Clearwater Specific Plan

Environmental Impact Report
(SCH# 2025010201)

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1.0 – INTRODUCTION

This Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) has been prepared by the City of Paramount in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)[i] and CEQA Guidelines[ii] to describe the potential environmental consequences of the proposed update to the Clearwater East Specific Plan (CESP). The Specific Plan Update (SPU) is a comprehensive amendment to the CESP, which was initially adopted by the City of Paramount in 1987, and subsequently updated incrementally, most recently in 2018. The proposed project would amend the CESP through a comprehensive update, repealing in its entirety the 1987 Specific Plan, inclusive of the 2018 and previous updates, and replace it with a new Specific Plan to facilitate redevelopment of the Planning Area.

The updated Clearwater East Specific Plan, which changes the Plan name to "Clearwater Specific Plan" or "CSP," identifies the long-term vision and objectives for private development and public improvements, including creation of a new street grid, within the Planning Area. The proposed SPU establishes land use, transportation, infrastructure, economic development, and urban design strategies to promote a vibrant, inclusive, and pedestrian-oriented neighborhood center. The Planning Area is envisioned as a dynamic live-work-play hub for residents and visitors, and includes a mixed-use district that would provide retail, entertainment, housing, and open space amenities for local residents. The SPU would also provide for an artisanal manufacturing and creative live/work district that includes industrial uses along with residential uses. Chapter 3 (Project Description) provides more detailed information regarding project characteristics.

The proposed Specific Plan constitutes a project that is subject to review under CEQA (California Public Resources Code, Division 13, Section 21000, et seq.) and the State CEQA Guidelines (Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, Division 6, Chapter 3, Section 15000, et seq.). The lead agency, the City of Paramount, determined that the proposed project requires an EIR. An EIR is a public document designed to provide decisionmakers and the public with an analysis of the environmental effects of a proposed project, to indicate possible ways to reduce or avoid environmental damage, and to identify alternatives to a project. This EIR has been prepared to assess the short-term, long-term, and cumulative environmental impacts that could result from the long-term implementation of the proposed project. Furthermore, this EIR has been prepared in accordance with the CEQA statutes and guidelines, and was prepared by professional planning consultants under contract to the City of Paramount, the lead agency for the preparation of this EIR, as defined by CEQA (Public Resources Code, Section 21067, as amended). The content of this document reflects the independent judgment of the City of Paramount.

To avoid repetition and provide a manageable environmental document, this Draft EIR does not duplicate the detailed contents of the Clearwater East Specific Plan update document. The reader is encouraged to review the entire Specific Plan, or the sections that interest the reader, for more detail (see Appendix A). Pursuant to Section 15150 (Incorporation by Reference) of the CEQA

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[i] The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) is codified in section 21000, et seq., of the California Public Resources Code.

[ii] The CEQA Guidelines are set forth in sections 15000 through 15387 of the California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3.

Guidelines, the Clearwater East Specific Plan is incorporated into this Draft EIR by reference, and also may be viewed during regular business hours at the Planning and Building Department at Paramount City Hall, 16400 Colorado Avenue, Paramount, CA 90723. Also, both documents are posted on the City of Paramount website at:

https://www.paramountcity.gov/government/planning-division/environmental-documents/

1.1 – EIR PURPOSE AND INTENDED USE

The purpose of an EIR, under the provisions of CEQA, is "to identify the significant effects on the environment of a project, to identify alternatives to the project, and to indicate the manner in which those significant effects can be mitigated or avoided." The EIR for this project is a Program EIR. According to Section 15168 of the CEQA Guidelines, a Program EIR may be prepared on a series of actions that can be characterized as one large project and which are related geographically or represent logical parts in the chain of contemplated actions in connection with issuance of rules, regulations, or plans. The Program EIR allows for a more exhaustive consideration of effects and alternatives than would be practical in EIRs on separate individual actions. A Program EIR also allows for consideration of cumulative impacts that might not be fully considered on a case-by-case basis.

The proposed SPU is a long-term planning program to guide growth and development within the Planning Area. It is intended to communicate the City's vision of the future for the Planning Area and to establish design guidelines and a policy framework. It would govern decision making concerning the physical development of the planning area including assurances that the community at large would be supported by an adequate range of public services and infrastructure systems.

Since this project does not directly lead to site-specific development or redevelopment, a Program EIR is the appropriate type of document to identify the geographic extent of sensitive resources and hazards, along with existing and planned services and infrastructure support systems that occur in the Planning Area. Further, the Program EIR is described in Section 15168 of the CEQA Guidelines as the appropriate analytical framework to assess the cumulative environmental effects of the full plan, in a first-tier level of analysis, to identify broad concerns and sets of impacts, and to define/develop regulatory standards and programmatic procedures that reduce impacts and help achieve environmental goals and objectives.

Later activities proposed pursuant to the Specific Plan would be reviewed in light of this EIR and may focus on those site-specific and localized environmental issues that could not be examined in sufficient detail as part of this EIR. If a subsequent project or later activity would have effects that were not examined in the certified Program EIR, or not examined at an appropriate level of detail to be used for the later activity, an Initial Study would need to be prepared, leading to a Negative Declaration or an EIR. If the Lead Agency (the City of Paramount) finds that, pursuant to Section 15152 (Tiering) of the CEQA Guidelines, no new effects could occur or no new mitigation measures would be required of a subsequent project, the Lead Agency can approve the activity as being within the scope of the project covered by a certified Program EIR, and no new environmental documentation would be required.

This EIR serves as an information document for use by public agencies, the general public, and decision makers. This EIR is not a City of Paramount policy document. It does, however, discuss the impacts of development pursuant to the Clearwater East Specific Plan Update, and analyzes

project alternatives. This Program EIR will be used by the City of Paramount Planning Commission and City Council in assessing impacts prior to adoption of the Specific Plan.

1.2 – EIR SCOPING AND NOTICE OF PREPARATION

To define the scope of the investigation of the Program EIR, the City of Paramount distributed a Notice of Preparation (NOP) to local, county, state, and federal agencies along with interested private organizations and individuals. The NOP was delivered to the State Clearinghouse and the CEQA-required 30-day review period began on January 7, 2025, and ended on February 2, 2025. The purpose of the NOP is to provide agencies and private entities an opportunity to identify concerns regarding potential impacts of the proposed project, recommend items to be analyzed in the DEIR, and to provide suggestions concerning ways to avoid significant impacts (Section 15082, CEQA Guidelines). The NOP is included in Appendix B, along with copies of written comments received during the 30-day public review period for the NOP and the NOP distribution list. On Thursday January 16, 2025, the City conducted a scoping meeting on the NOP and issues to be addressed in the EIR. No public comments were received during the scoping meeting. Written comments received in response to the NOP during the 30-day review period are summarized in Table 1-1. The comment letters are also included in Appendix B.

Table 1-1
Brief Summary of Comments on the NOP

Commenting Agency/Person	Brief Summary of Comments on the NOP	Section(s) Where Addressed
Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts	This comment letter describes the Districts' roles and responsibility with respect to sewage, identifies existing District facilities and capacities, and provides other information regarding service fees and sewage treatment demand factors for various land uses.	Utilities and Service Systems
California Department of Fish and Wildlife	The comment letter provides an overview of CDFW's role as a Responsible Agency. The letter also provides recommendations as to how biological resources should be analyzed in the EIR. Finally, this letter reminds the City that data collected for the preparation of the PEIR must be properly submitted to CDFW and that the assessment of CDFW filing fees will be necessary for the project.	Biological Resources
California Dept. of Transportation	This comment letter starts by describing the mission of Caltrans and noting that Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) must be used as the primary metric in identifying transportation impacts for all future development projects. The letter then encourages the use of multi-modal and complete streets transportation elements and pedestrian safety measures. The letter then encourages the City to ensure all modes are served well by planning and development activities and evaluate the potential for Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies and Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) applications in order to better manage the transportation network, as well as transit service and bicycle or pedestrian connectivity improvements. The comment letter then lists freeway interchanges that could be impacted by the proposed project, lists specific analyses that should be undertaken, and requests to review the traffic analysis for the PEIR.	Transportation

California Air Resources Board	This comment letter encourages new residential and mixed-use development to demonstrate consistency with the 2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality (2022 Scoping Plan), and recommends the GHG analysis demonstrate consistency with the plan. The letter than identifies priority areas for local government actions to reduce GHG emissions and recommends analysis of key project attributes that have demonstrated ability to reduce GHG from residential and mixed-use developments in each priority area. Because the Planning Area is completely urbanized, CARB recommends that the analysis pay special attention to how the project will utilize transit options to reduce VMT and GHG. CARB then recommends mitigation measures	Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas
South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD)	The letter provides input as to how the air quality and greenhouse gas analyses should be conducted in accordance with SCAQMD guidelines and includes reference to several information sources. The letter also provides information on potential mitigation measures.	Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas
LA County Public Works Department	This comment letter notes that there is an open case LUST Cleanup site with the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board to the west of the Planning Area located at 14350 Garfield Avenue.	Hazards and Hazardous Materials

1.3 – PUBLIC REVIEW OF THE DRAFT EIR

Comments from all agencies and individuals are invited regarding the information contained in the Draft Program EIR. Such comments should explain any perceived deficiencies in the assessment of impacts or provide the information that is purportedly lacking in the Draft Program EIR or indicate where the information may be found. All comments on the Draft Program EIR are to be submitted, by the close of the 45-day public review period to:

John King, Planning and Building Director
City of Paramount Planning Department
16400 Colorado Avenue
Paramount, California 90723
JKing@paramountcity.gov
(562) 220-2036

Following the 45-day period of circulation and public review of the Draft Program EIR, all comments and the city's responses to the comments will be incorporated into a Final Program EIR prior to certification of the document by the city of Paramount.

Availability of EIR Materials

All materials related to the preparation of this Program EIR, including information incorporated by reference, are available for public review. The Notice of Preparation and the Draft Program EIR are posted on the city's website: https://www.paramountcity.gov/government/planning-division/environmental-documents/

To request an appointment to review these materials, please contact John King (see contact information above).

1.4 – NATIVE AMERICAN CONSULTATION

On March 10, 2025, the City sent notices to the following nine (9) Native American Tribes/Tribal Representatives to determine if they wished to consult with the City regarding the proposed Specific Plan (see Appendix H):

Native American Tribal Group	Tribal Representative
Gabrieleno Band of Mission Indians - Kizh Nation	Andrew Salas, Chairperson
Gabrieleno/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians	Anthony Morales, Chairperson
Gabrielino /Tongva Nation	Sandonne Goad, Chairperson
Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council	Robert Dorame, Chairperson
Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council	Christina Conley, Tribal Consultant
Gabrielino-Tongva Tribe	Charles Alvarez
Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians	Lovina Redner, Tribal Chair
Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians	Isaiah Vivanco, Chairperson
Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians	Joe Ontiveros

As of publication of this Draft EIR, the 30-day AB 52 and the 90-day SB 18 consultation periods had expired and only two of the tribes indicated a desire to consult with the City on the proposed Specific Plan. Christina Conley, Tribal Consultant and Administrator for the Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council, initially inquired if a cultural resources report was available for the project. However, upon being informed that project is programmatic and the tribe would be notified of all future development projects within the Specific Plan Planning Area no further consultation was requested. Andrew Salas, Chairperson of the Gabrieleno Band of Mission Indians – Kizh Nation, also requested formal consultation from the City. Upon consultation with the City, Mr. Salas requested that mitigation measures be incorporated into the EIR requiring retention of a Native American monitor prior to commencement and during all ground disturbing activities. These measures have been incorporated herein by reference.

1.5 – EIR ORGANIZATION AND CONTENT

The Draft Program EIR (DEIR or Draft EIR) contains the primary analysis of potential environmental impacts discussed in the following six sections described below

Section 1.0 Introduction.

Section 2.0 Executive Summary: A brief discussion of the project and summary of project impacts, mitigation measures, and alternatives.

Section 3.0 Project Description: Provides a detailed description of the proposed project and the Environmental Setting/Existing Conditions and project objectives.

Section 4.0 Environmental Impact Analysis: Evaluates impacts of the SPU at a program level and site-impacts of the four opportunity sites, and identifies mitigation measures designed to reduce significant impacts, where applicable. This Section includes 20 chapters, each addressing different topical areas (Air Quality, Noise, Transportation, etc.).

Section 5.0 Alternatives: Provides an analysis of three different alternatives to the proposed project.

Section 6.0 Mandatory CEQA Sections: Provides an analysis of growth-inducing impacts, significant unavoidable environmental impacts, and irreversible environmental change.

Each of the environmental topics presented in Chapters 4.1 (Aesthetics) through 4.20 (Wildfire) include the following subsections:

Environmental Setting, which describes relevant existing conditions related to the environmental topic;

Regulatory Setting, which describes federal, State and local laws, regulations and policies relevant to potential impacts for the environmental topic; and

Impacts and Mitigation Measures, including:

- ***Significance Criteria***, which identifies the CEQA and other agency-recommended criteria for determining the significance of a potential impact;
- ***Impacts and Mitigations***, which identifies potential project impacts; whether each identified impact is "significant" or "less-than-significant"; mitigation for each identified "significant" impact; and whether each impact would be "significant" or "less-than-significant" after mitigation.
- ***Significant, Adverse and Unavoidable Impacts,*** identifying those impacts that cannot be feasibly mitigated to less-than-significant levels.

The EIR appendices include:

- Appendix A: Draft Clearwater Specific Plan
- Appendix B: Notice of Preparation (NOP), including comment letters received on the NOP and the NOP distribution list
- Appendix C: Draft Clearwater Specific Plan Existing Conditions Report
- Appendix D: Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Modeling Data
- Appendix E: Energy Use Data Summary
- Appendix F: Noise Analysis Data Summary
- Appendix G: Transportation Impact Analysis Report
- Appendix H: Record of AB 52 / SB 18 Tribal Consultation

In compliance with Public Resources Code Section 21081.6, a mitigation monitoring and reporting program (MMRP) would be prepared as a separately bound document that would be adopted in conjunction with the certification of the Final EIR. The MMRP, responses to public comments on the Draft EIR, and any revisions to the Draft EIR would be identified in the Final EIR.

1.6 – APPROACH TO EIR ANALYSIS

The approach to the analysis presented in this EIR is programmatic in nature given the broad scope of the Specific Plan Update. Each environmental issue is analyzed in a similar manner, starting with a discussion of the existing environmental setting, including physical conditions and pertinent planning and regulatory framework. Thresholds of significance are then defined and are

used to measure the proposed SPU's potential impacts on the environment. Thresholds of significance are based on a broad list of questions and impact topics set forth in Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines. The impact analysis provided for each of the 20 topical areas examines the broad, long-term environmental effects resulting from the implementation of the proposed Specific Plan. The assessment of impacts focuses on how the impact in question could occur and whether the proposed Specific Plan would reduce or eliminate such impacts. The presence of sensitive environmental resources, hazards in specific areas, and the broad implications of the Specific Plan throughout the Planning Area are considered in the determination of impact significance. If the analysis indicates that a significant impact could occur, even with the benefits of any proposed goals or policies, mitigation measures are specified.

1.7 – CITATION

Preparation of this Program EIR and the Specific Plan Update rely on information from many sources, including the appendix materials previously listed and numerous other references. Pursuant to Section 15148 of the State CEQA Guidelines, citations from the appendix materials and other sources are provided throughout the EIR. Citations are numbered sequentially and inclusive to each environmental impact topic (Sections 4.1 through 4.20). References are located at the end of each section of this DEIR.

Table 1-2
Definitions of Key EIR Terminology

Significant Impact	"Significant effect on the environment" (significant impact) means a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any of the physical conditions within the area affected by the project, including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise, and objects of historic and aesthetic significance. "*An economic or social change by itself shall not be considered a significant effect on the environment. A social or economic change related to a physical change may be considered in determining whether the physical change is significant."* (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15382)
Cumulative Impacts	"Cumulative impacts" are defined as *"two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts."* (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15355)
Significant Unavoidable Impact	"Significant unavoidable impact" is defined as a significant adverse environmental impact for which either no mitigation or only partial mitigation is feasible. If the project is to be approved without imposing an alternative design, the Lead Agency must include in the record of the project approval a written statement of the specific reasons to support its action, i.e., a "statement of overriding considerations." (CEQA Guidelines, Sections 15126.2[b] and 15093[b])

Significance Criteria	The criteria used in this EIR to determine whether an impact is or is not ″significant″ are based on (a) CEQA-defined "mandatory findings of significance" - i.e., where any of the specific conditions occur under which the Legislature and the Secretary of Resources have determined constitute a potentially significant effect on the environment, which are listed in CEQA Guidelines section 15065; (b) specific criteria that a Resources Agency has determined are "normally" considered to constitute a "significant effect on the environment"; (c) the relationship of the project effect to the adopted policies, ordinances, and standards of the Lead Agency and of responsible agencies; and/or (d) commonly accepted practice and the professional judgment of the EIR authors and Lead Agency staff.
Mitigation Measure	For each significant impact, the EIR must identify a specific "mitigation" measure or set of measures capable of *"(a) avoiding the impact altogether by not taking a certain action or parts of an action; (b) minimizing impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action and its implementation; (c) rectifying the impact by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the impacted environment; (d) reducing or eliminating the impact over time by preservation or maintenance operations during the life of the action; or (e) compensating for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments."* (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15370)

2.0 – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This chapter provides a summary description for the Clearwater Specific Plan ("CSP" or "project"), a list of associated environmental issues to be resolved, a summary of significant impacts and mitigation measures associated with the project, and a summary of feasible alternatives to the project, including identification of the environmentally superior alternative. The Clearwater Specific Plan is a "specific plan," which is one of several policy and regulatory tools used by the City of Paramount to implement the City's General Plan through the establishment of detailed policies, regulations, and actions specifically focused on the Specific Plan area. State law requires the Specific Plan to be consistent with the City's General Plan, including all goals, policies, objectives, and standards contained in the General Plan.

2.1 – SPECIFIC PLAN LOCATION

Regionally, the project site is located in the City of Paramount (City or Paramount) in Los Angeles County. Paramount is situated in the southern portion of Los Angeles County, approximately 10.5 miles southwest of the City of Los Angeles (see Exhibit 3-1, Regional Context Map). Regional access to Paramount is provided by Interstate 105 (I-105), Interstate 605 (I-605), State Route 91 (SR-91), and Interstate 710 (I-710). Paramount is located in the Gateway Cities area and is bordered by the Cities of South Gate and Downey to the north, the City of Bellflower to the east, the City of Long Beach to the south, and the Cities of Compton and Lynwood and the unincorporated community of East Rancho Dominguez to the west (see Exhibit 3-2, Project Vicinity Map). Locally, the Clearwater Specific Plan area ("Planning Area") is located in the north-central portion of the City and is bound by Rosecrans Avenue on the north, Paramount Boulevard on the east, Somerset Boulevard on the south, and a Union Pacific Railroad, San Pedro Subdivision, rail line on the west (see Exhibit 3-3, Specific Plan Boundary Map).

2.2 – PROJECT SUMMARY

The Clearwater Specific Plan identifies the long-term vision and objectives for private development and public improvements, including creation of a new street grid, within the Planning Area. The proposed Specific Plan establishes land use, transportation, infrastructure, economic development, and urban design strategies to promote a vibrant, inclusive, and pedestrian-oriented neighborhood center. The Planning Area is envisioned as a dynamic live-work-play hub for residents and visitors. The Specific Plan includes a mixed-use district that would provide retail, entertainment, housing, and open space amenities for local residents. The Specific Plan would also provide for an artisanal manufacturing and creative live/work district that includes industrial uses along with residential uses. The proposed Specific Plan allows flexibility between a variety of residential, commercial, office, and neo (light) industrial uses across the entire Planning Area. The 2045 planning horizon for the Specific Plan is estimated to result in increases of up to 926,730 square feet of non-residential space (excluding square footage for structured parking) and up to 2,000 new dwelling units, which would potentially result in up to 4,643 new residents and 138 new employees in the City for the 2045 horizon year.

2.3 – ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

As required by the CEQA Guidelines, this EIR addresses the following areas of potential environmental impact or controversy known to the Lead Agency (the City of Paramount), including those issues and concerns identified by the City in its Notice of Preparation (NOP) of this EIR (dated January 6, 2025) and by other agencies, organizations, and individuals in response to the NOP. These environmental concerns relate to the following topics (listed in the order that they are addressed in this EIR):

- Air Quality
- Cultural and Historic Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources
- Energy Use
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Global Climate Change
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Land Use and Planning
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Transportation and Circulation
- Utilities and Service Systems

2.4 – SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

The Draft EIR is a comprehensive EIR and covers all of the following topics:

- Aesthetics and Visual Resources
- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Global Climate Change
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation and Traffic
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service System
- Wildfire

For each of the environmental topics listed above, any *"significant"* Project or cumulative impact and associated mitigation measure(s) identified in this EIR are summarized in Table 2-1, Summary of Potentially Significant Impacts and Recommended Mitigation Measures, below. The summary chart in Table 2-1 has been organized to correspond with the more detailed impact and mitigation discussions in chapters 4.1 through 4.20 of this Draft EIR. The chart is arranged in four columns: (1) identified impacts, (2) potential significance without mitigation, (3) mitigation measure(s), and (4) the level of impact significance after implementation of the mitigation measure(s). Because the table does not list impacts that are less than significant with no mitigation required, the Impact/Mitigation Measure numbering may be out of sequence.

TABLE 2-1
SUMMARY OF POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS AND RECOMMENDED MITIGATION MEASURES

Impacts	Significance Before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Significance After Mitigation
AIR QUALITY			
Impact AQ-1 – Would the Specific Plan conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan? Since the projected population growth under the Project's 2045 time horizon exceeds the 2016 RTP/SCS growth forecasts used to prepare the 2020 South Coast Air Quality Management Plan, the Project could increase the frequency and/or severity of air quality violations in the Basin or otherwise impede attainment of air quality standards in the Basin. This is considered a **potentially significant impact**.	Potentially Significant	**See Mitigation Measures AQ-1, AQ-2, and TRAN-1 under Impact AQ-2 below.**	Significant and Unavoidable
Impact AQ-2 – Would the Specific Plan result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard? Due to the built-out nature of the Project Area, construction emissions are speculative with respect to the timing and magnitude of demolition, site preparation, grading, building construction, paving and painting activities that would occur over time. Fugitive dust (PM10) emissions would be greatest during building demolition, site preparation, and grading, due to the disturbances of soil and transport of material. NOx emissions would result from the combustion of diesel fuels used to power off-road heavy-duty pieces of equipment (e.g. backhoes, bulldozers, excavators, etc.). Reactive Organic Gas (ROG)	Potentially Significant	**Mitigation Measure AQ-1: Require a Project-level Construction Assessment for New Development Proposed Under Implementation of the Clearwater Specific Plan.** The City shall require applicants to submit a quantitative project-level construction criteria air pollutant and toxic air contaminant emissions analysis for future development proposed under implementation of the Clearwater Specific Plan. The estimated construction criteria air pollutant and toxic air contaminant emissions shall be compared against the thresholds of significance maintained by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) and, if emissions are shown to be above SCAQMD thresholds, the City shall require the implementation of mitigation to reduce emissions below SCAMQD thresholds or to the maximum extent feasible. Mitigation measures to reduce emissions could include, but are not limited to:	Significant and Unavoidable

or Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) emissions would generally be greatest during architectural activities. The types and quantity of equipment, and duration of construction activities, would be dependent on project-specific conditions. Despite the unknowns, it is plausible that one or more projects developed under implementation of the proposed Specific Plan could exceed one or more of the SCAQMD's construction criteria air pollutant thresholds of significance and the impact could be **potentially significant and requires mitigation**. Additionally, as shown in Table 4.3-8 of Chapter 4.3 Air Quality), the maximum daily operational emissions associated with the 2045 growth under the Specific Plan would result in ROG emissions that would exceed SCAQMD's recommended significance thresholds. This is considered a **potentially significant impact**.		• Requiring equipment to use alternative fuel sources (e.g., electric-powered and liquefied or compressed natural gas), meet cleaner emission standards (e.g., U.S. EPA Tier IV Final emissions standards for equipment greater than 50-horsepower), and/or utilizing added exhaust devices (e.g., Level 3 Diesel Particular Filter); • Limiting the idling time of diesel-powered construction equipment to two minutes; • Requiring that all construction equipment, diesel trucks, and generators be equipped with Best Available Control Technology (BACT) for emission reductions of NOx and PM per SCAQMD BACT Guidelines; • Requiring all contractors use equipment that meets CARB's most recent certification standard for off-road heavy-duty diesel engines; and • Application of super-compliant paints to interior and/or exterior surfaces (e.g., paints that meet SCAQMD Rule 1113 "super-compliant" requirements). **Mitigation Measure AQ-2: Use Super Compliant VOC Architectural Coatings During Operational Activities.** The City shall require the use architectural coatings that meet the South Coast Air Quality Management District's (SCAQMD) "Super Compliant" VOC standard of 10 grams/liter or less for all interior and exterior primer, sealer, paint, and other coating applications for which a super compliant product is commercially available. **See Mitigation Measure TRAN-1 in Section 4.17.**	
Impact AQ-3 – Would the Specific Plan expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	Potentially Significant	**See Mitigation Measure AQ-1 above**	Significant and Unavoidable (Construction Emissions Only)

Construction emissions associated with future development activities facilitated under implementation of the proposed Specific Plan could exceed SCAQMD construction localized significance thresholds (LSTs) and cancerogenic and non-cancerogenic threshold maintained and recommended by the SCAQMD. This is considered a **potentially significant impact**.			
Would the Specific Plan cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to Air Quality? The Project's 2045 growth and associated construction and operational emissions may not be consistent with the planning assumptions and emissions levels which exceed SCAQMD-recommended CEQA thresholds of significance. This is a **potentially significant impact.**	Potentially Significant	**See Mitigation Measures AQ-1, AQ-2, and TRAN-1 above**	Significant and Unavoidable
GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS			
Impact GHG-1 – Would the Specific Plan generate GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment? As shown in Table 4.8-4, the Specific Plan's 2045 growth projection would result in GHG emissions that exceed the adjusted SCAQMD derived plan-efficiency metric. This is considered a **potentially significant impact.**	Potentially Significant	**See Mitigation Measures AQ-1, and TRAN-1.** **Mitigation Measure GHG-1: Reduce Building Energy Consumption and GHG Emissions.** To reduce potential GHG emissions associated with the performance of the building envelope and systems components covered by Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations, all buildings in the Planning Area shall be designed to have a total energy design rating that is at least 5% less than the standard building design for Climate Zone 8. The energy budget for the standard design building and the energy budget for the proposed design building shall be determined in accordance with the definitions and approach set forth in the version of the Building Energy Efficiency Standards (Energy Code) that is in effect at the time of building permit approval, unless the City of Paramount has adopted local requirements that are more stringent than the Energy Code. The requirement to reduce a project's energy budget by 5% below the	Significant and Unavoidable

		standard design building shall not apply if the Energy Code or the city of Paramount has already established a zero net energy requirement for the standard design building. **Mitigation Measure GHG-2: Reduce Appliance Energy Consumption and GHG Emissions.** To reduce potential GHG emissions from appliance-related energy consumption, all developer-installed refrigerators, dishwashers, clothes washers and dryers, and room air conditioners shall be Energy Star-certified products. **Mitigation Measure GHG-3: Increase Water Conservation.** To reduce potential GHG emissions associated with water consumption, U.S. EPA Certified WaterSense labeled or equivalent faucets, toilets, and showerheads shall be installed. **Mitigation Measure GHG-4: Increase Solar Energy.** To reduce building energy and related GHG emissions, all projects occurring within the TR5, MU-TC, FD, and NI zones in the Planning Area shall implement the following sustainability recommendation included in the Specific Plan regarding solar energy: Solar panels shall cover a minimum percentage of the roof area, unless 100% of building energy needs are met using renewable energy. The minimum percentage of covered roof area is 30% for buildings within the MU-TC zone, 40% for building within the TR5 zone, and 50% for buildings within the FC and NI zones.	

Would the Specific Plan cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to greenhouse gases? The Project's 2045 growth projection and associated GHG emissions could exceed the significance threshold applied in this EIR and pose a conflict with the 2022 Climate Change Scoping Plan of the California Air Resources Board. This is considered a **potentially significant impact.**	Potentially Significant	**See Mitigation Measures AQ-1, GHG-1 through GHG-4, and TRAN-1.**	Significant and Unavoidable
HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY			
Impact HYD-2 – Would the Specific Plan substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin? The Specific Plan will substantially increase the projected population in the City over those projected in the 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, which must be updated every five years and will need to be updated to account for the growth represented by future land uses under the Specific Plan. This is considered a **potentially significant impact.**	Potentially Significant	**Mitigation Measure HYD-1: Water Demand Management.** New developments under the Specific Plan that will be served by local water utility providers shall not be approved if they increase water use in excess of what is identified for supply in 2045 under the most recent Urban Water Management Plan for the involved local water providers.	Less than Significant
NOISE			
Impact NOISE-1 – Would the project result in the generation of a substantial temporary increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies? As shown in Table 4.13-10, typical construction equipment activities could exceed the FTA's 80	Potentially Significant	**Mitigation Measure NOI-1: Reduce Potential Planning Area Construction Noise Levels.** To ensure receptors in the vicinity of the Planning Area are aware of the projects and their planned construction activities, all future development in the Planning Area shall implement the measures listed below. (1) *Provide Notification of Construction Activities.* The notice shall be provided at least 14 calendar days prior to the start of any construction activities, describe the	Less than Significant

dBA L_{eq} significance thresholds at onsite institutional use (e.g., Our Lady of the Rosary School and Parish, Paramount Adult School) and future onsite residential receptors that could be developed under the Specific Plan within approximately 100 feet of work areas. This is considered a **potentially significant impact**.		planned phasing and schedule of construction activities, describe the noise control measures to be implemented during construction, and include the name, phone number, and email address of a designated contact for the construction contractor and the city of Paramount responsible for handling construction-related noise complaints. The notice shall be provided to the owner/occupants of all occupied dwelling units within 200 feet of planned construction work areas. (2) *Restrict Work Hours:* Unless otherwise authorized by the City, all construction-related work activities, including material deliveries, shall be conducted only during the hours of 7 AM to 8 PM consistent with Municipal Code Section 9.12.060(4). Each development project shall post a sign at all entrances to and exits from the construction site informing contractors, subcontractors, construction workers, etc. of the allowable work hour requirements. (3) *Control Construction Traffic and Site Access*. Construction traffic, including soil and debris hauling, shall follow City-designated truck routes and shall avoid routes that contain residential dwelling units to the maximum extent feasible given specific project location and access needs. (4) *Construction Equipment Selection, Use, and Noise Control Measures*. The following measures shall apply to all future development in the Project area: a. Construction staging activities such as receipt of deliveries, equipment and material storage, etc., shall occur as far away from sensitive land uses as possible. b. All stationary noise generating equipment such as pumps, compressors, and welding machines shall be shielded and located as far from sensitive receptor locations as practical. Shielding may	

		consist of trailers, stored materials, or a three- or four-sided enclosure provided the structure/barrier breaks the line of sight between the equipment and the receptor, provides for proper equipment ventilation and operations, and complies with all other applicable occupational safety and health requirements. c. Heavy equipment shall include standard noise suppression devices such as mullers, engine covers, and engine/mechanical isolators, mounts, etc. Equipment and noise suppression devices shall be maintained in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations while onsite. d. Pneumatic tools shall include a noise suppression device on the compressed air exhaust. e. Connect to existing electrical service to power stationary and portable equipment (e.g., pumps, generators, compressors, and welding sets). This measure shall be subject to the approval of the local electric utility. 4) *Install Temporary Noise Barriers.* To reduce potential construction noise levels at receptors near active work areas, all future development in the Project area shall install a temporary noise barrier during all site preparation, grading, and paving work activities that have a line of sight to and occur within 100 feet of an occupied dwelling unit or educational or religious assembly land use. The barrier shall only be required along the portion of the job site perimeter that lies between the active work area and the affected dwelling unit(s). In addition, a temporary barrier shall not be required if a permanent barrier is already present between the work area and the affected dwelling unit. The barrier shall consist of the following: a. When activities occur no closer than 50 feet from an occupied dwelling unit, the physical noise barrier shall extend to a height of 6 feet above grade and consist of nominal 0.5-inch plywood	

		with a minimum material density of 1.7 pounds per square foot installed. Alternatively, the barrier may consist of commercially available acoustic panels, blankets, etc. that have a minimum sound transmission class (STC) or transmission loss value of 20 dB. b. When activities occur within 25 to 50 feet of an occupied dwelling unit, the physical noise barrier shall extend to a height of 8 feet above grade and consist of nominal 0.5-inch plywood with a minimum material density of 1.7 pounds per square foot installed. Alternatively, the barrier may consist of commercially available acoustic panels, blankets, etc. that have a minimum STC or transmission loss value of 20 dB. c. When activities occur within 25 feet of an occupied dwelling unit, the physical noise barrier shall extend to a height of 10 feet above grade and consist of nominal 1.0-inch plywood with a minimum material density of approximately 3 pounds per square foot installed. Alternatively, the barrier may consist of commercially available acoustic panels, blankets, etc. that have a minimum STC or transmission loss value of 23 dB or higher. The barrier shall be installed at grade, or mounted to structures located at grade, such as a K-rail, and be maintained free of openings or gaps other than weep holes. Construction ingress/egress shall not be permitted through the barrier unless there is no other viable access point due to specific project constraints or other access requirements. The noise barrier may be removed following the completion of all site preparation, grading, and paving activities (i.e., it is not necessary once framing and typical vertical building construction begins provided no other site preparation, grading, or paving work is still occurring in the area).	

Impact NOISE-2 – Would the project result in generation of a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies? The proposed Project could result in the operation of noise generating equipment and activities in close proximity to building facades within the Project area that have the potential to exceed interior noise standards. This would be a **potentially significant impact**.	Potentially Significant	**Mitigation Measure NOI-2: Control Onsite Noise Generating Sources and Activities.** To ensure onsite, operations-related equipment and other activities associated with the future development in the Project area do not generate noise levels that exceed City standards, future mixed-use residential/commercial, commercial and neo-industrial development shall submit a project-specific operational noise analysis to the City for review and approval prior to the issuance of building permits. The noise analysis shall be prepared by a qualified acoustical consultant and shall: 1) Identify surrounding land uses and noise-sensitive receptors in the vicinity of the project. 2) Identify the ambient noise level at and in the vicinity of the project, including at noise-sensitive receptors that could be impacted by the project. Ambient noise levels may be based on information in the Clearwater Specific Plan EIR, or new ambient noise measurements conducted for the project. 3) Describe the noise levels generated by the project's onsite noise sources, including all stationary equipment (e.g., pumps, compressors, generators, dryers, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning equipment, etc.), truck docks/dedicated loading areas, waste collection areas, and vehicle parking areas included in the final project design/site plan. 4) Demonstrate how project noise sources and activities will comply with the exterior sound limits established in Municipal Code Chapter 9.12, Noise, the noise compatibility guidelines in General Plan Table 5-3, and applicable interior sound limits. Measures for reducing project noise to may include, but are not limited to, setbacks, equipment enclosures, noise barriers or other means of shielding onsite noise levels from surrounding land uses and noise-sensitive receptors, and operating restrictions (e.g., prohibiting	Significant and Unavoidable for Offsite Noise Less than Significant for Onsite Noise

		certain equipment or activities from operating at certain times such as nighttime hours).	
Impact NOISE-3 – Would the project result in generation of excessive groundborne noise levels? The proposed project's construction activities would not result in physical damage to any existing structures, but could exceed FTA and Caltrans criteria for annoyance for potential onsite research and development uses and potential onsite residential receptors. Construction vibration would be a **potentially significant impact**.	Potentially Significant	**Mitigation Measure NOI-3: Prohibit Vibratory Equipment.** To reduce the potential for construction equipment to generate substantially perceptible groundborne vibrations, the use of vibratory rollers, vibratory/impact hammers and other potential large vibration-generating equipment (e.g., hydraulic breakers/hoe rams) shall be prohibited within 110 feet of any occupied institutional building, 150 feet of any occupied residential dwelling unit or within 250 feet of an occupied research building. Additionally, the use of large bulldozers, large loaded trucks, and/or auger drill rigs shall not be permitted within 65 feet of any occupied institutional building, 80 feet of any occupied residential dwelling unit or within 150 feet of an occupied research building. If it is not feasible to prohibit the use of the specified equipment within the ranges defined above due to site- or project-specific conditions or design considerations, a project-specific construction vibration evaluation plan shall be prepared that identifies planned vibration-generating construction activities and potential ground-borne vibration levels (given specific equipment and soil conditions) at specific receptor locations and the vibration control measures that will be employed to ensure equipment and work activities would not result in vibrations that exceed the FTA standards of 65 VdB, 72 VdB, and 75 VdB for Category 1, Category 2, and Category 3 land use types, respectively or Caltrans' strongly perceptible human annoyance criterion of 0.1 inches/second peak particle velocity. Such measures may include but are not limited to the use of vibration monitoring to measure actual vibration levels, the use of photo monitoring or documentation of building conditions prior to, during, and after construction activities, and/or the use of trenches or barriers that attenuate ground-borne vibration.	Less Than Significant

Would the project cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to noise or vibration?	Potentially Significant	**See TRAN-1, NOI-1, and NOI-2, and NOI-3.**	Significant and Unavoidable
TRANSPORTATION			
Impact TRANS-2 – Would the Specific Plan conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)? [regarding VMT] The proposed Specific Plan is located within a transit priority area and does not conflict with additional considerations that may contradict transit-oriented development. Therefore, the proposed project satisfies the "Proximity to Transit Based Screening Criteria" based on County Guidelines used by the City of Paramount and can be determined to have a less than significant VMT impact with implementation of Mitigation Measure TRAN-1.	Potentially Significant	**Mitigation Measure TRAN-1:** Prior to completion of the planned Southeast Gateway Line Paramount/Rosecrans station, all development proposals within the Clearwater Specific Plan Planning Area shall be required to prepare a project-specific VMT screening/analysis. After completion of the planned Southeast Gateway Line Paramount/ Rosecrans station, only development proposals involving APN 6241-016-023 or 6241-016-907 shall be required to prepare a project-specific VMT screening/analysis.	Less than Significant
Impact TRAN-3 – Would the Specific Plan substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	Potentially Significant	**Mitigation Measure TRAN-2:** Future development proposals forecast to generate more than 50 peak hour trips within the Planning Area shall be required to be prepare a traffic study that evaluates and addresses any deficiencies related to the following items: • The need for installation of a traffic signal or turning restrictions at unsignalized access points. • Left turn lane storage lengths. Any additional site access or safety concerns deemed necessary by the City of Paramount Director of Public Works.	Less than Significant

Would the Specific Plan cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to transportation and traffic?	Potentially Significant	**See Mitigation Measures TRAN-1 and TRAN-2.**	Less than Significant
UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS			
Impact UTIL-1 – Would the Specific Plan require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects? The Specific Plan will substantially increase the projected population in the City over those projected in the 2020 Urban Water Management Plan, which must be updated every five years and will need to be updated to account for the growth represented by future land uses under the Specific Plan. This is considered a **potentially significant impact.**	Potentially Significant	**Mitigation Measure HYD-1: Water Demand Management.** New developments under the Specific Plan that will be served by local water utility providers shall not be approved if they increase water use in excess of what is identified for supply in 2045 under the most recent Urban Water Management Plan for the involved local water providers.	Less than Significant

2.5 – ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

Pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6, this chapter describes three alternatives to the Specific Plan Update ("SPU" or "project"), including the CEQA-mandated No Project Alternative, and compares the impacts of each alternative to the project. The ability of each alternative to meet the basic project objectives is also described, and the "environmentally superior" alternative among the three is identified, as required by the CEQA Guidelines.

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(a), an EIR does not need to evaluate every conceivable alternative. A feasible range of alternatives has been evaluated that will allow decision makers to make a reasoned choice and that meet most of the project objectives. The project objectives included in Chapter 3, Project Description, are:

1. Create a transit-oriented development (TOD) mixed-use town center that provides a range of housing, commercial, and open space uses.
2. Facilitate Plan Area as an artisanal manufacturing center and business incubator district for local residents with an appropriate mix of industrial, office, and employment-supporting uses that will reflect market conditions.
3. Encourage ridership for the future Southeast Gateway Light Rail station for residents of the City of Paramount and Specific Plan Area, as well as visitors to the City and Plan Area.
4. Promote development of a mix of land uses that support economic development growth and affordable housing.
5. Encourage physical development of buildings and open space that provides a transition between existing uses that represent past development patterns and future development that will follow best practices for TOD.
6. Orient new development and promote internal circulation design to create pedestrian-oriented streets that promote the use of active transportation as a mode for user trips.
7. Encourage community participation, architectural style, urban design, and placemaking to represent the history and culture of the City of Paramount and its existing residents.
8. Prioritize the implementation of green infrastructure approaches to new infrastructure and utilities that promotes resilience and adaptation to climate change.
9. Implement infrastructure development that prioritizes sustainability for both natural systems and long-term economic development, operations, and maintenance.

Alternative 1: No Project/Existing Conditions Alternative

The No Project/Existing Conditions Alternative (No Project Alternative) assumes that the amount of development within the Planning Area would be reduced compared to the proposed Specific Plan. Development assumptions for this alternative are shown in Table 5-1. For this alternative, it is assumed there would be a significant decrease in residential and non-residential development, as well as employment and population, when compared to the proposed Specific Plan. Additionally, it is assumed that the No Project Alternative would not fulfill any of the proposed Specific Plan objectives.

Alternative 2: Reduced (25%) Non-Residential Alternative

The Reduced (-25%) Non-Residential Alternative reflects a reduced amount of non-residential building area and a reduced number of employees (both approximately 25 percent less) within the Planning Area when compared to those expected under the proposed Specific Plan. Development assumptions for this alternative are shown in Table 5-1. This alternative assumes that goals and policies associated with the existing 2007 General Plan would apply, as would development standards associated with the proposed Specific Plan. This alternative would fulfill some but not all of the proposed Specific Plan objectives.

Alternative 3: Reduced (25%) Residential Alternative

The Reduced (-25%) Residential Alternative reflects a reduced number of residential units and a reduced amount of residents (both approximately 25 percent less) within the Planning Area when compared to those expected under the proposed Specific Plan. Development assumptions for this alternative are shown in Table 5-1. This alternative assumes that goals and policies associated with the existing 2007 General Plan would apply, as would development standards associated with the proposed Specific Plan. This alternative would fulfill some but not all of the proposed Specific Plan objectives.

Environmentally Superior Alternative

None of the alternatives would eliminate or reduce any of the significant impacts of the proposed project to less than significant levels. However, Alternative 3, the Reduced Residential Alternative would reduce potential impacts to the greatest degree and would therefore be the “environmentally superior alternative.” This conclusion is based on the comparative impact conclusions in Table 2-2 and the analysis within this chapter. The CEQA Guidelines (Section 15126[e][2]) stipulate, "If the environmentally superior alternative is the 'no project' alternative, the EIR shall also identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives." While both Alternative 2 and Alternative 3 would result in reduced or similar less than significant impacts as the project, Alternative 3 would result in an overall greater reduction in development potential than Alternative 2. Therefore, other than Alternative 1 (No Project/Existing Conditions), Alternative 3, Reduced (25%) Residential Development Capacity, would result in the least adverse environmental impacts and would therefore be the “environmentally superior alternative.” This conclusion is based on the comparative impact conclusions in Table 5-2 and the analysis within this section. However, this alternative would not meet the objectives to nearly the same degree as the project or Alternative 2.

Table 2-2
Alternatives' Impacts Compared to Project Impacts

Impact/Resource	Proposed Specific Plan	Alternative 1: No Project/ Existing Conditions	Alternative 2: Reduced (-25%) Non-Residential Alternative	Alternative 3: Reduced (-25%) Residential Alternative
Aesthetics	LTS	Similar LTS	Reduced LTS	Reduced LTS
Ag./Forest Resources	LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS
Air Quality	**SU**	**Reduced SU**	**Reduced SU**	**Reduced SU**
Biological Resources	LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS
Cultural Resources	LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS
Energy	LTS	Reduced LTS	Reduced LTS	Reduced LTS
Geology and Soils	LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS
GHG Emissions	**SU**	**Reduced SU**	**Reduced SU**	**Reduced SU**
Hazards/Haz. Materials	LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS
Hydrology/Water Quality	LTS	Increased LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS
Land Use	LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS
Mineral Resources	LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS
Noise	**SU**	**Reduced SU**	**Reduced SU**	**Reduced SU**
Population/Housing	LTS	Reduced LTS	Reduced LTS	Reduced LTS
Public Services	LTS	Reduced LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS
Recreation	LTS	Reduced LTS	Similar LTS	Reduced LTS
Transportation (VMT)	LTS	Reduced LTS	Reduced LTS	Reduced LTS
Tribal Cultural Resources	LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS
Utilities/Service Systems	LTS	Similar LTS	Reduced LTS	Reduced LTS
Wildfire	LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS

Source: MIG, 2025.
LTS = Less Than Significant Impact
SU = Significant and Unavoidable Impact

2.6 – AREAS OF POTENTIAL CONTROVERSY

Potential Areas of Controversy include:

Air Quality: Since the projected population growth under the Project's 2045 time horizon exceeds the 2020 RTP/SCS growth forecasts used to prepare the 2022 South Coast Air Quality Management Plan, the Project could increase the frequency and/or severity of air quality violations in the Basin or otherwise impede attainment of air quality standards in the Basin. It is plausible that one or more projects developed under implementation of the proposed Specific Plan could exceed one or more of the SCAQMD's construction criteria air pollutant thresholds of significance. Additionally, as shown in Table 4.3-8 of Chapter 4.3 Air Quality), the maximum daily operational emissions associated with the 2045 growth under the Specific Plan would result in emissions that would exceed SCAQMD's recommended significance thresholds.

Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Compliance: The greenhouse gas emissions associated with the implementation of the Specific Plan would exceed the 2020 Climate Change Scoping Plan's recommended efficiency metrics. The Specific Plan has the potential to result in growth which is in excess of the amount of the assumed growth in the 2022 RTP/SCS and would conflict with State GHG reduction goals.

Noise: Future offsite traffic noise levels have the potential to exceed interior noise standards.

Water Supply: Depending on the rate of growth that actually occurs as a result of implementation of the Specific Plan, water serving agencies may be stressed in providing water supply to meet such growth.

3.0 – PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project is the adoption and implementation of the Clearwater Specific Plan (CSP). This chapter describes the proposed Specific Plan and the various components and actions addressed throughout the EIR. As explained by CEQA Guidelines Section 15124 (Project Description), the project description that follows has been detailed to the extent needed for adequate evaluation of potential environmental impacts.

3.1 – PROJECT LOCATION

Regionally, the project site is located in the City of Paramount (City or Paramount) in Los Angeles County. Paramount is situated in the southern portion of Los Angeles County, approximately 10.5 miles southwest of the City of Los Angeles (see Exhibit 3-1, Regional Context Map). Regional access to Paramount is provided by Interstate 105 (I-105), Interstate 605 (I-605), State Route 91 (SR-91), and Interstate 710 (I-710). Paramount is located in the Gateway Cities area and is bordered by the Cities of South Gate and Downey to the north, the City of Bellflower to the east, the City of Long Beach to the south, and the Cities of Compton and Lynwood and the unincorporated community of East Rancho Dominguez to the west (see Exhibit 3-2, Project Vicinity Map). Locally, the Clearwater Specific Plan area ("Planning Area") is located in the north-central portion of the City and is bound by Rosecrans Avenue on the north, Paramount Boulevard on the east, Somerset Boulevard on the south, and a Union Pacific Railroad, San Pedro Subdivision, rail line on the west (see Exhibit 3-3, Specific Plan Boundary Map).

3.2 – ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The Specific Plan area has a General Plan land use designation of Clearwater East (AP-CE). The Clearwater East Land Use Plan was designed to produce a quality multiple use district and provide a positive interaction between land use types. Specific land use recommendations for this designation include housing, light industrial, office/business park, commercial, and public/quasi-public uses. The Planning Area is characterized by private land ownership, with Modern Development Company being the largest landowner with a contiguous area that includes the Bianchi Theatres and Paramount Swap Meet and a majority of the northern half of the Planning Area, as well as a parcel in the southwest corner of the Planning Area that contains a retail/warehouse building and associated parking (see Exhibit 3-4, Existing Land Use Map). The parking in this area is used as overflow parking for the Swap Meet. Communications Workers of America (CWA) Local 9400 owns a small parcel with a single building in the northern portion of the Planning Area along Rosecrans Boulevard.

A strip mall-type shopping center is located in the northeastern portion of the Planning Area. A triangular shaped Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) property is located in the northeastern portion of the planning area adjacent to the shopping center at the corner of Rosecrans Avenue and Paramount Boulevard. The Paramount Adult School is located in the east-central portion of the Planning Area just north of the Swap Meet at the corner of All America City Way and Paramount Boulevard. The Our Lady of the Rosary Parish is located in the east-central portion of the Planning Area just south of the Swap Meet along Paramount Boulevard. The Somerset Business Park is located in the southeastern portion of the Planning Area at the corner of Paramount Boulevard and Somerset Boulevard and is comprised of multiple parcels combined together to form a business park with multiple buildings; the buildings include multiple tenants,

which are owned condominium-style. One of the tenants is a Paramount Sheriff's Substation. A recently vacated property formerly occupied by an automobile storage and shipping company (HoneyBee International) is located in the west-central portion of the Planning Area just south of the Swap Meet and west of the Our Lady of the Rosary Parish along All America City Way. There are multiple parcels located along the western edge of the Planning Area owned by the Port of Long Beach (formerly owned by Union Pacific Railroad) and containing the San Pedro Subdivision rail line. Finally, with the exception of small apartments for clergy at Our Lady of Rosary Parish, the Planning Area does not include any housing within its boundaries. Table 3-1 (Existing Planning Area Land Use) lists the existing land uses within the Planning Area, and indicates the use(s), number of acres, and square footage.

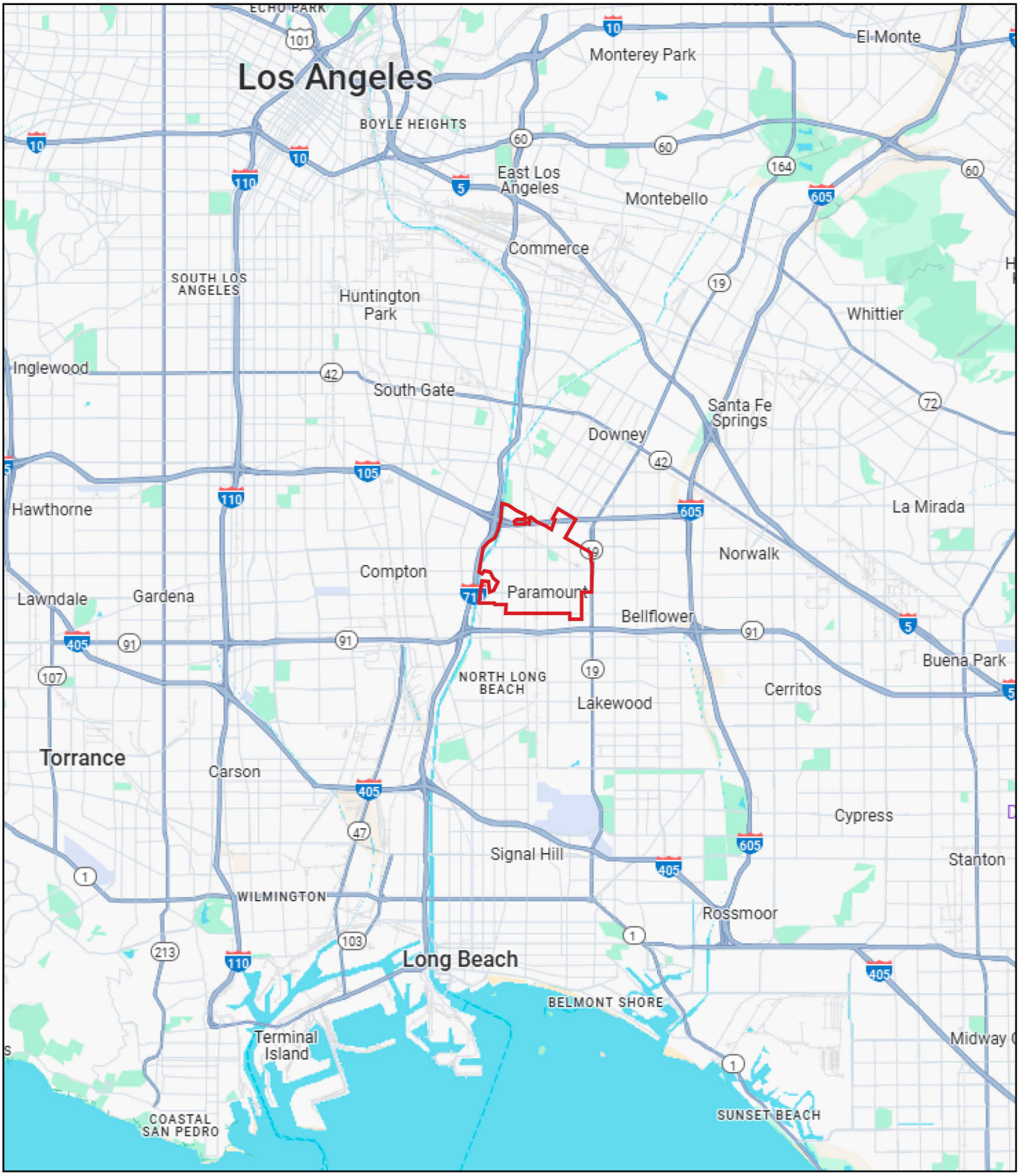
Table 3-1
Existing (2024) Planning Area Land Use

Current Use	Land Use Equivalent	Acres	Square Footage
Movie Theater	Commercial	4.1	47,840
CWA Local 9400	Quasi-Public	1.2	10,023
Strip Mall/Shopping Center	Commercial	2.5	40,843
Swap Meet/Drive-In Concession Building	Commercial	1.2	13,426
Swap Meet (Vendor Area)	Commercial	10	486,574
Swap Meet Parking	Commercial	23.1	0
Retail/Warehouse	Commercial	6.5	14,446
Former HoneyBee International	Industrial	6.6	86,714
Paramount Adult School	Quasi-Public	3.3	41,870
Our Lady of the Rosary	Quasi-Public	4.4	49,841
Somerset Business Park	Business Park/Office	6.3	140,386
Paramount Sheriff Substation	Public Facility	1.5	14,049
SCE Easement	Utility/Easement	0.3	0
	Total	**71.0**	**946,012**

Source: City of Paramount, *Clearwater Specific Plan: Existing Conditions Report*, October 2024. (see Appendix C)
Note: Land Use Equivalent provides a common, general land use category based on the specific use.

The Specific Plan area is bound by three major streets: Rosecrans Avenue to the north, Paramount Boulevard to the east, and Somerset Boulevard to the south. A Port of Long Beach rail line right-of-way acts as the western boundary of the Specific Plan area and All America City Way provides access to and from the western portion of the Planning Area via Somerset Boulevard to the south. Currently, it is estimated that there are approximately 2,946 passenger vehicle parking stalls located throughout the Planning Area, including 88 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant spaces.

The area surrounding the Specific Plan area is characterized primarily by a mix of commercial, industrial, quasi-public, and institutional land uses as well as parks and recreation facilities. Immediately north of the Planning Area across Rosecrans Avenue is a railway right-of-way, which has been identified as the Southeast Gateway Line corridor, LA Metro's new light rail transit line connecting Southeast LA County to Los Angeles. To the east of the Planning Area are Paramount Park and Paramount Park Community Center, the Paramount Park Middle School, Paramount High School (West) Campus, and residential neighborhoods. To the west of the Planning Area are warehouse, logistics, light industrial, and commercial uses developed under the Clearwater West Specific Plan. South of the Planning Area is a mix of industrial, commercial, and residential uses.



- City of Paramount

Source: Google Maps

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Exhibit 3-1 Regional Context Map

Clearwater Specific Plan

Paramount, California

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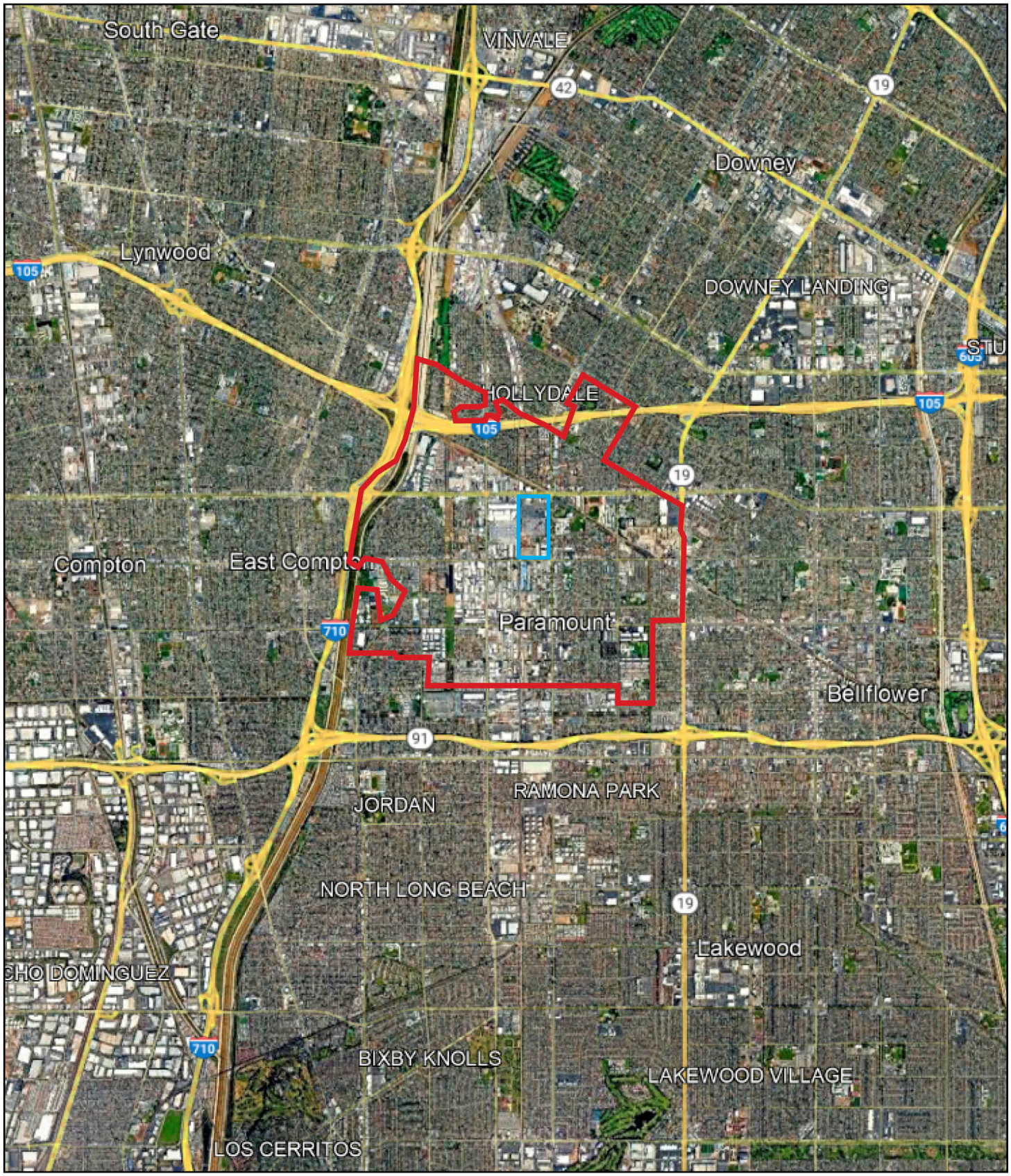

- City of Paramount

- Specific Plan Boundary

Source: Google Earth

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Exhibit 3-2 Project Vicinity Map

Clearwater Specific Plan

Paramount, California

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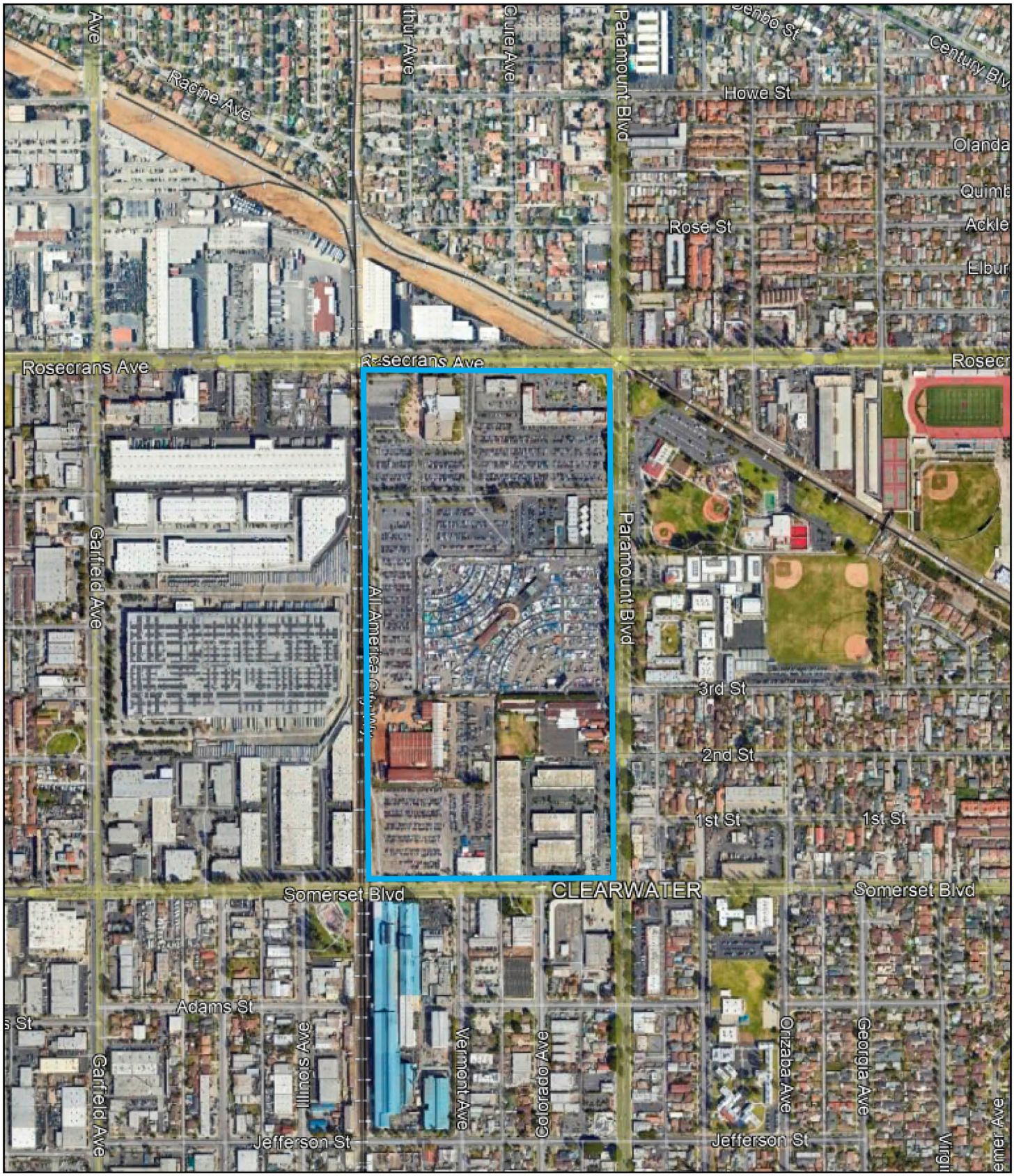

- Specific Plan Boundary

Source: Google Earth

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Exhibit 3-3 Specific Plan Boundary Map

Clearwater Specific Plan
Paramount, California

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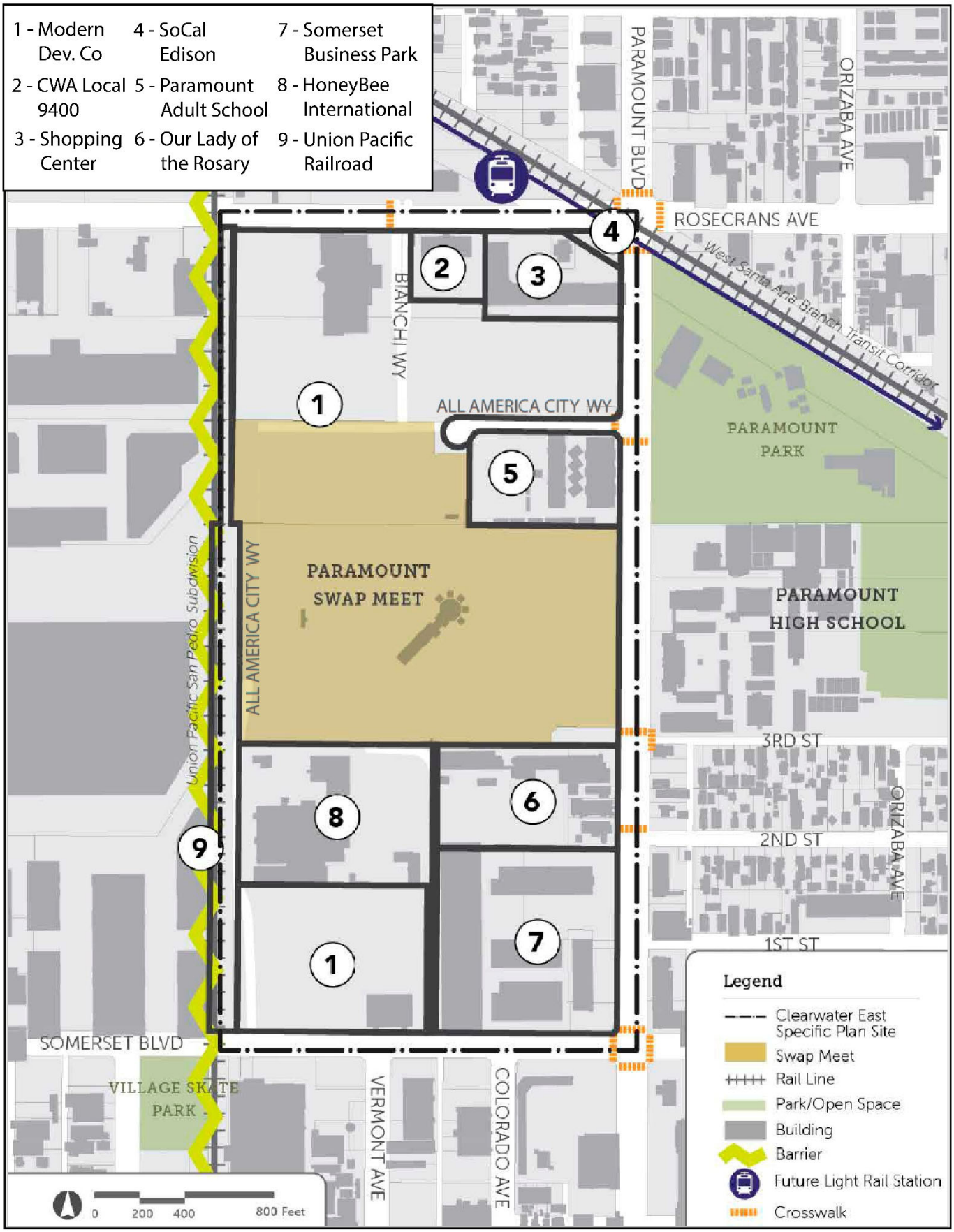

Source: Existing Conditions Report
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Exhibit 3-4 Existing Land Use Map

Clearwater Specific Plan
Paramount, California

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3.3 – PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

The Clearwater Specific Plan identifies the long-term vision and objectives for private development and public improvements, including creation of a new street grid, within the Planning Area. The proposed Specific Plan includes the following components:

Chapter 1: Introduction
Chapter 2: Vision
Chapter 3: Land Use Plan
Chapter 4: Design and Development Standards
Chapter 5: Mobility Plan
Chapter 6: Infrastructure Plan
Chapter 7: Implementation Plan

The proposed Specific Plan establishes land use, transportation, infrastructure, economic development, and urban design strategies to promote a vibrant, inclusive, and pedestrian-oriented neighborhood center. The Planning Area is envisioned as a dynamic live-work-play hub for residents and visitors. The Specific Plan includes a mixed-use district that would provide retail, entertainment, housing, and open space amenities for local residents. The Specific Plan would also provide for an artisanal manufacturing and creative live/work district that includes industrial uses along with residential uses.

