be designed only for the conservation of protected species. Development intensity within MSHCP reserve areas would be concentrated in the cities. As a consequence, the redistribution of development from conservation areas would change the location of development, but not result in an overall increase in residential build out within western Riverside County. No CETAP corridors are assumed to occur in this alternative. There would be build out of the existing General Plan circulation map, with the exception of roadways that would be inconsistent with the MSHCP. Cities would be built out according to their General Plans. Because urban development would be directed toward cities in this alternative, annexation of each city's sphere of influence would be assumed. They would be built according to the existing General Plan of each city.

With the **REDUCED COMMUNITY CENTERS ALTERNATIVE**, the scale, intensity, and the numbers of

¹ The County is not proposing a change in Countywide zoning at this time. The County is proposing a change in the physical boundary of zoning districts to correspond to the boundaries of the proposed Area Plans. It should be noted that in accordance with State law, the County, in the future, will be amending its zoning ordinance and zoning designations to be consistent with the adopted General Plan.

community centers identified in the proposed Plan would be reduced. Rather than reducing the overall build out of unincorporated areas, this alternative would represent a less concentrated pattern of development intensity as compared to the proposed Plan. Adoption and implementation of the proposed western Riverside County MSHCP would be assumed. Development intensity that is shown on General Plan and Area Plan land use maps within the MSHCP preserve areas would be distributed evenly throughout western Riverside County. As a consequence, the location of development would be changed, but there would not be an overall increase in residential build out within western Riverside County. Two north-south and two east-west corridors of the CETAP would be included in the proposed circulation system for this alternative. There would be an enhanced arterial system that would maximize roadway capacity. Roadways that are inconsistent with implementation of the MSHCP (e.g., Davis Road) would not be included in the proposed circulation system. Cities would build out according to their General Plans with this alternative. No annexations of cities' spheres of influence would be assumed. As a result, spheres of influence would be built out based on the Reduced Community Centers Alternative.

The scale and intensity of the community centers identified in the Plan would be increased with the **MORE INTENSE COMMUNITY CENTERS ALTERNATIVE**; however, the number of community centers would be reduced. Rather than increasing the overall build out of unincorporated areas, this alternative would represent a more concentrated pattern of development intensity as compared to the proposed Plan. Adoption and implementation of the proposed western Riverside County MSHCP would be assumed. Development intensity that is shown on General Plan and Area Plan land use maps within MSHCP preserve areas would be redistributed into community centers within western Riverside County. The redistribution of development from conservation areas would change the location of, but not result in an overall increase in, residential build out within western Riverside County. Two north-south and two east-west corridors would be included in the proposed circulation system. An "enhanced" arterial system, which maximizes roadway capacity, is assumed. Roadways that are inconsistent with implementation of the MSHCP (e.g., Davis Road) would not be included in the proposed circulation system. This alternative assumes that cities would be built out according to their General Plans. No annexations of cities' spheres of influence are assumed. As a result, spheres of influence would be built out based on the More Intense Community Centers Alternative.

With the **DENSITY BONUS ALTERNATIVE**, an incentive system would provide density bonuses to proposed development meeting specified criteria. Thus, this alternative would contain a net increase in residential development within unincorporated areas. The density bonus system would be applied to the proposed project to determine the potential environmental effects of increasing overall development intensity. In addition, the density bonus system also would be applied to the More Intense Community Centers Alternative, if that alternative were to show promise for reducing traffic congestion by increasing the use of transit. It would be applied if the redistribution of development intensity from conservation areas to community centers in the More Intense Community Centers Alternative were to fall short of the objective of having 15 percent of the new development within unincorporated Riverside County occurring within community centers. When applied to the proposed project or the More Intense Community Centers Alternative, the Density Bonus Alternative would employ the same assumptions for each regarding the MSHCP, CETAP corridors, proposed circulation system, and development within cities and their spheres of influence.

5. POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

An Initial Study has been prepared to identify potential environmental impacts that may occur upon implementation of the proposed General Plan. The Initial Study was prepared in conformance with the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 (CEQA), as amended, and State CEQA Guidelines. This document also complies with the procedures of the County of Riverside for implementing CEQA. One