Private Realm Strategies

The proposed Specific Plan includes five land use zones: Town Mixed-Use, Town Residential, Flex District, Quasi-Public, and Neo-Industrial. The Specific Plan sets development maximums and height limits for the five development zones. Below is a description of the five proposed development zones. Exhibit 3-5 (Specific Plan Development Zones) depicts the proposed zoning districts.

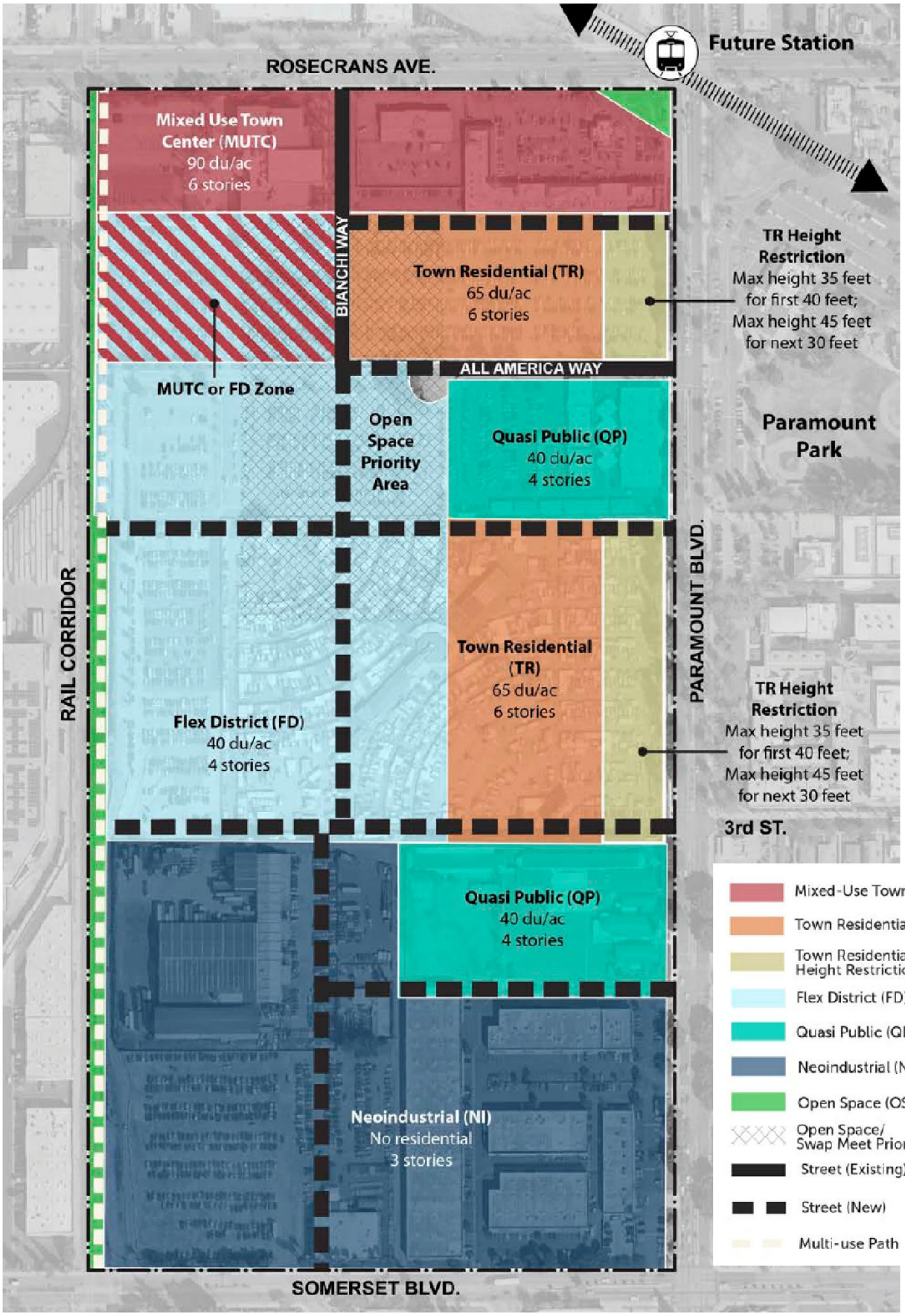
- The purpose of the **Mixed-Use Town Center (MU-TC)** zoning district is to promote a concentration of transit-oriented development best practices within the Specific Plan area that responds to the adjacent light rail station. This zone would accommodate the highest density of development allowed within the Specific Plan area that would encourage vertical mixed-use prioritizing housing above ground-level commercial uses. It would serve as the gateway between the City of Paramount and regional transit access.
- The **Town Residential (TR)** zoning district will emphasize development of housing with community serving ground-floor uses to create a pleasant, walkable neighborhood. It would promote multiple, medium-density, multi-unit residential housing projects that establish a traditional urban block pattern.
- The **Flex District (FD)** zoning district is intended to be a complementary mix of residential, commercial, and neo industrial uses. It provides for diverse land uses that promote a 24/7 live, work, play district; flexible building standards; and emphasis on healthy, sustainable performance standards. It allows for the continued operation of existing commercial and office uses while allowing for the evolution of the area into a denser mix of uses.
- The **Quasi-Public (QP)** zoning district is already in the City General Plan. This zone is used to note continued use of the Paramount Adult School and Our Lady of the Rosary Church. If residential development is proposed, as accessory/infill or as demolition and new development, the TR-40 standards would apply.

- The **Neo Industrial (NI)** zoning district will provide a model for neo-industrial development that complements the scale and character of neighborhood residential areas while providing a buffer from existing nonresidential uses outside the Specific Plan area. This zone encourages forward-thinking approaches to land uses, ongoing operations, and building design to promote mixed-use, multi-story non-residential buildings.

The proposed Specific Plan update allows flexibility between a variety of residential, commercial, office, and neo (light) industrial uses across the entire Specific Plan Area. Overall, the Specific Plan generally meets a maximum of 2,000 housing units, which represents approximately 30 dwelling units per acre (du/ac) over the entire Specific Plan Area. Development of the Specific Plan Area is anticipated to be phased over a 20-year, or longer, period, through individual buildings/sites. Rather than creating a consistent 30 du/ac over the entire Specific Plan Area, individual buildings will be able to be developed through nondiscretionary approval if all the objective design and development standards are met. Each development zone includes the following key development standards informing building envelope size and density:

- Mixed-Use Town Center
  - 3.5 FAR
  - 90 du/ac
  - Maximum height: 90 feet
- Town Residential - 65
  - 3.0 FAR
  - 65 du/ac
  - Maximum height: 80 feet
- Flex District
  - 2.5 FAR
  - 40 du/ac
  - Maximum height: 50 feet
- Quasi-Public
  - 2.0 FAR
  - 40 du/ac
  - Maximum height: 50 feet
- Neo Industrial
  - No residential allowed
  - 1.5 FAR
  - Maximum height: 40 feet

Square footage for structured parking areas (i.e., at-grade, subterranean, and/or above grade) is excluded from FAR.



Source: City of Paramount

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Exhibit 3-5 Specific Plan Development Zones

Clearwater Specific Plan
Paramount, California

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The proposed Specific Plan also includes development and design standards which are established to:

- Encourage the development of mixed-use structures with ground-floor retail and entertainment uses with residential above
- Enhance investment and development potential through higher-intensity development while respecting the area's physical form and eclectic, creative character
- Emphasize flexibility, creativity, and innovation to attract desired uses
- Differentiate between the smaller scale block-and-lot patterns of the western portion of the district and the larger scale block-and-lot patterns of the eastern portion to conserve opportunities for a variety of business types and maintain the sense of district authenticity
- Address parking needs while limiting the proliferation of surface lots and maintain parking regulations that allow for better site design and maximum site utility
- Identify standards and guidelines for onsite open space and encourage the retention and/or development of offsite open spaces that serve the Clearwater District
- Foster streetscape and landscape amenities that allow for small-scale, informal gathering, both within sites and along public rights-of-way, especially sidewalks and street corners
- Develop more accessible and street-side public open space. Buildings fronting public sidewalks, and specifically buildings fronting Paramount Boulevard and Rosecrans Avenue, should provide sidewalk-oriented entries and small-scale gathering opportunities
- Anticipate and facilitate emerging sidewalk and pedestrian activity, as well as ensure access to all transit modes through project designs, orientation, and spaces
- Add public gathering spaces: courtyards, public/town square, and small parks
- Encourage active and passive environmental design strategies that conserve natural resources

Specific Plan Development Capacity

Based on growth projections provided by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), the proposed components of the Clearwater Specific Plan, and an analysis of existing underutilized sites that may redevelop, a development estimate has been forecast through a project horizon year of 2045. Based on a development model according to the proposed development zones, the City estimates that the Specific Plan update would support the following development through 2045:

- Total new development of approximately 3 million square feet of residential, retail/restaurant, office, neo industrial, and community facilities
- 2,000 units at approximately 2.0 million square feet
    - 4,600 new residents based on average household size of 2.3 residents per unit
- Retain approximately 50,000-square foot movie theater
- Retain existing Somerset Business Park
- Retain existing church and adult school; includes development of accessory residential units (approximately 60 townhomes)
- 30,000 square feet for adaptive reuse of light industrial/storage shed into a brewery type facility
- 150,000 square feet new retail/restaurant
- 800,000 square feet new neo industrial and/or office
- Approximately 4,000 off-street parking stalls; 1.3 million square feet structured and surface parking
- New Open Space:

  - 5.5 acres publicly accessible open space
  - 1.75 acres resident/tenant common space
  - 4.5 acres rooftop amenity and/or landscape space
  - 2.5 to 3 acres of ground stormwater/bioswale planting area
- New Streets:
  - Type 1: +/-90 feet right of way, 2 travel lanes, on-street parking, protected bicycle lanes
  - Type 2: +/-80 feet right of way, 2 travel lanes, center left turn lane, on-street parking,
  - Type 3: +/-70 feet right of way, 2 travel lanes, limited on-street parking, protected bicycle lanes
  - Type 4: +/-60 feet right of way, 2 travel lanes, limited on-street parking, wide sidewalks
  - Type 5: 2 lane street with wider lanes to accommodate truck traffic serving neo industrial uses
  - Type 6: Woonerf, shared street typology used to access townhomes and provide service/emergency vehicle access to pedestrian areas

Table 3-2 (Existing and Projected Year 2045 Land Use Intensity) shows the anticipated growth within the Planning Area under the proposed Specific Plan Update. The majority of development would occur on surface parking lots currently used for the operation and parking of the Paramount Swap Meet. The areas with existing uses that could be demolished and redeveloped total approximately 40,000 square feet of retail and 10,000 square feet of office space at the corner of Rosecrans Avenue and Paramount Boulevard. As a result, proposed Specific Plan would result in a net increase in development within the Planning Area.

Table 3-2
Existing and Projected Year 2045 Land Use Intensity

Land Use Category	Existing Overall Intensity (SF)	2045 Overall Intensity (SF)	Difference (+/-)
Commercial	116,555	230,000	+113,445
Commercial (Swap Meet Stalls)*	486,574	100,000	-386,547
Neo Industrial (Light Manufacturing/R&D)	0	800,000	+800,000
Industrial/Logistics	86,714	0	-86,714
Public Facilities	14,049	14,049	0
Quasi-Public	101,734	101,734	0
Business Park (Office)	140,386	140,386	0
Utility/Easement	0	0	0
Total Nonresidential Building Area	**946,012**	**1,386,169**	**+440,157**

Source: City of Paramount, *Clearwater Specific Plan: Existing Conditions Report*, October 2024. (see Appendix C)
* 486,574 square feet for Swap Meet stalls does not include built (i.e., building) square footage. This represents the use of temporary facilities (i.e., tents) on surface parking lots.

The development capacity forecast encompasses the entire Specific Plan area because no site-specific, individual development proposals would be approved as part of the proposed Specific Plan Update. Individual site-specific projects would be subject to their own review for compliance with CEQA, and would be evaluated in accordance with Section 151153 (Tiering) of the CEQA Guidelines to determine whether potential project impacts were addressed by this EIR. Table 3-3 (Existing and Projected Year 2045 Development Capacity Comparison) shows the anticipated

net increases in development potential within the Planning Area under the proposed Specific Plan. The 2045 planning horizon for the Planning Area is estimated to result in increases of approximately 1 million square feet of non-residential space (excluding square footage for structured parking), 2,000 dwelling units, 4,643 residents, and 138 employees for the 2045 horizon year.

Table 3-3
Existing and Projected Year 2045 Development Capacity Comparison

Development Indicators	EXISTING CONDITIONS (2025)	FUTURE CONDITIONS (2045)	Difference (+/-)
Temporary Vendor Space SF	486,574	100,000	-386,574
Non-Residential Building SF	459,438	1,386,169	+ 926,731
Dwelling Units	0	2,000	+2,000
Population	0	4,643	+4,643
Employees	1,621	1,759	+ 138

Public Realm Strategies

The proposed Specific Plan includes public realm improvement strategies which establish street standards and guidelines to ensure long-term provision of pedestrian-oriented sidewalks, landscape amenities, and active transportation infrastructure that encourages walking and biking, and maximization of curbside parking resources throughout Clearwater. Addressing the lack of adequate sidewalks and basic streetscape facilities is a key Specific Plan objective.

Arterial Roadways

Improvements to the three arterial streets surrounding the project area to the north, east, and south, respectively, are likely to occur along with private redevelopment. Minimal changes to these boulevards are proposed while existing land use conditions remain in place. Based upon private redevelopment a range of improvements would be proposed:

- Update pedestrian facilities at intersections to increase safety such as new crosswalk legs, high-visibility crosswalks, and new alignment for crosswalk geometries
- Potential widening of sidewalks on private parcel areas through setbacks and/or dedications
- Updated signal timing
- New signalized intersections and/or mid-block crossings
- Dedicated bicycle crossings across Rosecrans
- New right-in, right-out vehicle entrances into the Planning Area

Internal Access and Mobility Plan

Upon redevelopment, new circulation patterns within the Specific Plan area would be established to connect new developments to the local street network, which will replace current surface parking lot circulation routes (see Exhibit 3-6, Specific Plan Mobility Concept). The intent of the new circulation patterns would be a traditional urban block structure defined by pedestrian-oriented streets. These streets are envisioned as a creative space that merges the boundary

between sidewalk and street to provide a common public space shared by pedestrians, cyclists and low-speed vehicles. Such streets, called “woonerfs”, or living streets, are pedestrian-oriented travel ways. New streets would range in facility types including with or without bike lanes, sidewalk width, parkway width, center medians, curbside management, and number of travel lanes. All streets are proposed to include curb extensions and mid-block crossings and intersections, a minimum of eight-foot-wide sidewalks (excluding parkway),and planted parkways that are bioswales or flow-through planters. The maximum number of lanes would be three lanes (one travel lane in each direction and a center turn lane). Additionally, the streets would be designed to encourage slow speeds with features such as raised intersections and curbless street design. As shown in Exhibit 3-6, the proposed Specific Plan includes the following six different street types for the internal roadways within the Planning Area:

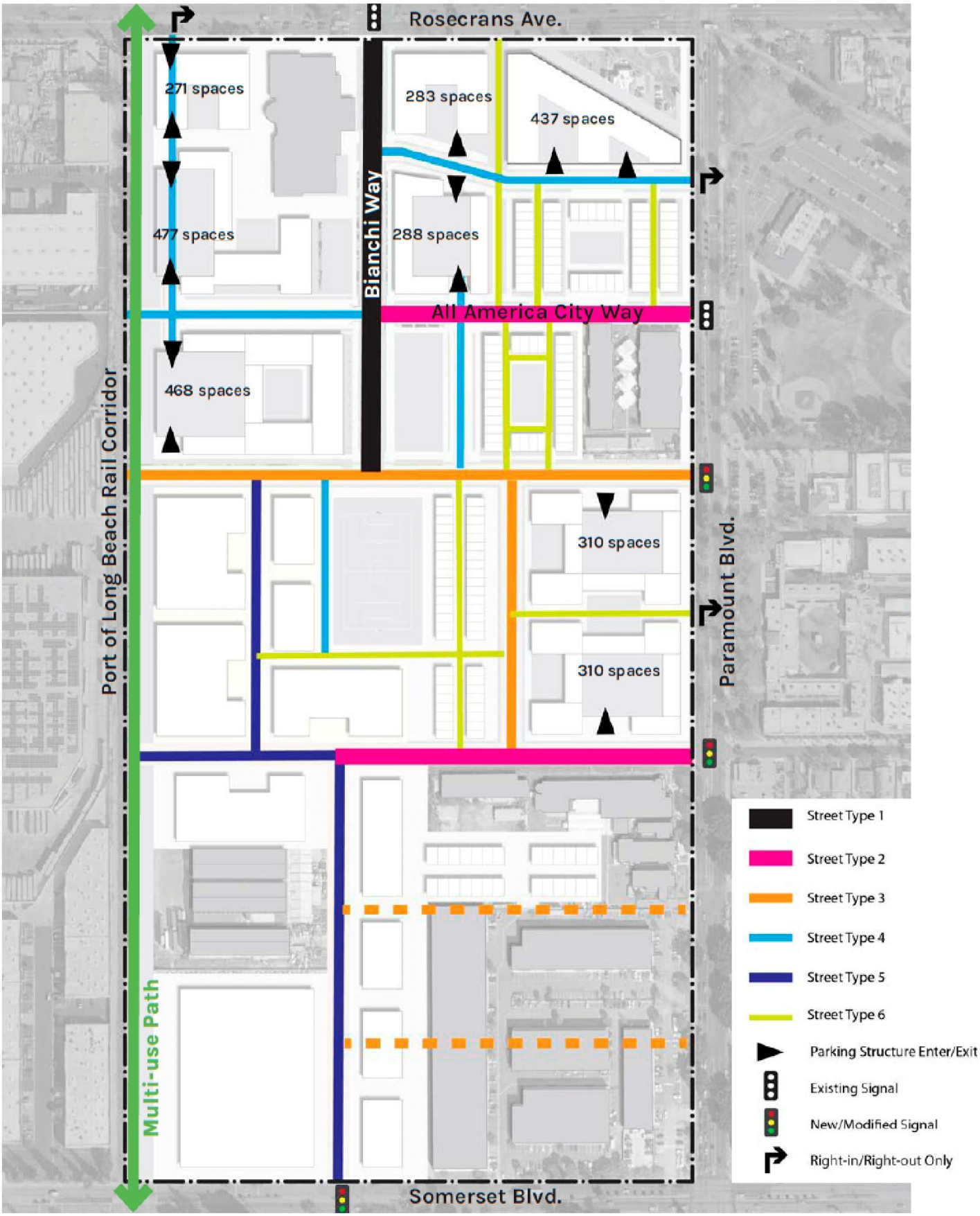
- Street Type 1 includes an approximately 90-foot right-of-way with a raised center median, travel lane, parking lane, bike lane, and sidewalk in both directions.
- Street Type 2 includes an approximately 80-foot right-of-way with a travel lane, parking lane, and sidewalk in both directions with a two-way left turn median.
- Street Type 3 includes an approximately 70-foot right-of-way with a painted median, travel lane, parking lane, bike lane, and sidewalk in both directions.
- Street Type 4 includes an approximately 60- to 65-foot right-of-way with a painted median, travel lane, parking lane, and sidewalk in both directions.
- Street Type 5 includes an approximately 50 foot-right-of-way with two concepts. One concept has a painted median with a travel lane in both directions and a sidewalk on one side of the roadway. The other concept has a travel lane and a sidewalk in each direction with off-street parking on one side of the roadway.
- Street Type 6 includes a varied right-of-way with a travel lane in both directions and an option center open space between travel lanes.

Bikeways

The proposed Specific Plan includes a multi-use path with a designated bikeway along the western edge of the Planning Area from Somerset Boulevard to Rosecrans Avenue adjacent to the Union Pacific railway line. This multi-use path would provide direct connections to the future Southeast Gateway Station via the planned bike path along the Southern California Edison corridor north of Rosecrans Boulevard.

Paramount Swap Meet

The Paramount Swap meet is currently open 7 days a week. Currently, the Paramount Swap Meet encompasses over 46 acres of the Planning Area (vendor area and parking). The swap meet includes a parking lot with 2,100 parking stalls, over 800 vendor spaces (approximately 500,000 square feet), and employs over 100 full and part time employees. Over time, the Paramount Swap meet is anticipated to be reduced in size as the Plan Area develops. At full build-out, the Specific Plan intends for Swap Meet operations to occur within publicly-accessible open space (e.g., market plaza, parks, etc.) during certain hours and/or days more akin to a daily farmers market (see Exhibit 3-7, Specific Plan Open Space Concept). Parking for Swap Meet visitors is proposed to be accomplished through mixed-use parking structures throughout the Planning Area, which are associated with new developments. New developments would be required to provide parking for their new uses; there will also be shared parking agreements and/or incentives for developments to provide some additional parking that would serve swap meet visitors and/or other public visitors.



Source: City of Paramount

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Exhibit 3-6 Specific Plan Mobility Concept

Clearwater Specific Plan
Paramount, California

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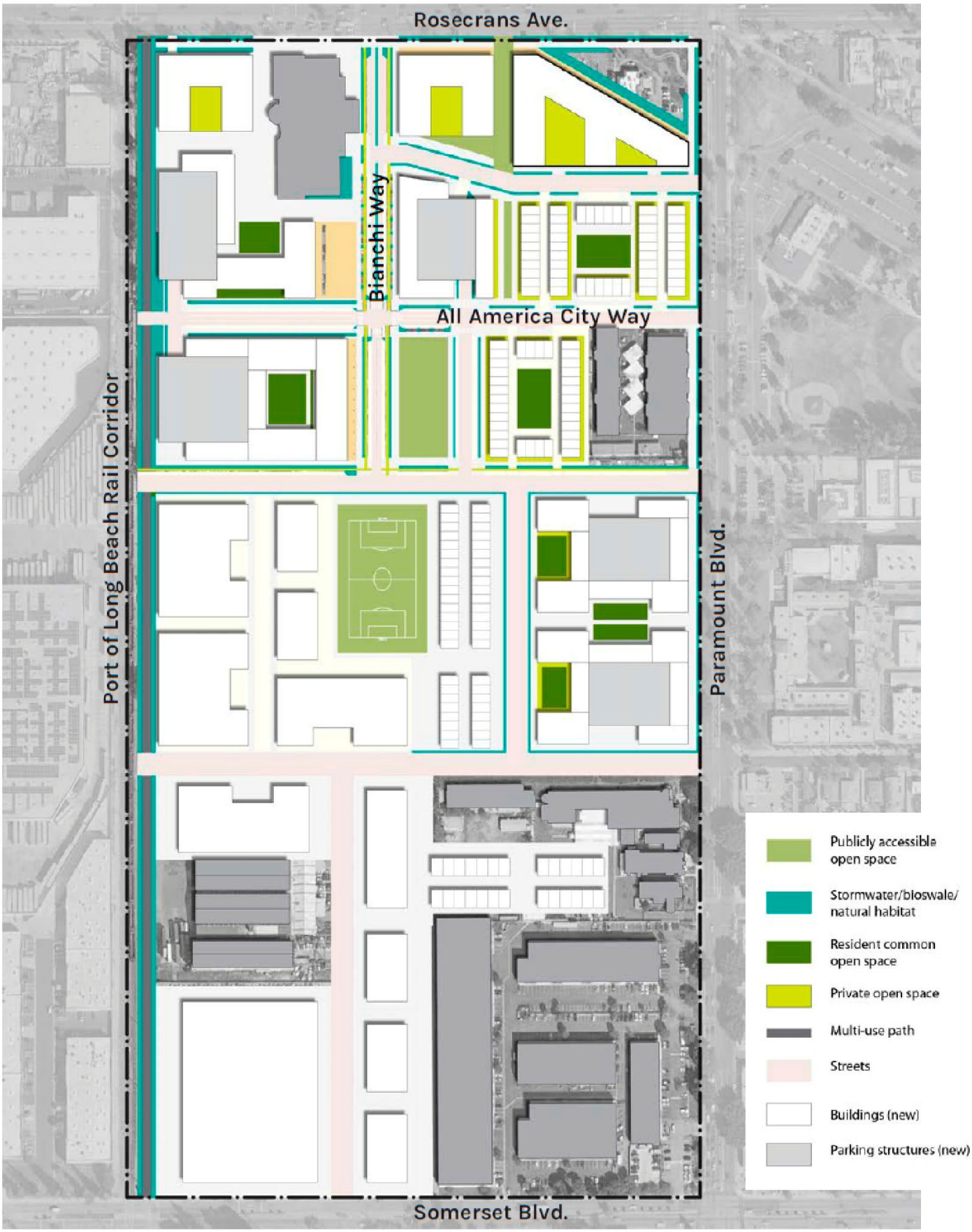

Source: City of Paramount

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Exhibit 3-7 Specific Plan Open Space Concept

Clearwater Specific Plan
Paramount, California

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General Plan Amendment

A General Plan amendment would be required to add new zones (Mixed-Use Town Center, Town Residential, Flex District, and Neo Industrial) to allow the proposed increase in development capacity (i.e., heights and allowed densities) and provide consistency with the Specific Plan.

3.4 – PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Section 15124(b) of the State CEQA Guidelines requires "[a] statement of objectives sought by the proposed project. The statement of objectives should include the underlying purpose of the project."

The City's objectives for the proposed Specific Plan update are as follows:

1. Create a transit-oriented development (TOD) mixed-use town center that provides a range of housing, commercial, and open space uses.
2. Facilitate Plan Area as an artisanal manufacturing center and business incubator district for local residents with an appropriate mix of industrial, office, and employment-supporting uses that will reflect market conditions.
3. Encourage ridership for the future Southeast Gateway Light Rail station for residents of the City of Paramount and Specific Plan Area, as well as visitors to the City and Plan Area.
4. Promote development of a mix of land uses that support economic development growth and affordable housing.
5. Encourage physical development of buildings and open space that provides a transition between existing uses that represent past development patterns and future development that will follow best practices for TOD.
6. Orient new development and promote internal circulation design to create pedestrian-oriented streets that promote the use of active transportation as a mode for user trips.
7. Encourage community participation, architectural style, urban design, and placemaking to represent the history and culture of the City of Paramount and its existing residents.
8. Prioritize the implementation of green infrastructure approaches to new infrastructure and utilities that promotes resilience and adaptation to climate change.
9. Implement infrastructure development that prioritizes sustainability for both natural systems and long-term economic development, operations, and maintenance.

3.6 – INTENDED USE OF THIS EIR

The programmatic planning framework proposed in the Specific Plan Update would not result in the immediate construction of any new development nor entitlement of any new, specific project. All new development within the Plan Area would be subject to the City's permitting, approval, and public participation processes. Elected and appointed officials along with City Staff would review subsequent project applications for consistency with the Specific Plan, and would prepare appropriate environmental documentation to comply with CEQA and other applicable environmental requirements.

Pursuant to Section 15168 of the State CEQA Guidelines, this EIR is a Program EIR as it relates to the Specific Plan Update. The goals, policies, land use designations, implementation programs,

and other substantive components of the Specific Plan and implementing sections of the Zoning Ordinance comprise the "program" evaluated in this Program EIR. Subsequent activities undertaken by the City and project proponents to implement the Specific Plan would be examined and would consider this Program EIR to determine the appropriate level of environmental review required under CEQA. Subsequent implementation activities may include but are not limited to the items listed below.

- Rezoning of properties to achieve consistency with the Specific Plan.
- Updating and approval of development plans and planning documents, including evaluation of development proposals.
- Review and approval of general plan amendments, specific plans, and zone changes.
- Approval of tentative maps, variances, conditional use permits, and other land use permits and entitlements.
- Approval of development agreements.
- Approval of facility and service master plans and financing plans.
- Approval and funding of public improvement projects.
- Approval of resource management plans.
- Issuance of permits and other approvals needed for implementation of the General Plan.
- Issuance of permits and other approvals needed for public works and private development projects.

As the Lead Agency, the City also intends this EIR to serve as the CEQA-required environmental documentation for consideration by other Responsible Agencies and Trustee Agencies that may have limited discretionary authority over future projects affected by the Specific Plan. Following certification of this Program EIR and adoption of the Specific Plan by the lead agency (City of Paramount), other agencies may use this Program EIR in the approval of subsequent implementation activities. These agencies may include but are not limited to those listed below.

Local Agencies

- City of Bellflower
- City of Downey
- City of Compton
- City of Lynwood
- City of Long Beach
- City of South Gate
- County of Los Angeles
- Gateway Cities Council of Governments

Regional and State Agencies

- Los Angeles County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO)
- Los Angeles County Flood Control and Water Conservation District
- Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
- Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts
- Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife
- California Department of Conservation
- California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD)
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)

- California Department of Toxic Substance Control
- Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region
- South Coast Air Quality Management District

Federal Agencies

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

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4.1 – AESTHETICS

This EIR chapter addresses aesthetic impacts that could result from implementation of the proposed Specific Plan. Issues of interest are identified by the CEQA Guidelines such as whether the Specific Plan may have an adverse effect on a scenic vista, damage scenic resources, degrade the visual character or quality of the area and surrounding areas, or have the potential to create substantial light and glare.

4.1.1 – ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The City of Paramount is located in southwest Los Angeles County. The City of Paramount is bounded by the City of Long Beach to the south, the Cities of South Gate and Downey to the north, the City of Bellflower to the east, and the Cities of Compton and Lynwood and the unincorporated community of East Rancho Dominguez to the west. The Planning Area is centrally located within the City of Paramount, and is bounded by Somerset Boulevard on the south, a Union Pacific Railroad San Pedro Subdivision on the west, Rosecrans Avenue on the north, and Paramount Boulevard on the east (see Exhibit 4.1-1, Plan Area Map). The Planning Area is characterized by private land ownership with Modern Development being the largest landowner with a contiguous area that includes the Paramount Swap Meet and a majority of the northern half of the Planning Area, as well as a parcel along Somerset Boulevard that is used for Swap Meet parking. Communications Workers of American (CWA) Local 9400 owns a small parcel with a single building in the northern portion of the Planning Area along Rosecrans Avenue. A strip mall type shopping center is located in the northeastern portion of the Planning Area.

A triangular shaped Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) property is located in the northeastern portion of the planning area adjacent to the shopping center at the corner of Rosecrans Avenue and Paramount Boulevard. The Paramount Adult School is located in the east-central portion of the Planning Area just north of the Swap Meet at the corner of All America City Way and Paramount Boulevard. The Our Lady of the Rosary Parish is located in the east-central portion of the Planning Area just south of the Swap Meet along Paramount Boulevard. The Somerset Business Park is located in the southeastern portion of the Planning Area at the corner of Paramount Boulevard and Somerset Boulevard and is comprised of multiple parcels combined together to form a business park with multiple buildings; the buildings include multiple tenants, which are owned-condominium style. A vacant property most recently leased by an automobile storage and shipping company (HoneyBee International) is located in the west-central portion of the Planning Area just south of the Swap Meet and west of the Our Lady of the Rosary Parish along All America City Way. Finally, there are multiple parcels located along the western edge of the Planning Area owned by Union Pacific Railroad and containing the San Pedro Subdivision rail line.

Scenic Vistas

Scenic vistas are defined in this document as natural landscapes that provide views of unique flora, geologic, or other natural features that are generally free from urban intrusions. Typical scenic vistas include views of mountains and hills, large, uninterrupted open spaces, and water bodies. Scenic vistas generally play a large role in the way a community defines itself and also affects development patterns as projects are designed to take advantage of viewsheds. Scenic vistas can be impacted by development in two ways. First, a structure may be constructed that

blocks the view of the vista. Second, the vista itself may be altered (i.e., development on a scenic hillside). The Puente Hills are visible to the northeast of the Planning Area, the Rancho Palos Verdes hills are visible to the southwest of the Planning Area, and the Santa Monica and San Gabriel Mountains are visible to the north and northwest of the Planning Area. These mountain ranges and hills can be seen from many locations within the Planning Area. However, these views are partially obstructed by existing development, trees, and roadway features.

Scenic Resources

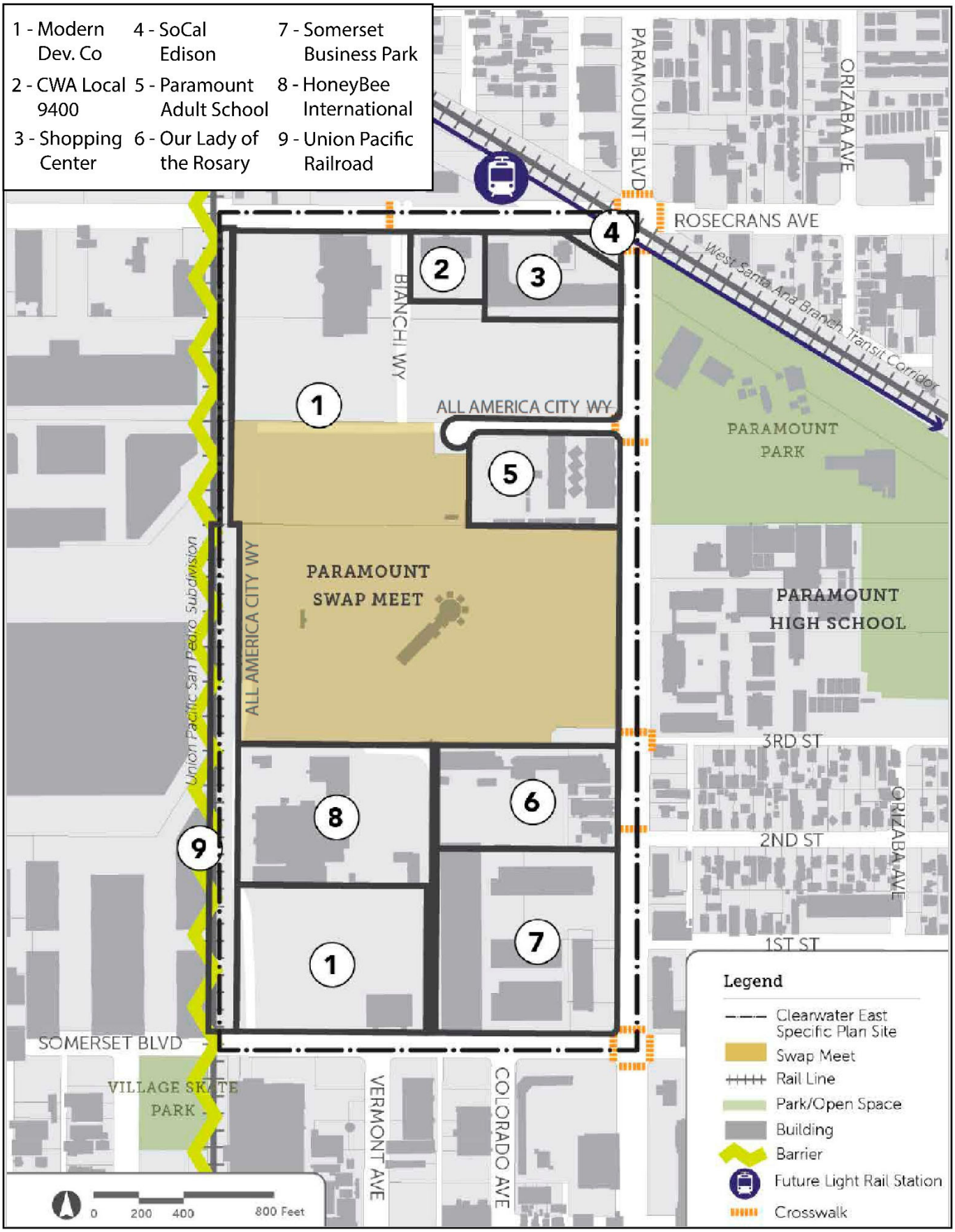
While scenic vistas form a complete viewshed, scenic resources are occurrences of aesthetically pleasing natural features such as rock outcroppings, trees, prominent ridgelines, slopes, and hilltops. Scenic resources can also be human-made, such as architecturally distinctive or historic buildings, historic points of interest, or historic roadways or highways. The Planning Area is not located within or in close proximity to a designated State scenic highway. There are no historic highways within or in close proximity to the Planning Area, and the Planning Area is not visible to a designated State scenic highway as identified on the California Scenic Highway Mapping System (Caltrans, 2024). The nearest officially designated scenic highway is California State Route 2, approximately 19 miles north of the project site in the San Gabriel Mountains. The Planning Area does not have any examples of natural scenic resources such as rock outcroppings, trees, prominent ridgelines, slopes, or hilltops. The Planning Area does not contain any historical resources, historic buildings, or historic points of interest. While the Swap Meet is culturally significant to the local population, it does not meet any of the criteria for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources, including: 1) being associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage; 2) being associated with the lives of persons important in our past; 3) embodying the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values; or 4) having yielded, or be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history (PRC Section 5024.1(c)).

Visual Character

The City of Paramount is completely urbanized and contains very little vacant land and almost no natural open space (see Exhibit 4.1.2, Plan Area Aerial View). The Planning Area is comprised entirely of commercial and institutional uses. Surface parking associated with the Swap Meet makes up the majority of the Planning Area. The Planning Area contains very little landscaping, with limited street trees and ornamental landscaping around some of the commercial buildings. The Planning Area is surrounded on all sides by industrial, commercial, residential, and institutional uses.

Night Skies

The Planning Area is completely developed and located within the completely built-out City of Paramount. Night skies are dominated by urban and suburban lighting. During the day, sunlight reflecting from roadways and structures is a primary source of glare, while nighttime light and glare consist of both stationary and mobile sources. Stationary sources of nighttime light include parking lot lighting, structure illumination, interior lighting, decorative landscape lighting, and streetlights. The principal mobile source of nighttime light and glare is vehicle headlamp illumination.



Source: Existing Conditions Report

http://www.migcom.com • 951-787-9222

Exhibit 4.1-1 Plan Area Map

Clearwater Specific Plan
Paramount, California

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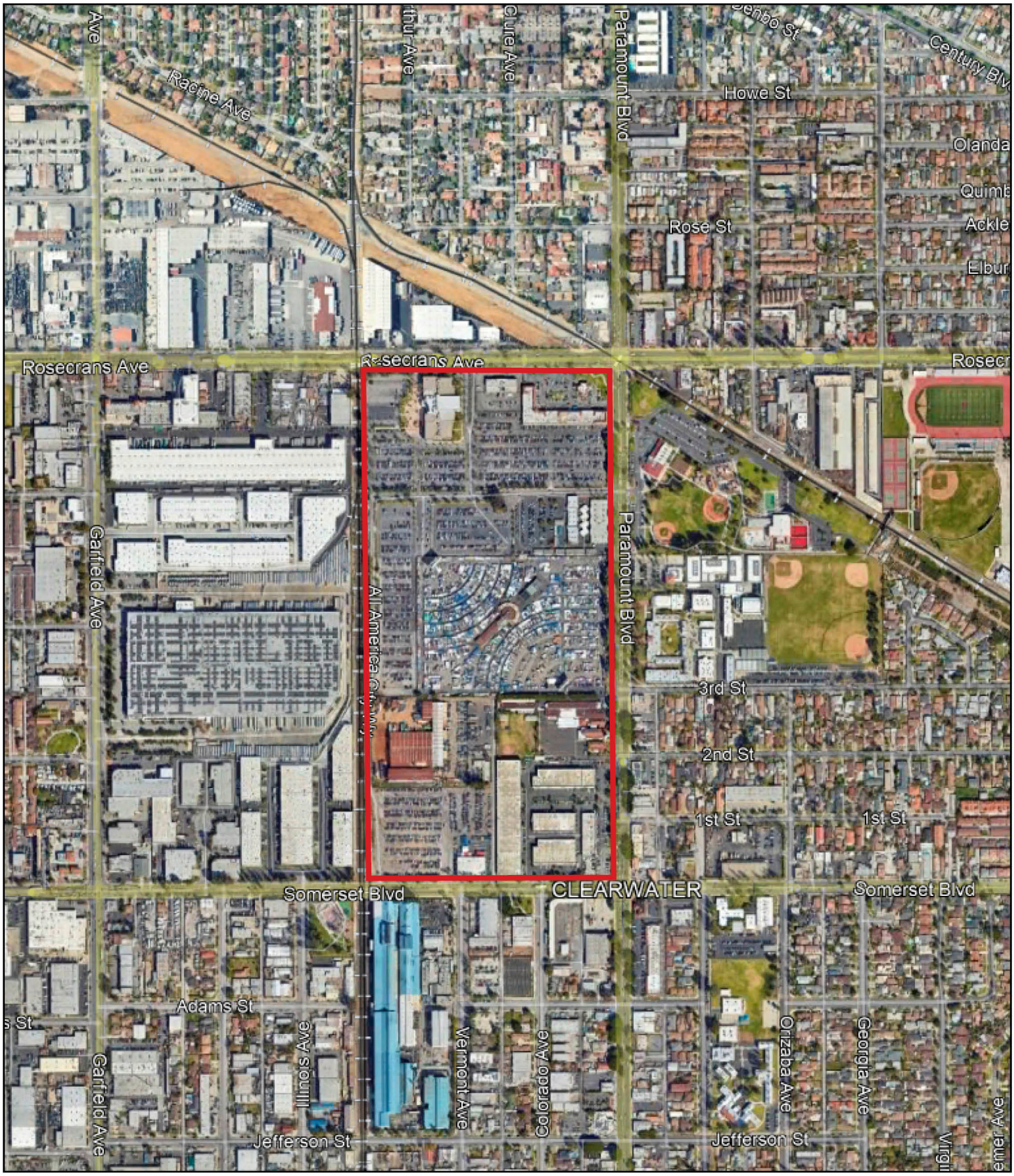

- Planning Area

Source: Google Earth

http://www.migcom.com • 951-787-9222

Exhibit 4.1-2 Plan Area Aerial View

Clearwater East Specific Plan Update

Paramount, California

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4.1.2 – REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

State

California Scenic Highway Program

Created by the California Legislature in 1963**,** the Scenic Highway Program was established to preserve and protect scenic highway corridors from change that would diminish the aesthetic value of lands adjacent to highways. A scenic highway is designated under this program when a local jurisdiction adopts a scenic corridor protection program, applies to Caltrans for scenic highway approval, and receives notification from Caltrans that the highway has been designated as a Scenic Highway. When a City or County nominates an eligible scenic highway for official designation, it defines the scenic corridor, which is land generally adjacent and visible to a motorist on the highway. State Laws governing the Scenic Highway Program are found in the Streets and Highways Code, Sections 260 through 263.

Local

City of Paramount 2007 General Plan

The City of Paramount General Plan includes the following policies related to aesthetics:

Land Use Element

Policy LU-2: The City of Paramount will continue to improve the character of individual neighborhoods through City policies designed to protect and preserve a high quality of life in Paramount.

Policy LU-3: The City of Paramount will provide guidance for land use and development within specific geographic areas of the City in the form of Specific Plans and Area Plans.

Policy LU-6: The City of Paramount will strive to improve the unity and identity of individual neighborhoods as a means to protect and preserve a high quality of life in Paramount.

Policy LU-9: The City of Paramount will promote development that capitalizes on its location near the I-105 Freeway, the 710 Freeway, and the 91 Freeway.

Policy LU-10: The City of Paramount will continue to promote the development of larger, more efficient, commercial retail shopping centers as opposed to smaller “strip commercial” centers.

Policy LU-11: The City of Paramount will continue to preserve and promote the improvement of the existing commercial areas, including those districts located along Paramount Boulevard and Alondra Boulevard.

Policy LU-15: The City of Paramount will promote the development of modern and attractive business parks that will enhance the community’s economic well-being.

Policy LU-16: The City of Paramount will continue to maintain, and where possible, expand its open space resources.

Policy LU-17: The City of Paramount will develop new open space areas in utility rights-of-way, along the Los Angeles River, and as part of future park development.

Policy LU-19: The City of Paramount will continue to work towards improving the appearance of the entryways leading into the City.

Policy LU-20: The City of Paramount will continue to work towards the implementation of streetscape and sign standards.

Policy LU-21: The City of Paramount will work with adjacent cities to improve the appearance of major entry points into the City.

Policy LU-22: The City of Paramount will continue to promote quality design in the review of residential, commercial and industrial development.

Policy LU-23: The City of Paramount will continue to employ a design theme in the review of future commercial development and in the rehabilitation of existing commercial uses.

Clearwater East Specific Plan

Policy CE-1: Mixed uses are allowed only where designated in order to avoid overloading the commercial market and reducing shared parking potential with the swap meet.

Policy CE-2: Office use is acceptable in lieu of other types of commercial uses if market feasibility is demonstrated.

Policy CE-3: Frontage treatments involving architectural elevations, materials, color, texture, landscaping, and signs shall be the subject of the Site Plan review in accordance with City design guidelines.

Policy CE-4: The City, the Redevelopment Agency or the Parking Authority will share in property acquisition and/or development costs of improvements where it is cost effective.

Policy CE-5: The "stacking" of vehicles entering the swap meet shall occur entirely on-site so Paramount Boulevard, Rosecrans Avenue, and Somerset Boulevard are not impacted.

Policy CE-6: The preferred method of land use regulation is the Planned Development with Performance Standards (PD-PS) zone, although conventional zone districts may be used if they are consistent with the intent of this Area Plan.

Resource Management Element

Policy RM-1: The City of Paramount will develop new areas of open space to the extent that opportunities present themselves for such development.

Policy RM-2: The City of Paramount will continue to make effective use of the open space lands that are available.

Policy RM-3: The City of Paramount will strive to maintain utility rights-of-way in open space uses that do not conflict with utility needs but provide attractive open space for the community, such as parks, trails, etc.

Policy RM-4: The City of Paramount will require new larger residential developments to provide sufficient open space (including pedestrian and bicycle linkages) to meet the local need.

Policy RM-5: The City of Paramount will pursue a landscape program to improve the open space areas located next to the Los Angeles River.

Policy RM-6: The City of Paramount will require special design and landscaping treatments along major roadways and other scenic corridors.

Policy RM-17: The City of Paramount will initiate a cultural arts and facilities program to enhance the City image.

Policy RM-18: The City of Paramount will continue with the development of the community art program.

Policy RM-19: The City of Paramount will identify and preserve those sites/buildings that are important to the community for the benefit of the future generations that will reside or work in the City.

Policy RM-20: The City of Paramount will prepare an inventory of private community and environmental organizations that may contribute to the improvement of the City's recreational facilities and general visual appearance.

Economic Development Element

Policy ECON-1: The City of Paramount will continue to promote commercial development that improves the image of the City for residents and businesses alike.

Policy ECON-3: The City of Paramount will continue to promote and support revitalization of the commercial districts in the City. The City will continue to enhance the "Central Business District", promote the creation of smaller commercial neighborhood centers at key intersections, and discourage the further creation of strip commercial development.

Policy ECON-4: The City of Paramount will encourage mixed use projects in key locations to provide additional market support and patronage of local businesses. This concept will be encouraged in the future infill development of underutilized and blighted commercially zoned parcels. This development concept will also be effective in eliminating strip commercial land use and development patterns.

Policy ECON-5: The City of Paramount will explore and, where feasible, promote the development of larger community-service and specialty centers.

Housing Element

Policy H-1.1: Preserve the character, scale, and quality of established residential neighborhoods.

Policy H-1.2: Continue to promote the maintenance and rehabilitation of the existing housing stock in Paramount.

Policy H-1.3: Protect established residential neighborhoods from potential adverse impacts associated with existing and proposed nonresidential land uses.

Policy H-1.4: Assist in the elimination of substandard construction, overcrowding, and other factors that contribute to the deterioration of the existing housing stock.

Policy H-1.5: Support healthy neighborhoods by addressing public health and safety issues, proactively resolving code violations; and minimizing threats from pollution contamination, industrial uses, and incompatible uses.

Policy H-2.1: Provide a zoning context that creates adequate sites to support the production of 364 housing units through October 2029 to meet the demands of present and future residents, including an adequate number and range of new dwelling types affordable to extremely low-, very low-, low-, moderate-, and above moderate-income households.

Policy H-2.2: Facilitate the development of a range of residential development types which fulfill regional housing needs, including accessory dwelling units, low- to moderate-density townhomes, and higher-density apartments and condominiums and mixed-use projects.

Policy H-2.3: Promote new residential development and ensure this housing—including affordable units—provides a healthy, safe, and attractive living environment.

Policy H-2.4: Encourage transit-oriented development within walking distance of planned light rail stations and high-frequency bus stops, including higher residential densities, public gathering places, urban parks, streetscape amenities, and commercial and entertainment uses.

Policy H-2.5: Encourage infill housing development that is compatible in character with the surrounding established residential neighborhood.

Policy H-3.1: Ensure that affordable housing is developed to the highest standards possible in a manner consistent with local market-rate housing.

Policy H-3.2: Encourage the development of residential units accessible to persons with disabilities or units that are adaptable for conversion for persons with disabilities.

Policy H-3.3: Consult with local social service providers to address the needs of the homeless and persons at risk of homelessness.

Policy H-3.4: Promote the development and rehabilitation of senior housing specifically designed to meet their needs and living arrangement.

Policy H-3.5: Consider opportunities for new housing—including housing for special needs households—in the planning and review of new development proposals.

City of Paramount Municipal Code

Section 17.44.490 (C) (Required improvement and maintenance of parking areas, etc.) requires all C and M zone parking areas to be illuminated with artificial lighting to a degree equal to one and one-half foot-candles per square foot. Additionally, any lights provided to illuminate outdoor parking areas are required to be arranged in such a way to prevent glare or direct illumination in any adjacent residential zone.

4.1.3 – SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLDS

The methodology used to evaluate potential environmental impacts is described in Section 4.0. As identified in Appendix G of the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Specific Plan Update could result in a significant impact if it:

A. Has a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista.
B. Substantially damages scenic resources, including but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings or historic buildings within a state scenic highway.
C. In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrades the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings. (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage points.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?
D. Creates a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.
E. Would cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to aesthetics.

4.1.4 – IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

This section describes potential impacts related to aesthetics, which could result from the implementation of the proposed Specific Plan, and recommends mitigation measures as needed to reduce significant impacts.

Scenic Vistas

Impact AES-1 - Would the Specific Plan have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

Analysis of Impacts

The Puente Hills are visible to the northeast of the Planning Area, the Rancho Palos Verdes hills are visible to the southwest of the Planning Area, and the Santa Monica and San Gabriel Mountains are visible to the north and northwest of the Planning Area. These mountain ranges and hills are visible from many locations within the Planning Area. However, these views are partially or fully obstructed by existing development, trees, and roadway features throughout the

Planning Area. Although such obstructions are usually minimal in nature, they do exist, and they are typical of any type of built/urbanized environment. As the Planning Area continues to develop based on the proposed Specific Plan, existing views in the Planning Area would continue to have partial to full obstructions. Although the Specific Plan would result in somewhat more intensive and higher density uses, impacts over time, if any, on scenic vistas would be minimal given the considerable distance of the Planning Area to some of these scenic features and the fact that these views are already affected by the existing built environment of the Planning Area, City, and region.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation
Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures
None required.

Scenic Resources/Scenic Highways

Impact AES-2 - Would the Specific Plan substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

Analysis of Impacts

The nearest official State-designated scenic highway is SR-2 which is located approximately 15 miles north of the Planning Area in the San Gabriel Mountains. Due to the distance and intervening terrain, development within the Planning Area under the proposed Specific Plan would not be visible to motorists on SR-2. The Planning Area does not have any examples of natural scenic resources such as rock outcroppings, trees, prominent ridgelines, slopes, or hilltops. Additionally, the Planning Area does not include any architecturally distinctive, historic buildings, or historic points of interest. Further, the City does not have extensive scenic vistas outside of the City, nor are there any designated or eligible scenic highways within or proximate to the City or the Planning Area. Therefore, implementation and development of the proposed Specific Plan would not substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Existing Visual Character

Impact AES-3 - Would the Specific Plan substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?

Analysis of Impacts

The Planning Area is fully urbanized. Development of the proposed Specific Plan is anticipated to occur over a period of approximately 20 years. Temporary impacts to the visual character and quality of the Planning Area would occur during construction activities, although they would be limited and temporary in nature. Typical construction activities would include site preparation, grading, installation of public and private utilities, building construction, application of architectural coatings, paving of surface parking areas, public improvements, and installation of landscaping, and roadway improvements. Construction equipment including, but not limited to, backhoes, excavators, graders, rubber-tired dozers, crushing machines for concrete and asphalt, and hauling trucks and materials may be present during construction activities.

During future construction activities, implementing development project sites would undergo temporary transformations in visual character. For example, at the onset of construction, structures and asphalt parking lots would be demolished and sites would be graded. Similarly, during building construction, vacant graded sites would be a temporary visual experience to receptors as the pouring of building foundations and framing of buildings during vertical construction would reintroduce permanent vertical forms to the project site. This characterization would also be temporary until building construction, paving, and site landscaping are completed.

Visual changes to implementing development project sites would be experienced gradually and implementing development project sites would progressively transition from active construction zones to finished development. Due to the temporary nature of construction, the visual changes anticipated during construction stages of future implementing development projects within the Planning Area would not be permanent and would not substantially degrade its visual character or the visual character of surrounding areas. In addition, the Specific Plan includes Public Realm design standards and guidelines for public rights-of-way and Private Realm standards and guidelines for general building and site design. These design standards and guidelines would preserve and enhance the visual quality and character of the Planning Area.

Finally, the various policies of the City's 2007 General Plan outlined in section 4.1.2 emphasize preservation and enhancement of the City's corridors and land use districts. Therefore, these General Plan policies apply indirectly to the visual character the Planning Area. Most critical are those that help preserve historical structures, create public art, and seek to enhance views (and thus visual character). Therefore, with adherence to Specific Plan standards and design guidelines and General Plan policies, future developments under the proposed Specific Plan would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the Planning Area and its surroundings.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Light and Glare

Impact AES-4 - Would the Specific Plan create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

Analysis of Impacts

Existing lighting within the Planning Area is typical for urbanized areas during nighttime hours and includes streetlights, traffic signals, security lighting around businesses and homes, auto headlights, and illuminated business signs. New uses and developments may result in an increase in the number of lighting sources currently within the Planning Area, although, given that it is already developed, such increases are expected to be minimal in nature. Implementation of the proposed Specific Plan is not anticipated to result in the introduction of new sources of substantial light and glare to the Planning Area that would affect existing daytime views. While future implementing development project components would include windows and other glass features and may include exterior metallic elements and trims (i.e., exterior staircases associated with parking structures, shade structures for retail developments, residential balcony railings, etc.), these elements would be relatively minor in the context of the Planning Area and would be similar to existing architectural elements present in the surrounding area.

Future projects within the Planning Area would be subject to the lighting and glare restrictions of the City of Paramount Municipal Code Section 17.44.490(C) (Required improvement and maintenance of Parking areas, etc.), which requires all C and M zone parking areas to be illuminated with artificial lighting to a degree equal to one and one-half foot-candles per square foot. Additionally, any lights provided to illuminate outdoor parking areas are required to be arranged in such a way to prevent glare or direct illumination in any adjacent residential zone. With adherence to the City's development requirements and regulations, potential impacts with respect to light and glare in and around the Planning Area as a result of implementation of the Specific Plan would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Cumulative Impacts

Impact AES-5 - Would the SPU cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to aesthetics?

Analysis of Impacts

Scenic Vistas. A cumulative impact to scenic vistas would occur if the combined visual changes from future development within the Planning Area resulted in the substantial degradation of quality or obstruction of particularly scenic views available from a recognized scenic vista. Project-specific impacts with respect to scenic vistas were determined to be less than significant. As stated in Section 4.1.1 above, the Puente Hills are visible to the northeast of the Planning Area, the Rancho Palos Verdes hills are visible to the southwest of the Planning Area, and the Santa

Monica and San Gabriel Mountains are visible to the north and northwest of the Planning Area. However, these existing views are partially or fully obstructed by existing development, trees, and roadway features. Although such obstructions are usually minimal in nature, they do exist, and they are typical of any type of built/urbanized environment. Buildout in the Planning Area under the proposed Specific Plan would occur over a period of several years and at locations throughout the Planning Area. Since the Planning Area is a completely urbanized area that is already developed, it is unlikely that incremental changes from implementation of the Specific Plan would result in cumulative impacts with respect to scenic vistas. Potential cumulative impacts of the proposed Specific Plan would be less than significant.

Scenic Highways. There are no scenic highways within, adjacent to, or visible from the Planning Area (i.e., no eligible or officially designated state scenic highways). As such, development within the Planning Area would not result in impacts to scenic resources within a state scenic highway. Therefore, the proposed Specific Plan would not contribute to a potential cumulative significant impact to a scenic highway. Potential impacts of the Specific Plan would be less than significant.

Degrade Visual Character. Construction and operation of future projects within the Planning Area were determined to result in less than significant impacts to the existing visual character and quality of the Planning Area and surrounding area. Future development projects considered in the cumulative scenario would generally be subject to the Specific Plan's underlying zoning standards that include regulations pertaining to permitted uses, minimum lot dimensions, and maximum building height. Further, the proposed Specific Plan includes Public and Private Realm standards and design guidelines. Future projects within the Planning Area would be subject to the policies of the existing General Plan which encourages attractive, high quality development. As such, future development would not result in significant adverse visual changes such that the existing visual character or quality of project sites and their surroundings would be substantially degraded. Therefore, potential cumulative impacts of the proposed Specific Plan would be less than significant.

Light and Glare. Project-related impacts with respect to light and glare were determined to be less than significant. Lighting and building materials associated with cumulative development would be subject to review and approval by the City of Paramount Planning Department and Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. If detailed information regarding proposed lighting and building materials are not known during preparation of necessary environmental documentation for cumulative projects, then the adoption of applicant-proposed measures or mitigation measures would likely be required by the City of Paramount to ensure that lighting and glare impacts are less than significant. Therefore, cumulative impacts of the Specific Plan would be less than significant.

<u>Level of Significance Before Mitigation</u>

Less than significant.

<u>Mitigation Measures</u>

No mitigation is required.

4.1.5 – REFERENCES

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). Map of Scenic Highways. Web: https://dot.ca.gov/programs/design/lap-landscape-architecture-and-community-livability/lap-liv-i-scenic-highways [Accessed March 2024].

City of Paramount. 2007. *Final Paramount General Plan*. Adopted August 7, 2007. Revisions: Health and Safety Element Update and Environmental Justice Element; Adopted February 8, 2022.

4.2 – AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

This EIR chapter addresses impacts to agriculture and forestry resources that could result from implementation of the proposed Specific Plan. Issues of interest are identified by the CEQA Guidelines such as whether the Specific Plan will convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance to non-agricultural use; conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract; conflict with existing zoning for or rezoning of forest land or timberland; or result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use or involve other changes in the existing environment could result in conversion of farmland or forest land to non-agricultural or non-forest use.

4.2.1 – ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Important Farmland

The California Department of Conservation (DOC) maps all lands in the State that are considered Prime Farmlands, Farmlands of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmlands, Farmlands of Local Importance, or Grazing Lands in their Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP)(DOC, 2024a). According to the DOC's Important Farmland Finder, the Planning Area is located in a built-up and urbanized area of Los Angeles County, and there is no land in the Planning Area considered Prime Farmlands, Farmlands of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmlands, Farmlands of Local Importance or Grazing Lands (DOC, 2024b).

Williamson Act Contracts

The Planning Area is not located on land that is used for or conflicts with agriculturally zoned land. The Planning Area is currently zoned CESP (Clearwater East Specific Plan) which does not allow for agricultural uses. The Planning Area is not located on a Williamson Act parcel in Los Angeles County. (L.A. County, 2015).

Forest Resources

Forest land is defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g) as "land that can support 10 percent native tree cover of any species, including hardwoods, under natural conditions, and that allows for management of one or more forest resources, including timber, aesthetics, fish and wildlife, biodiversity, water quality, recreation, and other public benefits" (CalFire). The Planning Area is built out and contains street trees and ornamental landscaping common to most urbanized areas in the region. There is no forest land within the Planning Area as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g).

4.2.2 – REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

State

<u>Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program</u>

Important farmland maps are compiled by the California Department of Conservation's Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP), pursuant to the provisions of Section 65570 of the

California Government Code. These maps and programs utilize data from the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) soil survey and current land use information to monitor conversion of important farmland to other uses. The majority of the Planning Area has been mapped by the California Department of Conservation, although no type of farmland is designated within the Planning Area.

California Land Conservation Act/Williamson Act Contract Program

The California Land Conservation Act of 1965, also known as the Williamson Act, was adopted in 1965. This voluntary program allows local governments to enter into contracts with private landowners for the purpose of having their property assessed on the basis of its agricultural production rather than at the current market value. The property owner is thus relieved of having to pay higher property taxes, resulting from conversion of nearby lands to urban uses as long as the contracted land remains in agricultural or related open space use. The purpose of the Williamson Act is to encourage property owners to continue to farm their land with a tax incentive and to prevent the premature conversion of farmland into non-agriculture use. Participation requires that the area consist of 100 contiguous acres of agricultural land under one or more ownerships.

Upon approval of an application by the Board of Supervisors, the agricultural preserve is established, and the land within the preserve is restricted to agricultural and compatible uses for ten (10) years. Williamson Act contracts are automatically renewed annually for an additional one-year period unless the property owner applies for non-renewal or early cancellation. The Williamson Act also contains limited provisions for cancellation of contracts. Specific findings regarding the non-viability of the agricultural use must be made, and a substantial penalty for the cancellation is assessed. Participating counties and cities are required to establish their own rules and regulations regarding implementation of the act within their jurisdiction. The City of Paramount has no land under the Williamson Act and there are no Williamson Act Contracts within the Planning Area.

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)

CAL FIRE enforces the laws that regulate logging on privately-owned lands in California. The Forest Practice Act was enacted in 1973 to ensure that logging is done in a manner that will preserve and protect fish, wildlife, forests, and streams. The State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection enacts and enforces additional rules to protect these resources. CAL FIRE ensures that private landowners abide by these laws when harvesting trees. Although there are specific exemptions in some cases, compliance with the Forest Practice Act and Board rules apply to all commercial harvesting operations for landowners. A Timber Harvesting Plan (THP) is the environmental review document submitted by landowners to CAL FIRE outlining what timber is proposed to be harvested, how it will be harvested, and the steps that will be taken to prevent damage to the environment.

Local

City or Paramount General Plan

The City of Paramount 2007 General Plan includes the following policies related to agriculture and forestry resources:

Environmental Justice Element

Policy EJ-5.2: Expand the tree canopy and improve the urban forest in areas without a lot of trees to promote healthier communities and expand shade opportunities along sidewalks and parking areas.

Policy EJ-6.3: Promote and expand urban agricultural opportunities, including home gardens, community gardens, urban orchards, and small-lot urban agricultural projects on underutilized sites, park or community facilities, schools, and remnant vacant properties.

Health and Safety Element

Policy HS-50: Enhance resilience of community tree canopy and urban forest.

4.2.3 – SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLDS

In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the State's inventory of forest land including the Forest and Range Assessment Project. As identified in Appendix G of the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Specific Plan Update could result in a significant impact if it would:

A. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use.

B. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract.

C. Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of forest land as defined by Public Resources Code 12220(g). Timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526) or timberland zoned Timberland Production as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g).

D. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

E. Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

F. Cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to agricultural and forest resources.

4.2.4 – IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

This section describes potential impacts related to Important Farmland, Forestland, and Timberland, which could result from the implementation of the proposed Specific Plan and recommends mitigation measures, as needed, to reduce significant impacts.

Important Farmland

Impact AG-1 - Would the Specific Plan convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?

Analysis of Impacts

The California Important Farmland Finder prepared by the California Department of Conservation does not identify any portion of the Specific Plan area as containing any prime farmland, unique farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance. The Farmland Finder identifies the entirety of the project site as being “Urban and Built-Up Land” (DOC 2024). The City of Paramount is heavily urbanized and developed, with the Specific Plan area being surrounded by light and heavy manufacturing, general commercial, and multi-family zoning. The project site contains no prime agricultural soils, designated farmland, or large-scale commercial agricultural uses. Due to a lack of resources in the City, development under the Specific Plan would not result in any conversion of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance to non-agricultural use.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

No impact.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Williamson Act Agricultural Contract

Impact AG-2 - Would the Specific Plan conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?

Analysis of Impacts

The City of Paramount does not include zoning that permits agriculture uses. The Planning Area is not located on land that is used for or conflicts with agriculturally zoned land, as it is currently zoned CESP for Clearwater East Specific Plan (SP), which does not allow for agricultural uses. The project site is not located on a Williamson Act parcel in Los Angeles County (LA County, 2015). Therefore, there will be no conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract; therefore, there will be no impact to an agricultural use or Williamson Act contract.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

No impact.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Forestland/Timberland

Impact AG-3 - Would the Specific Plan conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?

Analysis of Impacts

The project site and surrounding properties are not currently being managed or used for forest land as identified in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g). The project site is zoned CESP and in its existing format allows for a mixture of commercial, institutional, residential, retail, and light industrial uses located centrally within the City of Paramount. The proposed Specific Plan would not conflict with existing zoning for forest land, timberland, or Timberland Production areas, or result in the loss or conversion of forest lands to non-forest uses, as none exist.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

No impact.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation required.

Loss of Forestland

Impact AG-4 - Would the Specific Plan result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

Analysis of Impacts

As outlined above in Impact AG-3, there are no forest lands or resources located within the City of Paramount. The Specific Plan is located in an urbanized area of the City, and is surrounded by existing residential, commercial, manufacturing, and institutional uses. The project site is currently built-out and in a developed area. Implementation of the Specific Plan would not lead to the conversion of forest land to a non-forest use.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

No impact.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Conversion of Farmland/Forestland

Impact AG-5 - Would the Specific Plan involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

Analysis of Impacts

Please refer to responses AG-1 through AG-4 above. The proposed Specific Plan would not involve other changes that could result in conversion of farmland or forest land to non-agricultural or non-forest uses respectively. As discussed in Sections 4.2.4.a and 4.2.4.b above, the City does not include zoning that permits agricultural uses and no Williamson Act (agricultural preserve) contracts are active on the project site. In addition, the project site and surrounding properties are not currently being managed or used for forest land as identified in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g).

The City's General Plan includes goals and policies related to the preservation and expansion of the City's natural resources. The Environmental Justice Element contains Policy EJ-5.2 which aims to expand the tree canopy and improve the urban forest in areas that lack trees so as to promote healthier communities and expand shaded areas within the City. Similarly, Policy HS-50 of the Health and Safety Element aims to enhance the resilience of the City's tree canopy. Policy EJ-6.3 promotes and expands urban agricultural opportunities, such as home and community gardens, and small-lot urban agricultural projects on underutilized sites and remnant vacant properties.

The Specific Plan area is currently built out and contains no designated farmland or forest lands. Therefore, no conversion of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use would occur as a result of the proposed Specific Plan. Compliance with the outlined policies above would ensure that implementation of the Specific Plan would not deteriorate the existing tree canopy or urban forest resources within the City.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

No impact.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Cumulative Impacts

Impact AG-6 - Would the project cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to Agriculture and Forestry Resources?

Analysis of Impacts

As described in Sections Impact AG-1 through AG-5 above, the proposed Specific Plan would not result in impacts related to agricultural resources, Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, Williamson Act contracts, forest lands, timberland, or Timberland Production areas. Because the Planning Area is already developed, and located in

an urbanized area of the City, and because the Specific Plan would not impact agricultural uses, Farmland, Williamson Act contracts, forest lands, timberland, or Timberland Production areas, the proposed Specific Plan would not contribute to a cumulatively significant impact related to agriculture and forestry resources.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

No impact.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

4.2.5 – REFERENCES

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City of Paramount. 2007. *Final Paramount General Plan*. Adopted August 7, 2007. Revisions: Health and Safety Element Update and Environmental Justice Element; Adopted February 8, 2022.

L.A. County. General Plan: Land Use and Agriculture (2015). https://dpw.lacounty.gov/lacfcd/ewmppeir/docs/3.9%20Land%20Use%20Ag.pdf. [Accessed June, 2024].

4.3 – AIR QUALITY

This EIR chapter provides information on the environmental and regulatory air quality setting of the Planning Area and evaluates the potential amount of emissions of regulated air pollutants that could be generated by construction and operation of the proposed Specific Plan. The methodologies and assumptions used in the preparation of this section follow the CEQA Guidelines developed by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD, 2024a). Information on existing air quality conditions, federal, and State ambient air quality standards, and pollutants of concern was obtained from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA), California Air Resources Board (CARB), and SCAQMD. This EIR air quality analysis has been closely coordinated with the Energy and Greenhouse Gas analyses in Chapters 4.6 and 4.8, respectively, of this EIR. Please refer to Appendix D for detailed air quality and greenhouse gas emissions estimates (MIG, 2025).

4.3.1 – ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Air quality is a function of pollutant emissions and topographic and meteorological influences. The physical features and atmospheric conditions of a landscape interact to affect the movement and dispersion of pollutants and determine its air quality.

South Coast Air Basin

The U.S. EPA and CARB are the federal and State agencies charged with maintaining air quality in the nation and California, respectively. The U.S. EPA delegates much of its authority over air quality to CARB which has geographically divided the state into 15 air basins for the purposes of managing air quality on a regional basis. An air basin is a CARB-designated management unit with similar meteorological and geographic conditions.

The City of Paramount is located in the South Coast Air Basin (Basin) which includes Orange County and the non-desert portions of Los Angeles, San Bernardino, and Riverside counties. The basin encompasses approximately 6,745 square miles of coastal plains and is bounded by the San Gabriel, San Bernardino, and San Jacinto Mountains to the north and east.

Air quality in the Basin is managed by the SCAQMD. Pursuant to the California Clean Air Act, the SCAQMD is responsible for bringing air quality within the basin into conformity with federal and State air quality standards by reducing existing emission levels and ensuring that future emission levels meet applicable air quality standards. SCAQMD works with federal, State, and local agencies to reduce pollutant emissions through adoption and implementation of rules and regulations. Please refer to Section 4.3.2 for a description of the regulatory setting of the Planning Area as it relates to air quality.

Basin Climate and Meteorology

The climate of the Los Angeles region is classified as Mediterranean, but weather conditions within the Basin are also dependent on local topography and proximity to the Pacific Ocean. The climate is dominated by the Pacific high-pressure system that results in generally mild, dry summers and mild, wet winters. This temperate climate is occasionally interrupted by extremely hot temperatures during the summer, hot dry westerly “Santa Ana” winds during the fall, and

storms from the Pacific northwest during the winter. In addition to the Basin's topography and geographic location, El Niño and La Niña patterns in the central Pacific Ocean can also have large effects on weather and rainfall received in the Basin between November and March.

The Pacific high-pressure system drives the prevailing winds in the Basin. The winds tend to blow onshore in the daytime and offshore at night. In the summer, an inversion layer is often created over the coastal areas and increases ozone levels. A temperature inversion is created when a layer of cool air is overlain by a layer of warmer air; this can occur over coastal areas when cool, dense air that originates over the ocean is blown onto land and flows underneath the warmer, drier air that is present over land. In the winter, areas throughout the basin often experience a shallow inversion layer that prevents the dispersion of surface level air pollutants, resulting in higher concentrations of criteria air pollutants such as carbon monoxide (CO) and oxides of nitrogen (NO_X).

In the fall months, the Basin's weather is often impacted by Santa Ana winds. These winds are the result of a high-pressure system over the Nevada-Utah region that overcomes a westerly wind pattern and forces hot, dry winds from the east to the Pacific Ocean. These winds can be powerful and persistent during these times.

An El Niño condition is a warming of the surface waters of the eastern Pacific Ocean. It is a climate pattern that occurs across the tropical Pacific Ocean that is usually associated with drastic weather occurrences, including enhanced rainfall in Southern California. Conversely, a La Niña condition is the term for cooler than normal sea surface temperatures across the Eastern Pacific Ocean. The Los Angeles region receives less than normal rainfall during La Niña years.

Throughout the Basin, annual average temperatures vary from the low to middle 60s degrees Fahrenheit (° F). Due to a decreased marine influence, the eastern portion of the Basin shows greater variability in average annual minimum and maximum temperatures. January is the coldest month throughout the Basin, with average minimum temperatures of 47° F in downtown Los Angeles and 36° F in San Bernardino. All portions of the Basin have recorded maximum temperatures above 100° F.

Although the climate of the Basin can be characterized as semi-arid, the air near the land surface is quite moist on most days because of the presence of a marine layer. This shallow layer of sea air is an important modifier of the Basin's climate. Humidity restricts visibility in the Basin. The sulfur dioxide is converted to sulfates and is heightened in the air with high relative humidity. The annual average relative humidity within the Basin is 71% along the coast and 59% inland. Since the ocean effect is dominant, periods of heavy early morning fog are frequent with low stratus clouds being a characteristic feature. These effects decrease with distance from the coast.

More than 90% of rainfall occurs from November through April. The annual average rainfall varies from approximately nine inches in Riverside to fourteen inches in downtown Los Angeles. Monthly and yearly rainfall totals are extremely variable. Rainfall between the months of April and November usually consists of widely scattered thunderstorms near the coast and slightly heavier shower activity in the eastern portion of the Basin with frequency being higher near the coast.

The city of Paramount's average temperatures range from a high of 83.9 degrees Fahrenheit in August to a low of 45.3 degrees Fahrenheit in December. Annual precipitation is approximately 12 inches, falling mostly from November through March (WRCC, 2021).

Sunlight

Three-quarters of available sunshine is received in the Basin while the remaining one-quarter is absorbed by clouds. The ultraviolet portion of this abundant radiation is a key factor in photochemical reactions. The shortest day of the year has approximately 10 hours of possible sunshine, while the longest day of the year has approximately 14.5 hours of possible sunshine.

Temperature Inversions

There are two distinct temperature inversion structures that control vertical mixing of air pollution in the Basin. During the summer, warm high-pressure descending (subsiding) air is undercut by a shallow layer of cool marine air. The boundary between these two layers of air is a persistent marine subsidence/inversion. This boundary prevents vertical mixing that effectively acts as an impervious lid to pollutants over the entire Basin. The mixing height for the inversion structure is normally situated 1,000 to 1,500 feet above mean sea level.

A second inversion-type forms in conjunction with the drainage of cool air off the surrounding mountains at night followed by the seaward drift of this pool of cool air. The top of this layer forms a sharp boundary with the warmer air aloft and creates nocturnal radiation inversions. These inversions occur primarily in the winter when nights are longer and onshore flow is weakest. They are typically only a few hundred feet above mean sea level. These inversions effectively trap pollutants, such as NO_X and CO from vehicles, as the pool of cool air drifts seaward. Winter is therefore a period of high levels of primary pollutants within the basin.

Wind Patterns

The distinctive climate of the Basin is determined by its terrain and geographical location. The Basin is a coastal plain with connecting broad valleys and low hills, bounded by the Pacific Ocean to the southwest with high mountains ringing the rest of the Basin.

Wind patterns across the Basin are characterized by westerly and southwesterly onshore winds during the day and easterly or northeasterly breeze at night. Winds are characteristically light although the speed is somewhat greater during the dry summer months than during the rainy winter season.

Regulated Air Pollutants

The U.S. EPA has established National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for six common air pollutants: ozone (O_3), particulate matter (PM), which consists of “inhalable coarse” PM (particles with an aerodynamic diameter between 2.5 and 10 microns in diameter, or PM_{10}) and “fine” PM (particles with an aerodynamic diameter smaller than 2.5 microns, or $PM_{2.5}$), CO, nitrogen dioxide (NO_2), sulfur dioxide (SO_2), and lead. The U.S. EPA refers to these six common pollutants as “criteria” pollutants because the agency regulates the pollutants on the basis of human health and/or environmentally-based criteria and because they are known to cause adverse human health effects and/or adverse effects on the environment (U.S. EPA 2020a and 2020b).

CARB has also established California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) for the six criteria air pollutants regulated by the federal Clean Air Act (the CAAQS are more stringent than the NAAQS), plus the following additional air pollutants due to their known adverse effects on human

health or the environment (CARB 2020): hydrogen sulfide (H_2S), sulfates (SO_X), vinyl chloride, and visibility reducing particles.

A description of the air pollutants associated with the Planning Area and its vicinity is provided below. Air pollutants not commonly associated with the existing or proposed sources in the Planning Area such as hydrogen sulfide and visibility reducing particles, are not described below.

- **Ground-level Ozone**, commonly referred to as smog, is not emitted directly into the atmosphere. It is created from chemical reactions between NO_X and volatile organic compounds (VOCs), also called reactive organic gases (ROGs), in the presence of sunlight (U.S. EPA, 2022a). Thus, ozone formation is typically highest on hot sunny days in urban areas with NO_X and ROG pollution. Ozone irritates the nose, throat, and air pathways and can cause or aggravate shortness of breath, coughing, asthma attacks, and lung diseases such as emphysema and bronchitis.
    - **ROG** is a term defined by CARB as any compound of carbon, excluding carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, carbonic acid, metallic carbides or carbonates, and ammonium carbonate, and includes several low-reactive organic compounds which have been exempted by the U.S. EPA (CARB, 2004).
    - **VOC** is a term defined by the U.S. EPA term defined as any compound of carbon, excluding carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, carbonic acid, metallic carbides or carbonates, and ammonium carbonate, which participates in atmospheric photochemical reactions. The term exempts organic compounds of carbon which have been determined to have negligible photochemical reactivity such as: methane, ethane, and methylene chloride (CARB, 2004).
- **Particulate Matter**, also known as particle pollution, is a mixture of extremely small solid and liquid particles made up of a variety of components such as organic chemicals, metals, and soil and dust particles (U.S. EPA 2022b).
    - **PM_{10}**, also known as inhalable coarse, respirable, or suspended PM, consists of particles less than or equal to 10 micrometers in diameter (approximately 1/7th the thickness of a human hair). These particles can be inhaled deep into the lungs and possibly enter the bloodstream, causing health effects that include, but are not limited to, increased respiratory symptoms (e.g., irritation, coughing), decreased lung capacity, aggravated asthma, irregular heartbeats, heart attacks, and premature death in people with heart or lung disease (U.S. EPA 2022b).
    - **$PM_{2.5}$**, also known as fine PM, consists of particles less than or equal to 2.5 micrometers in diameter (approximately 1/30th the thickness of a human hair). These particles pose an increased risk because they can penetrate the deepest parts of the lung, leading to and exacerbating heart and lung health effects (U.S. EPA 2022b).
- **Carbon Monoxide (CO)** is an odorless, colorless gas that is formed by the incomplete combustion of carbon-based fuels. Motor vehicles are the single largest source of CO in the Basin. At high concentrations, CO reduces the oxygen-carrying capacity of the blood and can aggravate cardiovascular disease and cause headaches, dizziness, unconsciousness, and even death (U.S. EPA 2022c).
- **Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2)** is a byproduct of combustion. NO_2 is not directly emitted, but is formed through a reaction between nitric oxide (NO) and atmospheric oxygen. NO and NO_2 are collectively referred to as NO_X and are major contributors to ozone formation.

NO_2 also contributes to the formation of particulate matter. NO_2 can cause breathing difficulties at high concentrations (U.S. EPA, 2022d).

- **Sulfur Dioxide (SO_2)** is one of a group of highly reactive gases known as SO_X. Fossil fuel combustion in power plants and industrial facilities are the largest emitters of SO_2. Short-term effects of SO_2 exposure can include adverse respiratory effects such as asthma symptoms. SO_2 and other SO_X can react to form PM (U.S. EPA 2022e).
- **Sulfates (SO^{2-4})** are the fully oxidized ionic form of sulfur. SO^{2-4} are primarily produced from fuel combustion. Sulfur compounds in the fuel are oxidized to SO_2 during the combustion process and subsequently converted to sulfate compounds in the atmosphere. Sulfate exposure can increase risks of respiratory disease (CARB 2022a).
- **Lead** is a metal found naturally in the environment as well as in manufactured products. Mobile sources used to be the main contributor to ambient lead concentrations in the air. In the early 1970s, the U.S. EPA established national regulations to gradually reduce the lead content in gasoline, and in 1996, lead was banned from gasoline. As a result of these efforts, emissions of lead from the transportation sector and levels of lead in the air decreased dramatically. Lead can adversely affect multiple organ systems of the body and people of every age group. Lead poisoning in young children can cause brain damage, behavioral problems, and liver or kidney damage. Lead poisoning to adults can cause reproductive problems, muscle and joint pain, nerve disorders, and kidney disease (CARB 2016a).

Common criteria air pollutants, such as ozone precursors, CO, and PM, are emitted by a large number of sources and have effects on a regional basis (i.e., throughout the Basin). Other pollutants, such as hazardous air pollutants (HAPs) and toxic air contaminants (TACs), which are described in more detail below, are generally not as prevalent and/or emitted by fewer and more specific sources. As such, these pollutants have much greater effects on local air quality conditions and local receptors.

Ambient Air Quality Standards and Basin Attainment Status

In general, the NAAQS and CAAQS define “clean” air, and are established at levels designed to protect the health of the most sensitive groups in our communities by defining the maximum amount of a pollutant (averaged over a specified period of time) that can be present in outdoor air without any harmful effects on people or the environment. Air pollutant levels are typically described in terms of concentration, which refers to the amount of pollutant material per volumetric unit of air. Concentrations are typically measured in parts per million (ppm) or micrograms per cubic meter ($\mu g/m^3$). The U.S. EPA, CARB, and regional air agencies assess the air quality of an area by measuring and monitoring the amount of pollutants in the ambient air and comparing pollutant levels against NAAQS and CAAQS. Based on these comparisons, regions are classified into one of the following categories.

- **Attainment**. A region is “in attainment” if monitoring shows ambient concentrations of a specific pollutant are less than or equal to the NAAQS or CAAQS. In addition, an area that has been re-designated from nonattainment to attainment is classified as a “maintenance area” for 10 years to ensure that the air quality improvements are sustained.
- **Nonattainment.** If the NAAQS or CAAQS are exceeded for a pollutant, the region is designated as nonattainment for that pollutant. It is important to note that some NAAQS and CAAQS require multiple exceedances of the standard in order for a region to be classified as nonattainment. Federal and State laws require nonattainment areas to

develop strategies, implementation plans, and control measures to reduce pollutant concentrations to levels that meet, or attain, standards.

- **Unclassified.** An area is unclassified if the ambient air monitoring data are incomplete and do not support a designation of attainment or nonattainment.

Table 4.3-1 (Ambient Air Quality Standards and Basin Attainment Status) lists the NAAQS and CAAQS and summarizes the Basin's attainment status.

Table 4.3-1
Ambient Air Quality Standards and Basin Attainment Status

Pollutant	Averaging Time[B]	California Standards[A]		National Standards[A]	
		Standard	Attainment Status	Standard	Attainment Status
Ozone	1-Hour (1979)	--	--	0.12 ppm	Nonattainment
	1-Hour (Current)	0.09 ppm	Nonattainment	--	--
	8-Hour (1997)	--	--	0.08 ppm	Nonattainment
	8-Hour (2008)	--	--	0.075 ppm	Nonattainment
	8-Hour (Current)	0.070 ppm	Nonattainment	0.070 ppm	Pending
PM_{10}	24-Hour	50 µg/m^3	Nonattainment	150 µg/m^3	Attainment
	Annual Average	20 µg/m^3	Nonattainment	--	--
$PM_{2.5}$	24-Hour	--	--	35 µg/m^3	Nonattainment
	Annual Average (1997)	--	--	15 µg/m^3	Nonattainment
	Annual Average (Current)	12 µg/m^3	Nonattainment	12 µg/m^3 [C]	Nonattainment
Carbon Monoxide	1-Hour	20 ppm	Attainment	9 ppm	Attainment
	8-Hour	9 ppm	Attainment	9 ppm	Attainment
Nitrogen Dioxide	1-Hour	0.18 ppm	Attainment	100 ppb	Unclassifiable/ Attainment
	Annual Average	0.030 ppm	Attainment	0.053 ppm	Attainment
Sulfur Dioxide	1-Hour	0.25 ppm	Attainment	75 ppb	Attainment
	24-Hour	0.04 ppm	Attainment	0.14 ppm	Unclassifiable/ Attainment
	Annual Average	--	--	0.030 ppm	Unclassifiable/ Attainment
Lead	3-Months Rolling	--	--	0.15 µg/m^3	Nonattainment (Partial)
Hydrogen Sulfide	1-Hour	0.03 ppm	Attainment	--	
Sulfates	24-Hour	25 µg/m^3	Attainment	--	
Vinyl Chloride	24-Hour	0.01 ppm	Attainment	--	

Source: CARB 2016b, SCAQMD 2024a, modified by MIG.

(A) This table summarizes the CAAQS and NAAQS and the Basin's attainments status. This table does not prevent comprehensive information regarding the CAAQS and NAAQS. Each CAAQS and NAAQS has its own averaging time, standard unit of measurement, measurement method, and statistical test for determining if a specific standard has been exceeded. Standards are not presented for visibility reducing particles, which are not concentration-based. The Basin is unclassified for visibility reducing particles.

(B) Ambient air standards have changed over time. This table presents information on the standards previously used by the U.S. EPA for which the Basin does not meet attainment.

(C) Attainment status of annual $PM_{2.5}$ standard refers to 2012 standard of 12 µg/m^3. On February 7, 2024, the U.S. EPA lowered the primary annual average health-based standard for $PM_{2.5}$ from 12 µg/m^3 to 9 µg/m^3. The U.S. EPA generally makes initial attainment/nonattainment designations within 2 years of the issuance of a new standard. The Basin is likely to be designated non-attainment for the 9 µg/m^3 standard.

Hazardous Air Pollutants (HAPs) and Toxic Air Contaminants (TACs)

In addition to criteria air pollutants, the U.S. EPA and CARB have classified certain pollutants as HAPs or TACs, respectively. The U.S. EPA has identified 187 HAPs, including such substances as benzene and formaldehyde; CARB also considers particulate emissions from diesel-fueled engines and other substances to be TACs. Since CARB's list of TACs references and includes the U.S. EPA's list of HAPs, this EIR uses the term TAC when referring to HAPs and TACs.

TACs can cause severe health effects at very low concentrations (non-cancer effects), and many are suspected or confirmed carcinogens (i.e., can cause cancer). People exposed to TACs at sufficient concentrations and durations may have an increased chance of getting cancer or experiencing other serious health effects such as (but not limited to) reduced immune system, as well as neurological, reproductive (e.g., reduced fertility), developmental, respiratory, and/or other health problems (U.S. EPA 2024, CARB 2024). A description of the TACs associated with the proposed Specific Plan and its vicinity is provided below.

- **Gasoline and Diesel-Powered Mobile Sources.** According to the SCAQMD's *Multiple Air Toxics Exposure Study in the South Coast Air Basin* (SCAQMD, 2024), or MATES V, gasoline-powered vehicles emit TACs, such as benzene, which can have adverse health risks. Gasoline-powered sources emit TACs in much smaller amounts than diesel-powered vehicles. The MATES V study identifies that diesel emissions account for approximately 50% of the total cancer risk in the Basin, while Benzene, 1,3-Butadiene, and Carbonyls make up approximately 25% of the cancer risk.

  Diesel engines emit both gaseous and solid material; the solid material is known as DPM. Almost all DPM is less than 1 µm in diameter, and thus is a subset of $PM_{2.5}$. DPM is typically composed of carbon particles and numerous organic compounds. Diesel exhaust also contains gaseous pollutants including VOCs and NO_x. The primary sources of diesel emissions are ships, trains, trucks, rail yards, and heavily traveled roadways. These sources are often located near highly populated areas, resulting in greater DPM-related health consequences in urban areas. The majority of DPM is small enough to be inhaled into the lungs and what particles are not exhaled can be deposited on the lung surfaces and in the deepest regions of the lungs where they are most susceptible to injury. In 1998, CARB identified DPM as a toxic air contaminant based on evidence of a relationship between diesel exhaust exposure and lung cancer and other adverse health effects. DPM also contributes to the same non-cancer health effects as $PM_{2.5}$ exposure (CARB 2016c). Within the City, diesel emissions comprise a greater percentage of the total air toxic and cancer risk than the entire Basin, with 67% percent of the cancer risks in the 90723 zip code attributable to diesel emissions and receptor exposure to those emissions.
- **PM from Wheel-Rail Interactions**: PM may also be generated from friction between rail and locomotive wheels (wheel-rail interaction). This abrasion process can suspend metals such as iron, chromium, manganese, and copper in the form of PM (Loxham et al. 2013); however, the potential for PM to be generated is dependent on the weight of the train and the conditions of the wheels and track on which the train rides. While rail activities may generate PM from wheel-rail interaction, this contribution is anticipated to be minimal (i.e., would not have an appreciable effect on mass emission or health risk estimates) and this issue is not discussed further in this EIR.
- **Forge**: Forges can generate metal particulate emissions, such as nickel and hexavalent chromium. Carlton Forge Works, approximately 90 feet south of the Planning Area, is a forge that manufactures products from carbon and alloy steels, aluminum, titanium, nickel,

cobalt, and other metals (Carlton Forge Works 2025). See the Existing Air Pollution-Related Health Risks section and Community Air Toxics Initiative sections for further discussion of toxics levels related to the operation of the forge.

Local Air Quality Conditions

The SCAQMD monitors air quality within the Basin. Existing levels of ambient air quality and historical trends within the Planning Area are best documented by measurements taken by the SCAQMD. The Planning Area is located in SCAQMD Source Receptor Area (SRA) 5 (Southeast Los Angeles County). Air quality monitoring stations usually measure pollutant concentrations at varying heights above ground level depending on the monitoring site and the pollutants being monitored. Therefore, air quality is often referred to in terms of ground-level concentrations. The closest air quality monitoring station of this type is the South Central LA County Station, located in SRA 12 at 700 North Bullis Road, Compton, California, approximately 2.3 miles west of the Planning Area. The most recent three years' worth of measured air quality data for O_3, CO, NO_2, SO_2, and $PM_{2.5}$ from the South Central LA County monitoring are provided in Table 4.3-2 (Local Air Quality Conditions 2021-2023).

Table 4.3-2
Local Air Quality Conditions 2021-2023

Pollutant	Ambient Air Standard	Year[(A)]		
		2021	2022	2023
Ozone (O_3)				
Maximum 1-hour Concentration (ppm)		0.085	0.111	0.084
Maximum 8-hr Concentration (ppm)		0.076	0.085	0.071
Number of Days Exceeding State 1-hr Standard	>180 µg/m3	0	1	0
Number of Days Exceeding State 8-hr Standard	>137 µg/m3	1	1	2
Days Exceeding Federal 1-hr Standard	>0.124 ppm	0	0	0
Days Exceeding Federal 8-hr Standard	>0.070 ppm	1	1	1
Carbon Monoxide (CO)				
Maximum 1-hr Concentration (ppm)		4.3	3.4	3.2
Maximum 8-hr Concentration (ppm)		3.7	3.0	2.6
Days Exceeding State 1-hr Standard	>23,000 µg/m^3	0	0	0
Days Exceeding Federal/State 8-hr Standard	>10,000 µg/m^3	0	0	0
Days Exceeding Federal 1-hr Standard	>40,000 µg/m^3	0	0	0
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2)				
Maximum 1-hr Concentration (ppb)		68.2	64.9	53.4
Annual Arithmetic Mean Concentration (ppb)		14.0	14.4	12.7
Days Exceeding State 1-hr Standard	>180 µg/m^3	0	0	0
Coarse Particulate Matter (PM_{10}) *				
Maximum 24-hr Concentration (µg/m^3)		--	--	--
Annual Arithmetic Mean (µg/m^3)		--	--	--
Samples Exceeding State 24-hr Standard	>50 µg/m^3	--	--	--
Samples Exceeding Federal 24-hr Standard	>150 µg/m^3	--	--	--
Fine Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$)				
Maximum 24-hr Concentration (µg/m^3)		102.1	52.8	54.6
Annual Arithmetic Mean (µg/m^3)		13.41	12.25	11.12
Samples Exceeding Federal 24-hr Standard	>35 µg/m^3	12	6	2

Source: SCAQMD 2024b (A) "--" indicates data are not available at South Central LA County (Station ID 060371302) * There is no PM_{10} data in SRA 5, SRA 12 nor any other SRA in the vicinity of the Planning Area.

Existing Emissions Levels in the Planning Area

The Planning Area is bound by Rosecrans Avenue to the north, Paramount Boulevard to the east, Somerset Boulevard to the south, and Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) to the west. Existing land uses in the Planning Area are summarized in Table 3-1 (Existing Land Use) of the Project Description (see Chapter 3). The land uses in the Planning Area include the Paramount Swap Meet and a mix of other institutional (e.g., church and school), commercial (e.g., restaurants, retail shops), and industrial (e.g., Honeybee International shipping company contribute to pollutant concentrations in the city and Basin. The existing land uses in the Planning Area generate emissions from the following sources:

- **Small "area" sources.** Existing land uses generate emissions from small area sources including the use of consumer products such as paints and cleaners that result in the evaporation of chemicals to the atmosphere during product use.
- **Energy use and consumption**. Existing land uses generate emissions from the combustion of natural gas in building water and space heating equipment, as well as industrial processes.
- **Mobile sources.** Existing land uses generate emissions from vehicles travelling to and from the Planning Area.

Existing emissions[i] were estimated using the California Emissions Estimator Model, or CalEEMod, Version 2022.1.1.29. The swap meet is a unique land use that could have small stationary, refrigeration, or area sources that may vary by day, are not kept on record, and are challenging to quantify. Mobile source emissions for the swap meet were estimated based on the number of visitors per year and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) data for mode split in the City of Paramount. The existing emissions for the remaining land uses were estimated using default data assumptions contained within CalEEMod, with the following project-specific modifications:

- **Land Use Development:** The default acreage and square footage for each of the existing land uses within the Planning Area were adjusted to reflect existing development conditions.
- **Mobile Sources.** Mobile source operations were modified to be consistent with the traffic report, Clearwater East Specific Plan Update Transportation Impact Analysis (TIA) (Ganddini 2025).
    - **Trip Generation:** The CalEEMod default weekday and weekend trip generation rates for the regional shopping center and warehouse land use were modified to be consistent with the values used in the TIA.
    - **Trip Type:** The CalEEMod default primary, diverted, and pass by trip percentages were modified so that internal capture, as estimated by the TIA, was modeled as pass by trips, and the remaining trips were modeled as primary trips.

[i] Emissions are modeled for a subset of the Planning Area focusing on the land uses that would be replaced in the Specific Plan.

In total, based on the daily VMT estimate, land uses in the Planning Area are estimated to generate approximately 43.9 million annual VMT.

The emissions generated by current land uses in the Planning Area are shown in Table 4.3-3 (Clearwater Specific Plan: Existing Land Use Emissions Estimates). The emissions are shown for two scenarios:

- **Year 2025 (existing conditions)**, which are based on Year 2025 vehicle fleet characteristics (e.g., vehicle type, age, emission rates).
- **Year 2045 (future conditions)**, which are based on Year 2045 vehicle fleet characteristics and represent the projected emissions that existing land uses would generate in the future (assuming no increase in population or change in land uses). This scenario provides an estimate of how emissions would change in the Planning Area as a result of regulations that would reduce motor vehicle emissions in the future, and allows for distinguishing the potential change in emissions that would occur from the proposed change in land uses that would occur with implementation and buildout of the Clearwater Specific Plan in Year 2045, as opposed to a change in emissions that would occur from regulatory requirements that would be in place whether or not the Specific Plan is adopted.

Table 4.3-3
Clearwater Specific Plan: Existing Land Use Emissions Estimates

Emissions Source	Maximum Daily Pollutant Emissions (Pounds per Day) (A)					
	ROG	NOx	CO	SO_2	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
Year 2025 (Existing Conditions)						
Area Sources	4.9	0.1	6.6	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1
Energy	0.1	1.0	0.9	<0.1	0.1	0.1
Mobile Sources	49.6	40.4	416.8	0.9	86.0	22.3
Year 2025 Total(B)	*54.6*	*41.1*	*424.2*	*1.0*	*86.1*	*22.3*
Year 2045 (Future Conditions)						
Area Sources	4.9	0.1	6.6	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1
Energy	0.1	1.0	0.9	<0.1	0.1	0.1
Mobile Sources	28.8	18.2	255.8	0.7	85.4	21.8
Year 2045 Total(B)	*33.8*	*19.3*	*263.2*	*0.7*	*85.4*	*21.9*

Source: MIG 2025, see Appendix D.
(A) Emissions estimated using CalEEMod, V 2022.1.1.29. Estimates are based on default model assumptions unless otherwise noted in this document. Maximum daily ROG, CO, SO_X, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$ emissions occur during the summer. Maximum daily NO_X, emissions occur during the winter.
(B) Totals may not equal due to rounding.

As shown in Table 4.3-3, there is a decrease in mobile source emissions between Year 2025 and Year 2045 conditions. This decrease in emissions is due to improvements in exhaust emission control systems in newer vehicles, along with fewer older vehicles in use. In contrast, PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ dust emissions remain approximately the same because these emissions are associated with paved road dust, tire and brake wear, etc. and the amount of VMT does not change between the 2025 and 2045 conditions.

Sensitive Receptors

Some people are more affected by air pollution than others. Sensitive air quality receptors include specific subsets of the general population that are susceptible to poor air quality and the potential adverse health effects associated with poor air quality. Both CARB and the SCAQMD consider residences, schools, parks and playgrounds, childcare centers, athletic facilities, long-term health care facilities, rehabilitation centers, convalescent centers, and retirement homes to be sensitive air quality land uses and receptors (SCAQMD, 2017; CARB, 2005). The sensitive air quality receptors located in and within 1,000 feet of the Planning Area include:

- Our Lady of the Rosary School, in the southeastern portion of the Planning Area, approximately 75 feet west of the centerline of Paramount Boulevard.
- Paramount Adult School, in the northeastern portion of the Planning Area, approximately 60 feet west of the centerline of Paramount Boulevard.
- Paramount Park Middle School, approximately 90 feet east of the Planning Area boundary, across Paramount Boulevard
- Paramount High School, approximately 90 feet east of the Planning Area boundary, across Paramount Boulevard
- Single family residences, approximately 100 feet east of the Planning Area boundary, along Paramount Boulevard
- Paramount Park, approximately 170 feet east of the Planning Area boundary, across Paramount Boulevard
- Paramount Pool, approximately 650 feet east of the Planning Area boundary, across Paramount Boulevard
- Single-family residences, approximately 360 feet southeast of the Planning Area boundary, along California Avenue
- Lincoln Elementary School, approximately 630 feet southeast of the Planning Area boundary, along California Avenue
- Single-family residences, approximately 480 feet south of the Planning Area boundary, along Adams Street
- Village Skate Park, approximately 175 feet southwest of the Planning Area boundary, across Somerset Boulevard
- Single-family residences, approximately 690 feet southwest of the Planning Area boundary, along Minnesota Avenue
- Single-family residences, approximately 260 feet north of the Planning Area boundary, across Rosecrans Avenue and Metro/Pacific Electric railroad right-of-way
- Multifamily residences, approximately 480 feet northeast of the Planning Area boundary along Paramount Boulevard

<u>Existing Air Pollution-Related Health Risks</u>

Sensitive air quality receptors are usually most affected by local sources of air pollution. The Planning Area is bound by Rosecrans Avenue to the north, a designated truck route per Municipal Code Section 10.20.020, and a Union Pacific railroad (UPRR) corridor to the west, running north-

south. The planned Southeast Gateway Line light rail corridor runs north of and diagonal to the Planning Area, northwest to southeast. The rail line is approximately 60 feet northeast of the Planning Area at its closest point, the intersection of Rosecrans Avenue and Paramount Boulevard. The Rosecrans Avenue and Paramount Boulevard intersection would be the approximate location for the planned Southeast Gateway Station. Additionally, Interstate 105 is approximately 0.5 miles north of the Planning Area, former State Route 19 (Lakewood Boulevard) is approximately 1.0 miles east of Planning Area, State Route 91 is approximately 1.4 miles south of the Planning Area, and Interstate 710 is approximately 1.3 miles west of the Planning Area. These transportation corridors carry trucks and trains that emit DPM as they operate, and cause localized areas of DPM concentrations. According to the SCAQMD's MATES V Carcinogenic Risk Map, the Planning Area has an estimated cancer risk of 543 per million (SCAQMD 2024c).[ii] These cancer risk estimates are orders of magnitude higher than the SCAQMD's significance threshold of 10 cases in one million for cancer risk. These estimates, however, are based upon regional modeling efforts that largely do not account for site specific emission rates and dispersion characteristics that typically result in refined and substantially lower health risk estimates.

There are also several stationary sources located in the vicinity of the project site, which are described below. Under the State's Air Toxics Hot Spots Information and Assessment Act (AB 2588; see Section 4.3.2) the SCAQMD is required to prepare an annual report of activities related to facilities that emit TACs. According to the SCAQMD's 2023 Annual Report on AB 2588 Air Toxics Hot Spots Program, there were four (4) facilities within 0.5 miles of the Planning Area that were required to report their emissions to the SCAQMD under AB 2588 (SCAQMD, 2024d). These facilities include:

- Carlton Forge Works (SCAQMD Facility ID 22911), located at 7743 Adams St., approximately 90 feet south of the Planning Area, with a cancer risk value of 15.4 excess cancer chances per million and non-cancer acute and chronic hazard indices of 1.04 and 1.76, respectively;
- Ace Clearwater Enterprises (SCAQMD Facility ID 17325), located at 14105 Garfield Ave, approximately 0.3 miles northwest of the Planning Area, with a cancer risk value of 3.7 excess cancer chances per million and non-cancer acute and chronic hazard indices of 0.0 and 0.01, respectively;
- Anaplex Corp. (SCAQMD Facility ID 16951), located at 15547 Garfield Ave, approximately 0.4 miles southwest of the Planning Area, with a cancer risk value of 3.4 excess cancer chances per million and non-cancer acute of 2.89 and an undetermined chronic hazard indices;
- Aerocraft Heat Treating Co Inc (SCAQMD Facility ID 23752), located at 15701 Minnesota Ave, approximately 0.4 miles south of the Planning Area, with a cancer risk value of 0 excess cancer chances per million and non-cancer acute and chronic hazard indices of 2.9 and 0.15, respectively.

Including the facilities identified above, CARB indicates there are 19 facilities in the City of Paramount that report emissions pursuant to AB 2588 (CARB, 2021). Please see Appendix D for a full list of emissions and risks from the facilities, as provided by the CARB database.

[ii] According to the SCAQMD (2024c), cancer risk refers to the probability of contracting cancer associated with exposure to a substance. It is expressed as the chance per million population of a cancer case occurring. A risk of 543 per million means that in a population of one million individuals (exposed over a 70 year lifetime), 543 additional cancer cases would be expected. For reference, a cancer risk of 543 per million in the Planning Area, in the zip code 90723, is approximately 79.0% higher than other receptors within the SCAQMD's jurisdiction.

CalEnviroScreen is a mapping tool that helps identify California communities that are most affected by many sources of pollution, and where people are often especially vulnerable to pollution's effects. While CalEnviroScreen was originally developed as part of Senate Bill (SB) 535 and used to identify "disadvantaged communities" for the purposes of allocating funding from the State's Cap-and-Trade regulation, its application and scope have expanded over the years. The tool uses environmental, health, and socioeconomic information to produce scores for every census tract in the state. The CalEnviroScreen model is made up of four components – two pollution burden components (exposures and environmental effects) and two population characteristics components (sensitive populations and socioeconomic factors). The four components are further divided into 20 indicators. An indicator is a measure of either environmental conditions, in the case of pollution burden indicators, or health and vulnerability factors, in the case of population characteristic indicators.

- **Exposure** indicators are based on the measurements of different types of pollution that people may come into contact with. Exposure indicators include:
    - Air Quality: Ozone
    - Air Quality: $PM_{2.5}$
    - Children's Lead Risk from Housing
    - Diesel Particulate Matter
    - Drinking Water Contaminants
    - Pesticide Use
    - Toxic Releases from Facilities
    - Traffic Density
- **Environmental effects** indicators are based on the locations of toxic chemicals in or near communities. Environmental effects indicators include:
    - Cleanup Sites
    - Groundwater Threats
    - Hazardous Waste Generators and Facilities
    - Impaired Water Bodies
    - Solid Waste Sites and Facilities
- **Sensitive population** indicators measure the number of people in a community who may be more severely affected by pollution because of their age or health. Sensitive population indicators include:
    - Asthma
    - Cardiovascular Disease
    - Low Birth Weight Infants
- **Socioeconomic factor** indicators are conditions that may increase people's stress or make healthy living difficult and cause them to be more sensitive to pollution's effects (OEHHA 2021). Socioeconomic factors include:
    - Educational Attainment
    - Housing Burden
    - Linguistic Isolation
    - Poverty
    - Unemployment

Each census tract receives scores for as many of the 20 indicators as possible, and the scores are then mapped so that different communities can be compared. Percentiles are assigned to

each census tract based on the census tract's score in relation to the rest of the state. An area with a high percentile is one that experiences a much higher pollution burden than areas with low scores. For example, if a census tract has an indicator in the 40th percentile, it means that indicator's percentile is higher than 40 percent of the census tracts in the state. CalEnviroScreen also provides a total (or cumulative) score, which is the product of multiplying the 10 pollution burden components by the 10 population characteristics. This total / cumulative score helps contextualize how multiple contaminants from multiple sources affect people, while taking into account their living conditions (e.g., nonchemical factors such as socioeconomic and health status). Communities that are within the top 25th percentile for total CalEnviroScreen scores are considered disadvantaged communities pursuant to SB 535. Table 4.3-4 summarizes the CalEnviroScreen indicators for census tract 6037553601 which is the census tract within which the Planning Area is located.

Table 4.3-4:
CalEnviroScreen Health Risk Information

Indicator	Census Tract Indicator Values
	Tract 6037553601
Exposure Indicators	
Air Quality: Ozone	38
Air Quality: $PM_{2.5}$	81
Lead from Housing	77
Diesel Particulate Matter	78
Drinking Water Contamination	23
Pesticide Use	0
Toxic Releases from Facilities	97
Traffic	95
Environmental Effect Indicators	
Cleanup Sites	84
Groundwater Threats	91
Hazardous Waste Generators and Facilities	95
Impaired Water Bodies	67
Solid Waste Sites and Facilities	99
Sensitive Population Indicators	
Asthma	57
Cardiovascular Disease	67
Low Birth Weight Infants	72
Socioeconomic Factor Indicators	
Education	87
Housing Burden	76
Linguistic Isolation	65
Poverty	76
Unemployment	38
Cumulative Percentiles	
Pollution Burden Percentile	98
Population Characteristics Percentile	75
CalEnviroScreen Percentile (Total)	**95**
SB 535 Disadvantaged Community?	**Yes**
Source: OEHHA 2023	

As shown in Table 4.3-4, census tract 6037553601 is within the top 5% of total CalEnviroScreen percentiles throughout California. It is substantially burdened by exposure to pollution and is subject to relatively high levels of underlying conditions. This area shows an average pollution indicator percentile of 98% based on the CalEnviroScreen indicators (e.g., exposure, environmental effects, population characteristics, socioeconomic factors) and has a population of approximately 4,699 people. The census tract's total CalEnviroScreen percentile is 95, and since this census tract is within the top 25% in scoring, according to the CalEnviroScreen methodology, it is considered a disadvantaged community pursuant to SB 535.

Community Air Toxics Initiative

In 2013, SCAQMD received metallic odor complaints from residents in Paramount, leading to toxic metal emissions monitoring in the City. From 2014 to 2015, SCAQMD worked with Carlton Forge Works, located directly south of the Planning Area, to reduce the levels of nickel from its operations. A series of voluntary measures reduced the metal particulate emissions from the facility, resulting in a reduction in nickel. From 2016 to 2021, SCAMQD conducted monitoring of hexavalent chromium levels primarily in industrial portions of Paramount, including directly south of the Planning Area, across Somerset Boulevard (SCAQMD 2021). In response to elevated levels of hexavalent chromium, SCAQMD adopted rules and took enforcement actions, resulting in a substantial decrease in hexavalent chromium levels. In 2021, the City of Paramount took over monitoring efforts from the SCAQMD. The hexavalent chromium levels have been generally low and stable. A monitoring site in Lincoln Elementary, located approximately 630 feet southeast of the Planning Area, had an average hexavalent chromium concentration of 0.147 nanograms per cubic meter (ng/m^3), well below the established threshold of 1.0 ng/m^3 over three consecutive measurements that would be considered a cause for concern (City of Paramount 2024). Monitoring is ongoing.

4.3.2 – REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Federal

Federal Clean Air Act

The Federal Clean Air Act (CAA), as amended, provides the overarching basis for both Federal and State air pollution prevention, control, and regulation. The Act establishes the U.S. EPA's responsibilities for protecting and improving the nation's air quality. The U.S. EPA oversees Federal programs for setting air quality standards and designating attainment status, permitting new and modified stationary sources of pollutants, controlling emissions of hazardous air pollutants, and reducing emissions from motor vehicles and other mobile sources. In 1971, to achieve the purposes of Section 109 of the CAA, the U.S. EPA developed primary and secondary NAAQS. Primary standards are designed to protect human health with an adequate margin of safety. Secondary standards are designed to protect property and public welfare from air pollutants in the atmosphere.

State

California Clean Air Act

In addition to being subject to Federal requirements, air quality in the state is also governed by more stringent regulations under the California Clean Air Act, which was enacted in 1988 to develop plans and strategies for attaining the CAAQS. As discussed above, in California, both

the Federal and State Clean Air Acts are administered by CARB. CARB oversees the functions of local air pollution control districts and air quality management districts, which in turn administer air quality activities at the regional level.

In-Use Off-Road Diesel Equipment Program

CARB's In-Use Off-Road Diesel Equipment regulation is intended to reduce emissions of NO_x and PM from off-road diesel vehicles, including construction equipment, operating within California. The regulation imposes limits on idling; requires reporting equipment and engine information and labeling all vehicles reported; restricts adding older vehicles to fleets; and requires fleets to reduce their emissions by retiring, replacing, or repowering older engines or installing exhaust retrofits for PM. The requirements and compliance dates of the off-road regulation vary by fleet size, and large fleets (fleets with more than 5,000 horsepower) must meet average targets or comply with Best Available Control Technology (BACT) requirements beginning in 2014. CARB has off-road anti-idling regulations affecting self-propelled diesel-fueled vehicles of 25 horsepower and up. The off-road anti-idling regulations limit idling on applicable equipment to no more than five minutes, unless exempted due to safety, operation, or maintenance requirements. In 2022, CARB approved amendments requiring the use of renewable diesel fuel starting January 1, 2024. Fleets comprised of Tier 4 Final equipment or zero-emission equipment are exempt from this requirement (CARB 2022b).

On-Road Heavy-Duty Diesel Vehicles (In-Use) Regulation

CARB's On-Road Heavy-Duty Diesel Vehicles (In-Use) regulation (also known as the Truck and Bus Regulation) is intended to reduce the emission of NO_X, PM, and other criteria pollutants generated from existing on-road diesel vehicles operating in California. The regulation applies to nearly all diesel-fueled trucks and buses with a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) greater than 14,000 pounds that are privately or federally owned, and for privately and publicly owned school buses. Heavier trucks and buses with a GVWR greater than 26,000 pounds must comply with a schedule by engine model year or owners can report to show compliance with more flexible options. Since January 1, 2023, all trucks and buses operating in California, with few exceptions, were required to have 2010 model year engines or newer.

CARB Stationary Diesel Engines – Emission Regulations

In 1998, CARB identified DPM as a TAC. To reduce public exposure to DPM, in 2000, the Board approved the Risk Reduction Plan to Reduce Particulate Matter Emissions from Diesel-Fueled Engines and Vehicles (Risk Reduction Plan) (CARB 2000). Integral to this plan is the implementation of control measures to reduce DPM such as the control measures for stationary diesel-fueled engines. As such, diesel generators must comply with regulations under CARB's amendments *to Airborne Toxic Control Measure for Stationary Compression Ignition Engines* and be permitted by SCAQMD.

CARB Air Quality and Land Use Handbook

In 1998, CARB identified particulate matter from diesel-fueled engines as a TAC. CARB's Air Quality and Land Use Handbook is intended to serve as a general reference guide for evaluating and reducing air pollution impacts associated with new projects that go through the land use decision making process (CARB 2005). The CARB Handbook recommends that planning agencies consider proximity to air pollution sources when considering new locations for "sensitive" land uses, such as residences, medical facilities, daycare centers, schools, and playgrounds. Air

pollution sources of concern include freeways, rail yards, ports, refineries, distribution centers, chrome plating facilities, dry cleaners, and large gasoline service stations. Key recommendations in the Handbook relative to the Planning Area include taking steps to consider or avoid siting new, sensitive land uses:

- Within 500 feet of a freeway, urban roads with 100,000 vehicles/day, or rural roads with 50,000 vehicles/day;
- Within 300 feet of gasoline fueling stations; or
- Within 300 feet of dry cleaning operations (dry cleaning with TACs is being phased out and will be prohibited in 2023). The SCAQMD (Regulation 14, Rule 21) has established emission controls for the use of perchloroethylene, the most common dry-cleaning solvent.

CARB prepared a technical supplement to the Handbook, a *Technical Advisory on Strategies to Reduce Air Pollution Exposure Near High Volume Roadways* (CARB 2017), that provides recommendations for strategies to minimize exposure of the public to air pollutants due to proximity to high volume roadways.

Air Toxics "Hot Spots" Program

State requirements specifically address emissions of air toxics through Assembly Bill (AB) 1807 (known as the Tanner Bill) that established the State Air Toxics "Hot Spots" Program and the Air Toxics Hot Spots Information and Assessment Act of 1987 (AB 2588) (California Health and Safety Code Section 44300 et seq.). Under the Air Toxics Hot Spots Information and Assessment Act of 1987 (or Air Toxics "Hot Spots" Act) and Air Toxics Hot Spots Program, the State (CARB) must collect data on toxic emissions from stationary sources (facilities) throughout the State and ascertain potential health risks that these emissions pose to members of community for developing cancer or for resulting in non-cancer health effects. California's Children's Environmental Health Protection Act of 1999 (California Health and Safety Code Section 39606), also requires explicit consideration of infants and children in assessing risks from air toxics. Substances regulated under California's Air Toxics Hot Spots Program are defined in statute and include a list of substances developed by the following sources:

- International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC);
- U.S. EPA;
- U.S. National Toxicology Program (NTP);
- CARB Toxic Air Contaminant Identification Program List;
- Hazard Evaluation System and Information Service (HESIS) (State of California);
- Proposition 65 (Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986) list of carcinogens and reproductive toxicants (State of California); and,
- Any additional substance recognized by the State Board as presenting a chronic or acute threat to public health when present in the ambient air.

California Building Industry Association v. Bay Area Air Quality Management District (2015)

The California Supreme Court in *California Building Industry Association v. Bay Area Air Quality Management District*, 62 Cal.4th 369 (2015) ruled that CEQA review is focused on a project's

impact on the environment "and not the environment's impact on the project." The opinion also holds that when a project has "potentially significant exacerbating effects on existing environmental hazards" those impacts are properly within the scope of CEQA because they can be viewed as impacts of the project on "existing conditions" rather than impacts of the environment on the project. The Supreme Court provided the example of a project that threatens to disperse existing buried environmental contaminants that would otherwise remain undisturbed. The Court concluded that it is proper under CEQA to undertake an analysis of the dispersal of existing contaminants because such an analysis would be focused on how the project "would worsen existing conditions." The court also found that the limited number of express CEQA provisions that require analysis of the impacts of the existing environment on a project – such as impacts associated with school siting and airports – should be viewed as specific statutory exceptions to the general rule that such impacts are not properly within CEQA's scope.

Sierra Club v. County of Fresno (2018)

In another recent Supreme Court Ruling – *Sierra Club v. County of Fresno,* 6 Cal. 5th 502 (2018) – the Supreme Court held that CEQA requires a Lead Agency to make a reasonable effort to provide an appropriate, project-specific context and connection between mass pollutant emissions estimates (i.e., pounds per day or tons per year) and the potential health impacts associated with such emissions estimates, or to explain what is and is not yet known about the Specific Plan's "bare" emissions numbers and their potential adverse health impacts.

Regional

Southern California Association of Governments

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is a Joint Powers Authority under California law, established as an association of local governments and agencies that voluntarily convene as a forum to address regional issues. SCAG encompasses the counties of Los Angeles, Orange, Ventura, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Imperial. SCAG is designated as a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and as a Regional Transportation Planning Agency. Under SB 375, SCAG, as a designated MPO, is required to prepare a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) as an integral part of its Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). RTP/SCS documents are long-range visioning plans that balance future mobility and housing needs with economic, environmental, and public health goals. SCAG's current adopted RTP/SCS, Connect SoCal 2024, was adopted in April 2024. However, the Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) is based on the land use, transportation components, and growth assumptions of Connect SoCal 2020, SCAG's 2020 RTP/SCS. The AQMP also utilizes the 2020 RTP/SCS data for preparation of air quality forecasts and consistency analyses. See Section 4.8, Greenhouse Gases, for a discussion of Connect SoCal.

SCAQMD Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP)

The SCAQMD is required to prepare an overall plan for air quality improvement, known as an AQMP. The purpose of an AQMP is to bring the basin into compliance with federal and State air quality standards. The SCAQMD 2022 AQMP was adopted on December 2, 2022. The AQMP provides new and revised demonstrations for how the SCAQMD, in coordination with federal, State, regional, and local governments will bring the Basin back into attainment for the following NAAQS: 2008 8-hour ozone; 2012 annual PM2.5; 2006 24-hour PM2.5; 1997 8-hour ozone; and 1997 1-hour ozone. To achieve the reductions necessary to bring ambient air quality back into attainment, the SCAQMD has identified seven primary objectives for the AQMP, which include:

1. Eliminating reliance on unknown future technology measures to demonstrate future attainment of air quality standards;
2. Calculating and accounting for co-benefits associated with measures identified in other, approved planning efforts (e.g., SCAG RTP/SCS);
3. Developing a strategy with fair-share emission reductions at the federal, State, and local levels;
4. Investing in strategies and technologies that meet multiple objectives regarding air quality, climate change, air toxic exposure, energy, and transportation—especially in disadvantaged communities;
5. Seeking, identifying, and securing significant sources of funding for incentives to implement early deployment and commercialization of zero and near-zero technologies, particularly in the mobile source sector;
6. Enhancing the socio-economic analysis and selecting the most efficient and cost-effective path to achieve multi-pollutant and -deadline targets; and
7. Prioritize non-regulatory, innovative approaches that can contribute to the economic vitality of the region while maximizing emission reductions.

The emission forecasts and demonstrations presented in the 2022 AMQP rely heavily on information contained in other planning and strategy documents. For example, the 2022 AQMP's long-term emissions inventory is based on the growth and land use projections contained in the SCAG's 2020 RTP/SCS. Additionally, the conclusions relating to ozone compliance are based on implementation of measures presented in CARB's Mobile Source Strategy and State Implementation Plan (SIP) strategy. The Mobile Source Strategy outlines a suite of measures targeted at on-road light- and heavy-duty vehicles, off-road equipment, and federal and international sources. A subset of the statewide strategy is a mobile source strategy for the South Coast SIP. Because the SCAQMD has limited authority in regulating mobile source emissions, coordination and cooperation between SCAQMD, CARB, and the U.S. EPA is imperative to meeting the NOx reductions required to meet ozone standards. Although not incorporated specifically from another planning document strategy, the 2022 AQMP also provides numerous control measures for stationary sources (SCAQMD, 2022).

<u>SCAQMD Rules and Regulations</u>

The SCAQMD adopts rules that establish permissible air pollutant emissions and governs a variety of business, processes, operations, and products to implement the AQMP and the various federal and State air quality requirements. In general, rules that would be applicable to the GPU could include:

- **Rule 401 (Visible Emissions)** prohibits discharge into the atmosphere from any single source of emission for any contaminant for a period or periods aggregating more than three minutes in any one hour that is as dark or darker in shade than that designated as No. 1 on the Ringelmann Chart, as published by the U.S. Bureau of Mines.
- **Rule 402 (Nuisance)** prohibits discharges of air contaminants or other material which cause injury, detriment, nuisance, or annoyance to any considerable number of persons or the public, or which cause, or have a natural tendency to cause, injury or damage to business or property.

- **Rule 403 (Fugitive Dust)** prohibits emissions of fugitive dust from any grading activity, storage pile, or other disturbed surface area if it crosses the project property line or if emissions caused by vehicle movement cause substantial impairment of visibility (defined as exceeding 20 percent capacity in the air). Rule 403 requires the implementation of Best Available Control Measures and includes additional provisions for projects disturbing more than five acres and those disturbing more than fifty acres.
- **Rule 445 (Wood Burning Devices)** prohibits installation of woodburning devices such as fireplaces and wood-burning stoves in new development unless the development is located at an elevation above 3,000 feet or if existing infrastructure for natural gas service is not available within 150 feet of the development.
- **Rule 481 (Spray Coating Operations)** imposes equipment and operational restrictions during construction for all spray painting and spray coating operations.
- **Rule 1108 (Cutback Asphalt)** prohibits the sale or use of any cutback asphalt containing more than 0.5 percent by volume organic compounds (VOC) which evaporate at 260°C (500°F) or lower.
- **Rule 1113 (Architectural Coatings)** establishes maximum concentrations of VOCs in paints and other applications and establishes the thresholds for low-VOC coatings.
- **Rule 1143 (Consumer Paint Thinners and Multi-Purpose Solvents)** prohibits the supply, sale, manufacture, blend, package or repackage of any consumer paint thinner or multi-purpose solvent for use in the District unless consumer paint thinners or other multi-purpose solvents comply with applicable VOC content limits.
- **Rule 1403 (Asbestos Emissions from Demolition/Renovation Activities)** specifies work practice requirements to limit asbestos emissions from building demolitions and renovation activities, including the removal and associated disturbance of asbestos-containing materials. The requirements for demolition and renovation activities include asbestos surveying, notification, asbestos-containing materials removal procedures and time schedules, asbestos-containing materials handling and clean-up procedures, and storage, disposal, and land filling requirements for asbestos-containing waste materials.
- **Rule 2202 (On-Road Motor Vehicle Mitigation Options)** provides employers with options to reduce mobile source emissions generated from employee commutes. The rule applies to any employer who employs 250 or more employees on a full or part-time basis at a worksite for a consecutive six-month period.

Local

<u>City of Paramount General Plan</u>

The City of Paramount General Plan adopted in 2007 and incrementally revised most recently in 2025 includes the following policies related to air quality:

Environmental Justice Element

Goal EJ-1: Reduce exposure to air pollution and hazardous materials.

Policy EJ-1.1: Designate acceptable and unacceptable areas for freight trucking and diesel truck idling to limit impacts on residential neighborhoods overburdened by air

pollution. Require businesses to install signs prohibiting idling. Promote contact information of regulatory agency for reporting violations.

Policy EJ-1.2: Reduce pollution exposure in residential neighborhoods by limiting industrial operations that generate potentially hazardous air pollutants.

Policy EJ-1.3: Consult with [CARB] and the [SCAQMD] to ensure the appropriate monitoring and enforcement of mobile and stationary source emissions and to receive aid and assistance in reducing exposures to harmful air pollutants.

Policy EJ-1.4: Coordinate with the [SCAQMD] to explore ways to initiate data collection efforts for a community emissions reduction and/or community air quality monitoring plan, including the identification of: information needed (new or updated), potential data sources and the resources needed, and strategies to engage residents and businesses.

Goal EJ-2: Improve physical conditions of residential areas adjacent to pollutions sources

Policy EJ-2.1: Mitigate impacts on residential neighborhoods immediately adjacent to industrial areas by utilizing tree and green buffers, sound walls, and similar strategies.

Policy EJ-2.2: Require new residential development and encourage established residential units to include building design features, equipment, and/or site planning measures to protect occupants from air pollution.

Policy EJ-2.3: Assist residents in retrofitting their homes to be more energy efficient, weatherproofed, and better protected from air and noise pollution.

Policy EJ-2.4: Develop a proactive process that allows the City to quickly connect with City departments and regional agencies in order to promptly respond to community complaints concerning odors, emissions, noise, and vibration from industrial businesses.

Policy EJ-2.5: Develop community programs to improve public awareness of State, regional and local agencies, and resources to assist with air quality and other environmental quality concerns.

Policy EJ-2.6: Consult with World Energy Paramount for development of a community education campaign about the use of biodiesel at the former Paramount Petroleum Refinery.

Goal EJ-5: Prioritize community needs.

Policy EJ-5.1: Prioritize pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements along major corridors, focusing on the following roadways: Rosecrans Avenue, Paramount Boulevard, Downey Avenue, Somerset Boulevard, and Alondra Boulevard.

Resource Management Element

Policy RM-4: The City of Paramount will require new larger residential developments to provide sufficient open space (including pedestrian and bicycle linkages) to meet the local need.

Policy RM-15: The City of Paramount will seek to establish a comprehensive bikeway and pedestrian trail system for the City.

4.3.3 – SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLDS

The methodology used to evaluate potential environmental impacts is described in Section 4.0. As identified in Appendix G of the Guidelines for Implementation of CEQA, the Specific Plan Update has the potential to result in significant impacts if it would:

A. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?
B. Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?
C. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?
D. Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?
E. Would the project cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to air quality?

Consistent with the guidance contained in Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, this EIR relies upon SCAQMD-recommended methods and pollutant thresholds to evaluate whether the proposed Project would conflict with or obstruct implementation of an applicable air quality plan, result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria air pollutant for which the South Coast Air Basin is designated nonattainment, expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations, or result in other emissions adversely affecting a substantial number of people.

Regional Significance Thresholds

The SCAQMD's recommended regional mass daily thresholds of significance for criteria air pollutants are shown Table 4.3-5.

Table 4.3-5
SCAQMD-Recommended Regional Significance Thresholds

Air Contaminant	Construction (Maximum Pounds Per Day)	Operation (Maximum Pounds Per Day)
NO_X	100	55
VOC/ROG	75	55
PM_{10}	150	150
$PM_{2.5}$	55	55
SO_X	150	150
CO	550	550
Lead	3	3
Source: SCAQMD 2023b		

Localized Significance Thresholds

In addition to establishing thresholds of significance for emissions of criteria air pollutants on a regional level, the SCAQMD has also developed Local Significance Thresholds (LSTs) that represent the maximum emissions from a project that are not expected to cause or contribute to an exceedance of the most stringent applicable Federal or State ambient air quality standards, which would result in significant adverse localized air quality impacts. The LST methodology takes into account a number of factors, including (1) existing ambient air quality in each Source Receptor Area (SRA); (2) how many acres the project would disturb in a day; and (3) how far project construction and operational activities would take place from the nearest sensitive receptor. Unlike the regional emission significance thresholds presented in Table 4.3-5, LSTs have only been developed for NOx, CO, PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$.

The construction and operational LSTs for one-acre, two-acre, and five-acre sites in SRA 5 (Southeast Los Angeles County), the SRA in which the City of Paramount is located, are shown in Table 4.3-6 below.

Table 4.3-6
SCAQMD Localized Significance Thresholds for Source Receptor Area 5

Pollutant	Maximum Allowable Emissions (Pounds per Day) as a Function of Receptor Distance (in Feet) from Site Boundary				
	82 Feet	164 Feet	328 Feet	656 Feet	1,640 Feet
ONE-ACRE SITE					
Construction Thresholds					
Nitrogen Oxides (NO_x)	80	81	94	123	192
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	571	735	1,088	2,104	6,854
Particulate Matter (PM_{10})	4	13	30	66	173
Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$)	3	4	8	19	86
Operational Thresholds					
Nitrogen Oxides (NO_x)	80	81	94	123	192
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	571	735	1,088	2,104	6,854
Particulate Matter (PM_{10})	1	3	8	16	42
Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$)	1	1	2	5	21
TWO-ACRE SITE					
Construction Thresholds					
Nitrogen Oxides (NO_x)	114	111	121	145	205
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	861	1,082	1,496	2,625	7,500
Particulate Matter (PM_{10})	7	21	39	74	182
Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$)	4	6	10	22	92
Operational Thresholds					
Nitrogen Oxides (NO_x)	114	111	121	145	205
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	861	1,082	1,496	2,625	7,500
Particulate Matter (PM_{10})	2	5	10	18	44
Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$)	1	2	3	6	22
FIVE-ACRE SITE					
Construction Thresholds					
Nitrogen Oxides (NO_x)	172	165	176	194	224

Carbon Monoxide (CO)	1,480	1,855	2,437	3,867	9,312
Particulate Matter (PM_{10})	14	42	60	95	203
Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$)	7	10	15	30	103
Operational Thresholds					
Nitrogen Oxides (NO_x)	172	165	176	194	224
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	1,480	1,855	2,437	3,867	9,312
Particulate Matter (PM_{10})	4	10	15	23	49
Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$)	2	3	4	8	25

Source: SCAQMD 2009, modified by MIG
Note: The localized thresholds for NOx in this table account for the conversion of NO to NO_2. The emission thresholds are based on NO_2 levels, as this is the compound associated with adverse health effects.

Carbon Monoxide "Hot Spots" Thresholds

The SCAQMD does not have a methodology for screening CO hotspots. However, the SCAQMD performed CO modeling as part of its 2003 AQMP at four busy intersections during morning and evening peak hour periods. The busiest intersection studied in the analysis, Wilshire Boulevard and Veteran Avenue, had 8,062 vehicles per hour during morning peak hours, 7,719 vehicles per hour during evening peak hours, and approximately 100,000 vehicles per day. The 2003 AQMP estimated that the 1-hour CO concentration for this intersection was 4.6 ppm, which is less than a fourth of the 1-hour CAAQS CO standard (20 ppm) (SCAQMD, 2003a). For purposes of this Report, the proposed Project would have the potential for a CO hotspot if it would exceed the peak hour traffic volumes modeled by the SCAQMD in its 2003 AQMP (8,000 vehicles per hour, thereby having the potential to result in CO concentrations that exceed 1-hour State [20 ppm], 1-hour Federal [35 ppm], and/or State and Federal 8-hour [9 ppm] ambient air quality standards for CO.

Toxic Air Contaminant Thresholds

The SCAQMD recommends preparation of a Health Risk Assessment (HRA) for large commercial or industrial projects to determine the specific health risks posed by long-term emissions of TACs from a project. Following OEHHA and SCAQMD guidance, health risks from TAC emissions are estimated based on "Individual Cancer Risk," which is the likelihood that a person exposed to TACs over 70-year lifetime will get cancer or suffer some other "non-cancer" effect (measured by what is called as a "hazard index"). Numerous weighting factors (e.g., age sensitivity factors, breathing rates, etc.) are applied during health risk calculations to account for those members of the public who may be more sensitive to pollution than others (e.g., sensitive receptors). A project is considered to have a significant impact if it results in any of the following:

- A maximum incremental cancer risk greater than or equal to 10 in one million;
- A population-wide cancer burden greater than 0.5 (in areas where cancer risk is greater than or equal to one in a million); or
- A chronic or acute hazard index greater than or equal to 1.0.

Consistent with recent court rulings, the impact discussion presented below focuses on the proposed Specific Plan's effect on air quality and existing health risks, rather than the effect of existing air quality and its potential risks on the proposed Specific Plan's residents. The analysis evaluates whether the proposed Specific Plan would create or exacerbate adverse public health risk conditions at sensitive receptor locations, as identified in the SCAQMD's CEQA significance criteria.

4.3.4 – IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

This section describes potential impacts related to conflicts with an applicable air quality plan, cumulatively considerable net increases of criteria pollutants for which the region is in nonattainment, exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations, and objectionable odors, which could result from the implementation of the project, and recommends mitigation measures as needed to reduce significant impacts.

Conflicts with Local Air Quality Plan

Impact AQ-1 – Would the Specific Plan conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?

Analysis of Impacts

As described in Section 4.3.1, the proposed Specific Plan is within the South Coast Air Basin, which is under the jurisdiction of the SCAQMD. Pursuant to the methodology provided in Chapter 12 of the SCAQMD *CEQA Air Quality Handbook*, consistency with the AQMP is affirmed if the project:

1) Is consistent with the growth assumptions of the AQMP; and
2) Does not increase the frequency or severity of an air quality standards violation, or cause a new one.

Consistency Criterion 1 refers to the growth forecasts and associated assumptions included in the 2022 AQMP. Projects that are inconsistent with the AQMP growth assumptions would interfere with attainment of air quality standards because this growth would exceed the growth included in the projections used to formulate the AQMP. Therefore, if the growth under the proposed Specific Plan is consistent with the regional population, housing, and employment forecasts identified by SCAG in the RTP/SCS, plan implementation would be consistent with the AQMP, even if emissions could potentially exceed the SCAQMD's recommended daily emissions thresholds.

The proposed Specific Plan includes land use designations that support development of 2,000 dwelling units, accommodating a total population increase of 4,643 residents by 2045 (the existing land use designations do not include any residential uses and thus do not support any residential population). In addition, employment within the Planning Area would increase from 1,621 to 1,759 employees (i.e., 138 more employees).

The 2020 RTP/SCS population and employment projections for the City of Paramount, as well as the increase in population and employment that would occur under the proposed Specific Plan, are shown in Table 4.3-7.

Table 4.3-7
RTP/SCS and Specific Plan Population, Dwelling Units, and Employment Projections

Scenario	Population Growth	Dwelling Units Growth(A)	Employment Growth
Growth in Planning Area	4,643	2,000	138
RTP/SCS Growth 2016 – 2045	1,600(B)	400 (B)	1,600(B)
Within Growth Assumptions?	No	No	Yes

Source: SCAG 2020

(A) The RTP/SCS dwelling unit data includes only occupied dwelling units, while the Specific Plan dwelling unit data includes both occupied and unoccupied dwelling units. If unoccupied dwelling units were included in the RTP/SCS data for a direct comparison with the Specific Plan data, there would be an increase in dwelling units from the RTP/SCS growth assumptions. However, this would be a slight increase in line with the City of Paramount's 3.6% vacancy rate (SCAG 2021), which would not change the conclusions of the table that the growth in dwelling units from the Specific Plan exceeds the growth anticipated in the RTP/SCS.

(B) The SCAG 2020 RTP/SCS, which formulates the growth projections on which the 2022 AQMP are based, estimated that Paramount would increase population from 55,900 to 57,500, an increase of 1,600 residents between 2016 and 2045, and a growth rate of approximately 55 residents per year. The 2020 RTP/SCS also estimated the City would increase the number of households from 14,100 in 2016 to 14,500 in 2045, an increase of 400 households, and a growth rate of approximately 14 households per year. Additionally, the 2020 RTP/SCS estimated employment would increase from 21,400 in 2016 to 23,000 in 2045, an increase of 1,600 employees, and a growth rate of approximately 55 employees per year.

As shown in Table 4.3-7, the anticipated growth under the proposed Specific Plan would exceed SCAG's growth potential by almost three times the population and by approximately five times the dwelling units accounted for by the 2020 RTP/SCS while falling within the accounted employment growth. Therefore, from a population and housing growth standpoint, the proposed Specific Plan would be inconsistent with the AQMP.

Consistency Criterion 2 refers to the California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) and National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). Please refer to Section 4.3.1 for a description of the State and federal ambient air quality standards (CAAQS and NAAQS, respectively), and the Basin's attainment status. As described in Section 4.3.1, the Basin is designated nonattainment for national and State O_3, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$ standards. The analyses of potential emissions under Impact AQ-2 indicates the Specific Plan could result in significant emissions during construction activities. Some of these pollutants, such as NOx and ROG, are ozone precursor pollutants, and the region is designated non-attainment for ozone. The analysis contained under Impact AQ-2 also indicates the unmitigated operational ROG emissions (precursor emissions to O_3) associated with the proposed Specific Plan would exceed the SCAQMD-recommended CEQA thresholds of significance, which have been designed to bring the region into attainment for CAAQS and NAAQS.

Implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would result in population and housing growth that is in excess of that accounted for in the 2022 AQMP, while employment would be below that accounted for in the AQMP. The analysis conducted under Impact AQ-2 demonstrates that the unmitigated net change in operational emissions between existing land uses in 2045 and those proposed by the Specific Plan would exceed the SCAQMD's operational ROG CEQA thresholds of significance. Construction activities would also have the potential to exceed SCAQMD-recommended thresholds of significance. The SCAQMD, in developing its CEQA significance thresholds, considered the emission levels at which a project's individual emissions would be cumulatively considerable (SCAQMD, 2003b; page D-3). Even though the mass amount of emissions attributable to a single project (i.e., pounds per day) does not necessarily contribute to air pollution levels measured throughout the Basin and in or near the City, the SCAQMD considers

projects that result in emissions that exceed its CEQA significance thresholds to result in individual impacts that are cumulatively considerable and significant. Since the proposed Specific Plan could result in construction and operational emissions that exceed SCAQMD regional CEQA thresholds, the proposed Specific Plan could increase the frequency and/or severity of air quality violations in the Basin or otherwise impede attainment of air quality standards, particularly national and State ozone standards. This is considered a potentially significant impact.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Potentially significant.

Mitigation Measures

See Mitigation Measures AQ-1, AQ-2, and Tran-1

Level of Significance After Mitigation

The growth that could occur under the Specific Plan by 2040 would be inconsistent with the 2020 RTP/SCS growth forecast. As discussed under Impact AQ-2, the project would implement Mitigation Measure AQ-1, which would require the preparation of a project-specific air quality study prior to future development activities and mitigation incorporated into the project if emissions are shown to be above SCAQMD-recommended CEQA significance thresholds. Nonetheless, because it cannot be definitively known or stated at this time that construction emissions would be able to be mitigated such that all criteria air pollutant emissions would be below SCAQMD-recommended thresholds of significance, implementation of the proposed Specific Plan could still increase the frequency and/or severity of air quality violations in the Basin or otherwise impede attainment of air quality standards in the Basin. Furthermore, operational ROG emissions would continue to exceed SCAQMD thresholds, even after the incorporation of Mitigation Measures AQ-2 and Mitigation Measure Tran-1. For these reasons, the proposed Specific Plan would be inconsistent with the AQMP. This impact would be ***significant and unavoidable***.

Cumulatively Considerable Net Increase of Criteria Air Pollutants

Impact AQ-2 – Would the Specific Plan result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?

Analysis of Impacts

The proposed Specific Plan sets forth the City's vision for the types of development that would occur over the next approximately 20 years. The Specific Plan's proposed land use designations permit higher development intensity within the Planning Area boundaries than compared to existing conditions. Criteria air pollutants and other emissions would result from construction activities, and from the operation of residences, businesses, and other land uses within the Planning Area.

The Specific Plan implementation would generate short-term construction and long-term operational emissions of regulated air pollutants (i.e., criteria air pollutants and TACs). These emissions would be released to the ambient air and disperse according to the topographic and meteorological influences that prevail near the Planning Area and in the greater Basin (see Section 4.3.1). The SCAQMD maintains regional significance thresholds to assess how individual

projects may affect air quality on a regional scale. The potential for construction and operational emissions associated with implementation of the Specific Plan to impact air quality is discussed below.

Construction Emissions. The proposed Specific Plan would not directly result in construction of any development or infrastructure; however, future development supported by the Specific Plan would result in short-term construction-related criteria pollutant emissions that have the potential to have an adverse effect on air quality. Short-term criteria air pollutant emissions would occur during demolition, site preparation, grading, building construction, paving, and architectural coating activities associated with specific, new development projects. Emissions would occur from the use of equipment, worker, vendor and hauling trips, and disturbance of onsite soils (fugitive dust). ROG and NO_X emissions are primarily associated with gas and diesel equipment exhaust and the application of architectural coatings. Fugitive dust emissions (PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$) are primarily associated with site preparation and vary depending on factors such as soil silt content, soil moisture, wind speed, acreage of disturbance area, and VMT by construction vehicles on- and off-site. Typical pieces of construction equipment associated with development and redevelopment projects include, but are not limited to, bulldozers, graders, excavators, loaders, and trucks.

Future development activities would generally entail demolition, site preparation, grading, building construction, paving, and painting. Many new projects would require the demolition of existing structures (e.g., industrial/logistics uses and retail uses). Fugitive dust (PM_{10}) emissions would typically be greatest during building demolition, site preparation, and grading due to the disturbance of soils and transport of material. NO_X emissions would also result from the combustion of diesel fuels used to power off-road heavy-duty pieces of equipment (e.g., backhoes, bulldozers, excavators, etc.). ROG emissions would generally be greatest during architectural coating activities. The types and quantity of equipment, as well as duration of construction activities, would be dependent on project-specific conditions. Larger projects would require more equipment over a longer timeframe than smaller ones.

It is possible that either no construction could be occurring within the Planning Area at any given time, or multiple projects could be occurring simultaneously. Despite these unknowns, it is plausible that one or more projects developed under implementation of the proposed Specific Plan could have the potential to exceed one or more of the SCAQMD's construction criteria air pollutant threshold of significance (e.g., NOx for a project involving a substantial amount of earthwork during grading, ROG during architectural coating activities, etc.). Therefore, this impact is potentially significant and requires mitigation.

Operational Emissions. If adopted, the proposed Specific Plan would accommodate new residential and non-residential land uses, some of which would involve replacing existing development, including a substantial portion of the swap meet space. Overall, project implementation would increase residential dwelling units and non-residential building square feet while decreasing the swap meet vendor space square footage in the Planning Area under year 2045 growth conditions.

Growth under the Specific Plan would result in long-term regional emissions of criteria air pollutants associated with the operation of area sources, energy sources, and mobile sources. Area source emissions, which are widely distributed and made of many small emissions sources (e.g., landscaping equipment, consumer products, painting operations, etc.), were modeled according to the size and type of land uses proposed. Energy sources, which include natural gas combustion for heating and other purposes, were also modeled based on the size and type of

land uses included in the Specific Plan. Mobile-source emissions were modeled based on the daily vehicle trips that would result from the proposed Specific Plan. The net change in emissions of regulated air pollutants that would occur with implementation of the Specific Plan was modeled using CalEEMod, V. 2022.1.1.29. The net change in operational emissions for the Specific Plan was modeled based on the Specific Plan's proposed land use changes, using default data assumptions provided by CalEEMod, with the following project-specific modifications:

- **Land Use Development:** The default acreage and square footage for proposed development intensities within the Planning Area were adjusted to reflect proposed development conditions (see Chapter 3, Project Description, Table 3-2 and Table 3-3).

- **Area Sources:** Woodstoves and hearths were excluded from new development pursuant to SCAQMD Rule 445. Landscape equipment usage was adjusted to reflect an assumption of landscaping operations one day per week for all summer days.

- **Mobile Sources:**

    - **Trip Generation:** The default weekday and weekend trip generation rates for condo/townhouse, apartments mid-rise, regional shopping center, and research and development were adjusted based on the Clearwater East Specific Plan Update Transportation Impact Analysis (TIA) prepared for the Specific Plan by Ganddini. Trip generation rates for the swap meet land use was adjusted based on the number of visitors per year and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) data for mode split in the City of Paramount.

    - **Trip Type:** The CalEEMod default primary, diverted, and pass-by trip percentages were modified so that internal capture, as estimated by the TIA, was modeled as pass-by trips, and the remaining trips were modeled as primary trips.

- **Transportation Measures[iii]:**

    - **Increase Residential Density** to 40 dwelling units per acre as a probable average to reflect the density of zones that have residential development within the Planning Area (see Section 3.3 Project Characteristics).

    - **Provide Transit-Oriented Development:**[iv] The mode share was modified with 2017 NHTS data for the City of Paramount.

The net change in long-term operational emissions that would be generated by Specific Plan growth is shown in Table 4.3-8. As explained in Section 4.3.1, under the "Existing Emissions Levels in the Planning Area" discussion, the net change in emissions evaluated in this EIR is based on the difference between the existing land uses under future year 2045 conditions and the proposed Specific Plan land uses under 2045 growth conditions.

iii To account for the Specific Plan development's density and proximity to transit, mitigation measures were applied in CalEEMod. This reflects the unmitigated project characteristics and is not a mitigation action.

iv The Specific Plan would facilitate transit-oriented development due to its proximity to the planned and approved light rail adjacent to of the Planning Area. The light rail is set to be operational by 2035.

Table 4.3-8
2045 Project Growth Forecast Operational Emissions (Unmitigated)

Emissions Scenario	Maximum Daily Pollutant Emissions (Pounds per Day)[(A)]					
	ROG	NO_X	CO	SO_2	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
Project Growth Forecast Operational Emissions in Year 2045 (Specific Plan)						
Area Sources	70.9	29.9	20.4	0.2	2.4	2.4
Energy Sources	0.7	12.6	8.0	0.1	1.0	1.0
Mobile Source	38.8	22.7	331.3	0.9	104.0	26.6
Total[(B)]	*110.4*	*65.2*	*359.7*	*1.2*	*107.4*	*30.0*
Existing Land Uses Year 2045 Condition[(C)]						
Area Sources	4.9	0.1	6.6	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1
Energy Sources	0.1	1.0	0.9	<0.1	0.1	0.1
Mobile Source	28.8	18.2	255.8	0.7	85.4	21.8
Total[(B)]	*33.8*	*19.3*	*263.2*	*0.7*	*85.4*	*21.9*
Net Change in Emissions Levels						
Area Sources	66.0	29.8	13.8	0.2	2.4	2.4
Energy Sources	0.6	11.6	7.1	0.1	0.9	0.9
Mobile Source	10.0	4.5	75.5	0.2	18.6	4.8
Total[(B)]	***76.6***	***45.9***	***96.5***	***0.5***	***22.0***	***8.1***
SCAQMD CEQA Threshold	**55**	**55**	**550**	**150**	**150**	**55**
Threshold Exceeded?	**Yes**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**

Source: MIG, 2025 (see Appendix D) and SCAQMD 2023b.
(A) Emissions estimated using CalEEMod, V 2022.1.1.29. Estimates are based on default model assumptions unless otherwise noted in this document. Maximum daily ROG and CO emissions occur during the summer. Maximum daily NOx, emissions occur during the winter. Maximum daily SOx, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$ emissions were approximately the same during summer and winter.
(B) Totals may not equal due to rounding.
(C) See Table 4.3-3.

As shown in Table 4.3-8, maximum daily operational emissions associated with potential 2045 growth under the Specific Plan do not exceed the SCAQMD's recommended regional pollutant thresholds for all pollutants except ROG. The increase in ROG is primarily attributable to the increase in area sources (e.g., consumer products) and VMT that would occur with implementation of the Specific Plan, with area sources and mobile sources accounting for approximately 99% of the net ROG emissions.[v]

Whereas the increases in mobile source emissions are directly attributable to increases in VMT (associated with more people living and working within the Planning Area), the increases in area sources would be due to a combination of factors, including increased use of consumer products (e.g., cleaning supplies), reapplication of architectural coatings, emissions from natural gas hearths, and landscaping equipment. While these factors all contribute to ROG emissions, the main sources of the increased area source emissions are consumer products and architectural coatings, which account for approximately 88% and 8%, respectively, of the increase in ROG area source emissions.

As described in Section 4.3.1, the South Coast Air Basin is designated nonattainment for national and State ozone standards, and ROG is an ozone precursor pollutant. The exceedances of

[v] Approximately 66 of the 77 pounds per day increase in ROG emission, or approximately 86% of the increase, was due to area source emissions, while approximately 10 of the 77 pounds per day increase in ROG emissions, or approximately 13% of the increase, was due to mobile source emissions.

SCAQMD operational thresholds for ROG represent potentially significant impacts that require mitigation.

The City is limited in its capacity to require and regulate future residents and employees in the Planning Area to use consumer products that meet specific ROG/VOC emission standards; however, there are architectural coatings that would reduce the quantity of fugitive ROG emissions associated with operation of the land uses within the Planning Area. Accordingly, the City would implement Mitigation Measure AQ-2, which requires the use of super-compliant paints. Super-Compliant architectural coatings meet a VOC standard well below the regulatory requirements of Rule 1113.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Construction Emissions. As discussed above, construction emissions associated with future development activities facilitated under implementation of the proposed Specific Plan could exceed SCAQMD-recommended CEQA significance thresholds for regional criteria air pollutant emissions. This is considered a potentially significant impact.

Operational Emissions. As shown in Table 4.3-8, the modeled, maximum daily operational emission associated with potential 2045 growth under the Specific Plan would result in ROG emissions that exceed SCAQMD-recommended CEQA significance thresholds. This is considered a potentially significant impact.

Mitigation Measures

AQ-1: **Require a Project-level Construction Assessment for New Development Proposed Under Implementation of the Clearwater Specific Plan.** The City shall require applicants to submit a quantitative project-level construction criteria air pollutant and toxic air contaminant emissions analysis for future development proposed under implementation of the Clearwater Specific Plan. The estimated construction criteria air pollutant and toxic air contaminant emissions shall be compared against the thresholds of significance maintained by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) and, if emissions are shown to be above SCAQMD thresholds, the City shall require the implementation of mitigation to reduce emissions below SCAMQD thresholds or to the maximum extent feasible. Mitigation measures to reduce emissions could include, but are not limited to:

- Requiring equipment to use alternative fuel sources (e.g., electric-powered and liquefied or compressed natural gas), meet cleaner emission standards (e.g., U.S. EPA Tier IV Final emissions standards for equipment greater than 50-horsepower), and/or utilizing added exhaust devices (e.g., Level 3 Diesel Particular Filter);
- Limiting the idling time of diesel-powered construction equipment to two minutes;
- Requiring that all construction equipment, diesel trucks, and generators be equipped with Best Available Control Technology for emission reductions of NOx and PM per SCAQMD BACT Guidelines;
- Requiring all contractors use equipment that meets CARB's most recent certification standard for off-road heavy-duty diesel engines; and

- Application of super-compliant paints to interior and/or exterior surfaces (e.g., paints that meet SCAQMD Rule 1113 "super-compliant" requirements).

AQ-2: **Use Super Compliant VOC Architectural Coatings During Operational Activities.** The City shall require the use architectural coatings that meet the South Coast Air Quality Management District's (SCAQMD) "Super Compliant" VOC standard of 10 grams/liter or less for all interior and exterior primer, sealer, paint, and other coating applications for which a super compliant product is commercially available.

See **Mitigation Measure Tran-1** in Section 4.17.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Construction Emissions. As described in the preceding analysis, there is uncertainty regarding the specific nature of construction activities that would be facilitated under implementation of the proposed Specific Plan. Despite the implementation of Mitigation Measure AQ-1, which requires the preparation of project-specific air quality analysis prior to the construction of any new development and incorporation of mitigation if emissions levels are shown to be above SCAQMD-recommended thresholds of significance, it cannot be definitively known or stated at this time that all future development projects occurring under implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would be able to reduce potential criteria air pollutant emissions to levels that are below SCAQMD thresholds. Therefore, with regard to criteria air pollutant emissions generated during construction activities, this impact would be significant and unavoidable even with the incorporation of feasible mitigation measures.

Operational Emissions. Mitigation Measure Tran-1 would require development proposals under the Specific Plan to prepare a project-specific VMT screening/analysis. This requirement would apply to all development projects within the Planning Area before the completion of the Southeast Gateway Line Paramount/Rosecrans station, and apply only to projects involving APN 6241-016-023 or 6241-016-907 after its completion. Tran-1 has the potential to decrease VMT and associated mobile source emissions from projects. However, the exact VMT reductions are unknown and the mobile source emission reductions cannot be quantified. Therefore, it cannot be definitively known or stated at this time that the implementation of the identified measures would be capable of reducing ROG emissions to levels that are below the SCAQMD-recommended CEQA significance threshold. Therefore, this impact would be significant and unavoidable even with the incorporation of feasible mitigation measures.

Exposure of Sensitive Receptors to Pollutants

Impact AQ-3 – Would the Specific Plan expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

Analysis of Impacts

Growth projected to occur under the Specific Plan could expose existing and new sensitive receptors to substantial concentrations of criteria air pollutants and TAC emissions that pose adverse health effects. The potential for the proposed Specific Plan to expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations is evaluated below.

CO Hotspots. Based on the traffic study (see Appendix G), the Specific Plan would generate 667 net AM peak-hour trips and 799 net PM peak-hour trips, and 11,118 net daily trips[vi] (Ganddini 2025, see Table 5). These trips would be divided among Rosecrans Avenue, Paramount Boulevard, and Somerset Boulevard, and then further divided throughout the City's street network as vehicles travel further. This level of additional traffic on Rosecrans Avenue, Paramount Boulevard, or Somerset Boulevard[vii] is substantially below the screening threshold of 44,000 vehicles per hour or 100,000 vehicles per day for a CO hotspot analysis. Therefore, the Specific Plan would not cause or significantly contribute to CO concentrations that exceed State or Federal ambient air quality standards for CO. This impact would be less than significant.

Construction Emissions. As discussed under Impact AQ-2, future development activities facilitated under implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would generate emissions, including emissions of DPM (a TAC), during construction activities. These emissions would occur intermittently over the approximately 20-year growth period associated with the Specific Plan. Although specific details regarding the timing of project development within the Planning Area is not known at this time, it is possible that one or more projects developed under implementation of the proposed Specific Plan could have the potential to exceed SCAQMD LSTs and thresholds of significance for cancerogenic and non-cancerogenic health risks (see Section 4.3.3). This represents a potentially significant impact.

Operational Emissions. In addition to criteria air pollutant and TAC emissions on a local scale, receptor exposure to elevated concentrations of criteria air pollutants (e.g., CO, O_3, and PM) is capable of causing adverse health effects on heart, lung, and other organ systems. As described under Impact AQ-2, the proposed Specific Plan would generate cumulatively considerable ROG emissions, which is a precursor for O_3 – a pollutant for which the region is designated nonattainment. However, these operational ROG emissions would not expose receptors to substantial operational pollutant concentrations, as described below.

In the amicus brief filed by the SCAQMD on the California Supreme Court's decision in *Sierra Club versus County of Fresno*, the SCAQMD noted that, "[it] takes a large amount of additional precursor emissions [e.g., NOx] to cause a modeled increase in ambient ozone levels… a project emitting only 10 tons per year of NOx or VOC is small enough that its regional impact on ambient ozone levels may not be detected in the regional air quality models used to determine ozone levels…" (SCAQMD 2015). Although implementation of the Specific Plan is anticipated to increase ROG emissions within the Planning Area and greater SCAG region, any analysis linking potential adverse health risks to corresponding pollutant concentrations would be speculative for several reasons.

First, to estimate potential adverse health effects from regional emissions, it is necessary to have information on the sources of the ozone precursor emissions, such as the location of emission points, velocity of emissions, the meteorology and topography of the area, and the location of receptors exposed to the emissions (SCAQMD 2015). While the general nature of the emissions sources occurring with implementation of the proposed Specific Plan is known (i.e., area source, energy source, mobile source), the specific location of these sources within the Planning Area is not known, nor is other information, including source emission rate, exit velocity, operating characteristics (e.g., daytime or nighttime, seasonal or steady-state), etc.

[vi] The 2045 project modeling under CalEEMod used a higher daily trip value of 18,121 trips to take into account the swap meet use. This higher daily trip value would also be below CO screening thresholds.

[vii] Paramount Boulevard and Rosecrans Avenue have a daily average traffic volume of greater or equal to 20,000 vehicles, and Somerset Boulevard has a daily average traffic volume of 10,000 to 20,000 vehicles (Ganddini 2025).

Second, approximately 13 percent of the net ROG emissions estimated to occur under net 2045 growth would be from mobile sources (i.e., vehicle trips) that would potentially travel on numerous local and regional roadways throughout the Planning Area and beyond that would be subject to varying meteorological and topographical influences. These emissions would be subject to small scale air patterns, such as those formed as wind passes between buildings and other anthropogenic features (e.g., cars), creating eddies and other turbulence that affect pollutant transport. Approximately 76 percent of net ROG emissions would be attributable to additional use of consumer products, which would vary in temporal and spatial distribution throughout the Planning Area. Furthermore, these products may be used indoors as well as outdoors – the rate at which they are used, as well as operational characteristics of how they are used (e.g., windows opened or closed) – would affect the rate and manner that they are dispersed in accordance with wind circulation patterns in their vicinity.

Third, as mentioned previously, the SCAQMD has stated (SCAQMD 2015, pgs. 10-11):

> *"For the so-called criteria pollutants, such as ozone, it may be more difficult to quantify health impacts . . . It takes time and the influence of meteorological conditions for these reactions to occur, so ozone may be formed at a distance downwind from the sources . . . Scientifically, health effects from ozone are correlated with increases in the ambient level of ozone in the air a person breathes . . . However, it takes a large amount of additional precursor emissions to cause a modeled increase in ambient ozone levels over an entire region. For example, the SCAQMD's 2012 AQMP* [Air Quality Management Plan] *showed that reducing NOx by 432 tons per day (157,680 tons/year) and reducing VOC by 187 tons per day (68,255 tons/year) would reduce ozone levels at the SCAQMD's monitor site with the highest levels by only 9 parts per billion. SCAQMD staff does not currently know of a way to accurately quantify ozone-related health impacts caused by NO_X or VOC emissions from relatively small projects."*

As noted previously, the total estimated increase in ROG emissions associated with implementation of the Planning Area is estimated to be approximately 77 pounds per day under unmitigated conditions, or approximately 0.02% of the ROG increase identified by the SCAQMD in its amicus brief filed on the California Supreme Court's decision in *Sierra Club versus County of Fresno*. As such, the minor increase in ROG emissions is anticipated to increase O_3 concentrations more likely in the parts per trillion range, rather than the parts per billion range. This is a magnitude of order less than the change identified by the SCAQMD.

Finally, adverse health effects associated with receptor exposure to criteria air pollutant concentrations are cumulative in nature. In other words, any potential health effects associated with Specific Plan operational emissions would also need to be considered in light of background pollutant emissions. As discussed previously in this EIR chapter, there are many efforts being undertaken at the state and regional level to reduce criteria air pollutant emissions from stationary and mobile sources. These actions are anticipated to reduce pollutant concentrations throughout the Planning Area and Basin over the next few decades. Therefore, even if the proposed Specific Plan does increase emissions in and in proximity of the Planning Area, criteria air pollutant concentrations in the region could still be lower in the future than they are currently due to the advancement of cleaner technologies.

As described above, it would be speculative to transform the mass increase in ROG emissions that could occur with implementation of the proposed Specific Plan into quantifiable health risks for several specific reasons, including the uncertain location of emission points, velocity of emissions, the meteorology and topography of the area (which could affect the transport rate and

photochemical reactions needed to produce ozone), and background criteria air pollutant emissions in the future. However, given that the Specific Plan's operational ROG emissions are far less than that modeled by the SCAQMD for its 2012 AQMP, which showed a relatively minor increase in criteria air pollutant concentrations for a large amount of mass emissions, operational ROG emissions associated with implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would not result in emissions that would expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. This impact would be less than significant.

Additional Information on Existing Sources of Pollutants. Per the recent ruling by the California Supreme Court in *California Building Industry Association v. Bay Area Air Quality Management District*, 62 Cal.4th 369 (2015), projects are not required to analyze how existing conditions might impact a project's future users or residents. As such, this analysis does not focus on potential, future receptor exposure to existing emissions from existing sources of pollutants in and near the Planning Area. Rather, it focuses on the incremental increase in pollutant concentrations and associated impacts (including adverse health impacts) that could occur if existing operations were to change as a result of the Specific Plan.

The proposed Specific Plan generally focuses on redeveloping nonresidential uses and adding new residential development in the Planning Area. As shown in Table 3-2 and Table 3-3 of the Project Description, full buildout of the proposed Specific Plan would increase the amount of residential and non-residential building space in the Planning Area, with most of potential non-residential building space coming from 800,000 square feet of neo-industrial (light industrial and research and development) space. However, policies in the General Plan (see Section 4.3.2) would reduce residential exposure to air pollution (e.g., EJ-1.1, EJ-2.1, EJ-2.2). Additionally, the proposed Specific Plan includes growth in the form of mixed-use development. These forms of development generally do not include major sources of operational criteria air pollutant emissions (e.g., stationary sources associated with industrial developments) due to land-use conflicts with residential dwelling units on top of and in the immediate proximity of the non-residential land uses associated with the mixed-use development. The Specific Plan would also increase residential growth that is not in a mixed-use zone (e.g., townhomes in a Town Residential zone). These residences do not directly neighbor the Specific Plan's neo-industrial zone, creating distance for potential pollutants to disperse. This impact would be less than significant.

Additional Information on Existing Sources of Pollutants. To prevent exposure to significant sources of TAC emissions, CARB's *Air Quality and Land Use Handbook* recommends avoiding the siting of new sensitive land uses (e.g., residences, schools, etc.) within:

- 300 feet of large gasoline fueling stations (with a throughput of more than 3.6 million gallons of gasoline per year);
- Within 300 feet of dry cleaning operations;
- Within 500 feet of freeways, urban roads with 100,000 vehicles/day, or rural roads with 50,000 vehicles/day; and
- Within 1,000 feet of a major rail service or maintenance yard.

A review of the Planning Area vicinity indicates the nearest gas station is approximately 1,100 feet northwest of the Planning Area boundary, across Rosecrans Boulevard and the nearest dry cleaning facility is approximately 1,570 feet southeast of the Planning Area boundary, across Somerset Boulevard and Paramount Boulevard. The nearest freeway, I-105, is approximately 0.5 miles from the Planning Area boundary and there are no major rail maintenance yards within the

City. The Specific Plan, therefore, would not conflict with the CARB Land Use Handbook's recommendations for the location of sensitive receptors.

As identified in Section 4.3.1 under the "Existing Air Pollution-Related Health Risks" subheading, the census tract that contains the Planning Area is considered a disadvantaged community based on the SB 535 scoring definition. The proposed Specific Plan could result in the placement of additional, residential receptors within this census tract; however, as noted in the "Local" subheading of Section 4.3.2, Regulatory Setting, the City would implement various policies through the Environmental Justice Element of its General Plan to help control existing sources of pollutants and reduce receptor exposure to those pollutants. Furthermore, as identified in proposed General Plan Policies EJ-1.3 and EJ-1.4, the City would coordinate with CARB and SCAQMD on data collection efforts for enforcement and a community emissions reduction and/or community air monitoring plan, which would lay the groundwork for future actions to reduce pollutants in the City.

Although the potential exists for the Specific Plan to result in new sensitive residential receptors near existing sources of emissions, the Specific Plan would not exacerbate pollutant concentrations or health risks associated with emissions sources and, therefore, would not materially change the existing environmental risks present in the Planning Area.

<u>Level of Significance Before Mitigation</u>

CO Hotspots. Less than significant.

Construction Emissions. As discussed under the preceding analysis and Impact AQ-2, construction emissions associated with future development activities facilitated under implementation of the proposed Specific Plan could exceed SCAQMD construction LSTs and cancerogenic and non-cancerogenic threshold maintained and recommended by the SCAQMD. This is considered a potentially significant impact.

Operational Emissions. Less than significant.

Exacerbation of Existing Sources of Pollutants. Less than significant.

Additional Information on Existing Sources of Pollutants. This information has been provided for informational purposes and is not considered part of the CEQA analysis.

<u>Mitigation Measures</u>

See Mitigation Measure AQ-1.

<u>Level of Significance After Mitigation</u>

CO Hotspots. Not applicable.

Construction Emissions. There is uncertainty regarding the specific nature of construction activities that would be facilitated under implementation of the proposed Specific Plan. Despite the implementation of Mitigation Measure AQ-1, which requires the preparation of project-specific air quality analysis prior to the construction of any new development and incorporation of mitigation if emissions levels are shown to be above SCAQMD-recommended thresholds of significance for cancerogenic and non-cancerogenic risks, as well as SCAQMD LSTs, it cannot

be definitively known or stated at this time that all future development projects occurring under implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would be able to reduce potential risks and localized construction air pollutant emissions to levels that are below SCAQMD thresholds. Therefore, with regard to localized criteria air pollutant and TAC emissions generated during future construction activities, this impact would be *significant and unavoidable* even with the incorporation of feasible mitigation measures.

Operational Emissions. Not applicable.

Exacerbation of Existing Sources of Pollutants. Not applicable.

Additional Information on Existing Sources of Pollutants. Not applicable.

Objectionable Odors

Impact AQ-4 – Would the Specific Plan result in other emissions such as those leading to odors adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

Analysis of Impacts

According to the SCAQMD *CEQA Air Quality Handbook*, land uses associated with odor complaints include agricultural operations, wastewater treatment plants, landfills, and certain industrial operations, such as manufacturing uses that produce chemicals, paper, etc. (e.g., asphalt batch plants, chemical manufacturing plants, composting/green waste facilities, painting/coating operations). The Specific Plan does not propose agricultural operations, wastewater treatment plants, or landfills, and its proposed industrial uses would be light manufacturing/research and development uses. The light manufacturing uses would be located in the proposed neo-industrial zone in the southern portion of the Planning Area, at least 90 feet from its nearest off-site sensitive receptor, Village Skate Park, which would provide any potential odors space to disperse.

Construction occurring within the Planning Area could produce odors from fuel combustion or solvents/paints used. These odors would be temporary, quickly disperse, and would not affect a substantial number of people.

The Specific Plan could place new residential development near commercial or light industrial land uses that may generate localized sources of odors that may or may not be objectionable to nearby residential land uses; however, locating future receptors in proximity of sources of odors would not constitute a CEQA impact. The California Supreme Court in California Building Industry Association v. Bay Area Air Quality Management District, 62 Cal.4th 369 (2015) ruled that CEQA review is focused on a project's impact on the environment "and not the environment's impact on the project." Therefore, even if receptors are located in proximity of existing sources of odor, this would be a case of how the existing environment would impact the project, which is (generally) not an assessment required under CEQA.

The Specific Plan does not in and of itself permit or authorize any new, major sources of potential odors (e.g., wastewater treatment plant), and odor impacts would be less than significant with standard environmental review practices.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Cumulative Impacts

Would the Specific Plan cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to Air Quality?

Analysis of Impacts

As described in Section 4.3.1, the Basin is designated nonattainment for national and State O_3 standards, national and State $PM_{2.5}$ standards, and national PM_{10} standards. The SCAQMD, in developing its CEQA significance thresholds, considered the emission levels at which a project's individual emissions would be cumulatively considerable (SCAQMD, 2003b; page D-3). The SCAQMD considers projects that result in emissions that exceed its CEQA significance thresholds to result in individual impacts that are cumulatively considerable and significant.

The growth that could occur under the Specific Plan's 2045 growth conditions would be inconsistent with the 2020 RTP/SCS growth forecasts and, as discussed under Impact AQ-2, could result in construction (e.g., ROG and NO_X) and operational (ROG) emissions that exceed the SCAQMD's recommended regional CEQA thresholds. Although the mass amount of emissions attributable to a single project (i.e., pounds per day) does not necessarily contribute to air pollution levels measured within the Basin and in or near the City, the SCAQMD, in developing its CEQA significance thresholds, considered the emission levels at which a project's individual emissions would be cumulatively considerable (SCAQMD 2003b; page D-3). The SCAQMD considers projects that result in emissions that exceed its CEQA significance thresholds to result in individual impacts that are cumulatively considerable and significant. Since potential growth under the Specific Plan would be inconsistent with current AQMP projections and could lead to construction and operational emissions that exceed SCAQMD regional CEQA thresholds, the proposed Specific Plan could increase the frequency and/or severity of air quality violations in the Basin or otherwise impede attainment of air quality standards, particularly national and state O_3 standards. This is considered a potentially significant impact.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Potentially significant.

Mitigation Measures

See Mitigation Measures AQ-1, AQ-2, and Tran-1.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

The growth that could occur under the Specific Plan would be inconsistent with the 2020 RTP/SCS growth forecast and result in emissions that could increase the frequency and/or severity of air

quality violations in the Basin, or otherwise impede attainment of air quality standards. Therefore, this impact would be *significant and unavoidable*.

4.3.5 – REFERENCES

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List of Acronyms, Abbreviations, and Symbols	
Acronym / Abbreviation	**Full Phrase or Description**
AB	Assembly Bill
AQMP	Air Quality Management Plan
BACT	Best Available Control Technology
Basin	South Coast Air Basin
CAA	Clean Air Act
CAAQS	California Ambient Air Quality Standards
CalEEMod	California Emissions Estimator Model
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CO	Carbon monoxide
DPM	Diesel particulate matter
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
GVWR	Gross vehicle weight rating
H_2S	Hydrogen sulfide
HAP	Hazardous Air Pollutants
HRA	Health Risk Assessment
I	Interstate
lbs	Pounds
LOS	Level of Service
LST	Localized Significance Threshold
m^3	Cubic meter
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NO	Nitrogen oxide
NO_2	Nitrogen dioxide
NO_x	Oxides of nitrogen
NTP	United State National Toxicology Program
O_3	Ozone
OEHHA	Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment
PM	Particulate matter
ppb	Parts per billion
ppm	Parts per million
$PM_{2.5}$	Fine particulate matter
PM_{10}	Coarse particulate matter
ROG	Reactive organic gases
RTP	Regional Transportation Plan
SCAG	Southern California Association of Governments
SCAQMD	South Coast Air Quality Management District
SCS	Sustainable Communities Strategy
SIP	State Implementation Plan
SO_2	Sulfur dioxide
SO_4^{2-}	Sulfates
SO_x	Oxides of sulfur
SRA	Source Receptor Area
TAC	Toxic Air Contaminants
U.S.	United States

U.S. EPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
V.	Version
VMT	Vehicle Miles Traveled
VOC	Volatile organic compounds
µg	Micrograms
%	Percent
° C	Degrees Celsius
° F	Degrees Fahrenheit

4.4 – BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

This EIR chapter addresses biological resource impacts associated with implementation of the proposed Specific Plan. Issues of interest are biological resources impacts identified by the CEQA Guidelines are whether the Specific Plan will: cause a substantial adverse effect on special status wildlife species; have a substantial effect on any riparian habitat/sensitive natural communities; have a substantial adverse effect on State or federally protected wetlands; interfere substantially with wildlife movement or use of wildlife nurseries; conflict with local policies protecting biological resources; or conflict with the provision of an adopted habitat conservation plan.

4.4.1 – ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The Planning Area is relatively flat and has an elevation ranging from approximately 70 to 75 feet above mean sea level (AMSL). The City of Paramount and the Planning Area are completely urbanized and there is very little natural open space. The Planning area consists of approximately 71 acres that may provide low or marginal quality habitat for biological resources. There are no Significant Ecological Areas (SEAs) designated by Los Angeles County within the Planning Area. Potential issues related to biological resources within the Planning Area are discussed in detail below.

Sensitive Wildlife and Plant Species

Since the City of Paramount has been largely developed, no populations of rare or sensitive species are known to occur within the limits of the Planning Area. Due to the level of disturbance within and around the Planning Area, no sensitive plant species are expected to be encountered, and vegetation is primarily ornamental/ruderal. Wildlife expected within the Planning Area would be non-sensitive wildlife that generally inhabit disturbed urban areas (such as raccoons, squirrels, coyotes, rats, common bird species, etc.).

The Planning Area is located on the South Gate, California 7.5-minute series United States Geological Survey (USGS) topographic quadrangle map. Table 4.4-1 shows sensitive species that have been recorded in the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) for the South Gate topographic quadrangle (which encompasses the Planning Area and adjacent areas). All of these species have low potential to occur and/or are not expected to occur within the Planning Area due to the marginally suitable habitat available or lack of habitat. Historical occurrences of all special-status species within the Planning Area are believed to be extirpated, with the nearest potentially extant populations occurring outside of the Planning Area within or near the Los Angeles River.

Table 4.4-1
Federal- and State-Listed Species and Other Special Status Species

Type	Scientific Name	Common Name	Federal, State, or Other Status	Occurrence in Planning Area
Amphibians	*Spea hammondii*	Western spadefoot	SSC	Low potential to occur in Planning Area.
Birds	*Aquila chrysaetos*	*Aquila chrysaetos* golden eagle	FP, WL	Low potential to occur in Planning Area. *golden eagle*
	Athene cunicularia	*Burrowing Owl*	SSC	Low potential to occur in Planning Area.
	Coccyzus americanus occidentalis	Western yellow-billed cuckoo	FT, SE	Low potential to occur in Planning Area.
	Empidonax traillii extimus	Southwester willow flycatcher	FE, SE	Low potential to occur in Planning Area.
	Setophaga petechia	Yellow warbler	SSC	Low potential to occur in Planning Area.
	Spizella breweri	Brewers sparrow	FT	Low potential to occur in Planning Area.
	Polioptila calfornica californica	Coastal California gnatcatcher	FT	Low potential to occur in Planning Area.
	Vireo bellii pusillus	Least Bell's vireo	FE, SE	Low potential to occur in Planning Area.
Mammals	*Myotis velifer*	Cave myotis	SSC	Low potential to occur in Planning Area.
	Taxidea taxus	American badger	SSC	Low potential to occur in Planning Area.
Reptiles	*Anniella stebbinsi*	Southern California legless lizard	SSC	Low potential to occur in Planning Area.
	Phrynosoma blainvillii	Coast horned lizard	SSC	Low potential to occur in Planning Area.
Plants	*Centromadia parryi ssp. Australis*	Southern tarplant	1B.1	Low potential to occur in Planning Area.
	Navarretia protrata	Prostrate vernal pool navarretia	1B.2	Low potential to occur in Planning Area.
	Orcuttia californica	California Orcutt grass	FE, SE, 1B.1	Low potential to occur in Planning Area.
	Phacelia stellaris	Brands star phacelia	1B.1	Low potential to occur in Planning Area.

Relevant Species Status Codes:
FE = Federally listed as endangered; FT = Federally Threatened ; FSC = Federal Special Concern Species (a "term-of-art" for former Category 2 candidates);
ST = State Threatened; SE = State-listed as Endangered; SCE = State Candidate Endangered; SSC = California Special Concern species by CDFW;
1B.1 = Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere, seriously threatened in California; 1B.2 = Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California or elsewhere, fairly threatened in California; 4.2 = Plants of limited distribution, fairly threatened in California.
Source: California Natural Diversity Database. June 2024.

Sensitive Natural Communities and Habitats

Since the City is largely developed, no sensitive natural communities are known to occur within the Planning Area. Vegetation communities within the Planning Area include only "*Developed or Disturbed"* land. This category refers to areas of the Planning Area that have been modified by human activity. The vegetation communities found here are generally composed of non-native ornamental trees and shrubs. There are no parks or landscaped open spaces that could provide very limited habitat, but trees and other plantings may support migrating songbirds, raptors, and other wildlife known to occupy disturbed urban environments.

Waterways

There are no waterways that run through the Planning Area. The Los Angeles River is a major river through Los Angeles County, with its headwaters originating in the Simi Hills and Santa Susana Mountains, and is located approximately 1.2 miles west of the Planning Area. It flows nearly 51 miles from Canoga Park through the San Fernando Valley, Downtown Los Angeles, and the Gateway Cities to its mouth in Long Beach, where it dumps into San Pedro Bay. Paralleling the Long Beach Freeway, the river traverses the western edges of the City's boundary, adjacent to the city of Compton, within a concrete-lined channel. In 2022, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works approved the *Los Angeles River Master Plan*, addressing a broad spectrum of social and environmental aspects related to the river, its watershed, and the communities along its banks (Public Works, 2024). This ambitious plan aims to bring the reimagined river to life over the next two and a half decades, fostering connections among people, culture, water, open space, and wildlife along this iconic waterway. A series of enhancements are proposed for the river segment spanning Paramount and Compton, including multi-purpose trails, major planned projects, and project sites, both planned and proposed.

Riparian/Wetland Habitats

The Planning Area is devoid of wetlands and there are no waterways that traverse the Planning Area. Therefore, it assumed there are no riparian or wetlands habitats within the Planning Area. Wetlands and waters are regulated by federal, State, and local agencies, as described in section 4.4.2 below. The USFWS maintains the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) and Wetlands Mapper System to identify the location of wetlands and riparian habitats. NWI maps are intended to provide general reference only and do not define the jurisdictional limits for any wetland regulatory program. Exhibit 4.4-1 (Wetlands and Riparian Habitat) shows the location of the nearest wetlands and riparian habitat to the Planning Area. As shown in Exhibit 4.4-1, the nearest wetlands are located in the Los Angeles River, which is approximately 1.2 miles west of the Planning Area, and the San Gabriel River, which is approximately 2.95 miles east of the Planning Area.

Urban Forest

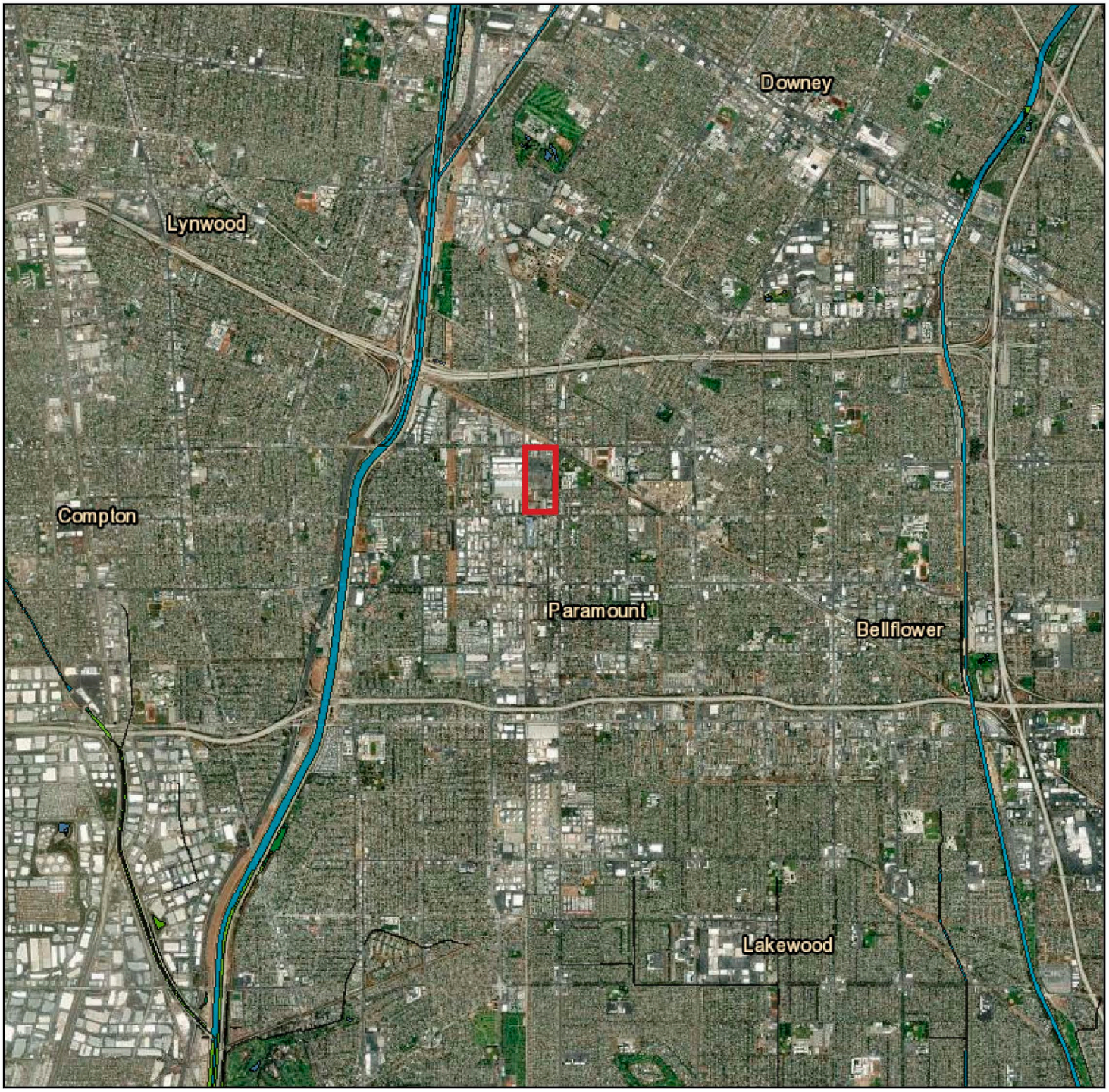
An urban forest consists of trees and vegetation located in parks, streets, gardens, creeks, and within residential neighborhoods and commercial and industrial districts. Trees and the urban forest benefit the urban environment by removing carbon from the atmosphere, reducing energy use, improving air quality, moderating stormwater flows, protecting water quality, and providing habitat for wildlife. In addition to the health benefits realized through the protection and promotion of the environment, trees and urban forests support residents' physical and mental health. Trees are also essential to mitigate the effects of climate change, especially extreme heat events. Paramount's urban forest is very sporadic. While many mature trees thrive

citywide, they appear inconsistently in many residential neighborhoods and along streets. Some parks have many mature trees while others do not. The inconsistency in mature trees creates a lower tree canopy and exacerbates the impacts from climate change and heat waves. These mature trees struggle to endure exposure to pollutants, high temperatures, drought, and the limited space they have to grow roots; and these conditions increase their susceptibility to insects and diseases.

Tree Canopy Coverage

Tree canopy coverage provides many benefits to urban areas. Canopy coverage can help to mitigate hot temperatures, improve air quality, improve water retention and filtration, improve the diversity of flora and fauna, and increase home values. These environmental factors have a direct impact on people's health. Cleaner air can reduce rates of asthma, and cooler temperatures reduce heat-related injuries and illnesses and encourage a more active lifestyle. Past research has drawn correlation between canopy coverage and income levels, concluding that the impact of air pollution and urban heat island falls disproportionately upon people of color and lower-income populations. This correlation largely holds true in Paramount. This disparity in tree coverage has several contributing factors, including historic redlining, the fact that more affordable areas in many cities were urban city centers with fewer trees, and a legacy of less public investment to maintain existing trees in lower-income areas.

In terms of tree canopy coverage, percent of land with tree canopy (weighted by number of people per acre), Paramount has a tree canopy percentage of 12.23%, which is 5.77% lower than the Los Angeles County average of 18% (TreePeople, 2024). Most of Paramount has a tree canopy coverage of 11 to 20 percent, with many neighborhoods lacking consistent street trees. Low tree canopy coverage has negative impacts on health and neighborhood investment, with many communities of color often having lower tree canopy coverage. Limited trees can exacerbate the impacts of climate change, including heat waves and exposure to the sun's rays.



- Planning Area

Wetlands

- Estuarine and Marine Deepwater
- Estuarine and Marine Wetland
- Freshwater Emergent Wetland
- Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland
- Freshwater Pond
- Lake
- Other
- Riverine

Source: Google Earth

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Exhibit 4.4-1 Wetlands

Clearwater East Specific Plan Update

Paramount, California

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4.4.2 – REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Federal

Endangered Species Act (FESA) (1973)

FESA, as amended, provides the regulatory framework for the protection of plant and animal species (and their associated critical habitats), which are formally listed, proposed for listing, or candidates for listing as endangered or threatened under FESA. FESA has the following four major components: (1) provisions for listing species, (2) requirements for consultation with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA NMFS), (3) prohibitions against "taking" (meaning harassing, harming, hunting, shooting, wounding, killing, trapping, capturing, or collecting, or attempting to engage in any such conduct) of listed species, and (4) provisions for permits that allow incidental "take". FESA also discusses recovery plans and the designation of critical habitats for listed species. Section 7 requires Federal agencies, in consultation with, and with the assistance of the USFWS or NOAA NMFS, as appropriate, to ensure that actions they authorize, fund, or carry out are not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of threatened or endangered species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat for these species. Both the USFWS and NOAA NMFS share the responsibility for the administration of FESA.

Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) (16 U.S.C. 703 et seq.), Title 50 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 10

The MBTA prohibits taking, killing, possessing, transporting, and importing of migratory birds, parts of migratory birds, and their eggs and nests, except when specifically authorized by the Department of the Interior. As used in the act, the term "take" is defined as meaning, "to pursue, hunt, capture, collect, kill or attempt to pursue, hunt, shoot, capture, collect or kill, unless the context otherwise requires." With a few exceptions, most birds are considered migratory under the MBTA. Disturbances that cause nest abandonment and/or loss of reproductive effort or loss of habitat upon which these birds depend would be in violation of the MBTA.

The Clean Water Act Sections 404 and 401

The United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulate the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States, including wetlands, under section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) (33 USC 1344). Waters of the United States are defined in Title 33 CFR Part 328.3(a) and include a range of wet environments such as lakes, rivers, streams (including intermittent or "blueline" streams), mudflats, sandflats, wetlands, sloughs, prairie potholes, wet meadows, playa lakes, or natural ponds. The lateral limits of jurisdiction in those waters may be divided into three categories – territorial seas, tidal waters, and non-tidal waters – and is determined depending on which type of waters is present (Title 33 CFR Part 328.4(a), (b), (c)). Activities in waters of the United States regulated under section 404 include fill for development, water resource projects (e.g., dams and levees), infrastructure developments (e.g., highways, rail lines, and airports), and mining projects. Section 404 of the CWA requires a federal permit before dredged or fill material may be discharged into waters of the United States, unless the activity is exempt from section 404 regulation (e.g., certain farming and forestry activities).

Section 401 of the CWA (33 U.S.C. 1341) requires an applicant for a federal license or permit to conduct any activity that may result in a discharge of a pollutant into waters of the United States to obtain a water quality certification from the state in which the discharge originates. The discharge is required to comply with the applicable water quality standards. A certification obtained for the construction of any facility must also pertain to the subsequent operation of the facility. The EPA has delegated responsibility for the protection of water quality in California to the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and its nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs).

The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)

This program requires permitting for activities that discharge pollutants into waters of the United States. This includes discharges from municipal, industrial, and construction sources. These are considered point sources from a regulatory standpoint. Generally, these permits are issued and monitored under the oversight of the SWRCB and administered by each regional water quality control board. Construction activities that disturb one acre or more (whether a single project or part of a larger development) are required to obtain coverage under the state's General Permit for Discharges of Storm Water Associated with Construction Activity. All dischargers are required to obtain coverage under the Construction General Permit. The activities covered under the Construction General Permit include clearing, grading, and other disturbances. The permit requires preparation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) with a monitoring program.

State

California Endangered Species Act (CESA)(1984)

CESA expands on the original Native Plant Protection Act (NPPA) of 1977 and enhances legal protection for plants, but the NPPA remains part of the California Fish and Game Code (CFGC). To align with FESA, CESA created the categories of "threatened" and "endangered" species. It converted all "rare" animals into CESA as threatened species but did not do so for rare plants. Thus, these laws provide the legal framework for protection of California-listed rare, threatened, and endangered plant and animal species. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) implements NPPA and CESA, and its Wildlife and Habitat Data Analysis Branch maintains the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB), a computerized inventory of information on the general location and status of California's rarest plants, animals, and natural communities. During the CEQA review process, the CDFW is given the opportunity to comment on the potential of development projects to affect listed plants and animals.

Fully Protected Species, Species of Special Concern, and Watch List Species

The classification of "fully protected" was the CDFW's initial effort to identify and provide additional protection to those animals that were rare or faced possible extinction. Lists were created for fish, amphibians and reptiles, birds, and mammals. Most of the species on these lists have subsequently been listed under CESA and/or FESA. The CFGC sections (fish at §5515, amphibians and reptiles at §5050, birds at §3511, and mammals at §4700) dealing with "fully protected" species states that these species "…may not be taken or possessed at any time and no provision of this code or any other law shall be construed to authorize the issuance of permits or licenses to take any fully protected species," although take may be authorized for necessary scientific research. This language makes the "fully protected" designation the strongest and most restrictive regarding the "take" of these species. In 2003, the code sections

dealing with fully protected species were amended to allow the CDFW to authorize take resulting from recovery activities for State-listed species.

Species of special concern (SSC) are broadly defined as animals not listed under FESA or CESA, but which are nonetheless of concern to the CDFW because they are declining at a rate that could result in listing or historically occurred in low numbers and known threats to their persistence currently exist. This designation is intended to result in special consideration for these animals by CDFW, land managers, consulting biologists, and others. It is intended to focus attention on these species to help avert the need for costly listing under FESA and CESA and cumbersome recovery efforts that might ultimately be required. This designation also is intended to stimulate collection of additional information on the biology, distribution, and status of poorly known at-risk species, and focus research and management attention on them. Although these species generally have no special legal status, they are given special consideration under CEQA during project review. Similarly, Watch List (WL) species are those that do not yet meet all the requirements of SSC metrics, but are potentially rare and need more information and monitoring to evaluate status. Many WL species have been previously classified or may qualify as SSC status.

California Fish and Game Code Sections 3503 and 3513

According to section 3503 of the CFGC, it is unlawful to take, possess, or needlessly destroy the nest or eggs of any bird (except English sparrow [*Passer domesticus*] and European Starling [*Sturnus vulgaris*]). Section 3503.5 specifically protects birds in the orders Falconiformes and Strigiformes (birds-of-prey). Section 3513 essentially overlaps with the MBTA, prohibiting the take or possession of any migratory non-game bird. Disturbances that cause nest abandonment and/or loss of reproductive effort are considered “take” by CDFW.

California Fish and Game Code Sections 1600-1603

Under section 1602 of CFGC, CDFW has authority over any proposed activity that may substantially modify a river, stream, or lake. CDFW requires notification for any activity that will do one or more of the following: (1) substantially obstruct or divert the natural flow of a river, stream, or lake; (2) substantially change or use any material from the bed, channel, or bank of a river, stream, or lake; or (3) deposit or dispose of debris, waste, or other material containing crumbled, flaked, or ground pavement where it can pass into a river, stream, or lake.

The notification requirement applies to any work undertaken in or near a river, stream, or lake that flows at least intermittently through a bed or channel. This includes ephemeral streams, desert washes, and watercourses with a subsurface flow. The CDFW typically considers a river, stream, or lake to include its riparian vegetation, but it may also extend to its floodplain. The term “stream”, which includes creeks and rivers, is defined in the CCR as follows: “a body of water that flows at least periodically or intermittently through a bed or channel having banks and supports fish or other aquatic life”. This includes watercourses having a surface or subsurface flow that supports or has supported riparian vegetation (14 CCR 1.72). In addition, the term stream can include ephemeral streams, dry washes, watercourses with subsurface flows, canals, aqueducts, irrigation ditches, and other means of water conveyance if they support aquatic life, riparian vegetation, or stream-dependent terrestrial wildlife. Riparian is defined as “on, or pertaining to, the banks of a stream”; therefore, riparian vegetation is defined as, “vegetation which occurs in and/or adjacent to a stream and is dependent on, and occurs because of, the stream itself”.

If the CDFW determines that the activity may substantially adversely affect fish and wildlife resources, a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement (LSAA) will be prepared, which includes reasonable conditions necessary to protect those resources. The applicant may then proceed with the activity in accordance with the final LSAA. Section 1602 does not extend to isolated wetlands and waters, such as small ponds not located on drainages.

Native Plant Protection Act (1977) (CFGC §§ 1900 through 1913)

The NPPA enacted the CDFW to carry out the Legislature's intent to "preserve, protect and enhance rare and endangered plants in this State." The NPPA is administered by the CDFW, which has the authority to designate native plants as endangered or rare and to protect them from "take."

Sensitive Plants – California Native Plant Society

The California Native Plant Society (CNPS), a non-profit plant conservation organization, publishes and maintains an Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California. The Inventory assigns plants to the following categories:

- 1A Presumed extinct in California;
- 1B Rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere;
- 2 Rare, threatened, or endangered in California but more common elsewhere;
- 3 Plants for which more information is needed – A review list; and
- 4 Plants of limited distribution – A watch list.

Additional endangerment codes are assigned to each taxon as follows:

- .1 Seriously endangered in California (over 80% of occurrences threatened/high degree of immediacy of threat).
- .2 Fairly endangered in California (20-80% occurrences threatened).
- .3 Not very endangered in California (<20% of occurrences threatened or no current threats known).

Plants on Lists 1A, 1B, and 2 of the CNPS Inventory consist of plants that qualify for listing by CDFW and/or other State agencies (e.g., California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection). As part of the CEQA process, such species should be fully considered, as they meet the definition of threatened or endangered under the NPPA and Sections 2062 and 2067 of the CFGC. CRPR 3 and 4 species are considered to be plants about which more information is needed or are uncommon enough that their status should be regularly monitored. Such plants may be eligible or may become eligible for State listing, and CNPS and CDFW recommend that these species be evaluated for consideration during the preparation of CEQA documents.

Sensitive Natural Communities

Sensitive natural communities are habitats that are either unique in constituent components, of relatively limited distribution in the region, or of particularly high wildlife value. These communities may or may not necessarily contain special-status species. Sensitive natural communities are usually identified in local or regional plans, policies or regulations, or by the CDFW or the USFWS. The CNDDB identifies a number of natural communities as rare, which are given the highest inventory priority. Impacts to sensitive natural communities and habitats must be considered/evaluated under the CEQA (CCR: Title 14, Div. 6, Chap. 3, Appendix G)

Natural Community Conservation Planning Act

The Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP) program of the CDFW takes a broad-based ecosystem approach to plan for the protection and perpetuation of biological diversity. The NCCP program, established pursuant to the 1991 NCCP Act (Fish and Game Code 2003), is broader in its orientation and objectives than CESA or FESA. While CESA and FESA are designed to identify and protect species that have already declined in significant numbers, the NCCP program seeks to prevent species listing by focusing on the long-term stability of wildlife and plant communities.

Section 401 of the Clean Water Act

RWQCBs regulate activities in "waters of the state", including wetlands, through Section 401 of the CWA. "Waters of the state" are defined by the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (see below) as "any surface water or groundwater, including saline waters, within the boundaries of the state." While the USACE administers permitting programs that authorize impacts to "waters of the US", any USACE permit authorized for a project would be invalid unless the RWQCB has issued a project-specific water quality certification or waiver of water quality. A water quality certification requires a finding by the RWQCB that the activities permitted by the USACE will not violate water quality standards individually or cumulatively over the term of the issued USACE permit.

Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act

The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Act (Porter-Cologne Act) (California Water Code Section 13260) requires "any person discharging waste, or proposing to discharge waste, within any region that could affect the "waters of the state" to file a report of discharge" with the RWQCB through an application for waste discharge. The RWQCB protects all waters in its regulatory scope but has special responsibility for isolated wetlands and headwaters. These water bodies have high resource value, are vulnerable to filling, and may not be regulated by other programs (e.g. Section 404 of the CWA).

Local

City of Paramount 2007 General Plan

The City of Paramount General Plan includes the following policies related to biological resources:

Environmental Justice Element

Policy EJ-5.2: Expand the tree canopy and improve the urban forest in areas without a lot of trees to promote healthier communities and expand shade opportunities along sidewalks and parking areas.

Health and Safety Element

Policy HS-50: Enhance resilience of community tree canopy and urban forest.

Resource Management Element

Policy RM-22: The City of Paramount will continue to cooperate with surrounding cities in the formulation and implementation of regional resource management plans and programs.

Paramount Municipal Code

Paramount Municipal Code Chapter 8.20 (Urban Stormwater Management) contains ordinances for stormwater discharge restrictions to protect water quality. Municipal Code Chapter 12.32 (Trees and Parkway Landscaping) includes regulations for the maintenance or removal of trees in the parkways, public rights-of-way, and parks.

4.4.3 – SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLDS

As identified in Appendix G of the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the proposed Specific Plan Update could result in a significant impact if it would:

A. Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the CDFW or USFWS.

B. Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the CDFW or USFWS.

C. Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means.

D. Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites.

E. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance.

F. Conflict with the provisions of an adopted HCP, Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP), or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.

G. Would the project cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to biological resources?

4.4.4 – IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

This section describes potential impacts related to biological resources which could result from the implementation of the Specific Plan and recommends mitigation measures as needed to reduce significant impacts.

Special Status Species Protections

Impact BIO-1 – Would the Specific Plan have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or

special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

Analysis of Impacts

Because the City of Paramount is almost completely developed, no populations of rare or sensitive species are known to occur within the City's limits. Wildlife expected within the Planning Area would be non-sensitive wildlife that generally inhabit disturbed urban areas (such as raccoons, squirrels, coyotes, rats, common bird species, etc.). The Planning Area is located on the South Gate, California 7.5-minute series United States Geological Survey (USGS) topographic quadrangle map. Table 4.4-1 shows sensitive species that have been recorded in the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) for the South Gate topographic quadrangle (which encompasses the Planning Area and adjacent areas). All of these species have low potential to occur and/or are not expected to occur within the Planning Area due to the marginally suitable habitat available or lack of habitat.

The Health and Safety Element of the City's existing 2007 General Plan contains Policy HS-50 which aims to enhance the resilience of the tree canopy and urban forest in the City. In Addition, Policy EJ-5.2 of the existing General Plan seeks to expand the tree canopy and improve the urban forest in areas of the City without a lot of trees. With implementation of these policies, existing and future trees within the Planning Area would continue to support a variety of bird species tolerant of human activity and proximity. Based on the lack of resources and the urbanized nature of the Planning Area, implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would not result in any significant impacts to listed or otherwise sensitive species or their habitats. However, given that the future trees within the Planning Area would continue to support a variety of bird species, if the loss of an active nest of common or special-status bird species and/or their eggs or young as a result of project-related construction would occur, it would be considered a violation of the CDFGC, Section 3503, 3503.5, 3513. Therefore, implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-1 is required to reduce impacts to nesting birds to a less than significant level. With implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-1, it is not expected that any significant impacts would occur to special-status species as part of implementation of the proposed Specific Plan.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Potentially significant.

Mitigation Measures

BIO-1 **Pre-construction Survey for Nesting Birds.** To the extent feasible, construction activities should be scheduled to avoid the nesting season. If construction activities are scheduled to take place outside the nesting season, all impacts to nesting birds protected under the MBTA and California Fish and Game Code would be avoided.

If it is not possible to schedule construction activities between September 1 and January 31, then pre-construction surveys for nesting birds will be conducted by a qualified biologist to ensure that no nests would be disturbed during project implementation. These surveys will be conducted no more than 5 days prior to the initiation of any site disturbance activities and equipment mobilization, vegetation removal, fence installation, grading, etc. If project activities are

delayed by more than 5 days, an additional nesting bird survey will be performed. During this survey, the biologist will inspect all vegetation and other potential nesting habitats (e.g., shrubs) in and immediately adjacent to the impact area for nests. Active nesting is present if a bird is building a nest, sitting in a nest, a nest has eggs or chicks in it, or adults are observed carrying food to the nest. The results of the surveys will be documented.

If an active nest is found sufficiently close to work areas to be disturbed by these activities, the qualified biologist will determine the extent of a construction-free buffer zone to be established around the nest (typically up to 300 feet for raptors and up to 100 feet for other species), to ensure that no nests of species protected by the MBTA and California Fish and Game Code will be disturbed during project implementation. Within the buffer zone, no site disturbance and mobilization of heavy equipment, including but not limited to equipment staging, fence installation, clearing, grubbing, vegetation removal, demolition, and grading will be permitted until the chicks have fledged.

A qualified biologist is an individual who has a degree in biological sciences or related resource management with a minimum of two seasonal years post-degree experience conducting surveys for nesting birds. During or following academic training, the qualified biologist will have achieved a high level of professional experience and knowledge in biological sciences and special-status species identification, ecology, and habitat requirements.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Less than significant.

Sensitive Natural Communities

Impact BIO-2 – Would the Specific Plan have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?

Analysis of Impacts

Almost the entirety of the Planning Area is urbanized, and no sensitive natural communities are known to occur within the City's limits. According to the CDFW, vegetation communities within the Planning Area include only "*Developed or Disturbed"* land. This category refers to areas that have been modified by human activity. The vegetation communities found here are generally composed of non-native ornamental trees and landscaping. Sensitive plant and animal species have low potential to occur and/or are not expected to occur within the Planning Area due to the lack of habitat. There are no wetlands, waterways, or waterbodies of any kind within the Planning Area. As discussed in Impact BIO-1 above, trees within the Planning Area may be used by migrating songbirds, raptors, and other wildlife known to occupy disturbed urban environments; however, incorporation of Mitigation Measure BIO-1 would ensure that significant impacts to special-status species would not occur as part of implementation of the proposed Specific Plan. Therefore, no impacts to sensitive riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities are expected to occur as part of implementation of the proposed Specific Plan. Based on the lack of riparian and related resources, and the urbanized nature of the Planning

Area, implementation of the Specific Plan would not result in any significant impacts on riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities of concern to federal or State resource agencies.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Wetland Conservation

Impact BIO-3 – Would the Specific Plan have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

Analysis of Impacts

As discussed in Impact BIO-2 above, there are no wetlands, waterways, or waterbodies of any kind within the Planning Area. Based on the lack of wetlands and related resources, and the urbanized nature of the Planning Area, implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would not result in any significant impacts on State or federally protected wetlands, vernal pools, or similar water-related features through direct removal, filling, or hydrological interruption.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Fish and Wildlife Movement

Impact BIO-4 – Would the Specific Plan interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

Analysis of Impacts

Due to its densely developed urban setting, the Planning Area does not contain any important natural biological communities, protected wildlife corridors, or protected wildlife nursery sites. Based on the lack of identified wildlife movement corridors or nursery sites, and the urbanized nature of the Planning Area and City, implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would not result in any significant impacts on the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Conflicts with Local Biological Resources Plans

Impact BIO-5 – Would the Specific Plan conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

Analysis of Impacts

As discussed in Impact BIO-1 above, the Health and Safety Element of the City's existing 2007 General Plan contains Policy HS-50 which aims to enhance the resilience of the tree canopy and urban forest in the City. In Addition, Policy EJ-5.2 of the existing General Plan seeks to expand the tree canopy and improve the urban forest in areas of the City without a lot of trees. Further, Municipal Code Chapter 12.32 (Trees and Parkway Landscaping) includes regulations for the maintenance or removal of trees in the parkways, public rights-of-way, and parks. Therefore, implementation of existing General Plan policies and compliance with Municipal Code requirements would ensure that the proposed Specific Plan would not result in any conflicts with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

No impact.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Habitat Conservation Plans

Impact BIO-6 – Would the Specific Plan conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?

Analysis of Impacts

According to the California Department of Fish and Game, Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP) Program website, the City is not located within an adopted or proposed NCCP (CDFW, 2021). According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service website, Habitat Conservation Plan, the City is not located within an adopted or proposed Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP)(USFWS, 2021). These websites also indicate the City is not located within any designated local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan. Therefore, the proposed Specific Plan would not result in any conflicts with an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

No impact.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Cumulative Impacts

Impact BIO-7 – Would the Specific Plan cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to Biological Resources?

Analysis of Impacts

As outlined in Impact BIO-1 through BIO-6 above, the Planning Area does not contain any significant biological resources that would be impacted as a result of implementation of the proposed Specific Plan, including sensitive habitat or habitat that could support listed or otherwise sensitive species. The Specific Plan would help protect local water quality which would in turn support any downstream regional biological resources associated with runoff into local flood control channels. The Specific Plan would not contribute to substantial adverse cumulative impacts to biological resources, as the Planning Area is a developed urban area and no natural areas are targeted for development under the Specific Plan. Therefore, cumulative impacts to biological resources from future development under the Specific Plan would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.4.5 – REFERENCES

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4.5 – CULTURAL RESOURCES

This EIR chapter addresses potential impacts to archaeological and historic resources associated with implementation of the proposed Specific Plan. The chapter will evaluate whether the Specific Plan will cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historic resource, destroy a unique archaeological resource, or disturb human remains.

4.5.1 – ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The Planning Area is characterized entirely by private ownership and is completely built out with commercial and institutional uses. There are no known historical or archaeological resources within the Planning Area and there are no known cemeteries or burial places within the Planning Area. These resources and potential impacts are discussed in more detail below.

Historical Resources

CEQA Guidelines state the term “historical resources” applies to resources that meet any of the criteria for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources.

> (1) Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California’s history and cultural heritage.
>
> (2) Is associated with the lives of persons important in our past.
>
> (3) Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values.
>
> (4) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history. (PRC Section 5024.1(c)).

The Planning Area does not contain any historical resources, historic buildings, or historic points of interest (California State Parks, 2021; National Parks Service, 2021). While the Swap Meet is culturally significant to the local population, it does not meet any of the criteria for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources, including: 1) being associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California’s history and cultural heritage; 2) being associated with the lives of persons important in our past; 3) embodying the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values; or 4) having yielded, or be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history. The City’s General Plan Resources Management Element also does not identify any historical resources within the Planning Area.

Archaeological Resources

Before the arrival of Spanish settlers in the 1700s, the area that would later become Paramount consisted of Kizh or Tongva People that inhabited a village called Sejatnga near the current city of Whittier and the San Gabriel River. By 1806, the Kizh or Tongva were providing labor for Spanish missions. The area was part of the early Spanish rancho of Jose Manuel Nieto, the holder of the largest Spanish land grant in California, stretching from the Pacific Ocean to the Puente Hills. Puente Hills, located approximately 10 miles northeast of Paramount in an

unincorporated area just north of the city of Whittier, contains archaeological and paleontological resources that pre-date Spanish and Mexican land grants, dating back thousands of years and reflecting Native American settlement patterns. Given the long history of Native American settlement in the region, followed by Spanish and Mexican rule, there is a moderate probability of finding prehistoric (archaeological) resources in the Planning Area.

4.5.2 – REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Federal

National Historic Preservation Act of 1966

Enacted in 1966, the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (16 U.S.C §§ 470 et seq.) declared a national policy of historic preservation and instituted a multifaceted program, administered by the Secretary of the Interior, to encourage the achievement of preservation goals at the federal, State, and local levels. The NHPA authorized the expansion and maintenance of the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), established the position of State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), provided for the designation of State Review Boards, set up a mechanism to certify local governments to carry out the purposes of the NHPA, assist Native American tribes in preserving their cultural heritage, and created the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP).

NHPA establishes the nation's policy for historic preservation and sets in place a program for the preservation of historic properties by requiring federal agencies to consider effects to significant cultural resources (i.e. historic properties) prior to undertakings**.**

Section 106 of the Federal Guidelines

Section 106 of the NHPA states that federal agencies with direct or indirect jurisdiction over federally funded, assisted, or licensed undertakings must take into account the effect of the undertaking on any historic property that is included in, or eligible for inclusion in, the NRHP and that the ACHP and SHPO must be afforded an opportunity to comment, through a process outlined in the ACHP regulations at 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 800, on such undertakings. The Section 106 process also gives Federally recognized Native American Tribes the chance to consult and comment on the project before it can be finalized.

National Register of Historic Places

The NRHP was established by the NHPA of 1966 as "an authoritative guide to be used by federal, State, and local governments, private groups, and citizens to identify the Nation's cultural resources and to indicate what properties should be considered for protection from destruction or impairment." The NRHP recognizes properties that are significant at the national, state, and local levels. To be eligible for listing in the NRHP, a resource must be significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture. Districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects of potential significance must also possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, or association. A property is eligible for the NRHP if it is significant under one or more of the following criteria:

Criterion A: It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

Criterion B: It is associated with the lives of persons who are significant in our past.

Criterion C: It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; represents the work of a master; possesses high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

Criterion D: It has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Cemeteries, birthplaces, or graves of historic figures; properties owned by religious institutions or used for religious purposes; structures that have been moved from their original locations; reconstructed historic buildings; and properties that are primarily commemorative in nature are not considered eligible for the NRHP unless they satisfy certain conditions. In general, a resource must be at least 45 years of age to be considered for the NRHP, unless it satisfies a standard of exceptional importance.

Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) of 1990

The NAGPRA of 1990 sets provisions for the intentional removal and inadvertent discovery of human remains and other cultural items from federal and tribal lands. It clarifies the ownership of human remains and sets forth a process for repatriation of human remains and associated funerary objects and sacred religious objects to the Native American groups claiming to be lineal descendants or culturally affiliated with the remains or objects. It requires any federally funded institution housing Native American remains or artifacts to compile an inventory of all cultural items within the museum or with its agency and to provide a summary to any Native American tribe claiming affiliation

State

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

CEQA provides criteria to evaluate whether a building, structure, object, or site is significant. Under CEQA Guideline §15064.5(a), historic resources include the following: (1) A resource listed in, or determined to be eligible by the State Historical Resources Commission, for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (Pub. Res. Code §5024.1, Title 14 CCR, Section 4850 et seq.). (2) A resource included in a local register of historical resources, as defined in §5020.1(K) of the Public Resources Code or identified as significant in a historical resource survey meeting the requirements of §5024.1 (g) of the Public Resources Code, shall be presumed to be historically or culturally significant. Public agencies must treat any such resource as significant unless the preponderance of evidence demonstrates that it is not historically or culturally significant. (3) Any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript which a lead agency determines to be historically significant or significant in the architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military, or cultural annals of California may be considered to be a historical resource, providing the lead agency's determination is supported by substantial evidence in light of the whole record.

Generally, a resource shall be considered by the lead agency to be "historically significant" if the resource meets the criteria for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources (Pub. Res. Code §5024.1, Title 14 CCR, Section 4852) including the following: (A) Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and

cultural heritage; (B) Is associated with the lives of persons important in our past; (C) Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values; or (D) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history. (4) The fact that a resource is not listed in, or determined to be eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, not included in a local register of historical resources (pursuant to §5020.1(k) of the Public Resources Code), or identified in an historical resources survey (meeting the criteria in §5024.1(g) of the Public Resources Code) does not preclude a lead agency from determining that the resource may be a historical resource as defined in Public Resources Code §5020.1(j) or 5024.1. In accordance with CEQA, properties designated or eligible at all levels are deserving of protection by a lead agency when any undertaking proposes to demolish or alter any such property.

California Register of Historical Resources

Created in 1992 and implemented in 1998, the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) is "an authoritative guide in California to be used by state and local agencies, private groups, and citizens to identify the state's historical resources and to indicate properties that are to be protected, to the extent prudent and feasible, from substantial adverse change (CA Public Resources Code)." Certain properties, including those listed in or formally determined eligible for listing in the NRHP and California Historical Landmarks (CHLs) numbered 770 and higher, are automatically included in the CRHR. Other properties recognized under the California Points of Historical Interest program, identified as significant in historic resources surveys, or designated by local landmarks programs may be nominated for inclusion in the CRHR. A resource, either an individual property or a contributor to a historic district, may be listed in the CRHR if the State Historical Resources Commission determines that it meets one or more of the following criteria, which are modeled on NRHP criteria (Public Resources Code):

Criterion 1: It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage.
Criterion 2: It is associated with the lives of persons important in our past.
Criterion 3: It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction; represents the work of an important creative individual; or possesses high artistic values.
Criterion 4: It has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory.

Resources nominated to the CRHR must retain enough of their historic character or appearance to be recognizable as historic resources and to convey the reasons for their significance. It is possible that a resource whose integrity does not satisfy NRHP criteria may still be eligible for listing in the CRHR. A resource that has lost its historic character or appearance may still have sufficient integrity for the CRHR if, under Criterion 4, it maintains the potential to yield significant scientific or historical information or specific data. Resources that have achieved significance within the past 50 years also may be eligible for inclusion in the CRHR, provided that enough time has elapsed to obtain a scholarly perspective on the events or individuals associated with the resource.

California Historical Landmarks (CHLs)

CHLs are buildings, structures, sites, or places that have anthropological, cultural, military, political, architectural, economic, scientific or technical, religious, experimental, or other value

and that have been determined to have statewide historical significance by meeting at least one of the criteria listed below. The resource must also be approved for designation by the County Board of Supervisors or the City or Town Council in whose jurisdiction it is located, be recommended by the State Historical Resources Commission, or be officially designated by the Director of California State Parks. The specific standards in use now were first applied in the designation of CHL No. 770. CHLs No. 770 and above are automatically listed in the CRHR.

To be eligible for designation as a Landmark, a resource must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- The first, last, only, or most significant of its type in the state or within a large geographic region (Northern, Central, or Southern California); or
- Associated with an individual or group having a profound influence on the history of California. A prototype of, or an outstanding example of, a period, style, architectural movement, or construction or one of the more notable works or the best surviving work in a region of a pioneer architect, designer, or master builder.

<u>California Points of Historical Interest</u>

California Points of Historical Interest are sites, buildings, features, or events that are of local (city or county) significance and have anthropological, cultural, military, political, architectural, economic, scientific or technical, religious, experimental, or other value. Points of Historical Interest (Point or Points) designated after December 1997 and recommended by the State Historical Resources Commission are also listed in the CRHR. No historic resource may be designated as both a Landmark and a Point. If a Point is later granted status as a Landmark, the Point designation will be retired. In practice, the Point designation program is most often used in localities that do not have a locally enacted cultural heritage or preservation ordinance.

To be eligible for designation as a Point, a resource must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- The first, last, only, or most significant of its type within the local geographic region (city or county).
- Associated with an individual or group having a profound influence on the history of the local area.
- A prototype of, or an outstanding example of, a period, style, architectural movement, or construction or one of the more notable works or the best surviving work in the local region of a pioneer architect, designer, or master builder.

<u>Native American Heritage Commission, Public Resources Code Sections 5097.9–5097.991</u>

Section 5097.91 of the Public Resources Code (PRC) established the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), whose duties include the inventory of places of religious or social significance to Native Americans and the identification of known graves and cemeteries of Native Americans on private lands. Under Section 5097.9 of the PRC, a State policy of noninterference with the free expression or exercise of Native American religion was articulated along with a prohibition of severe or irreparable damage to Native American sanctified cemeteries, places of worship, religious or ceremonial sites, or sacred shrines located on public property. Section 5097.98 of the PRC specifies a protocol to be followed when the NAHC receives notification of a discovery of Native American human remains from a county coroner.

Section 5097.5 defines as a misdemeanor the unauthorized disturbance or removal of archaeological, historic, or paleontological resources located on public lands.

California Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 2001

Codified in the California Health and Safety Code Sections 8010–8030, the California Native American Graves Protection Act (NAGPRA) is consistent with the federal NAGPRA. Intended to "provide a seamless and consistent state policy to ensure that all California Indian human remains, and cultural items be treated with dignity and respect," the California NAGPRA also encourages and provides a mechanism for the return of remains and cultural items to lineal descendants. Section 8025 established a Repatriation Oversight Commission to oversee this process. The act also provides a process for non–federally recognized tribes to file claims with agencies and museums for repatriation of human remains and cultural items.

Senate Bill (SB) 18

California Government Code, Section 65352.3 incorporates the protection of California traditional tribal cultural places into land use planning for cities, counties, and agencies by establishing responsibilities for local governments to contact, refer plans to, and consult with California Native American tribes as part of the adoption or amendment of any general or specific plan proposed on or after March 1, 2005. SB 18 requires public notice to be sent to tribes listed on the Native American Heritage Commission's SB 18 Tribal Consultation list within the geographical areas affected by the proposed changes. Tribes must respond to a local government notice within 90 days (unless a shorter time frame has been agreed upon by the tribe), indicating whether or not they want to consult with the local government. Consultations are for the purpose of preserving or mitigating impacts to places, features, and objects described in Sections 5097.9 and 5097.993 of the Public Resources Code that may be affected by the proposed adoption or amendment to a general or specific plan.

Assembly Bill (AB) 52

AB 52 specifies that a project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, as defined, may have a significant effect on the environment. AB 52 requires a lead agency to begin consultation with a California Native American tribe that is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the proposed project, if the tribe requested to the lead agency, in writing, to be informed by the lead agency of proposed projects in that geographic area and the tribe requests consultation, prior to determining whether a negative declaration, mitigated negative declaration, or environmental impact report is required for a project. AB 52 specifies examples of mitigation measures that may be considered to avoid or minimize impacts on tribal cultural resources. The bill makes the above provisions applicable to CEQA projects that have a notice of preparation or a notice of negative declaration filed or mitigated negative declaration on or after July 1, 2015. AB 52 amends Sections 5097.94 and adds Sections 21073, 21074, 2108.3.1., 21080.3.2, 21082.3, 21083.09, 21084.2, and 21084.3 to the California Public Resources Code (PRC), relating to Native Americans.

Health and Safety Code, Sections 7050 and 7052

Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 declares that, in the event of the discovery of human remains outside a dedicated cemetery, all ground disturbances must cease, and the county

coroner must be notified. Section 7052 establishes a felony penalty for mutilating, disinterring, or otherwise disturbing human remains, except by relatives.

Penal Code, Section 622.5

Penal Code Section 622.5 provides misdemeanor penalties for injuring or destroying objects of historic or archaeological interest located on public or private lands but specifically excludes the landowner.

Local

City of Paramount 2007 General Plan

The City of Paramount General Plan includes the following policies related to cultural resources:

Resource Management Element

Policy RM-17: The City of Paramount will initiate a cultural arts and facilities program to enhance the City image.

Policy RM-18: The City of Paramount will continue with the development of the community art program.

Policy RM-19: The City of Paramount will identify and preserve those sites/buildings that are important to the community for the benefit of the future generations that will reside or work in the City.

4.5.3 – SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLDS

The methodology used to evaluate potential environmental impacts is described in Section 4.0. As identified in Appendix G of the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the General Plan Update could result in a significant impact if it:

A. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to § 15064.5?
B. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?
C. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?
D. Would the project cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to cultural resources?

4.5.4 – IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

This section describes potential impacts related to historic resources, archaeological resources, and human remains which could result from the implementation of the Specific Plan and recommends mitigation measures as needed to reduce significant impacts.

Historic Resources

Impact CUL-1 – Would the Specific Plan cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historic resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?

Analysis of Impacts

According to the California Register of Historical Resources and the National Register of Historic Places, the Planning Area does not contain any historical resources, historic buildings, or historic points of interest. While the Swap Meet is culturally significant to the local population, it does not meet any of the criteria for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources, including: 1) being associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage; 2) being associated with the lives of persons important in our past; 3) embodying the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values; or 4) having yielded, or be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history. Additionally, the City's General Plan Resources Management Element does not identify any historical resources within the Planning Area. The City's existing General Plan includes policies related to preserving and improving access to historic and cultural resources within the Planning Area. The Resources Management Element of the General Plan includes Policy RM-17, which aims to initiate a cultural arts and facilities program to enhance the City image. Further, Policy RM-18 seeks to continue with the development of the community art program. Finally, Policy RM-19 aims to identify and preserve those sites/buildings that are important to the community for the benefit of the future generations that will reside or work in the City. With implementation of these policies, and the City's development requirements to review CEQA documents for impacts to historic resources, potential impacts to historic resources by future development within the Planning Area would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Archaeological Resources

Impact CUL-2 – Would the Specific Plan cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?

Analysis of Impacts

Archaeological resources are the physical remains of past human activities and can be of either prehistoric or historic origin. Archaeological sites are locations that contain evidence of human activity. Generally, a site is defined by a significant accumulation or presence of one or more of the following: food remains, waste from the manufacturing of tools, concentrations of alignments of stones, modification of rock surfaces, unusual discoloration or accumulation of soil, or human skeletal remains. Prior to European contact, the Planning Area was inhabited for many thousands of years by the Kizh and Tongva People that inhabited a village called Sejatnga near the current city of Whittier and the San Gabriel River. Development began in the Paramount

area in the first half of the 19th century, but the surrounding area is known to contain archaeological resources that pre-date Spanish and Mexican land grants. Areas that could have the potential for discovery include undeveloped land or when replacing buildings that have shallow foundations. The entire Planning Area is heavily developed, greatly reducing the potential for the discovery of previously uncovered archaeological resources.

Native American Consultation

On March 10, 2025, the city sent notices to the following nine (9) Native American Tribes/Tribal Representatives to determine if they wished to consult with the City regarding the proposed Specific Plan (see Appendix H):

Native American Tribal Group	**Tribal Representative**
Gabrieleno Band of Mission Indians - Kizh Nation	Andrew Salas, Chairperson
Gabrieleno/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians	Anthony Morales, Chairperson
Gabrielino /Tongva Nation	Sandonne Goad, Chairperson
Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council	Robert Dorame, Chairperson
Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council	Christina Conley, Tribal Consultant
Gabrielino-Tongva Tribe	Charles Alvarez
Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians	Lovina Redner, Tribal Chair
Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians	Isaiah Vivanco, Chairperson
Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians	Joe Ontiveros

As of publication of this Draft EIR, the 30-day AB 52 and the 90-day SB 18 consultation periods had expired and only two of the tribes indicated a desire to consult with the City on the proposed Specific Plan. Christina Conley, Tribal Consultant and Administrator for the Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council, initially inquired if a cultural resources report was available for the project. However, upon being informed that project is programmatic and the tribe would be notified of all future development projects within the Specific Plan Planning Area no further consultation was requested. Andrew Salas, Chairperson of the Gabrieleno Band of Mission Indians – Kizh Nation, also requested formal consultation from the City. Upon consultation with the City, Mr. Salas requested that mitigation measures be incorporated into the EIR requiring retention of a Native American monitor prior to commencement and during all ground-disturbing activities. All relevant correspondence for the project from the NAHC and consulting tribal representatives is included in Appendix H. This information is also included in Section 4.18 (Tribal Cultural Resources). The Planning Area is completely developed and has been previously disturbed by modern human activities that would have displaced surface and subsurface archaeological resources. However, if previously undiscovered archaeological resources are uncovered during ground-disturbing activities, and not properly treated, potentially significant impacts to archaeological resources could occur. As such, Mitigation Measures CUL-1 through CUL-3 have been incorporated requiring Native American monitoring during project ground-disturbing activities to ensure that inadvertent discoveries, if encountered, are properly treated and managed during project construction. With implementation of these measures during future development of the Specific Plan, the project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Potentially significant.

Mitigation Measures

CUL-1: Retain a Native American Monitor Prior to Commencement of Ground-Disturbing Activities: The project applicant/lead agency shall retain a Native American Monitor from or approved by the Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians – Kizh Nation. The monitor shall be retained prior to the commencement of any "ground-disturbing activity" for the subject project at all project locations (i.e., both on site and any off site locations that are included in the project description/definition and/or required in connection with the project, such as public improvement work). "Ground-disturbing activity" shall include, but is not limited to, demolition, pavement removal, potholing, auguring, grubbing, tree removal, boring, grading, excavation, drilling, and trenching. A copy of the executed monitoring agreement shall be submitted to the lead agency prior to the earlier of the commencement of any ground-disturbing activity, or the issuance of any permit necessary to commence a ground-disturbing activity. The monitor will complete daily monitoring logs that will provide descriptions of the relevant ground-disturbing activities, the type of construction activities performed, locations of ground-disturbing activities, soil types, cultural-related materials, and any other facts, conditions, materials, or discoveries of significance to the Tribe. Monitor logs will identify and describe any discovered TCRs, including but not limited to, Native American cultural and historical artifacts, remains, places of significance, etc., (collectively, tribal cultural resources, or "TCR"), as well as any discovered Native American (ancestral) human remains and burial goods. Copies of monitor logs will be provided to the project applicant/lead agency upon written request to the Tribe. On site tribal monitoring shall conclude upon the latter of the following (1) written confirmation to the Kizh from a designated point of contact for the project applicant/lead agency that all ground-disturbing activities and phases that may involve ground-disturbing activities on the project site or in connection with the project are complete; or (2) a determination and written notification by the Kizh to the project applicant/lead agency that no future, planned construction activity and/or development/construction phase at the project site possesses the potential to impact Kizh TCRs.

CUL-2: Unanticipated Discovery of Tribal Cultural Resource Objects (Non-Funerary/Non-Ceremonial): Upon discovery of any TCRs, all construction activities in the immediate vicinity of the discovery shall cease (i.e., not less than the surrounding 50 feet) and shall not resume until the discovered TCR has been fully assessed by the Kizh monitor and/or Kizh archaeologist. The Kizh will recover and retain all discovered TCRs in the form and/or manner the Tribe deems appropriate, in the Tribe's sole discretion, and for any purpose the Tribe deems appropriate, including for educational, cultural, and/or historic purposes.

CUL-3: Unanticipated Discovery of Human Remains and Associated Funerary or Ceremonial Objects. Native American human remains are defined in PRC 5097.98 (d)(1) as an inhumation or cremation, and in any state of decomposition or skeletal completeness. Funerary objects, called associated grave goods in Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, are also to be treated according to this statute. If Native American human remains and/or grave goods are discovered or recognized on the project site, then Public Resource Code 5097.9 as well as Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 shall be followed. Human remains and grave/burial goods shall be treated alike per California Public Resources Code section 5097.98(d)(1) and (2). Preservation in place (i.e., avoidance) is the preferred manner of treatment for

discovered human remains and/or burial goods. Any discovery of human remains/burial goods shall be kept confidential to prevent further disturbance.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Less than significant.

Human Remains

Impact CUL-3 – Would the Specific Plan disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

Analysis of Impacts

There are no formal cemeteries within or in close proximity to the Planning Area. The Planning Area is almost completely urbanized and any buried remains have likely been uncovered as part of previous development activities. However, Native Americans have occupied this region for thousands of years, and so it is possible that human remains could be discovered during excavation for development, especially when replacing buildings that have shallow foundations. Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code (CHSC) requires that, if human remains (or remains that may be human) are discovered on a project site during grading or earthmoving, the construction contractors, project archaeologist, and/or designated Native American Monitor shall immediately stop all activities within 100 feet of the find. The project proponent must then immediately inform the County Coroner and the City of the find. The coroner is permitted to examine the remains under CHSC Section 7050.5(b) to determine if the remains are those of a Native American. If human remains are determined as those of Native American origin, the applicant must comply with the State relating to the disposition of Native American burials that fall within the jurisdiction of the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) as outlined in Public Resources Code Section (PRC) 5097. The coroner then contacts the NAHC to determine the Most Likely Descendant (MLD) who will conduct an inspection and make recommendations or preferences for treatment within 48 hours of being granted access to the site. The disposition of the remains is to be overseen by the MLD to determine the most appropriate means of treating the human remains and any associated grave artifacts, in consultation with the property owner and the lead agency (in this case the City of Paramount). If the MLD is Native American, tribal representatives will be contacted to consult on the appropriate disposition of the remains. Therefore, compliance with existing State regulations with respect to disturbing human remains, including those interred outside of a formal cemetery, would result in less than significant impacts from development under the proposed Specific Plan.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Cumulative Impacts

Impact CUL-4 - Would the Specific Plan cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to cultural resources?

Analysis of Impacts

On a cumulative level, impacts to cultural resources from both the City and the surrounding jurisdictions of Los Angeles County should be considered. The region contains numerous cultural resources which, as with all cultural resources, are non-renewable. Damaging, disturbing, or destroying cultural resources results in a permanent loss of resources that can never be replaced, and future projects with impacts to cultural resources from all surrounding jurisdictions contribute to the cumulative impact to cultural resources. The existing Paramount General Plan includes policies related to preserving and improving access to the City's historical resources. The Resources Management Element of the General Plan includes Policy RM-17, which aims to initiate a cultural arts and facilities program to enhance the City image. Further, Policy RM-18 seeks to continue with the development of the community art program. Finally, Policy RM-19 aims to identify and preserve those sites/buildings that are important to the community for the benefit of the future generations that will reside or work in the City. Consistent with federal and State laws, the General Plans of the surrounding jurisdictions have similar goals and policies to protect cultural resources within their boundaries as well. Finally, state law requires the City and surrounding jurisdictions to notify Native American representatives if tribal human remains are found. By implementing General Plan policies, following required laws and regulations, and continuation of the City's required CEQA review of all development projects, the potential cumulative impacts to cultural resources would be minimized, and future development in the Planning Area under the proposed Specific Plan would not make a significant contribution to any cumulative regional impacts on cultural resources.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.5.5 – REFERENCES

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4.6 – ENERGY

This section addresses energy impacts associated with implementation of the proposed Specific Plan. Energy resources are closely tied to impacts discussed in the Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas (GHG) sections of this document, Sections 4.3 and 4.8, respectively. Many of the values presented herein reflect values derived from the air quality emissions modeling conducted for the project. Refer to Appendix D for detailed air quality and GHG emissions estimates and information on energy usage (MIG, 2025).

4.6.1 – ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Energy is primarily categorized into three areas: electricity, natural gas, and fuels used for transportation. The following describes the various types of energy, as well as where the energy is generated, how it is used, and the quantities in which it is consumed.

Electricity

Electricity is the flow of electrical power or charge (i.e., the movement of electrons between atoms). It is produced by converting sources of primary energy such as coal, natural gas, nuclear, hydropower, wind, and solar, into electrical power through various means. Generators and solar photovoltaic (PV) cells are two of the primary pieces of equipment used to produce and supply electricity to the grid. The following describes the processes through which electricity is generated by these pieces of equipment.

- **Generators.** Turbine generators convert mechanical or chemical energy into electricity. At its simplest form, an electrical generator is an electromagnet, moving wire near a magnet to direct the flow of electricity. Turbine generators do this by using a moving fluid (e.g., water, steam, combustion gases, or air) to push rotator blades that are attached to a generator. The rotation of magnets and wires within the generator produces an electromagnetic current, directing electrical flow.

- **Solar Photovoltaic Cells.** Solar photovoltaic (PV) cells convert solar energy directly into electricity. They are made up of semiconductor material that absorbs sunlight and generates an electrical current. This current is captured and transferred to wires so that it can be utilized at a different location.

Electricity production can be grouped into two main categories; electricity that is generated from renewable sources (e.g., solar and wind) and electricity that is generated from nonrenewable sources (e.g., fossil fuel combustion). Table 4.6-1 and Table 4.6-2 summarize the primary renewable and non-renewable sources of electricity, respectively, as well as how the energy from the various sources is converted into electricity.

Table 4.6-1
Renewable Sources of Electricity Production

Source	Electricity Production Process
Wind	Wind can be converted to electricity through the use of a wind turbine (historically referred to as "windmills"). Electricity from this source is produced when wind causes the turbine's blades to turn. The amount of electricity generated by a wind turbine is dependent on a number of factors, but is primarily related to how much wind energy can be collected at a given time. Wind turbines with longer blades have the capacity to generate more electricity than those with smaller blades, because they can collect more of the wind's energy. A small wind turbine could generate a similar output as a larger one, but the smaller one would need to be subject to higher wind speeds. Wind power plants, or wind farms, are composed of multiple wind turbines spread out over a large area.
Solar	The sun's energy can be converted into electricity by using solar PV cells, which produce electricity when photons from the solar energy are absorbed by the semiconductor material in the PV cell. Electrons are dislodged from the semiconductor material and absorbed by electrical conductors, which are connected in an electrical circuit. Electricity flows through the electrical circuit to an external device, such as a battery or an inverter.[(A)] Solar energy production can be increased with additional PV cells. PV cells can be connected in solar panels, and groups of solar panels can be connected into a solar array. One PV cell may power small devices such as calculators, small solar arrays may power individual residential or commercial buildings, and large arrays may produce power for utilities.
Hydroelectric	Hydroelectric energy is produced by using a naturally-flowing water source (e.g., from a river or dam) to spin the blades of a turbine, which is typically located on or adjacent to the body of water. Water is piped from a location upstream of the facility, through the turbine, and released back into the environment on the downstream side of the facility. The amount of electricity produced by a hydroelectric generator can be regulated by controlling the amount of water flowing through the turbine at a given time (e.g., greater water flow would produce more electricity).
Geothermal	Geothermal energy is produced by utilizing underground high-temperature hydrothermal resources to create steam (or superheat evaporate and other working fluid) that turns a turbine. Hot water is piped in one side of the system, used to turn the turbine, then piped back to a cooling tower before being piped underground. These power plants can pipe steam or hot water from wells that reach up to two miles into the earth.

Source: U.S. EIA 2022a, 2023a, 2023b, 2024b
(A) An inverter is a device that converts the type of electricity that is produced by PV cells (direct current, or DC, electricity) to the type of electricity that is used in appliances or in an electrical grid (alternating current, or AC electricity).

Table 4.6-2
Non-Renewable Sources of Electricity Production

Source	Electricity Production Process
Fossil Fuels	Combusting fossil fuels releases energy that can be harnessed and turned into electricity. The change in air pressure as a result of burning the material can be used to create a mechanical process that rotates a generator (e.g., using the hot air from the combusted material to move rotator blades within a generator or pistons within an internal combustion engine). Fossil fuels are hydrocarbons formed from plant and animal remains that were placed under heat and pressure from layers of sand, silt, and rock. Fossil fuels can include coal, crude oil, and natural gas. Petroleum products such as gasoline and diesel are produced from refining fossil fuels.
Nuclear	Nuclear reactors convert energy to electricity by using the heat from a nuclear reactor to evaporate water (i.e., producing steam) that rotates a turbine. Although nuclear energy is not renewable, it is often considered "green" and considered alongside renewable sources because it is a carbon-free source of electricity.
Source: U.S. DOE n.d., U.S. EIA n.d., 2023c	

Electricity production relies on different energy sources and technologies. A combination of the renewable and nonrenewable energy sources described above are used to generate electricity.

Electricity is measured in watts (W), a unit of power. For example, household lightbulbs are typically rated to consume 10 W to 50 W power. Electricity use over time can be measured in watt-hours (Wh), where, for example, one Wh is the equivalent of one W generated or consumed over the course of one hour. For example, if a 50 W lightbulb was on for one hour it would consume 50 Wh of electricity. If it was on for 100 hours, it would consume 5,000 Wh of electricity. Energy consumption in larger quantities is usually presented using kilo-, mega-, and giga-prefixes, which correspond to one-thousand, one-million, and one-billion of something, respectively. These prefixes are typically used in the following contexts when describing electricity production and consumption.

- **Kilowatts (kW)**, or 1,000 Watts, are typically used to describe large appliance and building-scale electricity consumption. For example, the average Californian household consumed 6,174 kWh of electricity in 2019 (DNV GL Energy Insights USA 2021).
- **Megawatts (MW)**, are 1,000 kW, or one million Watts. Megawatts may be used when discussing utility systems. For example, from October 2024 to November 2024, the U.S. added 5,845 MW of summer solar power generating capacity (U.S. EIA 2024c).
- **Gigawatts (GW)**, are 1,000 MW, one million kW, or one billion watts. Gigawatts may be used when discussing statewide electricity generation. For example, in 2022, California generated 203,257 GWh of electricity in-state (CEC 2023a).

Natural Gas

Natural gas is a fossil fuel-based energy source that is typically found between layers of rock or with deposits of crude oil. Natural gas can be extracted by drilling in wells or fracking. After extraction, natural gas is sent to a processing facility and then to storage or to natural gas companies.

Biomethane, also known as renewable natural gas, can be used as a substitute for fossil natural gas. Biomethane is a gas formed from the decomposition of organic matter, composed primarily of methane and carbon dioxide. It can be produced from solid waste landfills, wastewater

treatment plants, food waste, organic waste, and livestock farms. Biomethane is then treated to remove contaminants and gases such as carbon dioxide until the methane content is greater than 90% (U.S. EPA 2024d).

Natural gas can be measured in units such as therms or British thermal units (Btu), which are quantities of heat, or cubic feet, which is a volume. The U.S. EIA defines a Btu as the quantity of heat required to raise the temperature of 1 pound of liquid water by 1 degree Fahrenheit at the temperature at which water has its greatest density (approximately 39 degrees Fahrenheit) (U.S. EIA n.d.). One therm is the equivalent of 100,000 Btu. Since heat quantity and volume cannot be converted directly, there is not one conversion rate between therms and cubic feet. However, the units can be converted if the heat content per volume is known. The average heat content of natural gas in 2023 was approximately 1,038 Btu per cubic foot (U.S. EIA 2024e).

Transportation

Fuels used for transportation may include diesel, gasoline, natural gas, electricity, and hydrogen. Diesel, gasoline, and natural gas fuels have traditionally been refined from crude oil. Combusting these fuel sources in an engine releases energy that can be transferred into making an object move (e.g., rotating a vehicle's driveshaft or a boat's propeller). Diesel, which can also be biomass-based,[i] is typically used in larger pieces of equipment, such as trucks, trains boats, buses, farm equipment, and construction equipment. Gasoline (which may be blended with other liquids, such as ethanol), electricity, and hydrogen fuel cells[ii] are primarily used to power passenger vehicles.

Historical and Current Energy Production and Consumption Habits

National

Total U.S. energy consumption has increased in recent decades; however, per capita energy consumption has generally decreased since the year 2000. This is due to factors such as greater energy efficiency in appliances, vehicles, and utility scale electricity generation and a reduction in energy-intensive manufacturing (U.S. EIA 2024f). The following describes historical energy production and consumption trends in the U.S.

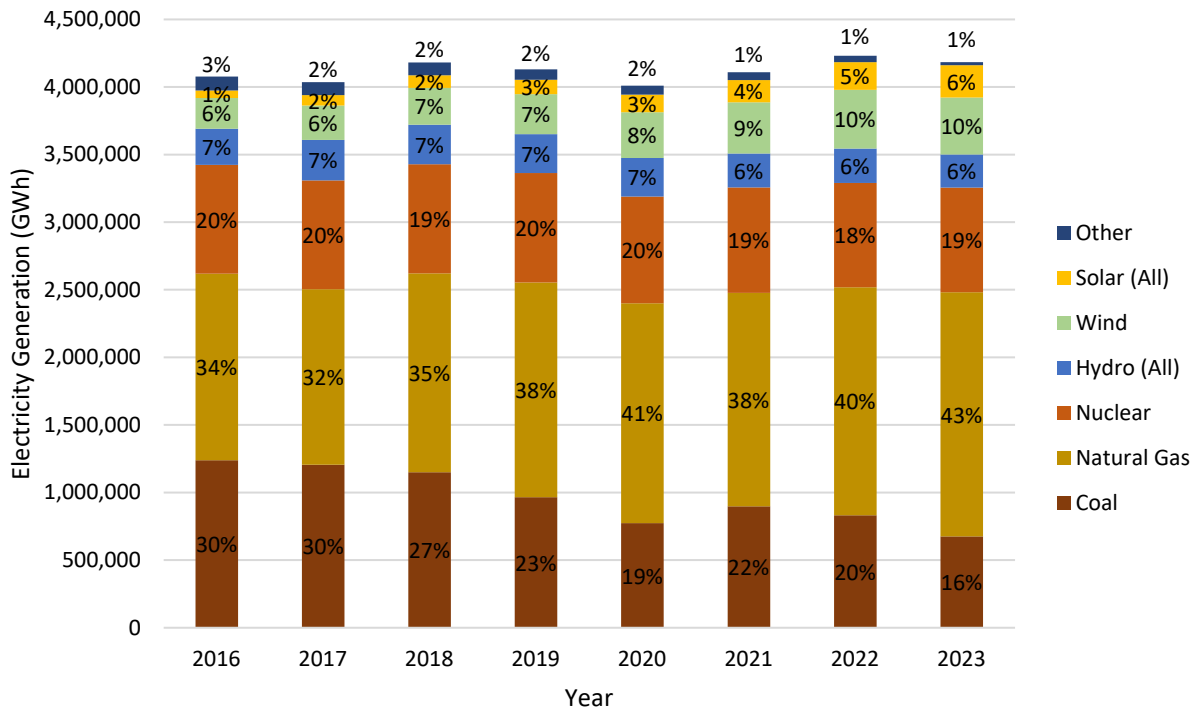
Electricity. The mix of energy sources for U.S. electricity generation has shifted in recent decades, but has primarily consisted of electricity generated from natural gas, coal, nuclear, hydroelectric, wind, and solar energy sources. Table 4.6-3 and Table 4.6-4 depict the overall quantity and make-up of electricity of electricity production in the U.S. over the last seven years.

[i] Biodiesel and renewable diesel are both produced from non-petroleum sources such as vegetable oil and animal fat. Biodiesel is consumed after it is blended with petroleum diesel. While renewable diesel may also be blended with petroleum diesel, renewable diesel can be transported and consumed directly without needing to be blended with petroleum.

[ii] Hydrogen fuel cells can produce electricity by combining hydrogen and oxygen atoms.

Table 4.6-3
United States Electricity Generation (2016 to 2023)

Energy Source	Electricity Produced Per Calendar Yr (Million GWh)							
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Natural Gas	1,379	1,298	1,472	1,589	1,627	1,579	1,687	1,806
Coal	1,239	1,206	1,149	965	773	898	832	675
Nuclear	806	805	807	809	790	778	772	775
Hydroelectric	268	300	293	288	285	252	255	245
Wind	227	254	273	296	338	378	434	421
Solar	55	77	93	107	131	164	205	239
Other[(A)]	104	95	94	77	66	59	46	22
Total Electricity	4,078	4,035	4,181	4,131	4,010	4,108	4,231	4,183
Fossil Fuels[(B)]	2,618	2,504	2,621	2,553	2,400	2,477	2,519	2,481
Non-Hydroelectric Renewables[(C)]	282	332	366	403	469	543	639	660
Total Carbon Free Electricity[(D)]	1,355	1,437	1,466	1,500	1,544	1,574	1,666	1,680



Sources: U.S. EIA n.d.
(A) "Other" sources include electricity production from petroleum coke and liquids, other gases, geothermal, and biomass.
(B) Fossil fuels include natural gas and coal.
(C) Non-hydroelectric renewables include wind and solar.
(D) Carbon-free energy sources consist of nuclear, hydroelectric, and renewable fuels.

As shown in Table 4.6-3, the amount of electricity produced from the different sources of energy varied between 2016 and 2023. Electricity production from fossil fuels (natural gas and coal), while remaining the predominant source of energy for electricity, decreased from a combined composition of approximately 64% in 2016 to approximately 59% in 2023. In particular, there was a large shift away from coal and toward natural gas over this timeframe. Whereas in 2016 the

total contribution to electricity production from coal (30%) and natural gas (34%) were similar, in 2023 the contribution from coal (16%) was much less than natural gas (43%). Nuclear power plants were the second largest generator of electricity nationwide, while electricity from renewable sources (e.g., solar, wind, hydroelectric) comprised less than a quarter of all electricity production; however, the overall electricity contribution from renewable sources, and in particular wind energy, approximately doubled over the 2016 to 2023 timeframe. While the nation's source of energy production varied from 2016 to 2023, the total amount of annual energy produced from all sources was generally constant between 4,000 and 4,200 thousand GWh of production.

Natural Gas. Nationwide natural gas consumption has increased in recent decades. In 1990, the U.S. consumed 24,369 billion cubic feet of natural gas, which increased to approximately 32,500 billion cubic feet of natural gas in 2023 (U.S. EIA 2012 and U.S. EIA 2023d).

Transportation Fuels. Petroleum products (e.g., gasoline and diesel) have historically been the predominant form of energy used within the transportation sector. Annual consumption of gasoline in the transportation sector increased from approximately 85.7 billion gallons per year in 1970 to approximately 131.1 billion gallons per year in 2023, an approximately 53% increase (U.S. EIA 2024g). Gasoline consumption has fluctuated slightly since 2007 (i.e., increasing and decreasing) but has generally remained at or around 135 billion gallons per year, deviating only from the trend at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. The use of diesel fuel increased at a substantially faster rate across the 1970 to 2023 timeframe, from approximately 11.3 billion gallons of consumption in 1970 to approximately 45.4 billion gallons in 2023, a 400% increase (U.S. EIA 2024g). Unlike gasoline consumption, which is still slightly down from pre-COVID-19 levels, diesel consumption has generally remained constant. Although petroleum productions are the primary forms of energy used within the transportation sector, other fuels are used to lesser extents, including jet fuel (also petroleum), natural gas, biofuels, and other sources (e.g., fuel oil, lubricants, propane, and electricity).

In 2022, petroleum products (gasoline, diesel, and jet fuel) accounted for approximately 90% of energy consumption in the transportation sector nationwide (U.S. EIA 2023g). Gasoline is currently the main transportation fuel used in the U.S., accounting for approximately 52% of energy consumption in the transportation sector, and is followed by diesel at 22% and jet fuel at 12%. Electricity accounted for less than one percent energy consumption in the U.S. transportation sector in 2021 (U.S. EIA 2023e).

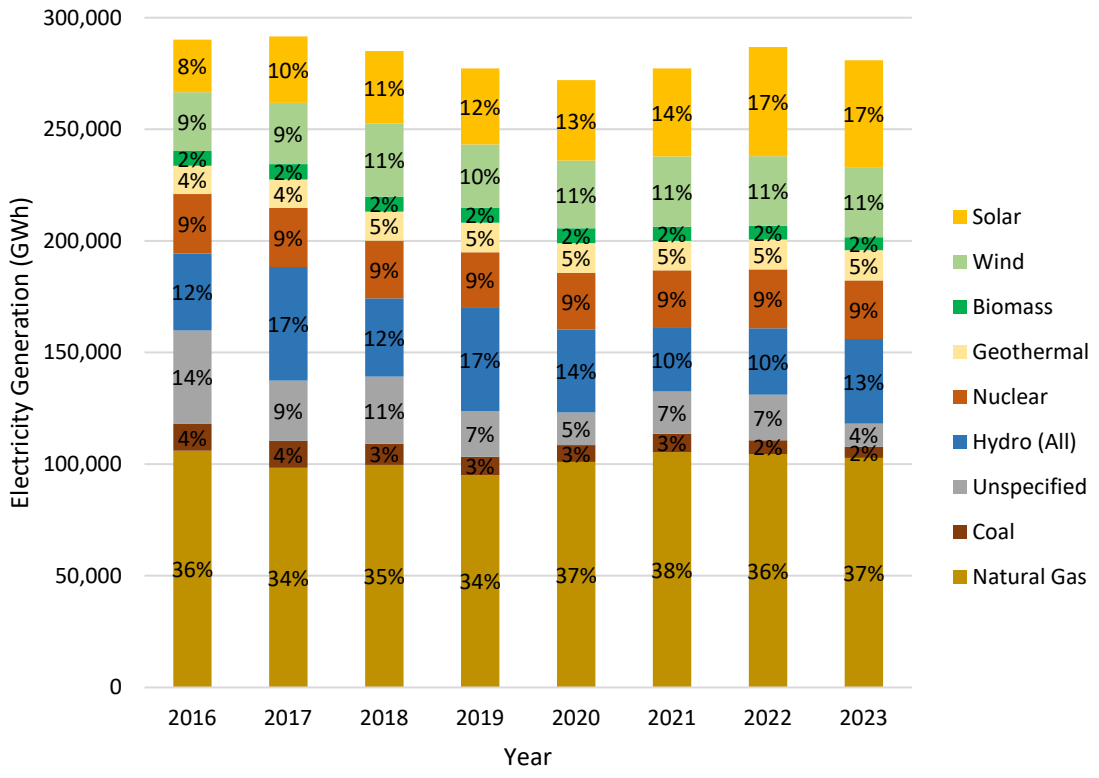
State

According to the U.S. EIA, California is the most populous state in the U.S., representing 12 percent of the total national population, has the largest economy, and is second only to Texas in total energy consumption. However, California has one of the lowest per capita energy consumption levels in the U.S. This is a result of California's mild climate, extensive efforts to increase energy efficiency, and implementation of alternative technologies. In 2023, California led the nation in electricity generation from solar and geothermal, and was the second-largest producer of electricity from biomass (U.S. EIA 2024h).

Electricity. As discussed above, California has one of the lowest per capita energy consumption levels in the U.S, which, in part, is attributable to its extensive efforts to increase energy efficiency. The State has also passed several legislative bills that have required retail-energy suppliers to increase the amount of renewable electricity supplied to customers. California's annual electricity generation and the sources that created it for the 2016 through 2023 calendar years are presented below in Table 4.6-4.

Table 4.6-4
California Electricity Generation (2016 to 2023)

Energy Source	Electricity Produced Per Calendar Year (Thousand GWh)							
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Natural Gas	106	98	100	95	101	105	104	103
Coal	12	12	9	8	7	8	6	5
Petroleum / Other	<0.5	<0.5	<0.5	<0.5	1	1	<0.5	<0.5
Nuclear	27	27	26	25	25	26	26	26
Hydroelectric	34	51	35	46	37	28	30	38
Wind	26	27	33	28	30	32	31	31
Solar	24	30	33	34	36	39	49	48
Geothermal	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	14
Biomass	7	7	7	7	7	6	6	6
Unspecified[A]	42	27	30	20	20	19	20	10
Total Electricity[B]	**291**	**292**	**285**	**278**	**273**	**278**	**287**	**281**
Fossil Fuels[C]	*118*	*111*	*110*	*104*	*109*	*114*	*111*	*108*
Non-Hydroelectric Renewables[D]	*69*	*77*	*85*	*82*	*86*	*90*	*100*	*99*
Total Carbon Free Electricity[E]	*61*	*77*	*61*	*71*	*63*	*54*	*56*	*64*



Sources: CEC 2024a
(A) "Unspecified" power is power that could not be traced to a facility, and would include a mix of fuel types
(B) Totals may not equal due to rounding
(C) Fossil fuels include natural gas and coal.
(D) Non-hydroelectric renewables include wind, solar, geothermal, and biomass
(E) Carbon-free energy sources consist of nuclear, and hydroelectric

As shown in Table 4.6-4, overall electricity consumption throughout the State has remained relatively constant over the 2016 to 2023 timeframe, from approximately 291 thousand GWh in 2016 to 281 thousand GWh in 2023 (an approximately 1 percent decrease). During this time, electricity production from natural gas and coal power plants decreased slightly from a combined total of approximately 40% to approximately 39% of the total energy supply. Biomass, geothermal, and nuclear sources have remained relatively constant at 2%, 5%, and 9%, respectively, while electricity generated from wind, and solar sources has increased. Electricity production from solar had one of the biggest relative increases in electricity production, increasing from approximately 8% to 17% between 2016 and 2023 (an approximately 113% increase). In 2023, over half of California's electricity was generated from carbon-free sources, including renewables, nuclear, and hydroelectric.

Similar to U.S. electricity generation, California electricity generation has shifted, with coal decreasing, renewables increasing, and nuclear and hydroelectric remaining relatively constant. However, while the direction of the shift in energy sources on the national and statewide level is the same, the state differs from U.S. energy consumption in the scale of this shift. For example, California's energy mix used for electricity generation contains over twice the amount of renewable fuels as the U.S.[iii]. California also uses a lower percentage of fossil fuels, mainly due to its low coal consumption.

Natural Gas. Annual natural-gas consumption in the State has fluctuated since the 1970s, but has generally remained at or around 2,100 billion cubic feet per year since the 1990s (U.S. EIA 2024i). Although California has historically accounted for approximately 7% of annual nationwide natural gas consumption, its reserves and production constitute less than 1% of the total United States (U.S. EIA n.d. and U.S. EIA 2025).

In 2023, California consumed about 2,087 billion cubic feet of natural gas, with the majority of that consumption attributable to the industrial sector (31%, including natural gas power plants) followed by the residential (22%) and commercial (12%) sectors (U.S. EIA 2024j). In 2020, approximately 88% of Californian homes used natural gas in some building system capacity, including clothes washer (77% of homes) and/or cooking appliance(s)[iv] (70% of homes) (U.S. EIA 2023f, U.S. EIA 2023g).

Transportation. California's transportation sector consumed 74.7 MMBtu of energy per capita in 2022, which ranked 36th in the nation (U.S. EIA 2023p). This means that California had the 16th best transportation energy per capita rate (i.e., most efficient) in the United States, including the District of Columbia. Much of the State's efficiency with regard to the amount of transportation energy consumed per capita can be attributed to the increase in vehicle fuel efficiency standards required by the State.

California's production of gasoline and diesel fuels supplies both in- and out-of-state demand; however, most gasoline and diesel fuel sold in California for motor vehicles is refined within the state to meet state-specific formulations required by CARB (i.e., these fuels typically are not imported from out of state). Crude oil extraction and production has been decreasing since the mid-1980s (from a peak of approximately 402 million barrels in 1986 to 124 million barrels in 2023) and is projected to continue to decline (CEC n.d.). According to taxable sales figures available

[iii] Whereas approximately 34% of electricity in California is from renewable sources (see Table 4.6-4), only 13% of electricity generated in the greater U.S. is from renewable sources (see Table 4.6-3).

[iv] Cooking appliances includes natural gas ranges, cooktops, and ovens; natural gas outdoor grills are not included in this metric.

from the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration, statewide gasoline sales have decreased from approximately 14,703 million gallons in 2014 to approximately 13,565 million gallons in 2023 (an approximately 7.5% reduction); however, this trend has not been linear. Gasoline sales increased from 2014 to 2017, remained relatively constant between 2017 and 2019, and decreased in the 2020 to 2023 timeframe. This decrease is most likely attributable to the shelter-in-place orders imposed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but is also likely associated with vehicle turnover (i.e., from older, less fuel efficient cars to newer models) across the same timeframe (CDTFA n.d.). Statewide diesel fuel sales have generally increased, from approximately 2,776 million gallons in 2014 to approximately 2,982 million gallons in 2023 (an approximately 7% increase) (CDFTA n.d.).

In 2022, California reached a milestone 1 million ZEVs sold, accounting for 40% of all ZEVs operating in the U.S. (Office of Governor Gavin Newsom 2022). By November 2024, California reached another milestone 2 million ZEVs sold and in the third quarter of 2024, 26.4% of all new vehicle sales in the state were ZEVs (Office of Governor Gavin Newsom 2024). Most of the ZEVs sold to date have been electric vehicles; however, vehicles powered by hydrogen fuel cells have also been expanding in availability and use, with 14,429 hydrogen fuel cell vehicles actively registered in California as of April 2024 (CARB 2024).

Transportation fuels are not used equally across different vehicle types in the state. For example, whereas light-duty vehicles (e.g., cars and pick-up trucks) are mainly powered by gasoline and electricity, medium- and heavy-duty vehicles (e.g., work trucks, semi-trucks, etc.) are generally powered by diesel. Natural gas can also be used as a fuel source in trucks and buses. Table 4.6-5 below shows a breakdown of statewide vehicle population in 2022, by fuel type.

Table 4.6-5
California Transportation Fuels by Vehicle Type (2022)

Vehicle Type	Breakdown in Fuel Type				
	Gasoline	Diesel	Natural Gas	Electricity	Plug-in Hybrid[(A)]
Medium- and heavy-duty trucks	8.3%	88.7%	3.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Light heavy-duty trucks	53.7%	46.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Buses	33.9%	47.6%	18.2%	0.3%	0.0%
Light-duty vehicles	96.1%	0.5%	0.0%	2.1%	1.3%

Source: EMFAC2021
(A) Plug-in hybrid vehicles are powered by gasoline and electricity.

Although each vehicle category may use several different fuel types, the majority of trucks in 2022 used diesel; most buses mostly used gasoline, diesel, and natural gas; and the majority of light duty vehicles used gasoline.

Local

Electricity. In 2022, Los Angeles County consumed approximately 68,485 GWh of electricity, about 23.8% of the state's electricity consumption (CEC, 2023b). The non-residential sector made up approximately 66% of Countywide consumption while the residential sector made up approximately 34% of Countywide consumption (CEC, 2023b).

*Natural Gas***.** Los Angeles County consumed approximately 431 million therms of natural gas in 2022, accounting for approximately 3.7% of statewide consumption. The non-residential sector made up approximately 34% of Countywide consumption, while the residential sector made up

approximately 66% (CEC, 2023c). SoCalGas provides natural gas service at the Project area. SoCalGas is the principal distributor of natural gas in Southern California and provides natural gas for residential, commercial, and industrial markets. The annual natural gas sale of SoCalGas to all markets in 2022 was approximately 5,026 million therms (CEC, 2023e).

4.6.2 – REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Federal

Federal Energy Policy and Conservation Act

In 1975, Congress enacted the Federal Energy and Policy Conservation Act, which established the first fuel economy standards for on-road motor vehicles in the United States. Pursuant to the act, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is responsible for establishing additional vehicle standards.

Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007

On December 19, 2007, the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (EISA) was signed into law. In addition to setting increased Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards for motor vehicles, the act also includes the following provisions related to energy efficiency:

- Renewable fuel standards (RFS)
- Appliance and lighting efficiency standards
- Building energy efficiency

This federal legislation requires ever-increasing levels of renewable fuels to replace petroleum. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) is responsible for developing and implementing regulations to ensure transportation fuel sold in the United States contains a minimum volume of renewable fuel. The RFS program regulations were developed in collaboration with refiners, renewable fuel producers, and other stakeholders.

The RFS program was created under the Energy Policy Act of 2005 and established the first renewable fuel volume mandate in the United States. As required under the act, the original RFS program (RFS1) required 7.5 billion gallons of renewable fuel to be blended into gasoline by 2012. Under the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (EISA), the RFS program was expanded in several key ways that laid the foundation for achieving significant reductions of GHG emissions through the use of renewable fuels, for reducing imported petroleum, and for encouraging the development and expansion of the nation's renewable fuels sector. The updated program is referred to as RFS2 and includes the following:

- EISA expanded the RFS program to include diesel, in addition to gasoline;
- EISA increased the volume of renewable fuel required to be blended into transportation fuel from 9 billion gallons in 2008 to 36 billion gallons by 2022;
- EISA established new categories of renewable fuel and set separate volume requirements for each one; and

- EISA required the U.S. EPA to apply lifecycle GHG performance threshold standards to ensure that each category of renewable fuel emits fewer GHG than the petroleum fuel it replaces (U.S. EPA 2024).

Additional provisions of the EISA address energy savings in government and public institutions, promoting research for alternative energy, additional research in carbon capture, international energy programs, and the creation of "green jobs."

Federal Vehicle Standards

In 2009, the NHTSA issued a final rule regarding fuel efficiency and GHG emissions from cars and light-duty trucks for model year 2011; and, in 2010, the U.S. EPA and NHTSA issued a final rule regulating cars and light-duty trucks for model years 2012–2016. In 2010, U.S. EPA and NHTSA proposed stringent, coordinated federal GHG and fuel economy standards for model years 2017–2025 light-duty vehicles. The proposed standards projected to achieve 163 grams per mile of carbon dioxide (CO_2) in model year 2025, on an average industry fleetwide basis, which is equivalent to 54.5 miles per gallon if this level were achieved solely through fuel efficiency. The final rule was adopted in 2012 for model years 2017–2021.

In addition to the regulations applicable to cars and light-duty trucks described above, in 2011, the U.S. EPA and NHTSA announced fuel economy and GHG standards for medium- and heavy-duty trucks for model years 2014–2018. The standards for CO_2 emissions and fuel consumption are tailored to three main vehicle categories: combination tractors, heavy-duty pickup trucks and vans, and vocational vehicles. According to the U.S. EPA, this regulatory program will reduce GHG emissions and fuel consumption for the affected vehicles by 6% to 23% over the 2010 baselines.

In August 2016, the U.S. EPA and NHTSA announced the adoption of the phase two program related to the fuel economy and GHG standards for medium- and heavy-duty trucks. The phase two program will apply to vehicles with model year 2018–2027 for certain trailers, and model years 2021–2027 for semi-trucks, large pickup trucks, vans, and all types and sizes of buses and work trucks. The final standards are expected to lower CO_2 emissions by approximately 1.1 billion metric tons (MT) and reduce oil consumption by up to 2 billion barrels over the lifetime of the vehicles sold under the program (U.S. EPA and NHTSA 2016).

In August 2018, the U.S. EPA and NHTSA released a notice of proposed rulemaking called Safer Affordable Fuel-Efficient (SAFE) Vehicles Rule for Model Years 2021-2026 Passenger Cars and Light Trucks (SAFE Vehicles Rule). On September 27, 2019, the U.S. EPA and the NHTSA published the SAFE Vehicles Rule Part One: One National Program." (84 Fed. Reg. 51,310 (Sept. 27, 2019)). The Part One Rule revoked California's authority to set its own greenhouse gas emissions standards and set zero emission vehicle mandates in California.

In April 2020, the U.S. EPA and NHTSA issued the SAFE Vehicles Rule for Model Years 2021-2026 Passenger Cars and Light Trucks (Final SAFE Rule) that relaxed federal greenhouse gas emissions and fuel economy standards. The Final SAFE Rule relaxed federal greenhouse gas emissions and Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards to increase in stringency at approximately 1.5 percent per year from model year (MY) 2020 levels over MYs 2021–2026. The previously established emission standards and related "augural" fuel economy standards would have achieved approximately 4 percent per year improvements through MY 2025. The Final SAFE Rule affects both upstream (production and delivery) and downstream (tailpipe exhaust) CO_2 emissions (CARB 2020). NHTSA repealed and the U.S. EPA rescinded the SAFE Rule Part

One in December 2021 and March 2022, respectively, restoring California's authority to implement its GHG standards and ZEV mandates (NHTSA 2024 and U.S. EPA 2023).

State

Title 24 Energy Standards

Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations, known as the Building Standards Code, contains regulations that govern structural safety and sustainability of buildings in California. The code is organized into 12 different parts, including:

Part 6 of the Title 24 Building Standards Code is referred to as the Building Energy Efficiency Standards (BEES, or Energy Code). The CEC first adopted energy efficiency standards for residential and non-residential development in 1978 in response to a legislative mandate to reduce energy consumption in the State. The standards are updated on an approximately three-year cycle to allow for the consideration and inclusion of new energy efficiency technologies and methods. The current 2022 BEES were adopted in August 2021, went into effect on January 1, 2023, and focused on establishing or expanding standards for electric heat pumps, for single-family homes to be electric-ready, for solar photovoltaic system and battery storage, and for ventilation systems (CEC 2021). The California Building Standards Commission approved the 2025 BEES in December 2024, and the 2025 BEES are expected to take effect on January 1, 2026, as scheduled.

Part 11 of the Title 24 Building Standards Code is referred to as the California Green Building Standards Code (CalGreen Code). The purpose of the CalGreen Code is to "improve public health, safety, and general welfare by enhancing the design and construction of buildings through the use of building concepts having a positive environmental impact and encouraging sustainable construction practices in the following categories: (1) planning and design; (2) energy efficiency; (3) water efficiency and conservation; (4) material conservation and resource efficiency; and (5) environmental air quality" (CDHCD n.d.). The CALGreen Code is not intended to substitute or be identified as meeting the certification requirements of any green building program that is not established and adopted by the California Building Standards Commission (CBSC). CalGreen contains both mandatory and voluntary measures. For non-residential land uses there are 39 mandatory measures including, but not limited to, exterior light pollution reduction, wastewater reduction by 20 percent, and commissioning of projects over 10,000 square feet. Two tiers of voluntary measures apply to nonresidential land uses, for a total of 36 additional elective measures.

Senate Bill 375 (Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act)

In January 2009, California SB 375, known as the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act, went into effect. The objective of SB 375 is to better integrate regional planning of transportation, land use, and housing to reduce sprawl and ultimately reduce GHG emissions and other air pollutants. SB 375 tasks the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to set GHG reduction targets for each of California's 18 regional Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). Each MPO is required to prepare a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) as part of their Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The SCS is a growth strategy in combination with transportation policies that will show how the MPO will meet its GHG reduction target. If the SCS cannot meet the reduction goal, an Alternative Planning Strategy may be adopted that meets the goal through alternative development, infrastructure, and transportation measures or policies.

In August 2010, CARB released the proposed GHG reduction targets for the MPOs. The proposed reduction targets for the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) region were 8% by year 2020 and 13% by year 2035. In September 2010 and February 2011, the 8% and the 13% targets were adopted, respectively. SCAG's Regional Council adopted 2016-2040 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (2016 RTP/SCS) on April 7, 2016, which updated the 2012 RTP/SCS.

In March 2018, CARB established new regional GHG reduction targets for SCAG and other MPOs in the state (CARB n.d.). The new SCAG targets are an 8% reduction in per capita passenger vehicle GHG reductions by 2020 and a 19% reduction by 2035. On May 7, 2020, SCAG adopted "Connect SoCal", the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS, for federal transportation conformity purposes only. On September 3, 2020, SCAG's Regional Council unanimously voted to approve and fully adopt Connect SoCal, and the addendum to the Connect SoCal Program Environmental Impact Report. Connect SoCal is designed to meet the regional GHG reduction targets for SCAG that were identified by CARB in 2018 (SCAG 2020a).

Connect SoCal is a long-range visioning plan that builds upon and expands land use and transportation strategies established over several planning cycles to increase mobility options and achieve a more sustainable growth pattern. It charts a path toward a more mobile, sustainable, and prosperous region by making connections between transportation networks, between planning strategies, and between the people whose collaboration can improve the quality of life for Southern Californians. Connect SoCal contains 10 primary goals, as detailed below:

1. Encourage regional economic prosperity and global competitiveness.
2. Improve mobility, accessibility, reliability, and travel safety for people and goods.
3. Enhance the preservation, security, and resilience of the regional transportation system.
4. Increase person and goods movement and travel choices within the transportation system.
5. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality.
6. Support healthy and equitable communities.
7. Adapt to a changing climate and support an integrated regional development pattern and transportation network.
8. Leverage new transportation technologies and data-driven solutions that result in more efficient travel.
9. Encourage development of diverse housing types in areas that are supported by multiple transportation options.
10. Promote conservation of natural and agricultural lands and restoration of habitats.

Connect SoCal's "Core Vision" centers on maintaining and better managing the transportation network for moving people and goods, while expanding mobility choices by locating housing, jobs, and transit closer together and increasing investment in transit and complete streets. The Core Vision includes: Sustainable Development, System Preservation and Resilience, Demand and System Management, Transit Backbone, Complete Streets, and Goods Movement (SCAG 2020b).

In April 2024, SCAG's Regional Council adopted Connect SoCal 2024, (2024 RTP/SCS) an update to Connect SoCal 2020 that planned development in the region through 2050 (SCAG

2024). Connect SoCal 2024 updates assumptions from Connect SoCal 2020. The Regional Growth Forecast in Connect SoCal 2024 projects a 30% higher household growth during the 2020s than was projected in Connect SoCal 2020. Connect SoCal 2024 also shifts the categories of regions that can accommodate jobs and housing from Priority Growth Areas (PGAs) to Priority Development Areas (PDAs). While PGAs and PDAs have substantial overlap, PDAs do not include Job Centers and High-Quality Transit Areas that helped compose the PGAs. Compared to Connect SoCal 2020's PGAs, SoCal 2024's PDAs include a greater percentage of new households and a substantially lower percentage of new jobs in a larger total land area.[v] Connect SoCal 2024 projects that approximately 66% of new households and 54% of new jobs between 2019 and 2050 will be located in PDAs. PDAs in Connect SoCal 2024 include Neighborhood Mobility Areas (NMAs), Transit Priority Areas (TPAs), Livable Corridors, and Spheres of Influence (SOIs). Connect SoCal 2024 is projected to achieve the region's targets for reducing greenhouse gases from automobiles and light-duty trucks by 19% per capita, from 2005 levels, by 2035.

Renewables Portfolio Standard Program

In 2002, California established its Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS) Program, with the goal of increasing the percentage of renewable energy in the state's electricity mix to 20 percent of retail sales by 2017. The *2003 Integrated Energy Policy Report* recommended accelerating that goal to 20 percent by 2010, and the *2004 Energy Report Update* further recommended increasing the target to 33 percent by 2020. The state's *Energy Action Plan* also supported this goal. In 2006 under Senate Bill 107, California's 20 percent by 2010 RPS goal was codified. The legislation required retail sellers of electricity to increase renewable energy purchases by at least one percent each year with a target of 20 percent renewables by 2010. Publicly owned utilities set their own RPS goals, recognizing the intent of the legislature to attain the 20 percent by the 2010 target.

On November 17, 2008, Governor Schwarzenegger signed Executive Order S-14-08 requiring "[a]ll retail sellers of electricity shall serve 33 percent of their load with renewable energy by 2020." The following year, Executive Order S-21-09 directed CARB, under its AB 32 authority, to enact regulations to achieve the goal of 33 percent renewables by 2020.

In October 2015, Governor Brown signed SB 350 to codify ambitious climate and clean energy goals. One key provision of SB 350 is for retail sellers and publicly owned utilities to procure "half of the state's electricity from renewable sources by 2030."

The State's RPS program was further strengthened by the passage of SB 100 in 2018. SB 100 revised the State's RPS Program to require retail sellers of electricity to serve 50% and 60% of the total kWh sold to retail end-use customers be served by renewable energy sources by 2026 and 2030, respectively, and requires 100% of all electricity supplied come from renewable sources by 2045.

[v] Connect SoCal 2020 anticipated that from 2016 to 2045, approximately 64% of households and 74% of new jobs would occur in PGAs, which comprised approximately 4% of the SCAG region's total land area. Connect SoCal 2024 anticipated that from 2019 to 2050, approximately 66% of household growth and 54% of employment growth would occur in PDAs, which comprise approximately 8.2% the SCAG region's total land area. 36% of household growth was located in more than one priority area and outside environmental constraint areas in Connect SoCal 2020 compared to 39% in Connect SoCal 2024.

Executive Order B-55-18, AB 1279, and SB 1020

On September 10, 2018, Governor Brown signed Executive Order B-55-18, to achieve carbon neutrality by moving California to 100% clean energy by 2045. This Executive Order also includes specific measures to reduce GHG emissions via clean transportation, energy efficient buildings, directing cap-and-trade funds to disadvantaged communities, and better management of the state's forest land. On September 16, 2022, Governor Newson signed into law AB 1279, the California Climate Crisis Act, and SB 1020, the Clean Energy, Jobs, and Affordability Act of 2022. AB 1279 codified California's 2045 carbon neutrality goal and established a GHG emission reduction target of 85% below 1990 levels. SB 1020 set targets for the retail sale of electricity of 90% clean electricity by 2035, and 95% by 2040, and 100% by 2045. It also set a target for 100% clean electricity for electricity serving State agencies by 2035.

Low Carbon Fuel Standard Regulation

CARB initially approved the LCFS regulation in 2009, identifying it as one of the nine discrete early action measures in the *2008 Scoping Plan* to reduce California's GHG emissions. The LCFS regulation defines a Carbon Intensity, or "CI," reduction target (or standard) for each year. The initial LCFS regulation required a reduction of at least 10 percent in the CI of California's transportation fuels by 2020. In 2018, CARB approved amendments to the LCFS regulation, which included strengthening and smoothing the carbon intensity benchmarks through 2030, adding new crediting opportunities to promote ZEV adoption, alternative jet fuel, carbon capture and sequestration, and advanced technologies to achieve deep decarbonization in the transportation sector (CARB 2020b). Under the 2018 amendments, the LCFS regulation now requires a reduction of at least 20 percent in CI by 2030 and beyond.

Sustainable Freight Plan

The Sustainable Freight Plan was adopted by CARB in July 2016, and provides a recommendation on a high-level vision and broad direction to the Governor to consider for State agencies to utilize when developing specific investments, policies, and programs related to the freight transport system that serves our State's transportation, environmental, and economic interests (CARB 2016). The Sustainable Freight Plan includes recommendations on:

- A long-term 2050 vision and guiding principles for California's future freight transportation system.
- Targets for 2030 to guide the State toward meeting the Vision.
- Opportunities to leverage State freight transport system investments.
- Actions to initiate over the next five years to make progress towards the Targets and the Vision.
- Pilot projects to achieve on-the-ground progress in the near-term.
- Additional concepts for further exploration and development, if viable.

Advanced Clean Trucks Program

The Advanced Clean Trucks (ACT) regulation was approved by CARB on June 25, 2020. The main components of the regulation are manufacturers' ZEV sales requirements and a one-time reporting requirement for large entities and fleets.

- ZEV Truck Sales. Manufacturers who certify Class 2b-8 chassis or complete vehicles with combustion engines are required to sell zero-emission trucks as an increasing percentage of their annual California sales from 2024 to 2035. By 2035, zero-emission truck/chassis sales would need to be 55% of Class 2b – 3 truck sales, 75% of Class 4 – 8 straight truck sales, and 40% of truck tractor sales.
- Company and Fleet Reporting. Large employers, including retailers, manufacturers, brokers and others, are required to report information about shipments and shuttle services. Fleet owners, with 50 or more trucks, would be required to report about their existing fleet operations. This information would help identify future strategies to ensure that fleets purchase available zero-emission trucks and place them in service where suitable to meet their needs.

Promoting the development and use of advanced clean trucks will help CARB achieve its emission reduction strategies as outlined in the SIP, Sustainable Freight Action Plan, SB 350, and AB 32.

Advanced Clean Cars Program

In January 2012, CARB approved the Advanced Clean Cars (ACC) Program (formerly known as Pavley II) for model years 2017-2025. The components of the ACC program are the Low-Emission Vehicle (LEV) regulations and the ZEV regulation. The Program combines the control of smog, soot, and global warming gases with requirements for greater numbers of zero-emission vehicles into a single package of standards. By 2025, new automobiles under California's ACC Program will emit 34 percent less global warming gases and 75 percent less smog-forming emissions.

Executive Order B-48-18, issued by Governor Brown in January 2018, establishes a target to have five million ZEVs on the road in California by 2030. This Executive Order is supported by the State's 2018 ZEV Action Plan Priorities Update, which expands upon the State's 2016 ZEV Action Plan. While the 2016 plan remains in effect, the 2018 update functions as an addendum, highlighting the most important actions State agencies are taking in 2018 to implement the directives of Executive Order B-48-18.

EO N-79-20, issued by Governor Newsom in September 2020, set a goal that 100 percent of in-state sales of new passenger cars and trucks will be zero-emission by 2035. It also set a goal that 100 percent of medium- and heavy-duty vehicles in the state be zero-emission by 2045 for all operations where feasible and by 2035 for drayage trucks. In addition, this EO set a goal to transition to 100 percent zero-emission off-road vehicles and equipment in the state by 2035 where feasible.

In August 2022, CARB approved the Advanced Clean Cars II program, which sets requirements for ZEV sales and codifies the light-duty vehicle goals in EO N-79-20. The regulation requires new light duty vehicle sales will be 35% zero emission or plug in hybrid electric vehicles in 2026, 68% in 2030, and 100% in 2035.

Advanced Clean Fleets Regulation

On April 28, 2023, CARB approved Advanced Clean Fleets (ACF), a rule that requires fleets of medium- and heavy-duty vehicles to transition to zero-emission vehicles. ACF applies to all drayage trucks, to high priority fleets, (i.e., fleets that have at least $50 million in gross annual revenue or fleets that operate 50 or more medium- and heavy-duty vehicles), and to government

fleets. The regulation places requirements on both the sale and operation of medium- and heavy-duty vehicles. Regarding the sale of vehicles, ACF requires manufacturers to sell only zero-emission medium- and heavy-duty vehicles starting in 2036. For the operation of vehicles, the regulation sets different timelines depending on the type of fleet. New drayage trucks must be zero-emission starting January 1, 2024. Existing diesel-powered drayage trucks may continue to operate until 2035, after which only zero-emission drayage trucks may operate. This structure will be implemented by the CARB Online System, which registers drayage trucks in the State.

High-priority fleets and federal fleets can choose between two options to meet the zero-emission requirements: a Model Year Schedule or a ZEV Milestone schedule. Under the Model Year Schedule, high-priority fleets and federal government fleets would purchase only zero-emission trucks starting in 2024 and would remove internal combustion powered trucks at the end of their useful life starting in 2025. Alternatively, the ZEV Milestone schedule sets requirements for a percentage of the total fleet to be zero-emission at specified years, depending on the type of vehicle. For example, under the ZEV Milestone option, box trucks and yard tractors would need to have zero-emission vehicles consist of 10% of the fleet by 2025, 50% of the fleet by 2031, and 100% by 2035. Specialty vehicles would have a longer timeline, and would need to reach 100% zero-emission vehicles by 2042. State and local government fleets may also choose the ZEV Milestone option. If State and local governments do not choose the ZEV Milestone option, new fleet purchases are required to be 50% zero-emission[vi] starting in 2024 and 100% zero-emission by 2027.[vii]

Local

<u>City of Paramount General Plan</u>

The City of Paramount 2007 General Plan includes the following policies related to energy resources:

Environmental Justice Element

Policy EJ-2.3: Assist residents in retrofitting their homes to be more energy efficient, weatherproofed, and better protected from air and noise pollution.

Policy EJ-2.6: Consult with World Energy Paramount for development of a community education campaign about the use of biodiesel at the former Paramount Petroleum Refinery.

Health and Safety Element

Policy HS-51: Enhance the resilience of buildings within the community to extreme heat, weather, and energy disruptions.

Policy HS-52: Improve the energy efficiency and weatherization of homes and businesses to reduce energy costs and carbon pollution.

[vi] State and local governments may meet the ACF requirements with near-zero-emission vehicles until 2035. After 2035, only zero-emission vehicle purchases would apply to the requirements.

[vii] If fleets have 10 or fewer vehicles or are in designated counties, zero-emission purchasing requirements would start later, in 2027.

4.6.3 – SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLDS

The methodology used to evaluate potential environmental impacts is described in Section 4.0. As identified in Appendix G of the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the proposed Specific Plan could result in a significant impact related to energy if it would:

A. Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation;
B. Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency;
C. Cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to energy.

4.6.4 – IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

This section describes potential impacts related to energy resources.

Energy Consumption

Impact ENG-1 – Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during Specific Plan construction or operation?

Analysis of Impacts

Implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would increase the demand for electricity within the Planning Area and gasoline and diesel consumption in the region during construction and operation of new land use developments.

Construction Electricity Use. Temporary electric power would be required at various construction sites throughout the city as growth occurs under Specific Plan. Electricity would be consumed by lighting and electronic equipment (e.g., computers) located in trailers used by construction crews, and by small, off-road equipment (e.g., compressors) used during development activities. However, the electricity used for such activities would be temporary and would have a negligible contribution to the overall energy consumption in the city.

Operational Electricity Use. Development facilitated under the Specific Plan would require electricity for multiple uses, including, but not limited to: building heating and cooling, lighting, appliance use (e.g., washer, dryer, microwave, etc.), and other electronics (e.g., televisions). Electricity generation was estimated in CalEEMod using default values for existing and proposed land uses. Table 4.6-6 summarizes changes in electricity consumption that would occur over the next approximately 20 years of growth envisioned by the Specific Plan.

Table 4.6-6
Estimated Operational Change in Electricity Consumption (2025 vs. 2045)

Metric	Electricity Consumption (MWh)		
	Existing Land Uses 2025[(A)]	Specific Plan Land Uses 2045[(B)]	Change
Total Electricity Consumption	2,290	25,008	+22,718
Service Population (SP)[(C)]	321	5,741	+5,420
Electricity Consumption Efficiency (MWh/yr/SP)	7.14	4.36	-2.78

Source: MIG, 2025 (see Appendix E).
(A) Electricity consumption for Existing Land Uses includes only the land uses that would be replaced under the Specific Plan. It does not include existing land uses that would be retained under the Specific Plan.
(B) Electricity consumption for Specific Plan Land Uses includes only new uses proposed by the Specific Plan. It does not include existing land uses that would be retained under the Specific Plan.
(C) Service Population is defined as the sum of the number of residents and number of jobs supported by the Specific Plan (CAPCOA, 2010). Existing conditions do not include any residents. Only the employees for the land uses that would not be retained in the Specific Plan are considered in the service population value, since energy consumption from only those land uses are presented in the table. Vendors for the swap meet were not considered employees for the purpose of this analysis.

As shown in Table 4.6-6, electricity consumption from the proposed land uses in the Planning Area in 2045 is expected to increase by approximately 22,718 MWh when compared to the existing 2025 land uses; however, on an efficiency basis, electricity consumption would decrease by approximately 39% from 7.14 MWh/yr/SP to 4.36 MW/yr/SP. Although growth would be occurring within the Planning Area under the Specific Plan, new development and land use turnover would be required to comply with statewide mandatory energy requirements outlined in Title 24, Part 6, of the California Code of Regulations (the CalGreen Code), which would decrease estimated electricity consumption in new and/or retrofitted structures. For this reason, the electrical energy that would be consumed by the proposed Specific Plan is not considered unnecessary, inefficient, or wasteful.

Construction Natural Gas Use. Substantial natural gas consumption is not anticipated to occur during construction activities that could occur with Specific Plan implementation. Fuels used for construction would generally consist of diesel and gasoline, which are discussed in the next subsection. Potential natural gas use during construction activities associated with Specific Plan growth would not substantially contribute to overall energy consumption in the city, and would not be unnecessary, inefficient, or wasteful.

Operational Natural Gas Use. The Specific Plan does not intend to include natural gas utilities in the Planning Area. However, as it is not prohibited and may be included if it is found to be required for an individual use, the potential natural gas consumption is analyzed below. Natural gas consumption from development associated with the Specific Plan may be required for various purposes, such as space and water heating in buildings. CalEEMod was used to estimate natural gas consumption associated with Specific Plan implementation. Table 4.6-7 summarizes estimated changes in natural gas consumption over the next approximately 20 years of growth envisioned by the Specific Plan.

Table 4.6-7
Estimated Operational Change in Natural Gas Consumption (2025 vs. 2045)

Metric	Natural Gas Consumption (MMBtu)		
	Existing Land Uses 2025[(A)]	Specific Plan Land Uses 2045[(B)]	Change
Total Natural Gas Consumption	3,818	48,293	+44,475
Service Population (SP)[(C)]	321	5,741	+5,420
Natural Gas Consumption Efficiency (MMBtu/yr/SP)	11.89	8.41	-3.48

Source: MIG, 2025 (See Appendix E)
(A) Natural gas consumption for Existing Land Uses includes only the land uses that would be replaced under the Specific Plan. It does not include existing land uses that would be retained under the Specific Plan.
(B) Natural gas consumption for Specific Plan Land Uses includes only new uses proposed by the Specific Plan. It does not include existing land uses that would be retained under the Specific Plan.
(C) Service Population is defined as the sum of the number of residents and number of jobs supported by the Specific Plan (CAPCOA, 2010). Existing conditions do not include any residents. Only the employees for the land uses that would not be retained in the Specific Plan are considered in the service population value, since energy consumption from only those land uses are presented in this table. Vendors for the swap meet were not considered employees for the purpose of this analysis.

Based on the demand calculations shown in Table 4.6-7, natural gas consumption from new land uses in the Planning Area in 2045 is expected to increase by approximately 44,475 MMBtu as compared to existing 2025 conditions. On an efficiency basis, however, natural gas consumption is estimated to decrease by approximately 29% from 11.89 MMBTU/yr/SP to 8.41 MMBTU/yr/SP percent.

Although growth would occur within the Planning Area over the next approximately 25 years, new development and land use turnover would be required to comply with statewide mandatory energy requirements outlined in Title 24, Part 6, of the California Code of Regulations (the CalGreen Code), which would decrease the rate at which natural gas consumption would occur in new and/or retrofitted structures (compared to older buildings that were built to prior building code standards that are less energy efficient). Additionally, actual natural gas consumption is expected to be lower than the conservative estimates calculated in CalEEMod, as the Specific Plan does not recommend building natural gas infrastructure and recent housing development in Paramount have voluntarily declined natural gas service. For these reasons, natural gas consumption by proposed land uses in the Specific Plan is not considered to be unnecessary, inefficient, or wasteful.

Construction Diesel and Gasoline Fuel Use. Diesel and gasoline fuels, also referred to as petroleum in this subsection, would be consumed during construction activities as the Planning Area is developed under the Specific Plan. Fuel use by construction equipment would be the primary energy resource consumed during development activities, and VMT associated with the transportation of construction materials (e.g., deliveries) and worker trips would also result in petroleum consumption. Whereas on site, heavy-duty construction equipment and delivery trucks would predominantly use diesel fuel, construction workers would generally rely on gasoline-powered vehicles to travel to and from construction sites. State regulations such as LCFS would reduce the carbon intensity of transportation-related fuels, and all construction projects would be required to comply with CARB's Airborne Toxic Control Measures, which restrict heavy-duty diesel vehicle idling to five minutes. Since petroleum use during construction would be temporary

at each location and required to conduct development activities, it would not be unnecessary, wasteful, or inefficient.

Operational Diesel, Gasoline, and Electric Fuel Use. Vehicle fuel consumption associated with new land uses in the Specific Plan would occur over the next approximately 20 years and would primarily be attributable to people traveling to or from the Planning Area for work, shopping, or other reasons. The amount of vehicle fuel consumption in the form of diesel, gasoline, and electricity in the Planning Area under existing 2025 and forecasted 2045 growth conditions are shown in Table 4.6-8.

Table 4.6-8.
Estimated Vehicle Fuel Consumption Changes (2025 vs. 2045)

Metric	Vehicle Fuel Consumption		
	Existing Land Uses 2025(A)	Specific Plan Land Uses 2045(B)	2025 Existing to 2045 Project Change
Total Gasoline Consumption (gal/yr)	1,287,035	375,952	-911,083
Total Diesel Consumption (gal/yr)	486,142	475,382	-10,760
Total Electricity Consumption (MWh/yr)	1,588	24,502	+22,914
Service Population	321	5,741	+5,420
Gasoline Consumption Efficiency (gal/yr/SP)	4,009	65	-3,944
Diesel Consumption Efficiency (gal/yr/SP)	1,514	83	-1,431
Electricity Consumption Efficiency (MWh/yr/SP)	4.9	4.3	-0.6

Source: MIG, 2025 (See Appendix E)
(A) Fuel consumption for existing land uses includes only the land uses that would be replaced under the Specific Plan. It does not include existing land uses that would be retained under the Specific Plan.
(B) Fuel consumption for Specific Plan land uses includes only new uses proposed by the Specific Plan. It does not include existing land uses that would be retained under the Specific Plan.
(C) Service Population is defined as the sum of the number of residents and number of jobs supported by the Specific Plan (CAPCOA, 2010). Existing conditions do not include any residents. Only the employees for the land uses that would not be retained in the Specific Plan are considered in the service population value, since energy consumption from only those land uses are presented in this table. Vendors for the swap meet were not considered employees for the purpose of this analysis.

As shown in Table 4.6-8, gasoline and diesel fuel consumption in 2045 from the new land uses proposed by the Specific Plan is anticipated to be approximately 375,952 and 475,382 gallons, respectively, while annual electricity consumption is anticipated to be approximately 24,502 MWh. Compared to existing land uses in 2025 that would be replaced in the Specific Plan, this represents approximately 911,083 fewer gallons of gasoline fuel consumed annually, approximately 10,760 fewer gallons of diesel fuel consumed annually, and approximately 22,914 more MWh of electricity consumed annually.[viii] On a service population basis, overall gasoline and diesel consumption is expected to decrease substantially by approximately 98% (from 4,009 gallons of fuel/yr/SP in 2025 to 65 gallons of fuel/yr/SP in 2045) and 95% (from 1,514 gallons of fuel/yr/SP in 2025 to 83 gallons of fuel/yr/SP in 2045), respectively, and overall electricity

viii These estimates are based on average fuel economy in Los Angeles County during the 2045 calendar year.

consumption is expected to decrease by approximately 14%[ix] (from 4.9 MWh/yr/SP in 2025 to 4.3 MWh/yr/SP in 2045).

These efficiency differences are primarily due to the substantial increase in service population under the new land uses in the Specific Plan, along with mandated increases in fuel efficiency and fleet turnover. There are numerous regulations in place that require and encourage fuel efficiency. For example, CARB has adopted an approach to passenger vehicles by combining the control of smog-causing pollutants and GHG emissions into a single, coordinated package of standards. The approach also includes efforts to support and accelerate the number of plug-in hybrids and ZEVs in California. In addition, per the requirements identified in SB 375, CARB adopted a regional goal for the SCAG or reducing per-capita GHG emissions from 2005 levels by 8% by 2020 and 19% by 2035 for light-duty passenger vehicles. In addition, the Specific Plan land uses plan increased density and mixed-use development near transit, which typically generates lower amounts of vehicle trips and VMT and contributes to the increase in fuel efficiency. On an efficiency basis (i.e., per service population), consumption of gasoline, diesel, and electricity for transportation fuel would decrease with the land uses proposed in the Specific Plan. Additionally, the consumption of vehicle fuel would be necessary to accommodate the planned level of growth envisioned by the Specific Plan. As such, vehicle fuel consumption from the Specific Plan would not be considered unnecessary, inefficient, or wasteful.

Conclusion: As described above, the consumption of electricity, natural gas, and vehicle fuel resources would be necessary to accommodate the planned level of growth envisioned by the Specific Plan. The Specific Plan supports redevelopment of the Planning Area uses with new, high density, mixed-use development near transit that would have more efficient energy consumption compared to existing conditions. For these reasons, the Specific Plan would not result in the unnecessary, inefficient, or wasteful use of energy resources. This impact would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Renewable Energy

Impact ENG-2 – Would the Specific Plan conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?

Analysis of Impacts

The Specific Plan would not conflict with nor obstruct a State or local plan adopted for the purposes of increasing renewable energy or energy efficiency. The Title 24 Building Code contains energy efficiency standards for residential and non-residential buildings. These standards address electricity and natural gas efficiency in lighting, water, heating, and air

ix The percent decrease of electricity consumption per service population may not equal due to rounding. The percent decrease is based on a calculation using the values of 4.948 MWh for existing land uses and 4.268 MWh for proposed land uses.

conditioning, as well as the effects of the building envelope (e.g., windows, doors, walls, and roofs, etc.) on energy consumption. The latest update to these standards, codified in the 2025 Title 24 Building Code, establishes mandatory renewable energy and energy efficiency standards that apply to various building systems, components, and uses. The City would enforce the 2025 Title 24 Building Code during design review and project approval processes. Other State plans, such as increasing the RPS portfolio, and increasing fuel efficiency and the number of electric vehicles on the road, would be implemented at the State level. The Specific Plan would not impede the implementation of any of these actions.

Since the Specific Plan would comply with applicable State standards and not impede any plan related to increasing renewable energy or energy efficiency, this impact would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Cumulative Impacts

Would the project cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to energy?

Analysis of Impacts

The proposed Specific Plan would consume electricity, natural gas, and transportation fuels during construction and operation (Impact ENG-1). The energy consumption by Specific Plan development activities would combine with the energy consumption from other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects. For the purposes of this cumulative energy analysis, the geographic extent for potential cumulative electricity and natural gas impacts is limited to the service territories for the Planning Area's electricity (Southern California Edison) and natural gas (Southern California Gas) service providers, while the geographic extent for cumulative transportation fuel impact is considered to be statewide.

- Cumulative Electricity and Natural Gas Impacts: The Specific Plan would not result in the unnecessary, inefficient, or wasteful use of energy resources as it is anticipated to increase energy efficiency for both electricity and potential natural gas consumption and contains recommendations to reduce its potential overall energy consumption. It is the Specific Plan's recommendation and intention not to include natural gas utilities within the Planning Area, although natural gas can be included for individual uses if it is required. The Specific Plan also recommends sustainability requirements that would increase on site renewable energy. In addition, future development projects in the city would be constructed in an orderly, purposeful, and efficient manner in compliance with all applicable design guidelines, design standards, and energy code rules and regulations. Cumulative development projects, at a minimum, would be subject to State energy efficiency standards (e.g., BEES, CalGreen Code) that conserve energy throughout each provider's service territory. Therefore, the Project would not result in a cumulative considerable contribution to cumulative energy consumption impacts.

- Transportation Fuel Impacts: The Specific Plan would not result in the unnecessary, inefficient, or wasteful use of transportation fuels because it includes a land use plan and policies that promote active transportation and transit and reduce VMT on an efficiency basis. Cumulative development projects would also consume transportation fuels, but over time, cumulative fuel consumption is expected to decrease due to State regulations pertaining to vehicle emissions standards and fuel content requirements. Therefore, the Project would not result in a considerable contribution to cumulative energy consumption impacts.

As described under Impact GHG-2, the Specific Plan would not conflict with a plan, policy, or regulation pertaining to renewable energy or energy efficiency in a manner that could result in a significant physical effect on the environment. As such, the Specific Plan would not have the potential to result in a cumulative considerable contribution to conflicts with renewable energy and energy efficiency plans.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

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List of Acronyms, Abbreviations, and Symbols	
Acronym / Abbreviation	**Full Phrase or Description**
AB	Assembly Bill
ACC	Advanced Clean Cars
Btu	British Thermal Unit
CalEEMod	California Emissions Estimator Model
Cal-EPA	California Environmental Protection Agency
CalGreen Code	California Green Building Standards Code
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CAFE	Corporate Average Fuel Economy
CBSC	California Building Standards Commission
CCR	California Code of Regulations
CEC	California Energy Commission
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CI	Carbon Intensity
CO_2	Carbon Dioxide
CO_2e	Carbon Dioxide Equivalent
EISA	Energy Independency and Security Act
EO	Executive Order
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GWh	Gigawatt-hours
IAQ	Indoor Air Quality
HQTA	High Quality Transit Area
KWh	Kilowatt-hours
LCFS	Low Carbon Fuel Standard
LEV	Low-Emissions Vehicle
MMBTUs	Million British Thermal Units
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
MWh	Megawatt Hours
NHTSA	National Highway Safety Administration
NMA	Neighborhood Mobility Area
PGA	Priority Growth Area
PV	Photovoltaic
RFS	Renewable Fuel Standards
RPS	Renewable Portfolio Standard
RTP	Regional Transportation Plan

SAFE	Safer Affordable Fuel-Efficient Vehicles Rule
SB	Senate Bill
SCAG	Southern California Association of Governments
SCE	Southern California Edison
SCS	Sustainable Communities Strategy
SoCalGas	Southern California Gas Company
SOI	Sphere of Influence
SP	Service Population
TPA	Transit Priority Area
U.S.	United States
USEIA	United State Energy Information Administration
U.S. EPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
VMT	Vehicle Miles Traveled
Yr	Year
ZEV	Zero Emission Vehicle

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4.7 – GEOLOGY AND SOILS

This EIR chapter addresses geology and soils impacts associated with the proposed Specific Plan, including earthquake fault rupture, seismic hazards, liquefaction, landslides, soil erosion, and unstable soils.

4.7.1 – ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The City of Paramount is subject to flooding, earthquakes, earthquake-induced hazards such as ground shaking and liquefaction, and pollution from hazardous materials. Hazard vulnerability assessment requires the analysis of many factors, including population and property distribution, event frequency, susceptibility, infrastructure, and disaster preparedness.

Seismic Hazards

Seismicity is a well-known hazard of Southern California. The region straddles the Earth's two largest tectonic plates: the northwest-moving Pacific plate and southwest-trending North American plate (DOC, 2024). Movement along this boundary has resulted in many earthquakes from the region's numerous faults. Small tremors generally result in mild ground shaking, with few adverse effects on structures and landforms. However, significant earthquakes can produce wide-scale damage to properties and result in loss of life. Modern building codes have mitigated the level of damage from more recent quakes; however, there are older structures located within the Planning Area, and more generally the City of Paramount that might not withstand seismic hazards resulting from a major event.

Faults

According to the California Department of Conservation, there are no faults underlying the City of Paramount or the Planning Area (DOC, 2024b). However, the Puente Hills blind thrust system is located approximately 0.85 miles to the east, the Los Alamitos Fault is located approximately 3.85 to the southeast, and the Newport-Inglewood-Rose Canyon fault zone is located approximately 5.10 miles to the southwest. The Newport-Inglewood-Rose Canyon fault zone is considered an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone.

Landslides and Liquefaction

Landslides can be attributed to a number of factors, including steep slopes, unstable terrain, and proximity to earthquake faults. The City of Paramount is located in the Los Angeles Basin, and is relatively flat. The City is not located within close proximity to any mountains, cliffs, hills or slopes that could expose the City to landslides. As such, the Planning Area is not considered susceptible to landslides.

Liquefaction is a form of ground failure that occurs when soil transforms from a solid state to liquefied condition due to intense seismic ground shaking. Liquefaction typically occurs in loose granular materials, with saturated silt and clay contents, at shallow groundwater tables less than 50 feet from the surface. According to the California Department of Conservation, the entire City of Paramount, including the Planning Area, is susceptible to liquefaction and ground failure from seismically induced ground shaking (DOC, 2024).

Flooding

The terms “100-year flood zone” and “500-year flood zone” refer to the statistical probability of a severe flood condition occurring during a period of extreme rainfall or runoff once every 100 or 500 years. A 100-year flood event refers to a flood that has a 1 in 100 chance of occurring with the same or greater intensity in any given year. Contrary to its name, a 100-year flood can occur any year. Typically, portions of the City of Paramount have been prone to occasional urban flooding due to debris accumulation on storm drains and aged drainage systems (Paramount, 2022). Otherwise, the City of Paramount has long had a high degree of flood protection due to the construction of dams along the San Gabriel and Rio Hondo Rivers and the channelization of the Los Angeles River in the 1950s. According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rates Maps (FIRM) system, the City of Paramount is located in Zone X and characterized as an area with reduced flood risks due to levees (FEMA, 2024).

Dam Inundation

There are two major dams that could potentially affect the City in the event of a dam failure. The Whittier Narrows Dam on the San Gabriel River at the southern end of the San Gabriel Valley, and the Hansen Dam located on the northern edge of the San Fernando Valley. In particular, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has determined that the 60-year-old Whittier Narrows Dam is structurally unsafe and poses a potentially catastrophic risk to the communities along the San Gabriel River floodplain, including the City of Paramount, which is geographically located in the flood inundation area should a dam failure occur.

4.7.2 – REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Federal

<u>National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program</u>

Established by Congress in 1977, the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program (NEHRP) leads the federal government’s efforts to reduce the fatalities, injuries, and property losses caused by earthquakes. The four basic NEHRP goals are:

- Develop effective practices and policies for earthquake loss reduction and accelerate their implementation.
- Improve techniques for reducing earthquake vulnerabilities of facilities and systems.
- Improve earthquake hazards identification and risk assessment methods, and their use.
- Improve the understanding of earthquakes and their effects.

In its initial NEHRP authorization, and in subsequent reauthorizations, Congress has recognized that several key federal agencies can contribute to earthquake mitigation efforts.

<u>Federal Antiquities Act of 1906</u>

Protects paleontological resources on federal lands under Subsection 8.16.2.

State

Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act

The Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zones Act was signed into law in 1972 (In 1994 it was renamed the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act). The primary purpose of the Act is to mitigate the hazard of fault rupture by prohibiting the location of structures for human occupancy across the trace of an active fault. The act dictates that cities and geologists delineate "Earthquake Fault Zones" along faults that are "sufficiently active" and "well defined." The boundary of an "Earthquake Fault Zone" is generally about 500 feet from active faults. Major counties are required to withhold development permits for sites within an Earthquake Fault Zone until geologic investigations demonstrate that the sites are not threatened by surface displacements from future faulting.

Seismic Hazard Mapping Act

The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act only addresses the hazard of surface fault rupture and is not directed toward other earthquake hazards. In 1990 the State passed the Seismic Hazards Mapping Act (SHMA), which addresses non-surface fault rupture earthquake hazards, including strong ground shaking, liquefaction, and seismically induced landslides. The California Geological Survey (CGS) is the principal State agency charged with implementing the Act. Pursuant to the SHMA, the CGS is directed to provide local governments with seismic hazard zone maps that identify areas susceptible to liquefaction, earthquake-induced landslides, and other ground failures. The goal is to minimize loss of life and property by identifying and mitigating seismic hazards. The seismic hazard zones delineated by the CGS are referred to as "zones of required investigation." Site-specific geological hazard investigations are required by the SHMA when construction projects fall within these areas.

Natural Hazards Disclosure Act

The Natural Hazards Disclosure Act requires that sellers of real property and their agents provide prospective buyers with a "Natural Hazard Disclosure Statement" when the property being sold lies within one or more State-mapped hazard areas.

California Building Code

The State regulations protecting structures from seismic hazards are contained in the California Code of Regulations, Title 24 (the California Building Code (CBC)), which is updated on a triennial basis. These regulations apply to public and private buildings in the State. Provisions of the CBC address (among other topics) fire safety, access for disabled persons, and seismic-resistant construction design.

California Public Resources Code Chapter 1.7, Section 5097.5 (Stats. 1965, c. 1136, p. 2792)

Defines any unauthorized disturbance or removal of a fossil site or fossil remains on public land as a misdemeanor and specifies that state agencies may undertake surveys, excavations, or other operations as necessary on state lands to preserve or record paleontological resources under Subsection 8.16.2.2

Regional

South Coast Air Quality Management District Rules

Rule 403 requires the implementation of best available dust control measures (BACM) during active operations capable of generating fugitive dust. Rule 403.1 is a supplemental rule to Rule 403 and is applicable to human-made sources of fugitive dust. The purpose of this rule is to reduce fugitive dust and resulting PM_{10} emissions from human-made sources. Rule 403.1 requires a Fugitive Dust Control Plan approved by South Coast AQMD or an authorized local government agency prior to initiating any construction/earth-moving activity. These requirements are only applicable to construction projects with 5,000 or more square feet of surface area disturbance.

Local

City of Paramount General Plan

The City of Paramount General Plan includes the following policies related to geology and soils:

Health and Safety Element

Policy HS-1: The City of Paramount will strive to minimize damage to life and property in the event of a major disaster.

Policy HS-2: The City of Paramount will work to identify and improve existing buildings that do not meet fire or earthquake standards.

Policy HS-3: The City of Paramount will identify areas of high risk (high densities, older structures, fire hazards) so that disaster response may be prioritized.

Policy HS-4: The City of Paramount will maintain an inventory of alternative emergency resources in the City (portable water, water delivery systems, communication, security, waste collection, and emergency power for critical facilities).

Policy HS-5: The City of Paramount will identify critical facilities for use during disasters and inform appropriate disaster assistance agencies of their location and capabilities.

Policy HS-6: The City of Paramount will assign disaster response duties to appropriate public employees.

Policy HS-7: The City of Paramount will work to minimize serious injury and loss of life in the event of a major disaster.

Policy HS-8: The City of Paramount will strive to prevent serious structural damage to critical facilities and structures, particularly where large numbers of people are apt to congregate.

Policy HS-9: The City of Paramount will work to ensure that vital services and functions can continue following a major earthquake.

Policy HS-10: The City of Paramount will work to educate the community on how the effects of a major earthquake can be reduced.

Policy HS-11: The City of Paramount will develop an information program to familiarize citizens with emergency preparedness in the event of a major earthquake.

Policy HS-12: The City of Paramount will require special soils and structural investigations for all larger structures or development involving large groups of people pursuant to State requirements.

Policy HS-13: The City of Paramount will continue to employ the code enforcement program, including the identification of pre-1933 structures, and require their rehabilitation.

Policy HS-14: The City of Paramount will continue redevelopment efforts, particularly in older commercial and industrial areas.

Policy HS-44: Maximize the resiliency of essential public facilities to risks and hazards of flooding.

Policy HS-45: Evaluate the need to expand the capacity of flood control facilities to minimize flood hazards resulting from extreme weather events.

Policy HS-46: Monitor the work of the Army Corps of Engineers' and other federal agencies' response plan to repair the Whittier Narrows Dam.

Policy HS-47: Encourage natural flood control infrastructure and techniques to capture storm water, recharge aquifers, and prevent flooding near established drainage systems and channels.

City of Paramount Municipal Code

Municipal Code Chapter 8.20 (Urban Stormwater Management) includes requirements for the implementation of soil erosion control measures and other best management practices for industrial and commercial facilities. In addition, Municipal Code Chapter 15.32 (Floodplain Management Regulations) includes requirements for controlling flood-related erosion. Finally, Municipal Code Chapter 17.96 (Water-Efficient Landscape Provisions) requires inclusion of landscaping in new developments for the purpose of preventing erosion.

4.7.3 – SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLDS

The methodology used to evaluate potential environmental impacts is described in Section 4.0. As identified in Appendix G of the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Specific Plan Update could result in a significant impact if it:

A. Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury or death involving:

   i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or

based on other substantial evidence of a known fault. Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.

ii) Strong seismic ground shaking.

iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction.

iv) Landslides.

B. Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil.

C. Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse.

D. Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code, creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property.

E. Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water.

F. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature.

G. Would the project cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to Geology and Soils.

4.7.4 – IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

This section describes potential impacts related to geology and soils which could result from the implementation of the project and recommends mitigation measures as needed to reduce significant impacts.

Fault Rupture or Groundshaking Effects

Impact GEO-1 – Would the Specific Plan directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury or death involving rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault; strong seismic ground shaking; seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction; or landslides?

Analysis of Impacts

Fault Rupture/Strong Seismic Shaking. The City of Paramount and the Planning Area are located in a seismically active region, and as such are susceptible to various forms of seismic activity. There are no faults underlying the City of Paramount or the Planning Area. However, the Puente Hills blind thrust system is located approximately 0.85 miles to the east, the Los Alamitos Fault is located approximately 3.85 to the southeast, and the Newport-Inglewood-Rose Canyon fault zone is located approximately 5.10 miles to the southwest. The Newport-Inglewood-Rose Canyon fault zone is considered an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone. Therefore, the potential for ground-shaking is severe for all areas of Paramount given the location of fault lines in and around the city. The 2022 California Building Code (CBC) has established guidelines for building design and construction based on seismic constraints and

expected ground-shaking and ground failure throughout California. Through the City's existing development review process, proposed private projects are evaluated against the seismic design constraints of all pertinent building codes. New developments under the proposed Specific Plan would be required to adhere to the design and repair requirements established in the CBC, and sufficiently mitigate for any potential impacts. Therefore, adherence to existing plans and regulations would ensure that impacts related to fault rupture and/or strong seismic ground-shaking are less than significant.

Landslides. The City of Paramount is generally flat, and there are no portions of the City characterized by steep, unstable terrain or slopes that could contribute to an increased risk of landslides in the area. As such, impacts from landslides are not anticipated within the Planning Area.

Liquefaction. Liquefaction is another form of ground failure that occurs when soil transforms from a solid state to liquefied condition due to intense seismic ground-shaking. According to the California Department of Conservation, the entire City of Paramount, including the Planning Area, is susceptible to liquefaction and ground failure from seismically induced ground-shaking. As such, given the project site's location in a seismically active area, structures may be damaged during earthquakes or other forms of strong seismic activity that result in liquefaction. However, with adherence to State design requirements established in the CBC, damage to structures and their surroundings would be minimized to less than significant.

The Health and Safety Element of the current General Plan includes Policy HS-1, which strives to minimize damage to life and property in the event of a major disaster. Policy HS-2 aims to identify and improve existing buildings that do not meet fire or earthquake standards. In addition, Policy HS-7 works to prevent serious structural damage to critical facilities and structures, particularly where large numbers of people are apt to congregate. Policy HS-8 strives to prevent serious structural damage to critical facilities and structures, particularly where large numbers of people are apt to congregate. Policy HS-9 seeks to ensure that vital services and functions can continue following a major earthquake. Further, Policy HS-10 aims to educate the community on how the effects of a major earthquake can be reduced. Policy HS-11 requires the City to develop an information program to familiarize citizens with emergency preparedness in the event of a major earthquake. Policy HS-12 requires the preparation of special soils and structural investigations for all larger structures or development involving large groups of people pursuant to State requirements. Implementation of these General Plan policies would ensure new development under the proposed Specific Plan would not result in significant impacts related to fault rupture or strong seismic ground-shaking.

<u>Level of Significance Before Mitigation</u>

Less than Significant

<u>Mitigation Measures</u>

None required.

Soil Erosion

Impact GEO-2 – Would the Specific Plan Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

Analysis of Impacts

Topsoil is used to cover surface areas for the establishment and maintenance of vegetation due to its high concentrations of organic matter and microorganisms. The City of Paramount in general, and the Planning Area in particular, are fully developed urban areas with very little exposed surficial soils. However, there is the potential to expose surface soils to wind and water erosion during construction activities. Wind erosion would be minimized through soil stabilization measures required by SCAQMD Rule 403 (Fugitive Dust), which requires daily watering of exposed soils. Water erosion would be prevented through the City's standard erosion control practices required pursuant to the CBC and the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) regulations, such as silt fencing, fiber rolls, or sandbags. Following construction of future development projects, opportunities for substantial soil erosion would be further minimized as project sites would be entirely developed.

In addition, the Health and Safety Element of the current General Plan includes Policy HS-12, which requires preparation of special soils and structural investigations for all larger structures or development involving large groups of people pursuant to State requirements. The City's development review process will also evaluate proposed development against established BMPs and other water quality-related guidelines, many of which are designed to control runoff and erosion. Finally, the City's Municipal Code includes requirements for the implementation of soil erosion control measures and other best management practices for industrial and commercial facilities, requirements for controlling flood-related erosion, and requirements for inclusion of landscaping in new developments for the purpose of preventing erosion. With implementation of General Plan Policy HS-12, water quality regulatory permitting requirements, and guidelines for erosion control in the Municipal Code, potential impacts related to erosion from future development within the Planning Area under the proposed Specific Plan would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Unstable Geologic Unit

Impact GEO-3 – Would the Specific Plan be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?

Analysis of Impacts

As indicated in Impact GEO-1, the Planning Area is relatively flat and not susceptible to landslides. Lateral spreading is the downslope movement of surface sediment due to

liquefaction in a subsurface layer. The downslope movement is due to a combination of gravity and ground-shaking. Lateral spreading has been observed to generally take place toward a free face (i.e., retaining wall, slope, or channel) and to lesser extent on ground surfaces with a very gentle slope. As indicated in Impact GEO-1, the Planning Area is in an area with a high susceptibility to liquefaction, and thus a high potential for lateral spreading to occur on development sites. In addition, because the Planning Area is located in a seismically active region, seismic-induced conditions could affect structures and their occupants of proposed future development under the Specific Plan. However, as also indicated in Impact GEO-2, future developments under the proposed Specific Plan would be required to be in compliance with existing CBC regulations, which limit hazardous impacts that would arise from any unstable soils.

The Health and Safety Element of the current General Plan includes HS-12, which requires preparation of special soils and structural investigations for all larger structures or development involving large groups of people pursuant to State requirements. Such studies would include projected changes to stability related to erosion, and the development of mitigation strategies for new development projects in areas with the potential for liquefaction. In addition to the General Plan, the CBC has guidelines on building design and construction based on onsite soil constraints. During the City's existing development review process, future development projects would be evaluated in light of actual onsite geologic or soil constraints and all pertinent building codes. With implementation of General Plan policies and all applicable building codes, potential impacts related to an unstable geologic unit or soil within the Planning Area would be reduced to less than significant levels.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Expansive Soil

Impact GEO-4 – Would the Specific Plan be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code, creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?

Analysis of Impacts

As indicated in the Health and Safety Element of the existing General Plan, soils in the City of Paramount are considered expansive as they are susceptible to liquefaction. As such, future development under the proposed Specific Plan would be required to implement CBC/LACBC guidelines on building design and construction based on onsite soil constraints. During the City's existing development review process, proposed private projects are evaluated in light of actual onsite geologic or soil constraints and all pertinent building codes.

Additionally, the Health and Safety Element of the current General Plan includes HS-12, which requires preparation of special soils and structural investigations for all larger structures or development involving large groups of people pursuant to State requirements. With implementation of existing General Plan policies and applicable building codes, potential

impacts related to expansive soils creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property within the Planning Area would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

No Impact

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Alternative Waste Water Systems

Impact GEO-5 – Would the Specific Plan have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?

Analysis of Impacts

The Planning Area is connected to the existing municipal sewer system, and future developments proposed as part of the Specific Plan would connect to this system as well. As indicated in Impacts GEO-3 and GEO-4, any impacts related to unstable or expansive soils are not considered significant. Since septic or other alternative wastewater treatment systems are not permitted in the City or Planning Area, and would not be included as part of the proposed Specific Plan, no impacts related to septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems relative to future development within the Planning Area would occur.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

No impact.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Paleontological Resources

Impact GEO-6 – Would the Specific Plan directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

Analysis of Impacts

The Planning Area is already developed and located in a highly urbanized and trafficked area, and as such has been highly disturbed during previous earth moving activities. Any buried paleontological resources would likely have already been uncovered or destroyed during these activities. Given that the Planning Area has been previously disturbed with existing development, it is considered unlikely that paleontological resources (fossil evidence of life from past geologic time frames) would be found. Paramount's development review process would require research and technical analysis to determine if a site contains identified or possible paleontological or unique geologic resources. Because of the low potential for paleontological discovery, the existing General Plan does not contain any goals, policies, or implementation

programs relative to paleontological resources. With implementation of the City's existing development review process, potential impacts related to paleontological resources from future development within the Planning Area would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Cumulative Impacts

Impact GEO-7 – Would the Specific Plan cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to Geology and Soils?

Analysis of Impacts

The Planning Area is subject to ground-shaking from regional faults, with the Planning Area being susceptible to seismic-related constraints such as liquefaction and unstable or expansive soil. Given the City's location in a seismically active region, future development in the Planning Area is subject to potential seismic constraints which may present a potentially significant impact on future structures. However, the construction of new structures as proposed in the Specific Plan would be required to be designed and constructed according to CBC guidelines and seismic standards to minimize any risk of damage or harm to structures and residents. Potential cumulative impacts to future development from geologic, seismic, and soil constraints are considered less than significant, and future development in the Planning Area proposed under the Specific Plan would not make a significant contribution to any cumulative regional impacts on geologic, seismic, soil, or paleontological resources.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant cumulative impacts.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.7.5 – REFERENCES

California Department of Conservation (DOC). 2024a. California Geological Survey (CGS) Regulatory Maps. Web: https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/ [Accessed January 2025].

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Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, 2007. Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) Preparation Manual. Web: https://dpw.lacounty.gov/cons/specs/SWPPPManual.pdf [Accessed January 2025].

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4.8 – GREENHOUSE GASES

This section describes the existing greenhouse gases (GHG) setting of the Planning Area; identifies associated regulatory requirements; evaluates the potential GHG and climate change impacts of the proposed Clearwater Specific Plan; and identifies mitigation measures related to implementation of the project. The methodologies and assumptions used in the preparation of this section follow guidance from the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). Information on existing GHG emissions levels and applicable Federal and State regulations were obtained from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA), California Air Resources Board (CARB), and SCAQMD. This GHG analysis has been closely coordinated with the Air Quality and Energy analyses in Sections 4.3 and 4.6 of this EIR. Please refer to Appendix D for detailed air quality and GHG emissions estimates (MIG, 2025).

4.8.1 – ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Climate Change

Climate change is the distinct change in measures of climate for a long period of time. Climate change can result from natural processes and from human activities. Natural changes in the climate can be caused by indirect processes such as changes in the Earth's orbit around the Sun or direct changes within the climate system itself (i.e. changes in ocean circulation). Human activities can affect the atmosphere through emissions of gases and changes to the planet's surface. Emissions affect the atmosphere directly by changing its chemical composition, while changes to the land surface indirectly affect the atmosphere by changing the way the Earth absorbs gases from the atmosphere. The term "climate change" is preferred over the term "global warming" because "climate change" conveys the fact that other changes can occur beyond just average increase in temperatures near the Earth's surface. Elements that indicate that climate change is occurring on Earth include:

- Rising of global surface temperatures by 1.3° Fahrenheit (°F) over the last 100 years
- Changes in precipitation patterns
- Melting ice in the Arctic
- Melting glaciers throughout the world
- Rising ocean temperatures
- Acidification of oceans
- Range shifts in plant and animal species

Climate change is intimately tied to the Earth's greenhouse effect. The greenhouse effect is a natural occurrence that helps regulate the temperature of the planet, and without it, life as we know it on Earth would not exist. Human activities since the beginning of the industrial revolution (approximately 275 years) have been adding to the natural greenhouse effect by increasing the gases in the atmosphere that "trap" energy, thereby contributing to an average increase in the Earth's temperature. Human activities that enhance the greenhouse effect are detailed below.

Greenhouse Gases

Gases that "trap" heat in the atmosphere and affect regulation of the Earth's temperature are known as "greenhouse gases". Many chemical compounds in the Earth's atmosphere exhibit the GHG property. GHG allows sunlight to enter the atmosphere freely. When the sunlight strikes the Earth's surface, it is either absorbed or reflected back toward space. Earth, or materials near the Earth's surface, that have absorbed energy from sunlight warm up during the daytime and emit infrared radiation back toward space during both the daytime and nighttime hours. GHG absorbs this long-wave, infrared radiation and helps keep the energy in the Earth's atmosphere.

GHG that contribute to climate regulation are a different type of pollutant than criteria or hazardous air pollutants because climate regulation is global in scale, both in terms of causes and effects. Some GHG are emitted to the atmosphere naturally by biological and geological processes such as evaporation (water vapor), aerobic respiration (carbon dioxide, or CO_2), and off-gassing from low-oxygen environments such as swamps or exposed permafrost (methane or CH_4). However, GHG emissions from human activities such as fuel combustion (e.g., CO_2) and refrigerants use (e.g., hydrofluorocarbons, or HFCs) significantly contribute to overall GHG concentrations in the atmosphere, climate regulation, and global climate change. Human production of GHG has increased steadily since pre-industrial times (approximately pre-1880), and atmospheric CO_2 concentrations have increased from a pre-industrial value of 280 parts per million (ppm) in the early 1800s to approximately 431 ppm in May 2025 (NOAA, 2025). The effects of increased GHG concentrations in the atmosphere include increasing shifts in temperature and precipitation patterns and amounts, reduced ice and snow cover, sea level rise, and acidification of oceans. These effects in turn will impact food and water supplies, infrastructure, ecosystems, and overall public health and welfare.

The 1997 United Nations' Kyoto Protocol international treaty set targets for reductions in emissions of four specific GHG—CO_2, CH_4, nitrous oxide (N_2O), and sulfur hexafluoride (SF_6)—and two groups of gases— hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) and perfluorocarbons (PFCs). These GHG are the primary GHG emitted into the atmosphere by human activities. Water vapor is also a common GHG that regulates the Earth's temperature; however, the amount of water vapor in the atmosphere can change substantially from day to day, whereas other GHG emissions remain in the atmosphere for longer periods of time. Black carbon consists of particles emitted during combustion; although a particle and not a gas, black carbon also acts to trap heat in the Earth's atmosphere. The most common GHG are described below.

- **Carbon Dioxide (CO_2)** is emitted and removed from the atmosphere naturally. Animal and plant respiration involves the release of CO_2 from animals and its absorption by plants in a continuous cycle. The ocean-atmosphere exchange results in the absorption and release of CO_2 at the sea surface. CO_2 is also released from plants during wildfires. Volcanic eruptions release a small amount of CO_2 from the Earth's crust. Human activities that affect CO_2 in the atmosphere include burning of fossil fuels, industrial processes, and product uses. Combustion of fossil fuels used for electricity generation and transportation are the largest source of CO_2 emissions in the United States. When fossil fuels are burned, the carbon stored in them is released into the atmosphere entirely as CO_2. Emissions from industrial activities also emit CO_2 such as cement, metal, and chemical production and use of petroleum produced in plastics, solvents, and lubricants.
- **Methane (CH_4)** is emitted from human activities and natural sources. Natural sources of CH_4 include wetlands, gas hydrates, permafrost, termites, oceans, freshwater bodies, soils, and wildfires. Human activities that cause CH_4 releases include fossil fuel

production, animal digestive processes from farms, manure management, and waste management. It is estimated that 50% of global CH_4 emissions are human generated. Releases from animal digestive processes at agricultural operations are the primary source of human-related CH_4 emissions. CH_4 is produced from landfills as solid waste decomposes. CH_4 is a primary component of natural gas and is emitted during its production, processing, storage, transmission, distribution, and use. Decomposition of organic material in manure stocks or in liquid manure management systems also releases CH_4. Wetlands are the primary natural producers of CH_4 because the habitat is conducive to bacteria that produce CH_4 during decomposition of organic material.

- **Nitrous Oxide (N_2O)** is emitted from human sources such as agricultural soil management, animal manure management, sewage treatment, combustion of fossil fuels, and production of certain acids. N_2O is produced naturally in soil and water, especially in wet, tropical forests. The primary human-related source of N_2O is agricultural soil management due to use of synthetic nitrogen fertilizers and other techniques to boost nitrogen in soils. Combustion of fossil fuels (mobile and stationary) is the second leading source of N_2O, although parts of the world where catalytic converters are used (such as California) have significantly lower levels than those areas that do not.
- **Sulfur Hexafluoride (SF_6)** is commonly used as an electrical insulator in high-voltage electrical transmission and distribution equipment such as circuit breakers, substations, and transmission switchgear. Releases of SF_6 occur during maintenance and servicing as well as from leaks of electrical equipment.
- **Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) and Perfluorocarbons (PFCs)** are entirely human made and are mainly generated through various industrial processes. These types of gases are used in aluminum production, semiconductor manufacturing, and magnesium production and processing. HFCs and PFCs are also used as substitutes for ozone-depleting gases like chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and halons.

GHG can remain in the atmosphere long after they are emitted. The potential for a particular greenhouse gas to absorb and trap heat in the atmosphere is considered its global warming potential (GWP). The reference gas for measuring GWP is CO_2, which has a GWP of one. By comparison, CH_4 has a GWP of 28, which means that one molecule of CH_4 has 28 times the effect on global warming as one molecule of CO_2. Multiplying the estimated emissions for non-CO_2 GHG by their GWP determines their CO_2 equivalent (CO_2e), which enables a project's combined GWP to be expressed in terms of mass CO_2 emissions. The GWP and estimated atmospheric lifetimes of the common GHG are shown in Table 4.8-1 (Global Warming Potential (GWP) of Common GHG (100-Year Horizon)).

Table 4.8-1
Global Warming Potential (GWP) of Common GHG (100-Year Horizon)

GHG	Lifetime (years)	GWP[(A)]
Carbon Dioxide (CO_2)	50-200	1
Methane (CH_4)	12	28
Nitrous Oxide (N_2O)	114	265
HFC-23	270	12,400
HFC-134a	14	1,3,00
HFC-152a	1.4	138
PFC-14	50,000	6,630
PFC-116	10,000	11,100
Sulfur Hexafluoride (SF_6)	3,200	23,500

Source: IPCC 2014
GWPs are based on the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 5th Assessment Report.

Climate Change and California

The 2009 California Climate Adaptation Strategy prepared by the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) identified anticipated impacts to California due to climate change through extensive modeling efforts. General climate changes in California indicate that:

- California is likely to get hotter and drier as climate change occurs with a reduction in winter snow, particularly in the Sierra Nevada Mountain Range.
- Some reduction in precipitation is likely by the middle of the century.
- Sea levels will rise up to an estimated 55 inches.
- Extreme events such as heat waves, wildfires, droughts, and floods will increase.
- Ecological shifts of habitat and animals are already occurring and will continue to occur (CNRA, 2009).

It should be noted that changes are based on the results of several models prepared under different climatic scenarios; therefore, discrepancies occur between the projections and the interpretation. The potential impacts of global climate change in California are detailed below.

In January 2018, the CNRA adopted *Safeguarding California Plan: 2018 Update*, which built on nearly a decade of adaptation strategies to communicate current and needed actions the State government should take to build climate change resiliency. It identified hundreds of ongoing actions and next steps that State agencies are taking to safeguard Californians from climate impacts within a framework of 81 policy principles and recommendations. The 2018 update also had two new chapters and incorporated a feature showcasing the many linkages among policy areas. A new “Climate Justice” chapter highlighted how equity is woven throughout the entire plan (CNRA, 2018).

The CNRA updated Safeguarding California with the 2021 California Climate Adaptation Strategy, which focused on the following six priorities:

- Strengthening protections for climate vulnerable communities
- Bolstering public health and safety to protect against increasing climate risks
- Building a climate resilient economy

- Accelerating nature-based climate solutions and strengthen climate resilience of natural systems
- Making decisions based on the best available climate science; and
- Partnering and collaborating to leverage resources

The 2021 update contained goals and actions to address each priority, and integrated climate actions from statewide climate action plans, sector-based strategies, regionally focused strategies, and State stewardship plans.

The CNRA released the Draft California Climate Adaptation Strategy in May 2024. The Draft update builds on the priorities and actions of the 2021 California Climate Adaptation Strategy, and includes additional new metrics and actions across the six priorities. For example, the 2024 draft contains new actions to analyze and address the effects of extreme heat and new metrics for investing in forest management (CNRA, 2024).

Carbon Sequestration

Carbon sequestration is the process by which plants absorb CO_2 from the atmosphere and store it in biomass like leaves and grasses. Agricultural lands, forests, and grasslands can all sequester carbon dioxide, or emit it. The key is to determine if the land use is emitting CO_2 faster than it is absorbing it. Young, fast-growing trees are particularly good at absorbing more than they release and are known as a sink. Agricultural resources often end up being sources of carbon release because of soil management practices. Deforestation contributes to carbon dioxide emissions by removing trees, or carbon sinks, that would otherwise absorb CO_2. Forests are a crucial part of sequestration in some parts of the world, but not much in the United States. Another form of sequestration is geologic sequestration. This is a human-made process that results in the collection and transport of CO_2 from industrial emitters (i.e. power plants) and injecting it into underground reservoirs.

Statewide GHG Emissions

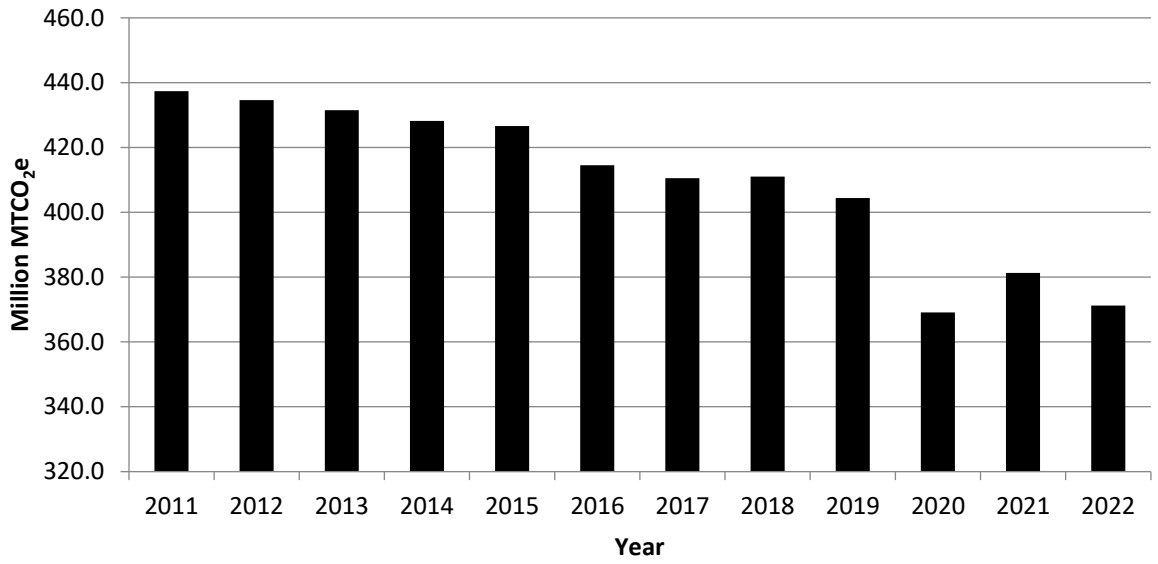
CARB prepares an annual statewide GHG emission inventory using regional, State, and federal data sources, including facility-specific emissions reports prepared pursuant to the State's Mandatory GHG Reporting Program. The statewide GHG emission inventory helps CARB track progress towards meeting the State's Assembly Bill (AB) 32 GHG emissions target of 431 million metric tons of CO_2 equivalents ($MTCO_2e$), as well as establish and understand trends in GHG emissions.[i]

Statewide GHG emissions for the 2011 to 2022 time period are shown in Table 4.8-2. Statewide GHG emissions have generally decreased over the last decade, with 2021 levels (371 million $MTCO_2e$) approximately 15.1% less than 2011 levels (438 million $MTCO_2e$) and below the State's 2020 reduction target of 431 million $MTCO_2e$. The transportation sector (140 million $MTCO_2e$) accounted for more than one-third (approximately 38%) of the state's total GHG emissions inventory (371 million $MTCO_2e$) in 2022. Statewide GHG emissions for the 2011 to 2022 time period are shown in Table 4.8-2.

[i] CARB approved use of 431 million $MTCO_2e$ as the State's 2020 GHG emission target in May 2014. Previously, the target had been set at 427 million $MTCO_2e$.

Table 4.8-2
2010-2023 Statewide GHG Emissions (in Million $MTCO_2e$)

Scoping Plan Sector	Year											
	'11	'12	'13	'14	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19	'20	'21	'22
Agriculture	34	35	34	34	33	32	32	32	31	32	31	30
Commercial/Residential	46	39	39	36	37	38	38	38	41	39	39	40
Electric Power	89	99	94	90	86	71	64	65	60	60	62	60
High GWP	15	16	17	18	19	19	20	21	21	21	21	21
Industrial	86	81	83	85	83	81	81	82	81	73	74	73
Recycling and Waste	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	9	8	8
Transportation	159	157	157	158	161	165	166	165	162	136	146	140
Total Million $MTCO_2e$[(A)]	**438**	**436**	**432**	**428**	**427**	**414**	**410**	**411**	**404**	**369**	**381**	**371**



Source: CARB 2024
(A) Totals may not equal due to rounding. CARB inventory uses GWPs based on the United Nations' IPCC's 4th Assessment Report.

As shown in Table 4.8-2, Statewide GHG emissions have generally decreased over the last decade, with 2021 levels (381 million $MTCO_2e$) approximately 13.9% less than 2010 levels (443 million $MTCO_2e$) and below the State's 2020 reduction target of 431 million $MTCO_2e$. The transportation sector (146 million $MTCO_2e$) accounted for more than one-third (approximately 38%) of the state's total GHG emissions inventory (381 million $MTCO_2e$) in 2021.

Existing Planning Area GHG Emissions

The existing land uses within the Planning Area contribute to existing city, regional, and statewide GHG emissions. The Planning Area's existing GHG emissions that would be replaced with new uses in the Specific Plan are presented below in Table 4.8-3 (Existing (2025) GHG Emissions in the Planning Area). Emissions were estimated using the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod), Version 2022.1.1.29. GHG emissions generated within the Planning Area come from the area, energy, and mobile sources described in Section 4.3.1, Air Quality (Environmental Setting), as well as the following additional sources specific to GHG emissions:

- **Energy use and consumption:** Emissions generated from purchased electricity and natural gas. As estimated using CalEEMod, the existing land uses that would not be retained in the Specific Plan use and consume approximately 2,290,411 kilowatt hours (kWh) of electricity per year and 3,818,270 kilo-British Thermal Units (kBtus) of natural gas per year.
- **Solid waste disposal:** Emissions generated from the transport and disposal of waste generated by land uses. CalEEMod estimates approximately 372 tons of solid waste are generated per year by uses that would not be retained in the Specific Plan.
- **Water/wastewater:** Emissions from electricity used to supply water to land uses, and treat the resulting wastewater generated. As estimated in CalEEMod, existing land uses that would not be retained in the Specific Plan use approximately 40,491,497 gallons of water per year.
- **Refrigerants:** Emissions generated from appliances (e.g., commercial refrigerators) or on site building systems (e.g., HVAC equipment).

The Planning Area's existing GHG emissions were estimated using default emissions assumptions provided by CalEEMod, with the Project-specific modifications described in the Existing Emissions Levels in the Planning Area subheading of Section 4.3.1. The Planning Area's existing GHG emissions are summarized in Table 4.8-3 (Existing Land Use GHG Emissions Estimates) below. The emissions are shown for two scenarios:

- **Year 2025 (Current Conditions)**, which are based on Year 2025 vehicle fleet characteristics (e.g., vehicle type, age, emission rates), and represent the emissions levels that existed at the time the Specific Plan was prepared.
- **Year 2045 (Future Conditions)**, which are based on Year 2045 vehicle fleet characteristics and forecast carbon intensities (including utility-specific integration of renewable energy) and represent the projected emissions that existing land uses would generate in the future (assuming no increase in population or change in land uses). This scenario provides an estimate of how emissions would change in the Planning Area as a result of regulations that would reduce motor vehicle emissions in the future, and allows for distinguishing the potential change in emissions that would occur from the proposed change in land uses that would occur with implementation and buildout of the Clearwater Specific Plan in Year 2045, as opposed to a change in emissions that would occur from regulatory requirements that would be in place whether or not the Specific Plan is adopted.

Table 4.8-3
Existing Land Use GHG Emissions Estimates

Source	GHG Emissions (Metric Tons / Year)				
	CO_2	CH_4	N_2O	R	Total $MTCO_2e$
Existing Land Use Operational Emissions in Year 2025 (Current Conditions)					
Mobile	15,532.4	0.8	0.7	25.4	15,780.3
Area	3.1	<0.1	<0.1	0.0	3.1
Energy	564.8	0.1	<0.1	0.0	567.5
Water	56.4	1.3	<0.1	0.0	98.9
Waste	33.2	3.3	0.0	0.0	116.0
Refrigeration	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1
Total Existing GHG(A)	16,189.9	5.5	0.7	25.5	16,565.8
Service Population (SP)(B)					321
Existing GHG Efficiency ($MTCO_2e$ / SP)					51.6
Existing Land Use Operational Emissions in Year 2045 (Future Conditions)					
Mobile	12,064.9	0.4	0.4	1.3	12,205.2
Area	3.1	<0.1	<0.1	0.0	3.1
Energy	473.5	0.1	<0.1	0.0	476.2
Water	45.5	1.3	<0.1	0.0	88.0
Waste	33.2	3.3	0.0	0.0	116.0
Refrigeration	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1
Total Existing GHG(A)	12,620.1	5.1	0.5	1.4	12,888.5
Service Population (SP)(B)					321
Existing GHG Efficiency ($MTCO_2e$ / SP)					40.2

Source: MIG, 2025 (see Appendix D)
(A) Totals may not equal due to rounding.
(B) Service Population is defined as the sum of the number of residents and number of jobs supported by the Specific Plan (CAPCOA, 2010). Existing conditions do not include any residents. Only the employees for modeled land uses (i.e., the land uses that would not be retained in the Specific Plan) are considered in the service population value, since emissions from only those land uses are presented in the table. Vendors for the swap meet were not considered employees for the purpose of this analysis.

4.8.2 – REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

This section summarizes key federal, State, and city statutes, regulations, and policies that would apply to the City of Paramount General Plan. Global climate change resulting from GHG emissions is an ongoing environmental concern being discussed at the international, national, and statewide levels. At each level, agencies are considering strategies to control emissions of gases that contribute to global climate change.

International and Federal

International Regulation and the Kyoto Protocol

In 1988, the United Nations established the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to evaluate the impacts of global warming and to develop strategies that nations could implement to curtail global climate change. In 1992, the United States joined other countries around the world in signing the "United Nations' Framework Convention on Climate Change" agreement with the goal of controlling GHG emissions. As a result, the Climate Change Action Plan was developed to address the reduction of GHG in the United States. The plan currently consists of more than 50 voluntary programs for member nations to adopt. In 1997, the United States (U.S.) was a signatory to the Kyoto Protocol; however, the treaty was not sent to Congress for ratification. Thus, while a signatory to the Kyoto Protocol, the U.S. is not an official party to this international agreement and is not subject to any emission reductions goals established pursuant to the Kyoto Protocol. Although the U.S. is not a party to this agreement, the GHG targeted for reduction by the Kyoto Protocol are also targeted under federal and State GHG reporting and emissions reduction programs.

Federal Regulation and the Clean Air Act

On December 7, 2009, the U.S. EPA issued an endangerment finding that current and projected concentrations of the six Kyoto GHG in the atmosphere (CO_2, CH_4, N_2O, SF_6, HFCs, and PFCs) threaten the public health and welfare of current and future generations. This finding came in response to the Supreme Court ruling in *Massachusetts v. EPA*, which found that GHGs are pollutants under the Federal Clean Air Act. As a result, the U.S. EPA issued its GHG Tailoring Rule in 2010, which applies to facilities that have the potential to emit more than 100,000 $MTCO_2e$. In 2014, the U.S. Supreme Court issued its decision in *Utility Air Regulatory Group v. EPA* (No. 12-1146), finding that the U.S. EPA may not treat GHG as an air pollutant for purposes of determining whether a source is a "major" source required to obtain a permit pursuant to the "Clean Air Act's Prevention of Significant Deterioration" or "Title V" operating permit programs. The U.S. EPA's Greenhouse Gas Reporting Program requires facilities that emit 25,000 $MTCO_2e$ or more of GHG to report their GHG emissions to the U.S. EPA to inform future policy decisionmakers.

Federal Vehicle Standards

In 2009, the NHTSA issued a final rule regulating fuel efficiency and GHG emissions from cars and light-duty trucks for model year 2011; and, in 2010, the U.S. EPA and NHTSA issued a final rule regulating cars and light-duty trucks for model years 2012–2016.

In 2010, President Obama issued a memorandum directing the Department of Transportation, Department of Energy, U.S. EPA, and NHTSA to establish additional standards regarding fuel efficiency and GHG reduction, clean fuels, and advanced vehicle infrastructure. In response to

this directive, EPA and NHTSA proposed stringent, coordinated federal GHG and fuel economy standards for model years 2017–2025 light-duty vehicles. The proposed standards are projected to achieve 163 grams per mile of CO_2 in model year 2025, on an average industry fleetwide basis, which is equivalent to 54.5 miles per gallon if this level were achieved solely through fuel efficiency. The final rule was adopted in 2012 for model years 2017–2021.

In addition to the regulations applicable to cars and light-duty trucks described above, in 2011, the EPA and NHTSA announced fuel economy and GHG standards for medium- and heavy-duty trucks for model years 2014–2018. The standards for CO_2 emissions and fuel consumption are tailored to three main vehicle categories: combination tractors, heavy-duty pickup trucks and vans, and vocational vehicles. According to the U.S. EPA, this regulatory program will reduce GHG emissions and fuel consumption for the affected vehicles by 6% to 23% over the 2010 baselines.

In August 2016, the EPA and NHTSA announced the adoption of the phase two program related to the fuel economy and GHG standards for medium- and heavy-duty trucks. The phase two program will apply to vehicles with model year 2018–2027 for certain trailers, and model years 2021–2027 for semi-trucks, large pickup trucks, vans, and all types and sizes of buses and work trucks. The final standards are expected to lower CO_2 emissions by approximately 1.1 billion metric tons (MT) and reduce oil consumption by up to 2 billion barrels over the lifetime of the vehicles sold under the program (U.S. EPA and NHTSA, 2016).

In May 2022, the NHTSA adopted new fuel economy standards in response to President Biden's Executive Order 13990, which called for an industry-wide fleet average of approximately 49 miles per gallon for passenger cars and light trucks in model year 2026. The standards increased fuel efficiency 8% annually for model years 2024-2025 and 10% annually for model year 2026. They also increased the estimated fleetwide average by nearly 10 miles per gallon for model year 2026, relative to model year 2021 (NHTSA, 2022).

In July 2023, the NHTSA issued a proposal to further update and improve fuel economy standards for passenger cars and light trucks. The standards proposed by NHTSA call for a 2% per year improvement in fuel efficiency for passenger cars and a 4% per year improvement for light trucks. These standards would begin for model year 2027 and ramp up through model year 2032, potentially reaching an average fleet fuel economy of 58 miles per gallon by 2032. NHTSA's proposal also calls for a 10% improvement per year for commercial pickup trucks and work vans (with gross vehicle weight ratings of more than 8,500 pounds and less than 14,001 pounds) beginning in model year 2030 and ramping up through model year 2035 (NHTSA, 2024).

State

<u>Assembly Bill 32 (California Global Warming Solutions Act) and Related GHG Goals</u>

In September 2006, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed AB 32, the California Climate Solutions Act of 2006. AB 32 establishes the caps on statewide greenhouse gas emissions proclaimed in Executive Order (EO) S-3-05 and established the timeline for meeting State GHG reduction targets. The deadline for meeting the 2020 reduction target was December 31, 2020.

As part of AB 32, CARB determined 1990 GHG emissions levels and projected a "business-as-usual" (BAU)[ii] estimate for 2020, to determine the amount of GHG emission reductions that would need to be achieved. In 2007, CARB approved a statewide 1990 emissions level and corresponding 2020 GHG emissions limit of 427 million $MTCO_2e$ (CARB 2007). In 2008, CARB adopted its *Climate Change Scoping Plan*, which projects 2020 statewide GHG emissions levels of 596 million $MTCO_2e$ and identifies numerous measures (i.e., mandatory rules and regulations and voluntary measures) that will achieve at least 174 million $MTCO_2e$ of GHG reductions and bring statewide GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020 (CARB 2009).

EO B-30-15, 2030 Carbon Target and Adaptation, issued by Governor Brown in April 2015, set a target of reducing GHG emissions by 40 percent below 1990 levels in 2030. To achieve this ambitious target, Governor Brown identified five key goals for reducing GHG emissions in California through 2030:

- Increase renewable electricity to 50 percent.
- Double energy efficiency savings achieved in existing buildings and make heating fuels cleaner.
- Reduce petroleum use in cars and trucks by up to 50 percent.
- Reduce emissions of short-lived climate pollutants.
- Manage farms, rangelands, forests, and wetlands to increasingly store carbon.

By directing State agencies to take measures consistent with their existing authority to reduce GHG emissions, EO B-30-15 establishes coherence between the 2020 and 2050 GHG reduction goals set by AB 32 and seeks to align California with the scientifically established GHG emissions levels needed to limit global warming below two degrees Celsius.

To reinforce the goals established through EO B-30-15, Governor Brown signed Senate Bill (SB) 32 and AB 197 on September 8, 2016. SB 32 made the GHG reduction target (to reduce GHG emissions by 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030) a requirement, as opposed to a goal. AB 197 gives the Legislature additional authority over CARB to ensure the most successful strategies for lowering emissions are implemented, and requires CARB to, "protect the State's most impacted and disadvantaged communities …[and] consider the social costs of the emissions of greenhouse gases."

Governor Brown issued EO B-55-18 on September 10, 2018, which directs the State to achieve carbon neutrality as soon as possible and no later than 2045, and achieve and maintain net negative emissions thereafter.

On September 16, 2022, Governor Newson signed into law AB 1279, the California Climate Crisis Act, that codified California's 2045 carbon neutrality goal and established a GHG emission reduction target of 85% below 1990 levels by 2045.

<u>CARB Scoping Plan</u>

The CARB Scoping Plan is the comprehensive plan primarily directed at identifying the measures necessary to reach the GHG reduction targets stipulated in AB 32. The key elements of the 2008 Scoping Plan were to expand and strengthen energy efficiency programs, achieve a statewide

[ii] BAU is a term used to define emissions levels without considering reductions from future or existing programs or technologies.

renewable energy mix of 33 percent, develop a cap-and-trade program with other partners (including seven states in the United States and four territories in Canada) in the Western Climate Initiative, establish transportation-related targets, and establish fees (CARB 2009). CARB estimated that implementation of these measures will achieve at least 174 million $MTCO_2e$ of reductions and reduce statewide GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020 (CARB 2009).

On February 10, 2014, CARB released the public draft of the "First Update to the Scoping Plan." "The First Update" built upon the 2008 Scoping Plan with new strategies and recommendations and identified opportunities to leverage existing and new funds to further drive GHG emission reductions through strategic planning and targeted low carbon investments (CARB 2014). "The First Update" defined CARB's climate change priorities over the next five years and set the groundwork to reach post-2020 goals set forth in Executive Orders S-3-05 and B-16-12. It also highlighted California's progress toward meeting the 2020 GHG emission reduction goals defined in the 2008 Scoping Plan. "The First Update" evaluated how to align the State's long-term GHG reduction strategies with other State policy priorities for water, waste, natural resources, clean energy, transportation, and land use. "The First Update" to the Scoping Plan was approved by the Board on May 22, 2014.

The second update to the scoping plan, the 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan Update, was adopted by CARB in December 2017. The primary objective for the 2017 Scoping Plan Update is to identify the measures required to achieve the mid-term GHG reduction target for 2030 (i.e., reduce emissions by 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030) established under Executive Order B-30-15 and SB 32. The 2017 Scoping Plan Update identifies an increased need for coordination among State, regional, and local governments to realize the potential for GHG emissions reductions that can be gained from local land use decisions. The third update to the scoping plan, the 2022 Scoping Plan, was released in May 2022 and adopted by CARB in December 2022. The plan presents a scenario for California to meet the State goal of reducing GHG emissions 40% below 1990 levels by 2030 and to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045. Specifically, the 2022 Scoping Plan:

- Identifies a path to keep California on track to meet its SB 32 GHG reduction target of at least 40 percent below 1990 emissions by 2030.
- Identifies a technologically feasible, cost-effective path to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045 and a reduction in anthropogenic emissions by 85 percent below 1990 levels.
- Focuses on strategies for reducing California's dependency on petroleum to provide consumers with clean energy options that address climate change, improve air quality, and support economic growth and clean sector jobs.
- Integrates equity and protecting California's most impacted communities as driving principles throughout the document.
- Incorporates the contribution of natural and working lands (NWL) to the state's GHG emissions, as well as their role in achieving carbon neutrality.
- Relies upon the most up-to-date science, including the need to deploy all viable tools to address the existential threat that climate change presents, including carbon capture and sequestration, as well as direct air capture.
- Evaluates the substantial health and economic benefits taking action.
- Identifies key implementation actions to ensure success.

Unlike the previous scoping plans, the 2022 Scoping Plan relies more heavily on the implementation, adoption, and use of existing technologies to reduce GHG emissions over the coming decades, as opposed to technologies that need to be developed. Examples of existing technologies the 2022 Scoping Plan relies upon include the use of renewable energy and energy storage systems (as opposed to polluting alternatives) for the electrical grid and transitioning the transportation sector's mobile sources to zero-emission technologies for light- and heavy-duty vehicles. The 2022 Scoping Plan also differs from its predecessors in that it takes into account carbon sources and sinks from California's NWL and identifies the need for active carbon capture and sequestration (CCS) technologies for some emissions sectors, such as petroleum refining and the production / processing of stone, clay, glass, and cement.

The continued implementation of existing plans, policies, and regulations adopted for the purposes of reducing GHG emissions remain critical for achieving the State's 2030 and 2045 GHG reduction goals. For example, the 2022 Scoping Plan identifies a goal of achieving a per capita vehicle miles traveled (VMT) reduction of at least 25 percent below 2019 levels by 2030 and a 30 percent below 2019 levels by 2045, which is related to the implementation of SB 375 and recommendations provided by the Scoping Plan's Environmental Justice Advisory Committee. The 2022 Scoping Plan also acknowledges that, "local governments are also frequently the sources of innovative and practical climate solutions that can be replicated in other areas. Their efforts to reduce GHG emissions within their jurisdictions are vital to achieving the state's near-term air quality and long-term climate goals… and can also provide important co-benefits such as improved air quality, local economic benefits, healthier and more sustainable communities, and improved quality of life" (CARB, 2022).

<u>Low Carbon Fuel Standard Regulation</u>

CARB initially approved the Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS) regulation in 2009, identifying it as one of the nine discrete early action measures in the 2008 Scoping Plan to reduce California's GHG emissions. The LCFS regulation is designed to encourage the use of cleaner low-carbon transportation fuels in California, encourage the production of those fuels, and therefore, reduce GHG emissions and decrease petroleum dependence in the transportation sector. The LCFS regulation defines a Carbon Intensity, or "CI," reduction target (or standard) for each year, which the rule refers to as the "compliance schedule."

The LCFS regulation initially required a reduction of at least 10 percent in the CI of California's transportation fuels by 2020. CARB approved some amendments to the LCFS in December 2011, which were implemented on January 1, 2013. In September 2015, the Board approved the re-adoption of the LCFS, which became effective on January 1, 2016, to address procedural deficiencies in the way the original regulation was adopted. The 2015 rulemaking included many amendments, updates, and improvements to the program, including a compliance schedule that maintained the 2009 LCFS regulation's target of a 10 percent reduction in average carbon intensity by 2020 from a 2010 baseline. In 2018, the Board approved amendments to the regulation, which included strengthening and smoothing the carbon intensity benchmarks through 2030 in line with California's 2030 GHG emission reduction target enacted through SB 32, adding new crediting opportunities to promote zero emission vehicle adoption, alternative jet fuel, carbon capture and sequestration, and advanced technologies to achieve deep decarbonization in the transportation sector (CARB 2020).

Senate Bill 375 (Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act)

In January 2009, California SB 375 went into effect known as the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act. The objective of SB 375 is to better integrate regional planning of transportation, land use, and housing to reduce sprawl and ultimately reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other air pollutants. SB 375 tasks CARB to set GHG reduction targets for each of California's 18 regional Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). Each MPO is required to prepare a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) as part of their Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The SCS is a growth strategy in combination with transportation policies that will show how the MPO will meet its GHG reduction target. If the SCS cannot meet the reduction goal, an Alternative Planning Strategy may be adopted that meets the goal through alternative development, infrastructure, and transportation measures or policies.

In August 2010, CARB released the proposed GHG reduction targets for the MPOs to be adopted in September 2010. The proposed reduction targets for the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) region were eight percent by year 2020 and 13 percent by year 2035. In September 2010 and February 2011, the eight percent and the 13 percent targets were adopted, respectively. On April 4, 2012, SCAG's Regional Council adopted the *2012-2035 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy: Towards a Sustainable Future.* The 2012 RTP/SCS included a strong commitment to reduce emissions from transportation sources to comply with SB 375 and contained a host of improvements to the region's multimodal transportation system. SCAG's Regional Council adopted an update to the 2012 RTP/SCS on April 7, 2016, the *2016-2040 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy* (2016 RTP/SCS). The 2016 RTP/SCS expanded upon the 2012 RTP/SCS's goal of balancing future mobility and housing needs with economic, environmental, and public health goals. Included in the 2016 RTP/SCS were 13 major initiatives primarily focused around preserving and maintaining the existing transportation system, expanding and improving mass transit (with a specific emphasis on passenger rail), decreasing reliance on vehicular modes of transportation through the expansion of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and focusing new growth around transit.

In March 2018, CARB established new regional GHG reduction targets for SCAG and other MPOs in the state (CARB, 2018). The new SCAG targets are an 8% reduction in per capita passenger vehicle GHG reductions by 2020 and a 19% reduction by 2035. On May 7, 2020, SCAG adopted "Connect SoCal", the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS, for federal transportation conformity purposes only. On September 3, 2020, SCAG's Regional Council unanimously voted to approve and fully adopt Connect SoCal 2020, and the addendum to the Connect SoCal Program Environmental Impact Report. Connect SoCal 2020 was designed to meet the regional GHG reduction targets for SCAG that were identified by CARB in 2018. Connect SoCal 2020 was a long-range visioning plan that builds upon and expands land use and transportation strategies established over several planning cycles to increase mobility options and achieve a more sustainable growth pattern. It charts a path toward a more mobile, sustainable, and prosperous region by making connections between transportation networks, between planning strategies and between the people whose collaboration can improve the quality of life for Southern Californians. Connect SoCal contains 10 primary goals, as detailed below:

1. Encourage regional economic prosperity and global competitiveness.
2. Improve mobility, accessibility, reliability, and travel safety for people and goods.
3. Enhance the preservation, security, and resilience of the regional transportation system.

4. Increase person and goods movement and travel choices within the transportation system.
5. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality.
6. Support healthy and equitable communities.
7. Adapt to a changing climate and support an integrated regional development pattern and transportation network.
8. Leverage new transportation technologies and data-driven solutions that result in more efficient travel.
9. Encourage development of diverse housing types in areas that are supported by multiple transportation options.
10. Promote conservation of natural and agricultural lands and restoration of habitats.

Connect SoCal 2020's "Core Vision" centers on maintaining and better managing the transportation network for moving people and goods, while expanding mobility choices by locating housing, jobs, and transit closer together and increasing investment in transit and complete streets. The Core Vision includes: Sustainable Development, System Preservation and Resilience, Demand and System Management, Transit Backbone, Complete Streets, and Goods Movement. In April 2024, SCAG's Regional Council adopted Connect SoCal 2024, (2024 RTP/SCS) an update to Connect SoCal 2020 that planned development in the region through 2050. Connect SoCal 2024 contains the following elements:

- Regional Planning Policies for land use and transportation,
- Project List that details Connect SoCal's near-term and long-term investments,
- Forecasted Regional Development Pattern for jobs and housing,
- Regional Strategic Investments that includes additional projects that are needed to achieve objectives but that are not covered by local plans, and
- Implementation Strategies that includes the role SCAG and other responsible agencies have in efforts involving Mobility, Communities, Environment, and Economy.

Connect SoCal 2024 projects that approximately 66% of new households and 54% of new jobs between 2019 and 2050 will be located in Priority Development Areas (PDAs), which account for 4.8% of the region's total land area. PDAs in Connect SoCal 2024 include Neighborhood Mobility Areas (NMAs), Transit Priority Areas (TPAs), Livable Corridors, and Spheres of Influence (SOIs). If implemented, Connect SoCal 2024 is projected to achieve the region's targets for reducing greenhouse gases from automobiles and light-duty trucks by 19% per capita, from 2005 levels, by 2035. The project is located within a TPA and Livable Corridor.

<u>Senate Bill 350 (Clean Energy and Pollution Reduction Act), Senate Bill 100, and SB 1020</u>

In October 2015, Governor Brown signed SB 350 to codify ambitious climate and clean energy goals. One key provision of SB 350 is for retail sellers and publicly owned utilities to procure "half of the state's electricity from renewable sources by 2030."

The State's RPS program was further strengthened by the passage of SB 100 in 2018. SB 100 revised the State's RPS Program to require retail sellers of electricity to serve 50% and 60% of the total kilowatt-hours sold to retail end-use customers be served by renewable energy sources

by 2026 and 2030, respectively, and requires 100% of all electricity supplied come from renewable sources by 2045.

On September 16, 2022, Governor Newson signed into law SB 1020, the Clean Energy, Jobs, and Affordability Act of 2022. SB 1020 set targets for the retail sale of electricity of 90% clean electricity by 2035, and 95% by 2040, and 100% by 2045. It also set a target for 100% clean electricity for electricity serving State agencies by 2035.

Advanced Clean Cars Program

In January 2012, CARB approved the Advanced Clean Cars (ACC) Program (formerly known as Pavley II) for model years 2017-2025. The components of the ACC program are the Low-Emission Vehicle (LEV) regulations and the ZEV regulation. The Program combines the control of smog, soot, and global warming gases with requirements for greater numbers of zero-emission vehicles into a single package of standards. By 2025, new automobiles under California's ACC Program will emit 34 percent less global warming gases and 75 percent less smog-forming emissions.

Executive Order B-48-18, issued by Governor Brown in January 2018, establishes a target to have five million ZEVs on the road in California by 2030. This Executive Order is supported by the State's 2018 ZEV Action Plan Priorities Update, which expands upon the State's 2016 ZEV Action Plan. While the 2016 plan remains in effect, the 2018 update functions as an addendum, highlighting the most important actions State agencies are taking in 2018 to implement the directives of Executive Order B-48-18.

EO N-79-20, issued by Governor Newsom in September 2020, set a goal that 100 percent of in-state sales of new passenger cars and trucks will be zero-emission by 2035. It also set a goal that 100 percent of medium- and heavy-duty vehicles in the state be zero-emission by 2045 for all operations where feasible and by 2035 for drayage trucks. In addition, this EO set a goal to transition to 100 percent zero-emission off-road vehicles and equipment in the state by 2035 where feasible.

In August 2022, CARB approved the Advanced Clean Cars II program, which sets requirements for ZEV sales and codifies the light-duty vehicle goals in EO N-79-20. The regulation requires new light duty vehicle sales will be 35% zero emission or plug in hybrid electric vehicles in 2026, 68% in 2030, and 100% in 2035.

Advanced Clean Fleets Regulation

On April 28, 2023, CARB approved Advanced Clean Fleets (ACF), a rule that requires fleets of medium- and heavy-duty vehicles to transition to zero-emission vehicles. ACF applies to all drayage trucks, to high priority fleets, (i.e., fleets that have at least $50 million in gross annual revenue or fleets that operate 50 or more medium- and heavy-duty vehicles), and to government fleets; however, in January 2025, CARB withdrew its request for a waiver and authorization to implement the ACF rule, and is no longer enforcing the parts of the regulation that required a federal waiver. As such, the ACF only applies to State and local government fleets, which can choose between two options to meet the zero-emission requirements: a ZEV Milestone schedule or a Model Year Schedule. The ZEV Milestone schedule sets requirements for a percentage of the total fleet to be zero-emission at specified years, depending on the type of vehicle. For example, under the ZEV Milestone option, box trucks and yard tractors would need to have zero-emission vehicles consist of 10% of the fleet by 2025, 50% of the fleet by 2031, and 100% by 2035. Specialty vehicles would have a longer timeline and would need to reach 100% zero-

emission vehicles by 2042. If State and local governments do not choose the ZEV Milestone option, new fleet purchases are required to be 50% zero-emission[iii] starting in 2024 and 100% zero-emission by 2027.[iv]

Title 24 Energy Standards

The California Energy Commission (CEC) first adopted Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings in 1978 in response to a legislative mandate to reduce energy consumption in the State. Although not originally intended to reduce GHG emissions, increased energy efficiency, and reduced consumption of electricity, natural gas, and other fuels would result in fewer GHG emissions from residential and nonresidential buildings subject to the standard. The standards are updated periodically to allow for the consideration and inclusion of new energy-efficient technologies and methods.

Part 11 of the Title 24 Building Standards Code is referred to as the California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen Code). The purpose of the CALGreen Code is to "improve public health, safety and general welfare by enhancing the design and construction of buildings through the use of building concepts having a positive environmental impact and encouraging sustainable construction practices in the following categories: (1) planning and design; (2) energy efficiency; (3) water efficiency and conservation; (4) material conservation and resource efficiency; and (5) environmental air quality." The CALGreen Code is not intended to substitute or be identified as meeting the certification requirements of any green building program that is not established and adopted by the California Building Standards Commission (CBSC). CALGreen contains both mandatory and voluntary measures. For nonresidential land uses there are 39 mandatory measures including, but not limited to exterior light pollution reduction, wastewater reduction by 20%, and commissioning of projects over 10,000 square feet. Two tiers of voluntary measures apply to nonresidential land uses, for a total of 36 additional elective measures.

California's Building Energy Efficiency Standards (BEES) are updated on an approximately three-year cycle. The 2019 standards, adopted May 9, 2018, went into effect on January 1, 2020, and improve upon existing standards, focusing on three key areas: proposing new requirements for installation of solar photovoltaics for newly constructed low-rise residential buildings; updating current ventilation and Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) requirements, and extending Title 24 Part 6 to apply to healthcare facilities. The 2019 standards also propose several smaller improvements in energy efficiency. The 2022 Building Energy Efficiency Standards were adopted by the CEC in August 2021, and went into effect January 2023. The update expands solar photovoltaic systems standards and introduces battery storage standards for new construction. It also encourages electric heat pump technology and establishes electric-ready requirements for newly constructed residential and commercial buildings. The California Building Standards Commission approved the 2025 BEES in December 2024, and the 2025 BEES are expected take effect on January 1, 2026.

[iii] State and local governments may meet the ACF requirements with near-zero-emission vehicles until 2035. After 2035, only zero-emission vehicle purchases would apply to the requirements.

[iv] If fleets have 10 or fewer vehicles or are in designated counties, zero-emission purchasing requirements would start later, in 2027.

Local

2021 Climate Action Plan

The City of Paramount adopted the Climate Action Plan (CAP) in July 2021. The CAP targets a 40% reduction below 2010 baseline emission levels by 2030. The CAP contains the following regional and local measures to reduce emissions:

Regional Measures

- Regional Measure R1: Implement the SCAG Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS)
- Regional Measure R2: Engage and Partner with Large Industrial Facilities to Reduce Emissions

Local Measures

Energy Efficiency and Conservation (EE)

- EE1: Improve Energy Efficiency of Existing Buildings
- EE2: Promote Green Building in New Construction and Major Renovations
- EE3: Improve Efficiency of Municipal Operations and Public Infrastructure

Renewable Energy (RE)

- RE1: Increase Local Renewable Energy Generation
- RE2: Promote and Maximize Community Choice Energy (CCE) and Utility Renewable Energy Offerings
- RE3: Promote Conversion from Natural Gas to Clean Electricity

Sustainable Transportation (TR)

- TR1: Support Fuel Efficient and Alternative Fuel Vehicles
- TR2: Improve Pedestrian and Bicycle Infrastructure
- TR3: Expand Public Transit Options and " last mile" Connectivity
- TR4: Expand Car Sharing, Bike Sharing, and Ride Sharing
- TR5: Infrastructure to Improve Traffic Flow and Efficiency
- TR6: Support Transportation Demand Management

Land Use and Community Design (LU)

- Local Measure LU1: Promote Smart Growth, TOD, and Complete Neighborhoods

Water and Wastewater Systems

- Local Measure WA1: Promote Water Conservation
- Local Measure WA2: Promote Water Recycling and Greywater Use

Water Reduction and Recycling (WR)

- Local Measure WR1: Solid Waste Diversion Programs

Green Infrastructure, Parks, Urban Forestry, and Agriculture (GA)

- Local Measure GA1: Support Urban Tree-Planting, Park Access, and Green Infrastructure
- Local Measure GA2: Support Sustainable Food and Urban Farming

Green Business and Industry (GB)

- Local Measure GB1: Engage and Partner with Local Industries and Businesses to Reduce Emissions
- Local Measure GB2: Grow Green Economy/Increase Green Jobs

While the above measures would lower GHG emissions, the CAP projects that they would not be sufficient to achieve the 2030 target, and that future updates to the CAP would provide more information about meeting the target. The CAP does not set an emissions goal for 2050 or target carbon neutrality.

City of Paramount General Plan

The City of Paramount 2007 General Plan includes the following goals and policies related to global climate change and greenhouse gas emissions:

Economic Development Element

Policy ED-4: The City of Paramount will encourage mixed-use projects in key locations to provide additional market support and patronage of local businesses. This concept will be encouraged in the future infill development of underutilized and blighted commercially zoned parcels. This development concept will also be effective in eliminating strip commercial land use and development patterns.

Environmental Justice Element

Policy EJ-2.3: Assist residents in retrofitting their homes to be more energy efficient, weatherproofed, and better protected from air and noise pollution.

Policy EJ-2.6: Consult with World Energy Paramount for development of a community education campaign about the use of biodiesel at the former Paramount Petroleum Refinery.

Health and Safety Element

Policy HS-51: Enhance the resilience of buildings within the community to extreme heat, weather, and energy disruptions.

Policy HS-52: Improve the energy efficiency and weatherization of homes and businesses to reduce energy costs and carbon pollution.

Land Use Element

Policy LU-10: The City of Paramount will continue to promote the development of larger, more efficient, commercial retail shopping centers as opposed to small "strip commercial" centers.

Policy LU-13: The City of Paramount will continue to provide safe, convenient pedestrian linkages across and along streets containing commercial centers and uses.

Public Facilities Element

Policy PF.4: The City of Paramount will protect, conserve, and enhance water resources through implementation of the Water Master Plan.

Resource Management Element

Policy RM-4: The City of Paramount will require new larger residential developments to provide sufficient open space (including pedestrian and bicycle linkages) to meet the local need.

Policy RM-15: The City of Paramount will seek to establish a comprehensive bikeway and pedestrian trail system for the City.

Transportation Element

Policy TR-1: The City of Paramount will increase the efficiency of the local street system by reducing the conflicts associated with through traffic.

Policy TR-6: The City of Paramount will continue to support the development and expansion of the region's public and mass transit system.

Policy TR-9: The City of Paramount will continue to support the maintenance and expansion of the existing public transit system.

Policy TR-10: The City of Paramount will encourage new and existing businesses to include those improvements that will promote the use of alternative forms of transit.

Policy TR-11: The City of Paramount will continue to support the local public transit system and ongoing efforts to improve conditions with other regional transit facilities and services (MTA bus service, Long Beach Transit, Green Line, etc.)

4.8.3 – SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLDS

The methodology used to evaluate potential environmental impacts is described in Section 4.0. Per the CEQA Guidelines, implementation of the Specific Plan would have a significant impact related to GHG emissions if it would:

A. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?
B. Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emission of greenhouse gases?

C. Would the project cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to greenhouse gases?

In order to provide guidance to local lead agencies on determining the significance of GHG emissions in their CEQA documents, the SCAQMD convened the first GHG Significance Threshold Working Group (Working Group) meeting on April 30, 2008 (SCAQMD 2008). To date, the Working Group has convened a total of 15 times, with the last meeting taking place on September 28, 2010 (SCAQMD 2010). Based on the last Working Group meeting, the SCAQMD identified an interim, tiered approach for evaluating GHG emissions intent on capturing 90 percent of development projects where the SCAQMD is not the lead agency. The following describes the basic structure of the SCAQMD's tiered, interim GHG significance thresholds:

Tier 1 consists of evaluating whether or not the project qualifies for applicable CEQA exemptions.

Tier 2 consists of determining whether or not a project is consistent with a greenhouse gas reduction plan. If a project is consistent with a greenhouse gas reduction plan, it would not have a significant impact.

Tier 3 consists of using screening values at the discretion of the Lead Agency; however, the Lead Agency should be consistent for all projects within its jurisdiction. The following thresholds were proposed for consideration:

a. 3,000 $MTCO_2e$/yr for all land use types; or

b. 3,500 MTCO2e/yr for residential; 1,400 MTCO2e/yr for commercial; 3,000 MTCO2e/yr for mixed use projects.

Tier 4 has three options for projects that exceed the screening values identified in Tier 3:

Option 1: Reduce emissions from business-as-usual by a certain percentage (currently undefined).

Option 2: Early implementation of applicable AB 32 Scoping Measures.

Option 3: For plan-level analyses, analyze a project's emissions against an efficiency value of 6.6 $MTCO_2e$/yr/SP by 2020 and 4.1 $MTCO_2e$/yr/SP by 2035. For project-level analyses, analyze a project's emissions against an efficiency value of 4.8 and 3.0 $MTCO_2e$/yr/SP for the 2020 and 2035 calendar years, respectively.

The Specific Plan plans for growth through 2045, ten years after the SCAQMD's latest Tier 4 interim efficiency target year (2035) identified above. Therefore, to evaluate the Specific Plan's GHG emissions against future GHG reduction goals, the plan-level efficiency target has been adjusted based on the anthropogenic GHG reduction targets of AB 1279, which sets a target of 85% below 1990 levels by 2045. The resulting, interpolated efficiency target for the year 2045 is 1.0 $MTCO_2e$/yr/SP.[v]

[v] To remain on track with future GHG reduction goals, it is necessary to identify a potential efficiency target for 2045. Pursuant to existing legislation, all human-caused or influenced GHG emissions are required to be reduced to 85 percent below 1990 levels by 2045. The 1.0 $MTCO_2e$/yr/SP efficiency target was developed by taking the

4.8.4 – IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

This section describes potential impacts related to GHG emissions and potential conflicts with a plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purposes of reducing GHG emissions which could result from the implementation of the project and recommends mitigation measures as needed to reduce significant impacts.

GHG Emissions

Impact GHG-1 – Would the Specific Plan generate GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

Analysis of Impacts

Implementation of the Specific Plan would result in construction and operational activities that would generate GHG emissions. As described in more detail below, the GHG emissions generated by the growth envisioned under the Specific Plan would exceed SCAQMD thresholds and result in a significant and unavoidable impact even with the inclusion of feasible mitigation measures.

GHG Emissions. As explained in more detail in Section 4.3, Air Quality, the planned land use changes that could occur under the Specific Plan would result in an additional 2,000 dwelling units and 4,643 residents. The proposed Specific Plan would also increase the amount of nonresidential building space by approximately 926,731 square feet, decrease swap meet vendor space by approximately 386,574 square feet, and accommodate approximately 138 net new jobs within the Planning Area (see Table 3-3). The growth facilitated under implementation of the Specific Plan would result in construction activities that would generate GHG emissions primarily from fuel combustion in equipment during demolition, site preparation, grading, building construction, paving, and architectural coating activities and in worker, vendor, and haul trips to and from future development projects. Construction activities would occur intermittently at different sites within the Planning Area over the next approximately 20 years. Construction emissions were not estimated for buildout of the proposed Specific Plan, because the quantity of construction emissions would be dependent on a number of factors, including the specific nature of development activities and the timeframes on which projects would be undertaken. Projects undertaken further in the future would be anticipated to benefit from cleaner technologies as compared to those that are currently available. Due to these unknown variables, construction emissions were not estimated for the proposed Specific Plan.

The proposed land uses envisioned by the Specific Plan would result in operational GHG emissions, primarily from mobile and energy sources. Mobile sources, including vehicle trips to and from land uses within the City, would result primarily in emissions of CO_2, with emissions of CH_4, NO_2, and refrigerants also occurring in minor amounts. In addition to mobile sources, GHG emissions would also be generated from natural gas usage, electricity use, water conveyance and use, wastewater treatment, solid waste disposal, and refrigerants from appliances and HVAC systems. Natural gas use would result in the emission of two GHGs: CH_4 (the major component of natural gas) and CO_2 (from the combustion of natural gas). Electricity use associated with both

SCAQMD's 6.6 $MTCO_2e$/yr/SP efficiency target for 2020, which was the target to reduce emissions back to 1990 levels, and reducing it by 85% (6.6 $MTCO_2e$/yr/SP * (1-0.85) = 1.0 $MTCO_2e$/yr/SP). This reduction is consistent with the anthropogenic GHG emissions reductions required under AB 1279. The City is not adopting nor proposing to use 1.0 $MTCO_2e$/yr/SP as a CEQA GHG threshold for general use; rather, it is only intended to provide context and information on the magnitude of the proposed GPU's emissions of GHGs.

the physical usage of the development, as well as the energy needed to transport water/wastewater, would result in the production of GHG if the electricity is generated through non-renewable sources (i.e., combustion of fossil fuels). Solid waste generated by land uses within the Planning Area would contribute to GHG emissions in a variety of ways. Landfilling and other methods of disposal use energy when transporting and managing the waste. In addition, landfilling, the most common waste management practice, results in the release of CH_4 from the decomposition of organic materials.

Potential operational GHG emissions[vi] resulting from operation of the land uses proposed by the Specific Plan were estimated using CalEEMod, Version 2020.1.1.29. The modeling assumes Specific Plan growth consistent with the land use development intensities described in Impact AQ-2 (i.e., obtained from Table 3-2 and Table 3-3 of the Project Description). The modeling is based on default data assumptions contained in CalEEMod, with the project-specific modifications described under Impact AQ-2. The total unmitigated GHG emissions estimated to occur under projected 2045 growth conditions are shown below in Table 4.8-4 and compared against the potential GHG emissions that could exist in 2045 if the Specific Plan were not approved.[vii]

As described above, the SCAQMD recommends the use of an efficiency threshold for plan-level analysis in which potential emissions levels are considered in terms of how many GHG emissions would be produced by each resident and employee using a project's facilities. Thus, the adjusted 2045 project-level efficiency target of 1.0 $MTCO_2e$/yr/SP is the primary contextual factor considered in evaluating the significance of the Specific Plan's GHG emissions changes.

As shown in Table 4.8-4 below, the new uses in Specific Plan would emit approximately 19,264 $MTCO_2e$ annually by 2045. Dividing through by the service population for the modeled land use changes (5,741 residents and employees)[viii] results in an efficiency metric of 3.4 $MTCO_2e$/yr/SP for 2045. Although this GHG efficiency level is above the adjusted target for 2045 (1.0 $MTCO_2e$/yr/SP), it shows a substantial reduction from existing and future baseline conditions, as the GHG efficiency occurring under 2045 with the Specific Plan would be approximately 93% less than existing 2025 conditions and 92% less than 2045 conditions without the Specific Plan. The primary source of Specific Plan GHG emissions would be mobile sources, which represent approximately 78% of total annual GHG emissions occurring under 2045 growth conditions. The next highest source of Specific Plan GHG emissions would be energy sources, which would represent approximately 13% of total annual GHG emissions.

[vi] Emissions are modeled for a subset of the Planning Area focusing on the land uses in the Specific Plan that are not currently existing uses.

[vii] Although CEQA generally requires an evaluation of impacts associated with project implementation against the conditions that exist at the time the Notice of Preparation (NOP) is published, CEQA Guidelines Section 15125(a)(2) allows a lead agency to, "…use projected future conditions (beyond the date of project operations) baseline as the sole baseline for analysis only if it demonstrates with substantial evidence that use of existing conditions would be either misleading or without informative value to decision makers and the public." Existing conditions GHG emissions for Year 2025 (current baseline conditions) and Year 2045 (future conditions) have been provided in Section 4.8.1. As shown in Table 4.8-3 and described in Section 4.8.1, the existing land uses within the Planning Area would benefit from regulatory actions at the State level (i.e., vehicle and fuel efficiency standards and cleaner electricity), which would continue to reduce emissions over the next approximately 20 years, even if the Specific Plan is not approved or implemented. Therefore, to provide a conservative assessment of emissions associated with implementation of the proposed Specific Plan, GHG emissions associated with operation of the existing land uses in 2045 are compared against the new uses proposed under the Specific Plan in 2045 to paint a more accurate picture of how the land uses proposed by the Specific Plan could change emissions in the Planning Area. This provides a more conservative assessment of emissions because the existing land use GHG emissions in 2025 were greater than those shown for the existing land uses shown in 2045 (see Table 4.8-3).

[viii] The Specific Plan's total of employees and residents does not align with the net employees and residents in the Project description because swap meet vendors are not considered employees in the service population estimate.

Table 4.8-4
Unmitigated Specific Plan GHG Emissions

Source	GHG Emissions ($MTCO_2e$ / Year)		
	Existing Land Uses (2045)[(A)]	Specific Plan Land Uses (2045)	Net Change
Mobile	12,205.2	15,050.3	+2,845.1
Area	3.1	430.8	+427.7
Energy	476.2	2,569.6	+2,093.4
Water	88.0	682.2	+594.2
Waste	116.0	525.7	+409.7
Refrigeration	0.1	5.8	+5.7
Total Existing GHG[(B)]	12,888.5	19,264.3	+6,375.8
Service Population (SP)[(C)]	321	5,741	+5,420
$MTCO_2e$/yr/SP	40.2	3.4	-36.8
SCAQMD Tier 4 2035 Plan Level Efficiency Threshold	--	4.1	--
SCAQMD Tier 4 Adjusted 2045 Plan Level Efficiency Threshold	--	1.0	--
Exceeds Threshold?	**--**	**Yes**	**--**

Source: MIG, 2025 (see Appendix D).
(A) See Table 4.8-3 for existing GHG emissions in the Planning Area.
(B) Totals may not equal due to rounding.
(C) Service population values in this table include only the service population associated with the modeled land use changes

The Specific Plan would improve GHG efficiency through its transit-oriented development, mixed-use development, increasing of development density within the Planning Area, and building of additional sidewalks and bicycle lanes that facilitate active transportation. Although these project design features would reduce potential vehicle trips and associated mobile source emissions, it cannot be assured future development projects would be able to mitigate their emissions in line with Statewide goals. Since the GHG emissions associated with the Specific Plan would not meet the interpolated SCAQMD efficiency metric of 1.0 $MTCO_2e$/yr/SP, this impact would be potentially significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Potentially significant.

Mitigation Measures

See Mitigation Measures AQ-1, and Tran-1.

GHG-1: **Reduce Building Energy Consumption and GHG Emissions.** To reduce potential GHG emissions associated with the performance of the building envelope and systems components covered by Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations, all buildings in the Planning Area shall be designed to have a total

energy design rating that is at least 5% less than the standard building design for Climate Zone 8. The energy budget for the standard design building and the energy budget for the proposed design building shall be determined in accordance with the definitions and approach set forth in the version of the Building Energy Efficiency Standards (Energy Code) that is in effect at the time of building permit approval, unless the City of Paramount has adopted local requirements that are more stringent than the Energy Code. The requirement to reduce a project's energy budget by 5% below the standard design building shall not apply if the Energy Code or the City of Paramount has already established a zero net energy requirement for the standard design building.

GHG-2: **Reduce Appliance Energy Consumption and GHG Emissions.** To reduce potential GHG emissions from appliance-related energy consumption, all developer-installed refrigerators, dishwashers, clothes washers and dryers, and room air conditioners shall be Energy Star-certified products.

GHG-3: **Increase Water Conservation.** To reduce potential GHG emissions associated with water consumption, U.S. EPA Certified WaterSense labeled or equivalent faucets, toilets, and showerheads shall be installed.

GHG-4: **Increase Solar Energy.** To reduce building energy and related GHG emissions, all projects occurring within the TR5, MU-TC, FD, and NI zones in the Planning Area shall implement the following sustainability recommendation included in the Specific Plan regarding solar energy: Solar panels shall cover a minimum percentage of the roof area, unless 100% of building energy needs are met using renewable energy. The minimum percentage of covered roof area is 30% for buildings within the MU-TC zone, 40% for building within the TR5 zone, and 50% for buildings within the FC and NI zones.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Significant and Unavoidable.

Impact GHG-2 – The proposed Specific Plan would conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purposes of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases.

Analysis of Impacts

CARB Scoping Plan. The 2022 Climate Change Scoping Plan is a State-level plan intended to integrate policies, programs, and investments to achieve the State's climate change goals.

The plan does not contain any applicable, mandatory policy or requirement that applies to specific, individual projects. Rather, the plan primarily relies upon the ability of State agencies, primarily CARB and the CEC, to uphold and implement existing legislation and develop new plans and strategies to sequester, trap, and store emitted carbon emissions. Once developed, GHG reductions achieved by the State's plans, policies, and regulations would be realized at the local level. Although the plan's framework is statewide in nature, it does discuss potential voluntary actions that could be undertaken at a local level to support the State's climate goals.[ix] The discussion of potential local actions is geared towards the preparation of climate action plans and

[ix] This discussion is located in Scoping Plan Appendix D.

residential and mixed-use land use plans and projects. The Scoping Plan does not include criteria for evaluating the consistency of other land uses that would be developed under the Specific Plan (e.g., neoindustrial).

Nonetheless, development under the Specific Plan would incorporate characteristics that reduce GHG emissions consistent with the Scoping Plan.

- Transportation Electrification: The new land uses that would be developed under the Specific Plan would be required to meet the mandatory EV charging requirements stipulated in the CalGreen Code. The Specific Plan also includes EV charging stations as a potential application for Smart City Technologies to implement in the Planning Area.
- VMT Reduction: The Specific Plan would increase density, with the mixed-use and residential areas ranging from 40 to 90 dwelling units per acre (see Section 3.3). Additionally, the Specific Plan includes transit-oriented development. The Mixed-Use Town Center (MU-TC) zoning district specifically has the purpose to promote a concentration of transit-oriented development best practices, and would locate development adjacent to the planned light rail station. Furthermore, the Specific Plan would add bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure throughout the Planning Area, increasing connectivity and encouraging active transportation.
- Building Decarbonization: The Specific Plan would reduce GHGs from buildings, as the Specific Plan notes that it is its recommendation and intention not to include natural gas utilities within the Planning Area, although natural gas can be included for individual uses if it is required. The Specific Plan recommends that natural gas and petroleum-powered appliances, HVAC and mechanical systems are prohibited (see Table 4-10 of the Specific Plan). Additionally, the Specific Plan recommends sustainability features (e.g., requirements for the use of low-carbon interior and exterior materials, recycling and composting, solar panels, water-efficient fixtures, and drought-tolerant landscaping) which would further reduce GHG from new development.

The Specific Plan would therefore be consistent with the GHG reduction goals of the Scoping Plan, and would not impede its implementation.

SCAG 2024 RTP/SCS. As described in Section 4.8.2, Connect SoCal is a growth strategy and transportation plan that demonstrates how the SCAG region will meet its GHG reduction target through the year 2045. Many of the measures included in the RTP/SCS are focused on the expansion of, and access to, mass transit (e.g., light rail, commuter rail, bus rapid transit, etc.), planning growth around livable corridors, and locating new housing and job growth in high quality transit areas. Collectively, these land use plans, in conjunction with measures at the State-level to improve fuel efficiency standards, are designed to meet CARB's SB 375 goal for the SCAG region (reducing per capita GHG emissions in the region by 8% by 2020 and 19 percent by 2035), as compared to 2005 levels. The Specific Plan, which supports high density and mixed-use development in a transit priority area, would be consistent with Connect SoCal.

City of Paramount Climate Action Plan. The CAP contains emissions forecasts, which are based on local growth projections, for business-as-usual scenarios as well as for a CAP implementation scenario based on achieving GHG reduction measures. The Specific Plan would exceed the growth in population and dwelling units accounted for in the CAP. Its consistency with the measures contained in the CAP is evaluated below.

The CAP contains State and regional measures that would reduce GHG emissions, but those would not be administered at the local level and would not directly apply to the proposed Specific Plan. Additionally, the CAP contains local measures that the City will enact to meet its GHG reduction goal (i.e., a 40% reduction in baseline emissions by 2030).[x] Some measures (e.g., waste reduction and recycling, green infrastructure, parks, urban forestry, and agriculture; and green business and industry) are not quantified, and are considered supporting measures.

Table 4.8-5
Summary of Project Consistency with CAP Strategies

CAP Emissions Reduction Category and Strategy	Consistency
Energy Efficiency and Conservation (EE)	
EE1 Improve Energy Efficiency of Existing Buildings.	Consistent. The Specific Plan includes existing buildings which would remain under the Specific Plan. The Specific Plan would not conflict with any City efforts to improve energy efficiency. Additionally, any redevelopment of existing buildings that would occur under the Specific Plan would follow the latest Title 24 requirements, resulting in greater energy efficiency.
EE2 Promote Green Buildings.	Consistent. The Specific Plan contains objectives to advocate for sustainable building designs and for climate-responsive architecture and site design. The plan notes that buildings should prioritize passive design standards and are encouraged to exceed Title 24 requirements. The Specific Plan also recommends sustainability requirements such as solar panel roof coverage and water-efficient fixtures. Additionally, the Specific Plan recommends requiring a LEED certification level depending on the zone. For Flex District (FD) and Neo Industrial (NI) zones, buildings are required to be LEED certified (at least 40 points), and for Town Residential Height Restriction Zone (TR-HRZ), Town Residential (TR5), and Mixed-Use Town Center (MU-TC), buildings are required to have at least 20 points, although they are not required to be certified. There is no recommended requirement for the Quasi-Public (QP) zone.
EE3 Improve Efficiency of Municipal Operations and Public Infrastructure.	Consistent. The Specific Plan includes existing municipal buildings (e.g., Sheriff's Station), which would remain under the Specific Plan. The Specific Plan would not conflict with any City efforts to improve energy efficiency. Additionally, the Specific Plan includes a policy recommendation that new municipal buildings and infrastructure should promote sustainable design elements and urban greening.

[x] The CAP notes that implementation of its current measures would not achieve its GHG reduction target, and that future updates to the CAP would be required to achieve the needed additional reductions.

Renewable Energy (RE)	
RE1 Increase Local Renewable Energy Generation.	Consistent. The Specific Plan recommends sustainability requirements in the TR5, MU-TC, FD, and NI zones for solar to either meet 100% of building energy needs or to cover a minimum percentage of the roof area (30% for MU-TC, 40% for TR5, and 50% for FC and NI).
RE2 Promote and Maximize Community Choice Energy (CCE) and Utility Renewable Energy Offerings.	Not applicable. This measure requires the City to offer and promote a community choice aggregate program, and to collaborate with utilities to increase renewable electricity. This measure has bee implemented.
RE3 Promote Conversion from Natural Gas to Clean Electricity	Consistent. It is the recommendation and intention of the Specific Plan not to include natural gas utilities within the Planning Area, although natural gas can be included for individual uses if it is required.
Sustainable Transportation (SE)	
TR1 Support Fuel Efficient and Alternative Fuel Vehicles	Consistent. Development under the Specific Plan would include electric vehicle charging consistent with Title 24 requirements.
TR2 Improve Pedestrian and Bicycle Infrastructure	Consistent. The Specific Plan would add bike lanes, shared use paths, and sidewalks throughout the Planning Area and increase bicycle parking.
TR3 Expand Public Transit Options and " last mile" Connectivity	Consistent. The Specific Plan would place mixed-use and residential development within 0.5 miles of the planned light rail station and existing bus stops (e.g., for LA Metro 125). Additionally, the Specific Plan would expand the bicycle and pedestrian network, increasing connectivity.
TR4 Expand Car Sharing, Bike Sharing, and Ride Sharing	Consistent. The Specific Plan includes a policy recommendation to coordinate with regional agencies and neighboring jurisdictions to improve shared mobility infrastructure at key entry points into Paramount. Shared mobility service centers and shared mobility rentals are permitted land uses across several zones in the Specific Plan. Additionally, the Specific Plan considers bike sharing and e-scooter networks in its potential applications for Smart City Technologies.
TR5 Infrastructure to Improve Traffic Flow and Efficiency	Consistent. The Specific Plan proposes new/updated signals at intersections and the expansion of the bicycle and pedestrian network to allow for vehicle trips to be replaced by active transportation. Additionally, the Specific Plan has an objective to implement “park-once” parking strategies to reduce vehicle traffic within the Planning Area.
TRG6 Support Transportation Demand Management (TDM)	Consistent. The Specific Plan would reduce vehicle trips consistent with the goals of TDM through its high density mixed-use development near transit and its additions to the bicycle and pedestrian network. While already consistent, the implementation of Mitigation Measure

	Tran-1 would further support TDM by requiring project-specific VMT screenings/analyses.
Land Use & Community Design (LU)	
LU1 Promote Smart Growth, TOD, and Complete Neighborhoods	Consistent. The Specific Plan would increase density and include transit-oriented mixed-use development.
Water and Wastewater Systems (WA)	
WA1 Promote Water Conservation	Consistent. The Specific Plan recommends requirements for water-efficient fixtures, and drought-tolerant landscaping that would promote water conservation.
WA2 Promote Water Recycling and Greywater Use	Consistent. The Specific Plan encourages onsite rainwater capture, storage, and reuse, as well as greywater recycling systems.
Waste Reduction and Recycling (WR)	
WR1 Solid Waste Diversion Programs	Consistent. The Specific Plan recommends that a minimum of 70% of construction and demolition waste must be diverted from landfills and that operationally, recommends requiring recycle and compost bins in the TR-HRZ, TR5, MU-TC, FD, QP, and NI zones.
Green Infrastructure, Parks, Urban Forestry, And Agriculture (GA)	
GA1 Support Urban Tree-Planting, Park Access, and Green Infrastructure	Consistent. The Specific Plan adds 5.5 acres of publicly accessible open space, as well as rooftop amenity/landscape space and ground stormwater/bioswale planting areas.
GA2 Support Sustainable Food and Urban Farming	Consistent. Urban agriculture and community gardens are permitted in mixed-use for the MU-TC, TR, TR-HRZ, and permitted by right in the FD, QP, and NI zones. Vertical farming operations are permitted by right in the FD and NI zones.
Green Business and Industry (GB)	
GB1 Engage and Partner with Local Industries and Businesses to Reduce Emissions	Not applicable. This measure requires the City to establish partnerships with businesses and promote local green business programs and emissions reduction programs.
GB2 Grow Green Economy/Increase Green Jobs	Not applicable. This measure recommends that the City use a combination of local ordinances, funding sources, and small business incubators to increase cleantech businesses, and to promote education and job training.

As discussed above, the project would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purposes of reducing the emissions of GHG. This impact would be less than significant.

<u>Level of Significance Before Mitigation</u>

Less than Significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Cumulative Impacts

Would the Specific Plan cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to greenhouse gases?

Analysis of Impacts

As stated at the beginning of Section 4.8.4, global climate change is the result of GHG emissions worldwide; individual projects do not generate enough GHG emissions to influence global climate change. Thus, the analysis of GHG emissions is by nature a cumulative analysis focused on whether an individual project's contribution to global climate change is cumulatively considerable. As described under Impact GHG-1, the Specific Plan would result in GHG emissions that exceed the significance thresholds applied in this EIR.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Potentially Significant.

Mitigation Measures

See Mitigation Measures AQ-1, GHG-1, GHG-2, GHG-3, GHG-4, and Tran-1.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Significant and Unavoidable.

4.8.5 – REFERENCES

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List of Acronyms, Abbreviations, and Symbols	
Acronym, Symbol, Abbreviation	**Description**
AB	Assembly Bill
ACC	Advanced Clean Cars
BAU	Business-As-Usual
CalEEMod	California Emissions Estimator Model
CALGreen	California Green Building Standards Code
CAP	Climate Action Plan
CAPCOA	California Air Pollution Control Officers Association
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CBSC	California Building Standards Commission
CEC	California Energy Commission
CFC	Chlorofluorocarbon
C_H4	Methane
CNRA	California Natural Resources Agency
CO_2	Carbon Dioxide
CO_2e	Carbon Dioxide Equivalent
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
EO	Executive Order
EV	Electric Vehicle
FD	Flex District
GHG	Greenhouse Gases
GWP	Global Warming Potential
HFC	Hydrofluorocarbon
IAQ	Indoor Air Quality
LEED	Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design
LCFS	Low Carbon Fuel Standard
NI	Neo Industrial
NMA	Neighborhood Mobility Area
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
$MTCO_2e$	metric tons of CO_2 equivalents
MU-TC	Mixed-Use Town Center
N_2O	Nitrous Oxide
PFC	Perfluorocarbon
Ppm	parts per million
QP	Quasi-Public
RPS	Renewable Portfolio Standard

RTP	Regional Transportation Plan
SB	Senate Bill
SCAG	Southern California Association of Governments
SCAQMD	South Coast Air Quality Management District
SCS	Sustainable Communities Strategy
SF_6	Sulfur Hexafluoride
SOI	Sphere of Influence
SP	Service Population
TDM	Transportation Demand Management
TPA	Transit Priority Area
TR5	Town Residential
TR-HRZ	Town Residential Height Restriction Zone
U.S. EPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
VMT	Vehicle Miles Travelled
Working Group	SCAQMD GHG Significance Threshold Working Group
ZEV	Zero Emission Vehicle
°F	Degrees Fahrenheit
%	Percent

4.9 – HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

This EIR chapter addresses hazards and hazardous materials impacts associated with the proposed Specific Plan, including the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials, upset and accident conditions, emissions or handling of hazardous materials, hazardous materials sites, excessive airport noise, impairment of emergency response plans, and risks from wildfire.

4.9.1 – ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Hazardous materials (hazmat) are substances or chemicals that are capable of having a harmful effect on human health or the environment. Hazardous materials are used in everyday activities from painting houses to fueling cars. Facilities that transport, generate, or treat hazardous waste must report their activities to the California and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and comply with waste management standards.

Contaminated Sites

The federal Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA), informally known as Superfund, allows the EPA to clean up contaminated sites by assigning liability and ensuring responsible parties either remediate the site or reimburse the government for EPA-led efforts. When no viable responsible party can be identified, Superfund allocates the public funds to the EPA for remedial action of contaminated sites. Contaminated sites pose serious health risks for adjacent populations, with threats of harmful elements infiltrating air, water, and soil. Superfund sites refer to areas where hazardous waste has been dumped, stored improperly, or otherwise ill-managed. These sites may include manufacturing facilities, processing plants, landfills, and mining sites. A brownfield is a land area that has a presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminate. Because of this, the land is harder and more expensive to develop and often requires more complicated procedures to ensure the health and safety of future occupants/users. According to the California Department of Toxic Substances *EnviroStor* tracking system, there are no contaminated sites located within the Planning Area (DTSC, 2024a). The nearest contaminated site to the Planning Area is the Carlton Forge Works site located at 7743 Adams Street, which is opposite the Planning Area on the south side of Somerset Boulevard. However, this site is listed as a voluntary cleanup site with no further action required.

Leaking Underground Storage Tanks

Underground storage tanks are used to store petroleum and other hazardous materials. Leaking underground storage tanks (LUST) can contaminate surrounding soil, groundwater, or surface waters. Once the leak is registered and confirmed, immediate response actions must be taken to minimize or eliminate the source of the release and to reduce the potential harm to human health, public safety, and the environment. The U.S. EPA monitors underground storage tank (UST) systems. Until the mid-1980s, most USTs were made of bare steel and thus were likely to corrode over time, allowing content to leak into the surrounding environment. Tanks may store hazardous materials like petroleum or harmful chemicals, which pose major concerns for potential groundwater contamination. In addition to affecting drinking water, a leaking UST poses fire and explosion risk depending on the contents. According to the California Department of Toxic Substances *Cortese List Data Sources*, and the *GeoTracker* data management system

for sites that impact water quality, there are two LUST cleanup sites within the Planning Area: the Modern Development (formerly Paramount Associated) cleanup site located at 7900 All America City Way (T0603704103) and the Paramount Interests, Inc. cleanup site located at 14409 Paramount Boulevard (T0603702872) (DTSC, 2024b). However, these sites are listed as Completed – Case Closed with no further action required.

Hazardous Waste and Toxic Release

Hazardous waste includes large quantity waste generators, transfer facilities which temporarily store waste, and transporters which move hazardous waste from one site to another. These sites are typically found in industrial areas and along transportation corridors. Waste byproducts might contain harmful chemicals, which could further contaminate air, water, and soil in proximate areas. Studies have found that such facilities are often located near poorer neighborhoods and communities of color. The South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) collects emissions data from stationary sources of pollutants through the Air Toxics Hot Spots program. This identifies facilities having localized impacts, to ascertain health risks, to notify nearby residents of significant risks, and to reduce those significant risks to acceptable levels. The Air Toxic Hot Spots program quantifies criteria and toxic pollutants. Criteria air pollutants are air pollutants for which acceptable levels of exposure can be determined and for which an ambient air quality standard has been set. Examples include ozone, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, and PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$. Toxic air pollutants (TAPs) are those pollutants that are known or suspected to cause cancer or other serious health effects, such as reproductive effects or birth defects, or to cause adverse environmental effects. According to the California Environmental Protection Agency, there are no large quantity waste generators, transfer facilities, or transporters located within the Planning Area (Cal EPA, 2016).

Hazardous Waste and Substances Site List

The Hazardous Waste and Substances Sites (Cortese) List is a planning document used by the State, local agencies, and developers to comply with the CEQA requirements in providing information about the location of hazardous materials release sites. Government Code Section 65962.5 requires the California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal EPA) to develop at least annually an updated Cortese List. The California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), and other State and local government agencies are responsible for the information contained in the Cortese List. The Cortese list consists of:

- List of Hazardous Waste and Substances sites from Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) EnviroStor database;
- List of Leaking Underground Storage Tank Sites from the State Water Board's GeoTracker database;
- List of solid waste disposal sites identified by Water Board with waste constituents above hazardous waste levels outside the waste management unit;
- List of "active" Cease and Desist Orders and Cleanup and Abatement Orders; and,
- List of hazardous waste facilities subject to corrective action pursuant to Section 25187.5 of the Health and Safety Code, identified by DTSC.

The Planning Area is not located on any of the above lists (DTSC, 2024b). The Planning Area does not contain any Hazardous Waste and Substances sites, solid waste sites identified by the Water Board, active CDOs and CAOs, or hazardous waste facilities subject to corrective action

as identified by DTSC. There two LUST sites located within the Planning Area; however, both are listed as Completed – Case Closed.

Airport Hazards

There are no airports located within the City of Paramount and the Planning Area is not located within close proximity to any airport. The nearest airport to the Planning Area, the Compton-Woodley Airport, is located approximately 4.65 miles southwest of the Planning Area.

Wildfire Hazards

According to the CALFIRE Fire Hazard Severity Zone Maps, the Planning Area is not located in an area of high fire threat (CALFIRE, 2023). Because the City of Paramount is an urbanized community, structural fires rather than wildland fires represent the greatest fire risk to the Planning Area and surrounding areas.

4.9.2 – REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Federal

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Regulates chemical and hazardous materials use, storage, treatment, handling, transport, and disposal practices; protects workers and the community (along with CalOSHA, see below) and integrates the Federal Clean Water Act and Clean Air Act into California Legislation.

Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA)

Adopted in 1980, CERCLA was developed to remove contamination of water, air, and land resources from past chemical disposal practices. Also known as the “Superfund Act,” CERCLA contains a list of sites referred to as Superfund sites, where there is an imminent threat to human health. CERCLA collects taxes from the chemical and petroleum industries to clean abandoned or uncontrolled hazardous sites using short-term and long-term techniques.

The Resources Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA)

Federal law that regulates hazardous wastes from a ‘cradle-to-grave’ approach, meaning that all hazardous wastes are tracked and strictly regulated from generation to disposal, and waste generators are required to report use or transport of hazardous wastes to the EPA. Hazardous waste generators range from small producers such as dry cleaners and automobile repair facilities to larger producers such as hospitals and manufacturing operations. The EPA categorizes Small Quantity Generators (SQG) as those facilities that produce between 100 and 1,000 kilograms (kg) of hazardous waste per month. Facilities producing less than 100 kg of hazardous waste per month are not subject to RCRA. Large Quantity Generators (LQG) produce 1,000 kg or more hazardous waste per month. LQG and SQG facilities are subject to the storage and transportation requirements of RCRA.

The Federal Emergency Planning and Community Right-To-Know Act (EPCRA)

Enacted to inform communities and residents of chemical hazards in their area, this Act requires the US EPA maintain and publish a list of toxic chemical releases, known as the Toxic Release

Inventory (TRI). Facilities required to report include industrial uses that manufacture, process, or use significant amounts of chemicals. Reporting includes types and amounts of chemicals that are released each year into the air, water, and land or transferred off site. Listing as a TRI facility doesn't necessarily mean that releases are harmful to humans or the environment.

Federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)

Establishes and enforces Federal regulations related to health and safety of workers exposed to toxic and hazardous materials. OSHA also sets health and safety guidelines for construction activities and manufacturing facility operations.

U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT)

Regulates the shipment of hazardous material. DOT also administers the Hazardous Materials Transportation Uniform Safety Act (HMTUSA) to clarify conflicting State, local, and federal regulations. HMTUSA requires the Secretary of Transportation to promulgate regulations for the safe transport of hazardous material in intrastate, interstate, and foreign commerce. The Secretary also retains authority to designate materials as hazardous (along with EPA) when they pose unreasonable risks to health, safety, or property.

Standardized Emergency Management System and National Incident Management System (SEMS)

According to the State's SEMS, local agencies have primary authority regarding rescue and treatment of casualties and making decisions regarding protective actions for the community. When a major incident occurs the first few moments are critical in terms of reducing loss of life and property. First responders must be sufficiently trained to understand the nature and the gravity of the event to minimize the confusion that inevitably follows catastrophic situations. This on-scene authority rests with the local emergency services organization and the incident commander.

State

California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (CalOSHA)

Responsible for promulgating and enforcing State health and safety standards and implementing Federal OSHA Laws. For example, CalOSHA's regulatory scope includes provisions to minimize the potential for release of asbestos and lead during construction and demolition activities.

California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal EPA)

The Cal EPA implements and enforces a statewide hazardous materials program known as the Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA) established by Senate Bill 1802 to enable counties and local government to enforce the administrative requirements, permits, inspections, and enforcement activities for the following environmental and emergency management programs for hazardous materials:

- Hazardous Materials Release Response Plans and Inventories (Business Plans)
- California Accidental Release Prevention Program
- Underground Storage Tank Program

- Aboveground Petroleum Storage Act Requirements for Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasure Plans
- Hazardous Waste Generator and On-site Hazardous Waste Treatment Programs
- California Uniform Fire Code, Hazardous Materials Management Plans, and Hazardous Material Inventory Statements

CUPAs are accountable for carrying out responsibilities previously handled by approximately 1,300 different State and local agencies.

CalEPA Office of Emergency Services (CalEPA/OES)

Cal/EPA establishes regulations governing the use of hazardous materials in the State to protect air, water, and soil. OES coordinates State and local agencies and resources for educating, planning, and warning citizens of hazardous materials and related emergencies, including organized response efforts in case of emergencies.

CALFIRE, Office of the State Fire Marshal (CAL FIRE-OSFM)

The Office of the State Fire Marshal evaluates and provides technical assistance for the Hazardous Material Management Plan (HMMP), the Hazardous Materials Inventory Statement (HMIS) and the Aboveground Petroleum Storage Act (APSA) Programs. The HMMP and HMIS Program are closely tied to the Business Plan Program.

California Fire Code

The City has adopted the most current version of the California Fire Code, with amendments to address specific local conditions and needs. These provisions include construction standards and fire hydrant requirements, road widths and configurations designed to accommodate the passage of fire trucks and engines, requirements for minimum fire flow rates for water mains, and specifications for exterior materials and construction methods for structures located in the wildland-urban interface (WUI). These regulations pertain to any new building located within a Local Agency ‘Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone’ or within a State Responsible ‘Moderate’, ‘High’, or ‘Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone’.

California Hazardous Waste Control Law

The California Hazardous Waste Control Law is administered by the California EPA to regulate hazardous wastes. Although the Hazardous Waste Control Law is generally more stringent than RCRA, until the federal EPA approves the California Hazardous Waste Control Program (which is charged with regulating the generation, treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous waste), both the State and federal laws apply in California. The Hazardous Waste Control Law lists 791 chemicals and approximately 300 common materials that may be hazardous; establishes criteria for identifying, packaging, and labeling hazardous wastes; prescribes management controls; establishes permit requirements for treatment, storage, disposal, and transportation; and identifies some wastes that cannot be disposed of in landfills. The California Code of Regulations (CCR) 22 CCR Section 66261.10 provides that waste has “hazardous” characteristics if it has the following effects: [a](1) a waste that exhibits the characteristics may: (A) cause, or significantly contribute to, an increase in mortality or an increase in serious irreversible, or incapacitating reversible, illness; or (B) pose a substantial present or potential hazard to human health or environment when improperly treated, stored, transported, or disposed or otherwise managed.

According to 22 CCR (Article 11, Chapter 3), substances having a characteristic of toxicity, ignitability, corrosivity, or reactivity are considered hazardous waste. Hazardous wastes are hazardous substances that no longer have a practical use, such as material that has been abandoned, discarded, spilled, contaminated, or are being stored prior to proper disposal. Toxic substances may cause short-term or long-lasting health effects, ranging from temporary effects to permanent disability or death. For example, toxic substances can cause eye or skin irritation, disorientation, headache, nausea, allergic reactions, acute poisoning, chronic illness, or other adverse health effects if human exposure exceeds certain levels (the level depends on the substance involved). Carcinogens (substances known to cause cancer) are a special class of toxic substances. Examples of toxic substances include most heavy metals, pesticides, and benzene (a carcinogenic component of gasoline). Ignitable substances (e.g., gasoline, hexane, and natural gas) are hazardous because of their flammable properties. Corrosive substances (e.g., strong acids and bases such as sulfuric (battery) acid or lye) are chemically active and can damage other materials or cause severe burns upon contact. Reactive substances (e.g., explosives, pressurized canisters, and pure sodium metal, which reacts violently with water) may cause explosions or generate gases or fumes.

Other types of hazardous materials include radioactive and biohazardous materials. Radioactive materials and wastes contain radioisotopes, which are atoms with unstable nuclei that emit ionizing radiation to increase their stability. Radioactive waste mixed with chemical hazardous waste is referred to as “mixed wastes.” Biohazardous materials and wastes include anything derived from living organisms. They may be contaminated with disease-causing agents, such as bacteria or viruses (22 CCR 66251.1 et seq.).

<u>California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC)</u>

DTSC regulates hazardous substances and wastes, oversees remedial investigations, protects drinking water from toxic contamination, and warns the public that could potentially be exposed to listed carcinogens. DTSC evaluates and provides technical assistance for the Hazardous Waste Generator Program, including Onsite Treatment (Tiered Permitting) and the Resource Conservation Recovery Act (RCRA). In addition, EnviroStor is DTSC’s data management system for tracking cleanup, permitting, enforcement, and investigation efforts at hazardous waste facilities and sites with known contamination or sites where there may be reasons to investigate further. There are no open investigations in the planning area (DTSC EnviroStor).

<u>Underground Tank Regulations</u>

Title 23, Division 3, Chapter 16 (Underground Tank Regulations) of the California Code of Regulations identifies the regulations applicable to new and existing underground storage tanks. These regulations establish monitoring, maintenance, reporting, abatement, and closure procedures for all underground storage tanks in the state. These regulations are administered by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board.

<u>California Highway Patrol (CHP)</u>

The CHP has primary regulatory responsibility for the transportation of hazardous wastes and materials.

Cortese List

California Government Code Section 65962.5 established the "Cortese List", which requires State agencies to compile a list of all properties affected by hazardous waste and develop a framework for how they will continue to be monitored and addressed by the State. A site's presence on the list has bearing on the local permitting process as well as on compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This statute was enacted over 20 years ago, and some of the provisions refer to agency activities that are no longer being implemented and in some cases the information to be included in the Cortese List does not exist.

California Porter Cologne Water Quality Control Act

Division 7 of the California Water Code (Water Code) identifies the enforcement and implementation rights of the Regional Water Quality Control Board to remedy discharges to surface waters or groundwater that would or could violate water quality standards. Standard remedies include issuance of Cease and Desist Orders and cleanup and abatement procedures.

Code of Regulations Title 22

Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations contains all applicable State and Federal laws governing hazardous wastes in the State. Title 22 is more stringent and broader in its coverage of wastes than Federal law. Chapter 51 (Site Remediation) identifies the minimum standards of performance for site investigations and response actions performed by the private sector in site cleanup efforts.

Hazardous waste is any waste with properties that make it potentially dangerous or harmful to human health or the environment. Hazardous waste is defined in one of two ways. Waste is considered hazardous if it appears on one of the five lists created pursuant to the Federal Resource Conservation Recovery Act (RCRA). The lists are known as the F-, K-, P-/U-, and M-lists and reflect non-specific source waste, source-specific waste, discarded commercial chemical products, discarded mercury-containing products, respectively. A waste may also be categorized as hazardous if it exhibits one of the four characteristics of hazardous materials: ignitibility, corrosivity, reactivity, and toxicity. Because of its toxicity, solid wastes containing certain levels of lead are considered hazardous and must be handled, transported, and disposed of in accordance with Federal and State law. In California, two thresholds have been established by State regulation to determine if a waste is hazardous due to its lead content. The Total Threshold Limit Concentration (TTLC) establishes a threshold of 1,000 milligrams (mg) of lead per one kilogram (kg) of waste. The Soluble Threshold Limit Concentration (STLC) establishes a threshold of 5 mg of lead per liter (L) of waste extract solution. Hazardous Waste must be disposed of at Class I landfills that are specifically designed to accept hazardous waste.

California Asbestos Standards in Construction

The California Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA) enforces the California Asbestos Standards in Construction (8 CCR Section 1529). These standards regulate exposure to asbestos in all construction work including demolition of structures. These regulations establish entry and exit procedures after working in asbestos contaminated areas and establish specific control measures designed to protect workers depending on the type of asbestos they are handling. Such procedures include minimum air circulations, use of respirators, wetting of

materials, clothing laundering, construction and demolition equipment requirements, and shielding specifications. Notification procedures are also in place that require building owner and employee noticing as well as external and internal hazard signage. All asbestos workers are required to complete training programs and register as an asbestos contractor, depending on the type of asbestos being removed. Medical examination requirements are also required to monitor worker health, generally on an annual basis.

California Construction Safety Orders for Lead

Title 8, Section 1532.2 (Lead) of the California Code of Regulations establishes the requirements for any construction worker who may be exposed to lead during demolition or salvage, removal or encapsulation, new construction, and cleanup activities. The construction safety orders establish an action level of 30 micrograms of lead per cubic meter ($\mu g/cm^3$) of air calculated over an 8-hour time-weighted average without regard for the use of a respirator, meaning this is the limit where safety protocols must be initiated, such as use of a respirator. Under no circumstance may a worker be exposed to 50 $\mu g/cm^3$ over an 8-hour weighted period. These regulations require implementation of engineering and work practice controls such as respiratory protection, protective clothing, housekeeping, hygiene practices, and signage requirements to meet worker exposure limits. Medical monitoring and training requirements are also identified.

Assembly Bill 2948

In response to the growing statewide concern of hazardous waste management, State Assembly Bill 2948 (Tanner 1986) enacted legislation authorizing local governments to develop comprehensive hazardous waste management plans. The intent of each plan is to ensure that adequate treatment and disposal capacity is available to manage the hazardous wastes generated within its jurisdiction.

Hazardous Materials Business Plan (CERS Annual Submittal)

In 1986, the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) established the Hazardous Materials Business Plan (HMBP) Program, which prevents or minimizes damage to the public and the environment from a release of hazardous materials. Under the Program, California businesses that handle hazardous materials were required to submit an HMBP each year. Assembly Bill 1429, which was passed on July 9, 2019, requires a business with a facility that is not required to submit Tier II information pursuant to the above-mentioned federal provision and is not subject to the provisions governing those aboveground storage tanks to submit its business plan once every three years, instead of annually. However, the Los Angeles County Code of Ordinance, Section 12.64.030 still requires all hazardous materials handlers operating under the jurisdiction of Los Angeles County must electronically certify, or submit an updated HMBP, including the hazardous materials inventory, site map, contingency plan, and the employee training plan information via the Statewide information management system which is also known as the California Environmental Reporting System (CERS).

Emergency Services Act

Under the Emergency Services Act, the State of California developed an Emergency Response Plan to coordinate emergency services provided by federal, State, and local agencies. Rapid response to incidents involving hazardous materials or hazardous waste is an integral part of the plan, which is administered by the Governor's Office of Emergency Services. The Office of

Emergency Services coordinates the responses of other agencies, including the EPA, California Highway Patrol, Regional Water Quality Control Boards, Air Quality Management Districts, and county disaster response offices.

The Emergency Planning Community Right-to-Know Act

The Emergency Planning Community Right-to-Know Act requires facilities to disclose to the State and Local Emergency Planning Committee the quantities and type of toxic chemicals stored. To avoid multiple reports to various agencies, the California Health and Safety Code requires notification of chemical inventory to the Administering Agency (DTSC). Notification of chemical inventory is accomplished through completion of a Hazardous Materials Business Plan and inventory.

Regional

Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB)

One of nine regional boards in the State, the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) protects surface and groundwater quality from pollutants discharged or threatened to be discharged to the Waters of the State. The RWQCB issues and enforces National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits and regulates leaking underground storage tanks and other sources of groundwater contamination.

Los Angeles County Airport Land Use Commission.

The main goal of the Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) is to protect the public health, safety, and welfare by ensuring the orderly expansion of airports and the adoption of land use measures that minimize the public's exposure to extensive noise and safety hazards within areas around airports.

South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD)

The SCAQMD regulates the demolition of buildings and structures that may contain asbestos. The SCAQMD is vested with the authority to regulate airborne pollutants through both inspection and law enforcement and shall be notified 10 days in advance of any proposed demolition or abatement work.

South Coast Air Quality Management District Rule 1403

Rule 1403 (Asbestos Emissions from Demolition/Renovation Activities) specifies work practices to limit asbestos emissions from building demolition and renovation activities including the removal and disturbance of asbestos containing material (ACM). This rule is generally designed to protect uses surrounding demolition or renovation activities from exposure to asbestos emissions. Rule 1403 requires any facility being demolished or renovated for the presence of all friable and Class I and Class II non-friable ACM. Rule 1403 also establishes notification procedures, removal procedures, handling operations, and warning label requirements.

Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) Procedures

A Phase I ESA is the initial investigation phase of a process established by the American Society for Testing and Materials Standards (ASTM), as adequate due diligence by new

purchasers of properties or their lenders prior to site development. Phase I ESAs must be completed prior to property development by private parties to establish that the buyer has exercised due diligence in purchasing the site. If a Phase I ESA indicates evidence of site contamination, a Phase II ESA would be required prior to site development. The Phase II ESA includes collection of original samples of soil, groundwater, or building materials to measure and analyze quantities of various contaminants. The most frequent substances tested for are petroleum hydrocarbons, heavy metals, pesticides, solvents, asbestos, and mold. Appropriate cleanup levels for each contaminant, based on current and planned land use, would be determined in accordance with professional procedures adopted by the lead agency (e.g., DTSC, RWQCB, SCAQMD, CUPA).

County

Los Angeles County Fire Department (LACFD), Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA)

The LACFD Health Hazardous Materials Department is a CUPA under the state that administers the following programs within Los Angeles County; the Hazardous Waste Generator Program, the Hazardous Materials Release Response Plans and Inventory Program, the California Accidental Release Prevention Program (Cal-ARP), the Aboveground Storage Tank Program and the Underground Storage Tank Program. CUPAs and Program Agencies (PAs) throughout the state created a partnership and formed the California CUPA Forum. Together, members of the California CUPA Forum and representatives of local, State and federal agencies established the Unified Program Administration and Advisory Group (UPAAG) to effectively address policy decisions, training, and problem solving. The UPAAG's goals and objectives are listed in the UPAAG Strategic Plan. The Unified Program consolidates the administration, permit, inspection, and enforcement activities of the following environmental and emergency management programs:

- Aboveground Petroleum Storage Act (APSA) Program
- Area Plans for Hazardous Materials Emergencies
- California Accidental Release Prevention (CalARP) Program
- Hazardous Materials Release Response Plans and Inventories (Business Plans)
- Hazardous Material Management Plan (HMMP) and Hazardous Material Inventory Statements (HMIS) (California Fire Code)
- Hazardous Waste Generator and Onsite Hazardous Waste Treatment (tiered permitting) Programs
- Underground Storage Tank Program

State agency partners involved in the implementation of the Unified Program are responsible for setting program element standards, working with CalEPA to ensure program consistency and providing technical assistance to CUPAs and PAs.

Multi-Hazard Functional Plan

The County's Multi-Hazard Functional Plan addresses the planned response to extraordinary emergency situations associated with natural and human caused disasters, technological incidents, and national security operations. Individuals and departments assigned emergency responsibilities within this plan will have prepared appropriate supporting plans and related Standard Operating Procedures.

Health Hazardous Materials Division

In May 1982, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors established the Hazardous Materials Control Program in the Department of Health Services. The program focuses on inspection of businesses that generate hazardous waste, hazardous materials inspections, criminal investigations, site mitigation oversight, and emergency response operations. On July 1, 1991, the program was transferred to the Fire Department's Health Hazardous Materials Division (HHMD). The HHMD's mission is to protect the public health and the environment throughout Los Angeles County from accidental releases and improper handling, storage, transportation, and disposal of hazardous materials and wastes through coordinated efforts of inspections, emergency response, enforcement, and site mitigation oversight.

Unified Hazardous Waste and Hazardous Materials Management Regulatory Program

The Los Angeles County Fire HHMD administers the Unified Hazardous Waste and Hazardous Materials Management Regulatory Program for the City of Paramount. Senate Bill 1082 (1993) established the "Unified Hazardous Waste and Hazardous Materials Management Regulatory Program." The Unified Program consolidates, coordinates, and standardizes the following hazardous materials and hazardous waste programs (Program Elements):

- Hazardous Waste Generation (including onsite treatment under Tiered Permitting);
- Aboveground Petroleum Storage Tanks (only the Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure Plan or "SPCC");
- Underground Storage Tanks (USTs);
- Hazardous Material Release Response Plans and Inventories;
- California Accidental Release Prevention Program (Cal ARP); and
- Uniform Fire Code Hazardous Material Management Plans and Inventories.

Household Hazardous and E-Waste Program

The Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County have established the Household Hazardous and Electronic Waste (E-Waste) Collection Program to provide County residents a legal and cost-free way to dispose of unwanted household chemicals that cannot be disposed of in the regular trash. The Household Hazardous and E-Waste Program allows residents to dispose of the following household chemicals and E-Waste.

- Household Chemicals
- Motor oil, oil filters, brake fluid
- Used antifreeze
- Paint, paint thinner, turpentine
- Cleaners with acid or lye
- Pesticides or herbicides
- Household batteries or car batteries
- Pool chemicals
- CRTs, old TVs, misc. electronics
- Mercury thermometers or thermostats
- Fluorescent light bulbs
- Used needles or sharps (In a Sharps container or sturdy box labeled "SHARPS")
- Unwanted or expired prescriptions

LA Sanitation (LASAN) has established permanent collection sites throughout the County known as S.A.F.E. Centers (Solvents/Automotive/Flammables/Electronics).

Local

City of Paramount General Plan

The City of Paramount 2007 General Plan includes the following goals and policies related to hazards and hazardous materials:

Public Facilities Element

Policy PF-3: The City of Paramount will continue to identify sources of industrial pollution and require any pertinent remediation to be undertaken in a timely manner.

Environmental Justice Element

Goal EJ-1: Reduced exposure to air pollution and hazardous materials.

Policy EJ-1.1: Designate acceptable and unacceptable areas for freight trucking and diesel truck idling to limit impacts on residential neighborhoods overburdened by air pollution. Require businesses to install signs prohibiting idling. Promote contact information of regulatory agency for reporting violations.

Policy EJ-1.2: Reduce pollution exposure in residential neighborhoods by limiting industrial operations that generate potentially hazardous air pollutants.

Policy EJ-1.3: Consult with California Air Resources Board and the South Coast Air Quality Management District to ensure the appropriate monitoring and enforcement of mobile and stationary source emissions and to receive aid and assistance in reducing exposures to harmful air pollutants.

Policy EJ-1.4: Coordinate with the South Coast Air Quality Management District to explore ways to initiate data collection efforts for a community emissions reduction and/or community air quality monitoring plan, including the identification of: information needed (new or updated), potential data sources and the resources needed, and strategies to engage residents.

Goal EJ-2: Improve physical conditions of residential areas adjacent to pollutions sources.

Policy EJ-2.1: Mitigate impacts on residential neighborhoods immediately adjacent to industrial areas by utilizing tree and green buffers, sound walls, and similar strategies.

Policy EJ-2.2: Require new residential development and encourage established residential units to include building design features, equipment, and/or site planning measures to protect occupants from air pollution.

Policy EJ-2.3: Assist residents in retrofitting their homes to be more energy efficient, weatherproofed, and better protected from air and noise pollution.

Policy EJ-2.4: Develop a proactive process that allows the City to quickly connect with City departments and regional agencies in order to promptly respond to community complaints concerning odors, emissions, noise, and vibration from industrial businesses.

Policy EJ-2.5: Develop community programs to improve public awareness of State, regional and local agencies, and resources to assist with air quality and other environmental quality concerns.

Policy EJ-2.6: Consult with World Energy Paramount for development of a community education campaign about the use of biodiesel at the former Paramount Petroleum Refinery.

Goal EJ-3: Proper management and disposal of hazardous waste from industrial activities.

Policy EJ-3.1: Discourage the siting of facilities that utilize hazardous materials or generate hazardous wastes within one-quarter mile of any private or public school, park, or similar place where people congregate in numbers.

Policy EJ-3.2: Monitor and evaluate commercial and industrial uses that generate, store, and transport hazardous materials to determine the need for buffer zones or setbacks to minimize risks to residential neighborhoods, schools, parks, and community facilities.

Policy EJ-3.3: Protect natural resources— including groundwater—from hazardous waste and materials contamination, and leaking underground storage tanks.

Policy EJ-3.4: Consult with State, federal, and Los Angeles County agencies to develop and promote best practices related to the use, storage, transportation, and disposal of hazardous materials.

Policy EJ-3.5: Coordinate and integrate hazard mitigation activities with emergency operations plans and procedures.

Policy EJ-3.6: Promote the proper collection, handling, recycling, reuse, treatment, and long-term disposal of hazardous waste from households, businesses, and government operations.

Health and Safety Element

Policy HS-1: The City of Paramount will strive to minimize damage to life and property in the event of a major disaster.

Policy HS-3: The City of Paramount will identify areas of high risk (high densities, older structures, fire hazards) so that disaster response may be prioritized.

Policy HS-4: The City of Paramount will maintain an inventory of alternative emergency resources in the City (portable water, water delivery systems, communication, security, waste collection, and emergency power for critical facilities).

Policy HS-5: The City of Paramount will identify critical facilities for use during disasters and inform appropriate disaster assistance agencies of their location and capabilities.

Policy HS-6: The City of Paramount will assign disaster response duties to appropriate public employees.

Policy HS-15: The City of Paramount will strive to protect life and property from fire damage.

Policy HS-16: The City of Paramount will work to reduce fire danger.

Policy HS-17: The City of Paramount will continue to provide efficient fire protection services.

Policy HS-18: The City of Paramount will continue code enforcement efforts as a means to reduce fire hazards often associated with older buildings and unpermitted structures.

Policy HS-19: The City of Paramount will require contemporary fire protection for multi-story structures and larger industrial facilities.

Policy HS-20: The City of Paramount will require all development to comply with established fire safety standards.

Policy HS-21: The City of Paramount will require new development to install sprinkler systems and smoke detectors, as appropriate.

Policy HS-22: The City of Paramount will encourage improved fire insurance programs.

Policy HS-23: The City of Paramount will monitor, review, and improve, as needed, the City's emergency response capabilities.

4.9.3 – SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLDS

The methodology used to evaluate potential environmental impacts is described in Section 4.0. As identified in Appendix G of the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Specific Plan Update could result in a significant impact if it would:

A. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials.
B. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment.
C. Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school.
D. Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code section 65962.5 and, as a result, would create a significant hazard to the public or the environment.

E. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area.

F. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.

G. Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires.

H. Would the project cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to hazards and hazardous materials.

4.9.4 – IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

This section describes potential impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials which could result from the implementation of the proposed Specific Plan and recommends mitigation measures as needed to reduce significant impacts.

Transport, Use, and Disposal Hazards

Impact HAZMAT-1 – Would the Specific Plan create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?

Analysis of Impacts

Implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would result in an increase in residential dwelling units and nonresidential building space within the Planning Area. Construction associated with implementation of the Specific Plan would likely involve the use and disposal of chemical agents, solvents, paints, and other hazardous materials associated with construction activities. The amount of these chemicals present during construction would be limited, would comply with existing government regulations, and would not be considered a significant hazard.

Hazardous materials associated with operation of residential and commercial uses could include, for example, liquid chemical products (e.g., household cleaners), used motor oil, building maintenance supplies, paints and solvents, pesticides, or other similar materials. The limited quantity of such products would not generate significant hazardous emissions or involve the use of acutely hazardous materials that could pose a significant threat to the environment. The U.S. and California Departments of Transportation regulate the designation of routes appropriate for the transportation of hazardous materials/wastes.

Additionally, the Paramount General Plan Environmental Justice Element includes Goal EJ-1 and its Policies EJ-1.1 through EJ-1.4 which are intended to reduce exposure to hazardous materials, and Goal EJ-2 and its Policies EJ-2.1 through EJ-2.6 which seek to improve physical conditions of residential areas adjacent to pollutions sources.

Finally, the transportation of hazardous materials is regulated by the issuance of permits to the transporter. Such permits are issued by the California Department of Health Services, through the County of Los Angeles Health Department. The City would require all new development to follow applicable federal, State, regional, county, and local regulations and guidelines regarding the storage, handling and disposal of hazardous waste. In addition, all hazardous materials are

required to be stored and handled according to manufacturer's directions and local, State, and federal regulations.

For the above reasons, the proposed project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Hazardous Materials

Impact HAZMAT-2 – Would the Specific Plan create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?

Analysis of Impacts

As previously stated, there are no Hazardous Waste Generators, oil wells, Superfund sites, LUST sites, or other contaminated sites located within or in close proximity to the Planning Area. Therefore, development under the proposed Specific Plan would not risk reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment from any of these types of sites.

Demolition of existing structures in the Planning Area would involve removal and disposal of existing building materials, which could result in the release of hazardous materials such as asbestos containing materials (ACM) or lead based paint (LBP) into the environment. ACM were used on a widespread basis in building construction prior to and into the 1980s; therefore, ACM could be present on the project site and may need to be handled following specific regulations/guidelines described below. Asbestos generally does not pose a threat when it remains intact. When asbestos is disturbed it becomes airborne and can be inhaled. SCAQMD Rule 1403 (Asbestos Emissions from Demolition/Renovation Activities) requires work practices that limit asbestos emissions from building demolition and renovation activities, including the removal and disturbance of ACM (SCAQMD, 2024). This rule is designed to protect uses and persons adjacent to demolition or renovation activity from exposure to asbestos emissions. Rule 1403 requires a certified inspector to survey any facility being demolished or renovated for the presence of all friable and Class I and Class II non-friable ACM. Project applicants must also notify SCAQMD of their intent to perform demolition or renovation of any buildings that may contain asbestos prior to demolition and requires that all ACM is removed prior to any demolition. Rule 1403 also establishes notification procedures, removal procedures, handling and clean-up procedures, storage, disposal, landfilling requirements, and warning label requirements, including high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filtration, the “glovebag” method, wetting, and some methods of dry removal that must be implemented when disturbing appreciable amounts of ACM (more than 100 square feet of surface area). All ACM would be disposed of at a waste disposal site operated in accordance with Rule 1403. Project applicants would also be required to ensure the safety of construction workers involved in the ACM removal by complying with all California Asbestos Standards in Construction, including, but not

limited to minimum air circulations, use of respirators, wetting of materials, clothing laundering, construction and demolition equipment requirements, and shielding specifications. Adherence to SCAQMD Rule 1403 would ensure that impacts related to the potential release of ACM are less than significant.

Similar to exposure to asbestos, exposure of construction workers to lead-based paint during demolition activities is also of concern. Improper disposal of lead-based paint could also contaminate soil and subsurface groundwater in and under landfills not properly equipped to handle hazardous levels of this material. Exposure of surrounding land uses to lead from demolition activities is generally not a concern because demolition activities do not result in appreciable emissions of lead (DTSC, 2024c). The primary emitters of lead are industrial processes. Any lead-based paint utilized on the exterior and interior of existing buildings within the Planning Area would generally remain inside the structures or close to the exterior of the buildings and would be removed during demolition. Due to the age of the buildings it is possible that lead-based paint is present. Therefore, 8 CCR Section 1532.1 (California Construction Safety Orders for Lead) must be followed for the demolition of all existing structures requiring exposure assessment and compliance measures to keep worker exposure below action levels. Development projects under the proposed Specific Plan would also be subject to Title 22 requirements for the disposal of solid waste contaminated with excessive levels of lead. Testing, monitoring, containment, and disposal of lead-based materials would comply with all Cal/OSHA standards and regulations under California Construction Safety Orders for Lead section 1532. Adherence to standard regulations would ensure that impacts related to the release of lead-based paints would be less than significant.

The potential for accidental contamination would also be addressed through the continued application of existing General Plan goals and policies. Safety Element Policy SF-3 requires the City to identify sources of industrial pollution and require any pertinent remediation to be undertaken in a timely manner. Further, Environmental Justice Element Goal EJ-3 and its Policies EJ-3.1 through EJ-3.6 requires proper management and disposal of hazardous waste from industrial activities.

Finally, the City's standard development review process would continue to ensure that a Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) would be prepared where appropriate. By complying with established local, State and federal environmental site assessment procedures, laws, and regulations; by adhering to the requirements of the General Plan goals and policies; and by following applicable Phase 1 ESA requirements, potential hazards to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials would be reduced to less than significant levels.

<u>Level of Significance Before Mitigation</u>

Less than significant.

<u>Mitigation Measures</u>

None required.

Emit Hazardous Emissions

Impact HAZMAT-3 – Would the Specific Plan emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?

Analysis of Impacts

There are multiple schools within one-quarter mile of the Planning Area: Paramount High School and Paramount Park Middle School are located immediately adjacent to the east of the Planning Area; and the Our Lady of the Rosary School is located within the Planning Area. During construction activities, new development projects within the Planning Area could use and dispose of chemical agents, solvents, paints, and other hazardous materials. However, the amount of these chemicals present during construction would be limited, would comply with existing government regulations, and would not be considered a significant hazard.

New development within the Planning Area is expected to be primarily residential and commercial uses, which are not uses that emit hazardous materials or emissions. Hazardous materials associated with new residential and community uses could include, for example, liquid chemical products (e.g., household cleaners), used motor oil, building maintenance supplies, paints and solvents, and pesticides. The limited quantity of such products would not generate significant hazardous air emissions or involve the use of acutely hazardous materials that could pose a significant threat to nearby schools. In addition, individual discretionary development applications would be required to undergo project-specific CEQA review which would include an evaluation of each project's potential impacts on schools.

Further, the potential for accidental contamination would also be addressed through continued application of the Paramount General Plan Environmental Justice Element, including: Goal EJ-1 and its Policies EJ-1.1 through EJ-1.4, which are intended to reduce exposure to hazardous materials; Goal EJ-2 and its Policies EJ-2.1 through EJ-2.6, which seek to improve physical conditions of residential areas adjacent to pollutions sources; and, Goal EJ-3 and its Policies EJ-3.1 through EJ-3.6, which require proper management and disposal of hazardous waste from industrial activities. Similarly, General Plan Safety Element Policy SF-3 requires the City to identify sources of industrial pollution and require any pertinent remediation to be undertaken in a timely manner.

Finally, the City's standard development review process would continue to ensure that a Phase 1 ESA would be prepared where appropriate. By complying with established local, State and federal environmental site assessment procedures, laws, and regulations; by adhering to the requirements of the General Plan goals and policies; and by following applicable Phase 1 ESA requirements, potential risks associated with hazardous emissions or handling of hazardous materials within one-quarter mile within an existing or proposed school would be reduced to less than significant levels.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Hazardous Material Sites

Impact HAZMAT-4 – Would the Specific Plan be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

Analysis of Impacts

While the City of Paramount contains numerous sites that are included on the Cortese list required by Government Code Section 65962.5 for various reasons, and the vast majority of these sites are now closed following remediation and cleanup. None of the sites is located within the Planning Area. Future development under the proposed Specific Plan would be contained entirely within the Specific Plan area and would, therefore, not result in impacts related to hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

No impact.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Airports

Impact HAZMAT-5 – Would the Specific Plan be located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, resulting in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the Specific Plan area?

Analysis of Impacts

There are no airports located within the City of Paramount and the Planning Area is not located within close proximity to any airport. The nearest airport to the Planning Area, the Compton-Woodley Airport, is located approximately 4.65 miles southwest of the Planning Area. Since there are no aircraft influence areas that affect the Planning Area, no impacts related to an airport or private airstrip are anticipated as a result of implementation of the proposed Specific Plan.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

No impact.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Adopted Response and/or Evacuation Plans

Impact HAZMAT-6 – Would the Specific Plan impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

Analysis of Impacts

As shown in the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works Disaster Route Maps, Garfield Avenue serves as principal evacuation route connecting the City of Paramount with Interstate 105 and Imperial Highway to the north and State Route 91 and Artesia Boulevard to the south (LA County Department of Public Works, 2008). These principal access ways are all well-maintained and would continue to support an evacuation function for occupants of the Planning Area. In any disaster warranting evacuation, the exact emergency routes used would depend on a number of variables, including the type, scope, and location of the incident.

Additionally, the existing Health and Safety Element of the General Plan is intended to protect the residents, their property, and public facilities from natural, human-made, and climate change related hazards. Policy HS-1 strives to minimize damage to life and property in the event of a major disaster, while Policy HS-3 seeks to identify areas of high risk (high densities, older structures, fire hazards) so that disaster response may be prioritized. Similarly, Policy HS-4 requires the City to maintain an inventory of alternative emergency resources in the City (portable water, water delivery systems, communication, security, waste collection, and emergency power for critical facilities), while Policy HS-5 requires the City to identify critical facilities for use during disasters and inform appropriate disaster assistance agencies of their location and capabilities. Finally, Policy HS-6 requires the City to assign disaster response duties to appropriate public employees. While it is possible that there may be temporary and limited circulation changes required during discrete periods of time associated with specific construction projects under implementation of the proposed Specific Plan, these changes would be temporary and would be of a nature that still allows for evacuation in the event of an emergency. Emergency access would be maintained to all properties within the project limits and the surrounding vicinity during construction. After construction is completed, proper access routes to developments within the Planning Area would be provided, and these access routes would be designed in accordance with existing emergency response and/or evacuation plans. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Wildland Fires

Impact HAZMAT-7 – Would the Specific Plan expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?

Analysis of Impacts

Generally, the greatest potential for wildfire hazards occurs in areas adjacent to abundant natural vegetation. According to the CALFIRE Fire Hazard Severity Zone Maps, the Planning Area is not located in an area of high fire threat. The Planning Area is located in a highly urbanized area and would not include development within or adjacent to areas of abundant natural vegetation. Because of this, the Planning Area is not at risk of wildfire impacts, and the Specific Plan would not expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires. However, there is a significant fire-related risk within the Planning Area related to structure fires. As such, the Health and Safety Element of the existing General Plan includes Policies HS-15 through HS-23, to minimize the risk to lives and property due to fire hazards. Therefore, the Specific Plan would not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires. Impacts related to wildfire will be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Cumulative Impacts

Impact HAZMAT-8 – Would the Specific Plan cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to hazards and hazardous materials?

Analysis of Impacts

Some impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials are often site-specific and not cumulative in nature because each project area has unique considerations that would be subject to uniform site development and construction standards. Exceptions to this include impacts that have the potential to contaminate the wider environment, such as water basins, or impacts that increase the potential of wildfire, or decrease the ability to evacuate an area.

The routine use, handling, and transport of hazardous materials is regulated at the State, federal, and local level, and is frequently site-specific. Compliance with these regulations and mitigations at the project level would ensure there is no cumulative impact to the public, or to schools within or in close proximity to the Planning Area.

There are no sites within the Planning Area that are included in the Cortese list. Therefore, development within the Planning Area would not have the potential to cause a release of hazardous material into the environment, which could have a significant cumulative impact.

Since there are no aircraft influence areas in the City, there would be no cumulative impact associated with a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the Specific Plan area.

There is the potential that multiple projects could be located along emergency routes, each slowing or interfering with an emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan that, when considered together, create a significant impact. However, in addition to individual CEQA analysis, the City will ensure as part of its development review process, that projects along emergency routes do not have the potential to have a cumulative effect, would not permit projects with the potential to occur simultaneously, and would stagger projects as necessary in order to allow emergency routes to flow freely.

There are no areas of wildland within or adjacent to the Planning Area; therefore, individual development projects would not result in cumulative wildfire impacts.

The existing General Plan contains goals and policies designed to assure future development would not result in significant environmental impacts regarding hazards and hazardous materials. In addition, it is assumed other surrounding jurisdictions have similar General Plan goals and policies as they generally reflect compliance with State laws regarding various hazards and hazardous materials.

Compliance with existing State, federal, and local laws and regulations, compliance with the requirements of the General Plan, and ensuring that projects with the capacity for cumulative impacts are mitigated on a project level if occurring simultaneously would result in a less than significant cumulative impact related to hazards and hazardous materials. Therefore, implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would not result in a cumulatively considerable impact.

<u>Level of Significance Before Mitigation</u>

Less than significant cumulative impact.

<u>Mitigation Measures</u>

None required.

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4.10 – HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

This EIR chapter addresses the potential for water quality, hydrology, flooding, erosion, and siltation impacts that could result from implementation of the proposed Specific Plan.

4.10.1 – ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Water Supply

The City of Paramount Water Division of the Public Works Department provides potable water to approximately 100 percent of its customers within the Specific Plan area. Other residents outside the specific plan area are serviced by the Golden State Water Company. The City and Planning Area overlay the Central Groundwater Basin (Central Basin). The City has three water sources: groundwater from the Central Basin, imported surface water, and recycled water (Paramount, 2020). The City also has emergency mutual-aid domestic water connections with the City of Long Beach, the City of Downey, and Golden State Water Company. The City's current water system includes three wells; two imported water connections; approximately 130 miles of water transmission and distribution mains; and appurtenant valves, hydrants, and equipment. Currently, the City does not have any storage reservoirs, although the groundwater basin acts as ground storage for the City. Upon the Central Basin's adjudication in 1965, the City was allocated an annual pumping right, which currently stands at 5,883 acre-feet per year plus 20% carryover rights. The City utilizes groundwater wells No. 13, 14, and 16. The three wells have a total operating capacity of 10,368,000 gallons per day. In addition to groundwater, the City, and by extension the Planning Area, receive water from imported water and recycled water supplies (UWMP, 2020). According to the UWMP, the City's Water Division is estimated to provide water to a service population of approximately 57,404 in 2025, and is projected to have a service population of approximately 61,266 by 2040, which represents an anticipated population increase of 3,862. According to the UWMP, the City is estimated to have a water demand of 6,267 acre-feet in 2025, and is projected to have a demand of 6,446 acre-feet by the year 2045. However, the UMWP projects the City will have a water supply of 7,902 acre-feet per year by 2040. Therefore, the UWMP projects that water supplies are adequate to meet normal domestic needs in the City of Paramount under the normal, dry, and multiple dry water years.

Watershed

The City of Paramount is located within the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). The Los Angeles RWQCB is a 5,600-square-mile area that encompasses all coastal drainages flowing to the Pacific Ocean between Rincon Point on the coast of western Ventura County and the eastern Los Angeles County line. The City of Paramount is located in the Los Angeles River Watershed of the Los Angeles Valley Hydrologic Unit area which is bounded by the Santa Monica and San Gabriel Mountains to the north, the San Gabriel River to the east, the Pacific Ocean to the south, and multiple watersheds to the west (Calleguas Creek Watershed, Malibu Creek Watershed, Ballona Creek Watershed, and Dominguez Channel Watershed). The Los Angeles River Watershed Monitoring Program (LARWMP) is patterned after the San Gabriel River Regional Monitoring Program (SGRRMP) and is implemented through a collaborative effort led by the Los Angeles and San Gabriel Rivers Watershed Council (Watershed Council).The SGRRMP was developed by multiple stakeholders in the watershed in cooperation with the Regional Board and United States Environmental Protection Agency staff as well as the major dischargers in the watershed in order to monitor water quality. Program

objectives are to increase awareness of the importance of issues at the watershed scale and to improve the coordination and integration of monitoring efforts for both compliance and ambient conditions. The Los Angeles Water Board is an active member of the Watershed Council and coordinates its SWAMP monitoring efforts with both the LARWMP and the SGRRMP. The Planning Area is primarily located in the Lower Los Angeles River sub-watershed area. The Los Angeles River receives drainage from 824 square miles of southern Los Angeles County. Approximately 324 square miles of the watershed are covered by forest or open space land, including the area near the headwaters which originate in the Santa Monica, Santa Susana, and San Gabriel Mountains. The rest of the watershed is highly developed. The lower part of the river flows through a concrete-lined channel in a heavily urbanized portion of the County before becoming a soft-bottom channel once again near the ocean in the City of Long Beach. Pollutants from dense clusters of residential and commercial activities have impaired water quality in the middle and lower watershed.

Wastewater

The City of Paramount contracts with the Los Angeles County Public Works Sewer Maintenance Division for maintenance of its sewer system. Paramount is among 37 cities and unincorporated communities that belong to the Consolidated Sewer Maintenance District (CSMD). The collection system consists of over 4,600 miles of gravity sewer lines and a total of 159 pump stations. The City of Paramount does not have a sewer maintenance agreement with the CSMD, and is responsible for the upkeep of sewer lines within the City. The Paramount Public Works Department is responsible for the City's sewer collection system, which transports domestic sewage to a treatment plant. Domestic sewage includes wastewater from household and commercial plumbing, such as toilets, showers, and sinks. In Paramount, sewage travels from private plumbing pipes into the City's sanitary sewer system, which eventually carries it to the Joint Water Pollution Control Plant in the City of Carson. There, contaminants are removed from the sewage through a multi-stage process, which includes settling, filtering, and biological and chemical treatment. The treated water is then discharged into local waterways or used as reclaimed water. There are existing sewer connections that connect the Planning Area to the main lines along Rosecrans Avenue and 3rd Street. Additionally, there are existing sewer facilities that service the existing uses within the Planning Area.

Stormwater

The storm drain system in Paramount is maintained by the Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD) which conveys stormwater through a network of mains and catch basins until it is eventually discharged in the Pacific Ocean via the Los Angeles River and its tributaries, including the Los Cerritos Channel. The City is covered by the Los Angeles County National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). In 2012, Los Angeles County adopted the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Permit (MS4 Permit), which allows permittees within the county to develop Watershed Management Programs (WMPs). This permit is administered by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (LARWQCB). WMPs implement requirements of the MS4 permit on a local scale through various strategies, measures, and best management practices (BMPs). Participation in the MS4 Permit serves as an NPDES Permit, and fulfills waste discharge requirements under State law. As required by the NPDES permit, the City of Paramount has developed a Storm Water Quality Management Plan (SQMP) to improve and protect the quality of stormwater runoff within the City. The SQMP is implemented by ordinances, requirements, and policies that govern public and private construction projects, site management, and operations. Existing developments within the Planning Area include stormwater systems that direct runoff into the local storm drainage system.

Flooding and Dam Inundation

The terms “100-year flood zone” and “500-year flood zone” refer to the statistical probability of a severe flood condition occurring during a period of extreme rainfall or runoff once every 100 or 500 years. A 100-year flood event refers to a flood that has a 1 in 100 chance of occurring with the same or greater intensity in any given year. Contrary to its name, a 100-year flood can occur any year. Typically, portions of the City of Paramount have been prone to occasional urban flooding due to debris accumulation on storm drains and aged drainage systems (Paramount, 2022). Otherwise, the City of Paramount has long had a high degree of flood protection due to the construction of dams along the San Gabriel and Rio Hondo Rivers and the channelization of the Los Angeles River in the 1950s. According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rates Maps (FIRM) system, the City of Paramount is located in Zone X and characterized as an area with reduced flood risks due to levees (FEMA, 2024). There are, however, two major dams that could potentially affect the City in the event of a dam failure. The Whittier Narrows Dam on the San Gabriel River at the southern end of the San Gabriel Valley, and the Hansen Dam located on the northern edge of the San Fernando Valley. In particular, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has determined that the 60-year-old Whittier Narrows Dam is structurally unsafe and poses a potentially catastrophic risk to the communities along the San Gabriel River floodplain, including the City of Paramount, which is geographically located in the flood inundation area should a dam failure occur.

4.10.2 – REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Federal

<u>Clean Water Act Section 404</u>

The United States Clean Water Act (CWA) is the primary federal law that protects the quality of the nation’s surface waters, including lakes, rivers, aquifers, and coastal areas. The CWA focuses on the protection of surface water, but certain sections also apply to groundwater. Under the CWA, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) sets national standards and effluent limitations, and delegates many regulatory responsibilities to the California State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB).

The CWA authorizes the EPA to regulate water quality in California by controlling the discharge of pollutants to water bodies from point and non-point sources through the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). In Los Angeles County NPDES permits are administered by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB Region 4), a division of the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB). The Basin Plan for the Coastal Watersheds of Los Angeles and Ventura Counties (Water Board, 2020) is the master policy document that drives the management of water quality and NPDES permits.

NPDES permits are adopted to address the water quality and flow-related impacts of stormwater runoff. It is a comprehensive permit, which regulates activities related to construction sites, industrial sites, illegal discharges and illicit connections, new development, and municipal operations. It also requires a public education program, implementing targeted pollutant reduction strategies, and a monitoring program to help characterize local water quality conditions and to begin evaluating the overall effectiveness of the permit’s implementation.

Stormwater Water Discharge for Construction Sites

Dischargers whose projects disturb one (1) or more acres of soil are required to obtain coverage under the General Permit for Discharges of Storm Water Associated with Construction Activity Construction General Permit Order 2009-0009-DWQ. Construction activity subject to this permit includes clearing, grading, and disturbances to the ground such as stockpiling or excavation but does not include regular maintenance activities. The Construction General Permit requires the development of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), identifying potential sources of pollution, and specifying runoff controls during construction for the purpose of minimizing the discharge of pollutants in stormwater from the construction area. The SWPPP must list best management practices (BMPs) the discharger will use to protect stormwater runoff and the placement of those BMPs. Construction-related BMPs are a set of specific guidelines for reducing pollutants (including sedimentation and turbidity) in stormwater discharges and runoff both during construction and post-construction.

Additionally, the SWPPP must contain a visual monitoring program; a chemical monitoring program for “non-visible” pollutants to be implemented if there is a failure of BMPs; and a sediment monitoring plan if the site discharges directly to a water body listed on the 303(d) list for sediment. The permit also includes post-construction standards with the requirement for all construction sites to match pre-project hydrology to ensure that the physical and biological integrity of aquatic ecosystems is maintained. This “runoff reduction” approach is analogous in principle to Low Impact Development (LID) and serves to protect related watersheds and water bodies from both hydrologic-based and pollution impacts associated with the post-construction landscape. Section 404 of the CWA requires a permit before dredged or fill material may be discharged into waters of the United States, unless the activity is exempt from Section 404 regulation (e.g., certain farming and forestry activities).

Federal Emergency Management Agency

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) creates maps classifying levels of flood risk or flood zones for designated areas. The maps are called Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) and are utilized to determine the need and rate of flood insurance. Flood zones are determined based on historical data on the likelihood of flood inundation. The 100-year flood zone, also classified as Zones A, AO and AE, is the area of flooding expected to occur every 100 years.

NPDES Program

The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program requires permitting for activities that discharge pollutants into waters of the United States. This includes discharges from municipal, industrial, and construction sources. Generally, these permits are issued and monitored under the oversight of the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and administered by each regional water quality control board. A brief discussion of these permit types is presented below:

Municipal Permits. Municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4) are issued permits based on the size of the municipality. MS4 permit requirements include reduction of pollutant discharges to the ‘maximum extent practicable’ and protection of water quality. Requirements also include identification of major outfalls and pollutant loads and control of discharges from new development and redevelopment. To address these objectives, municipalities are required to prepare stormwater management plans. Although the NPDES program does not regulate

nonpoint sources of pollution, the Los Angeles Basin RWQCB has other programs in place to address nonpoint sources.

Industrial Permits: The State Water Resources Control Board issues the Industrial General Permit that regulates discharges from 10 broad categories of industrial activities. The permit requires preparation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and monitoring program to implement water quality objectives through use of the best available technology economically achievable (BAT) and best conventional pollutant control technology (BCT).

Construction Permits: Construction activities that disturb one acre or more (whether a single project or part of a larger development) are required to obtain coverage under the State's General Permit for Discharges of Storm Water Associated with Construction Activity. The activities covered under the Construction General Permit include clearing, grading, and other disturbances. The permit requires preparation of a SWPPP and implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) with a monitoring program.

Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (33 U.S.C. 403)

Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 states, "That the creation of any obstruction not affirmatively authorized by Congress, to the navigable capacity of any of the waters of the United States is hereby prohibited; and it shall not be lawful to build or commence the building of any wharf, pier, dolphin, boom, weir, breakwater, bulkhead, jetty, or other structures in any port, roadstead, haven, harbor, canal, navigable river, or other water of the United States, outside established harbor lines, or where no harbor lines have been established, except on plans recommended by the Chief of Engineers and authorized by the Secretary of War; and it shall not be lawful to excavate or fill, or in any manner to alter or modify the course, location, condition, or capacity of, any port, roadstead, haven, harbor, canal, lake, harbor of refuge, or enclosure within the limits of any breakwater, or of the channel of any navigable water of the United States, unless the work has been recommended by the Chief of Engineers and authorized by the Secretary of War prior to beginning the same" (EPA, 2020).

State

Porter-Cologne Act (California)

Under the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (Porter-Cologne) the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) has authority over State water rights and water quality policy. Porter-Cologne also established nine RWQCBs to oversee water quality on a day-to-day basis at the local/regional level. RWQCBs engage in a number of water quality functions in their respective regions.

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

On September 16, 2014, Governor Jerry Brown signed into law a three-bill legislative package collectively known as the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). SGMA requires governments and water agencies of high and medium priority basins to halt overdraft and bring groundwater basins into balanced levels of pumping and recharge. Under SGMA, these basins should reach sustainability within 20 years of implementing their sustainability plans. For critically over-drafted basins, that will be 2040. For the remaining high and medium priority basins, 2042 is the deadline. SGMA empowers local agencies to form Groundwater

Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) to manage basins sustainably and requires those GSAs to adopt Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs) for crucial groundwater basins in California.

NPDES Regulations

The federal Clean Water Act allows individual States to operate their own NPDES programs provided such programs meet minimum Federal requirements. The Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board issues the municipal stormwater National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit, MS4, which encompasses the City of Paramount.

The objective of Order No. 01-182 is to protect the beneficial uses of receiving waters in Los Angeles County. To meet this objective, the Order requires that the Los Angeles Countywide Stormwater Quality Management Plan (SQMP) specify Best Management Practices (BMPs) that would be implemented to reduce the discharge of pollutants in stormwater to the maximum extent practicable. Further, Permittees are to assure that stormwater discharges from the MS4 shall neither cause nor contribute to the exceedance of water quality, standards, and objectives nor create conditions of nuisance in the receiving waters, and that the discharge of non-storm water to the MS4 has been effectively prohibited.

Permit No. CAS004001 requires implementation of a Stormwater Quality Management Plan, which provides specific guidelines to control, reduce, and monitor discharges of waste to storm drain systems. The emphasis of the Stormwater Quality Management Plan is pollution prevention through education, public outreach, planning and implementation as source control BMPs first and structural and treatment control BMPs second.

Standard Urban Stormwater Mitigation Plan

The Standard Urban Stormwater Mitigation Plan (SUSMP) was developed as part of the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board's Municipal Stormwater Program. The Standard Urban Stormwater Mitigation Plan addresses stormwater pollution from certain types of new development and redevelopment. The Standard Urban Stormwater Mitigation Plan specifies the minimum required Best Management Practices (BMPs) that must be used for a designated project. Additional BMPs may be required on certain targeted categories of projects based on these regulations at the discretion of the City. Applicable project applicants are required to incorporate appropriate Standard Urban Stormwater Mitigation Plan requirements into their development plans.

California Water Plan

Required by the California Water Code Section 10005(a), the California Water Plan, prepared by the State Department of Water Resources (DWR), is the State government's strategic plan for managing and developing water resources statewide for current and future generations and provides a framework for water managers, legislators, and the public to consider options and make decisions regarding California's water future. The California Water Plan, which is updated every five years, presents basic data and information on California's water resources, including water supply evaluations and assessments of agricultural, urban, and environmental water uses to quantify the gap between water supplies and uses. The California Water Plan also identifies and evaluates existing and proposed statewide demand management and water supply augmentation programs and projects to address the state's water needs. The goal for the California Water Plan Update is to meet California Water Code requirements, while receiving broad support among those participating in California's water planning, and serving as a useful

document for the public, water planners throughout the state, legislators, and other decisionmakers.

Colbey-Alquist Floodplain Management Act

The Colbey-Alquist Floodplain Management Act encourages local governments to plan, adopt, and enforce land use regulations for floodplain management, in order to protect people and property from flooding hazards. This act also identifies requirements which jurisdictions must meet in order to receive State financial assistance for flood control.

State Resolution No. W-4976

In recent years, the State of California has been experiencing dry weather conditions due to less rainfall in the area, thus, causing a statewide drought emergency. In an effort to promote water conservation efforts, Resolution No. W-4976 was adopted by the California Public Utilities Commission on February 27, 2014 to establish procedures for water conservation measures in order to ensure a reduction in consumption. Since many water utility agencies or companies secure their water supply from multiple sources, including water wholesalers, surface water and/or groundwater; the adoption of this mandate has affected how water utility districts plan their service distribution while encountering various levels of water supply adjustments within each service area.

California Green Building Standards Code

The California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen Code), Part 11 of the California Building Standards Code (Title 24) is designed to improve public health, safety, and general welfare by utilizing design and construction methods that reduce the negative environmental impact of development and to encourage sustainable construction practices. The CALGreen Code provides mandatory direction to developers of all new construction and renovations of residential and nonresidential structures with regard to all aspects of design and construction, including, but not limited to, site drainage design, stormwater management, and water use efficiency. Required measures are accompanied by a set of voluntary standards designed to encourage developers and cities to aim for a higher standard of development.

Low Impact Development

The State of California adopted sustainability as a core value for all California Water Boards' activities and programs on January 20, 2005. Low Impact Development (LID) practices benefit water supply and contribute to water quality protection by taking a different approach to development and using site design and stormwater management to maintain a site's pre-development runoff rates and volumes. The amount of impervious surface, infiltration, water quality, and infrastructure costs can all be addressed by LID techniques, tools, and materials. LID practices include: bioretention facilities or rain gardens, grass swales and channels, vegetated rooftops, rain barrels, cisterns, vegetated filter strips, and permeable pavements.

Regional

Los Angeles Regional Basin Plan

The California legislature has assigned the primary responsibility to administer and enforce statutes for the protection and enhancement of water quality, including the Porter–Cologne Act

and portions of the CWA, to the SWRCB and its nine RWQCBs. The SWRCB provides State-level coordination of the water quality control program by establishing statewide policies and plans for implementation of State and federal regulations. The nine RWQCBs throughout California adopt and implement Basin Plans that recognize the unique characteristics of each region with regard to natural water quality, actual and potential beneficial uses, and water quality problems. The Los Angeles RWQCB is responsible for the protection of the beneficial uses of waters within the coastal watersheds of Los Angeles and Ventura counties, including the Project area. The Water Quality Control Plan for the Los Angeles Region, and Basin Plan for the Coastal Watersheds of Los Angeles and Ventura Counties (Basin Plan) designate beneficial uses, establish water quality objectives, and contain implementation programs and policies to achieve those objectives for all waters addressed through the plan (California Water Code Sections 13240–13247). The Los Angeles RWQCB Basin Plan must conform to the policies set forth in the Porter-Cologne Act as established by the SWRCB in its statewide water policies. The Porter-Cologne Act also provides the RWQCBs with authority to include within their basin plan water discharge prohibitions applicable to particular conditions, areas, or types of waste.

More specifically, the Basin Plan: (i) identifies beneficial uses for surface and ground waters, (ii) includes narrative and numerical water quality objectives that must be attained or maintained to protect the designated beneficial uses and conform to the State's anti-degradation policy, and (iii) describes implementation programs and other actions that are necessary to achieve the water quality objectives established in the Basin Plan.

The Basin Plan is continually being updated to include amendments related to implementation of TMDLs of potential pollutants or water quality stressors, revisions of programs and policies within the Los Angeles RWQCB region, and changes to beneficial use designations and associated water quality objectives.

Construction General Permit (SWRCB Order 2009-0009-DWQ, as amended)

For stormwater discharges associated with construction activity in the State of California, the SWRCB has adopted the General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities (Construction General Permit) to avoid and minimize water quality impacts attributable to such activities. The Construction General Permit applies to all projects in which construction activity disturbs one acre or more of soil. Construction activity subject to this permit includes clearing, grading, and disturbances to the ground, such as stockpiling and excavation. The Construction General Permit requires the development and implementation of a stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWPPP), which would include and specify water quality BMPs designed to prevent pollutants from contacting stormwater and keep all products of erosion from moving off-site into receiving waters. Routine inspection of all BMPs is required under the provisions of the Construction General Permit, and the SWPPP must be prepared and implemented by qualified individuals as defined by the SWRCB.

Activities that disturb over half an acre of land require coverage under the Construction General Permit. Waste Discharge Requirements for the Discharge of Groundwater from Construction and Project Dewatering to Surface Waters in the Coastal Watersheds of Los Angeles and Ventura County (Los Angeles RWQCB Order no. R4-2018-0125). This general order is intended to authorize discharges of treated or untreated groundwater generated from permanent or temporary dewatering operations or other applicable wastewater discharges not specifically covered in other general or individual NPDES permits. Discharges from facilities to waters of the United States that do not cause, have the reasonable potential to cause, or contribute to an in-

stream excursion above any applicable State or federal water quality objectives/criteria or cause acute or chronic toxicity in the receiving water are authorized discharges in accordance with the conditions set forth in this Order. To demonstrate coverage under the order, dischargers must submit documentation to show that the discharge would not cause or contribute to a violation of any applicable water quality objective/criteria for the receiving waters, or any other discharge prohibition listed in the order. In addition, discharges must perform reasonable potential analysis using a representative sample of groundwater or wastewater to be discharged. The sample shall be analyzed, and the data compared to the water quality screening criteria for the constituents listed in the order, and if results show exceedance of water quality screening criteria, the discharge will be required to treat the wastewater to acceptable standards prior to discharge.

Local

City of Paramount General Plan

The City of Paramount 2007 General Plan includes the following goals and policies related to hydrology and water quality:

Environmental Justice Element

Policy EJ-5.3: Encourage urban greening and green infrastructure elements to increase groundwater recharge, reduce urban runoff, improve water quality, and create public green spaces.

Health and Safety Element

Policy HS-44: Maximize the resiliency of essential public facilities to risks and hazards of flooding.

Policy HS-45: Evaluate the need to expand the capacity of flood control facilities to minimize flood hazards resulting from extreme weather events.

Policy HS-46: Monitor the work of the Army Corps of Engineers' and other federal agencies' response plan to repair the Whittier Narrows Dam.

Policy HS-47: Encourage natural flood control infrastructure and techniques to capture storm water, recharge aquifers, and prevent flooding near established drainage systems and channels.

Policy HS-54: Consult with Central Basin Water District to implement Drought Response Plan.

Public Facilities Element

Policy PF-1: The City of Paramount will work to maintain good water quality.

Policy PF-2: The City of Paramount will provide water storage and delivery capacity to meet normal usage and fire requirements.

Policy PF-3: The City of Paramount will continue to identify sources of industrial pollution and require any pertinent remediation to be undertaken in a timely manner.

Policy PF-4: The City of Paramount will protect, conserve, and enhance water resources through implementation of the Water Master Plan.

Policy PF-8: The City of Paramount will provide adequate sewage service to ensure that waste disposal practices are in accordance with policies and procedures of the Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County.

Policy PF-9: The City of Paramount will work to eliminate problems of ponding on local streets.

Resource Management Element

Policy RM-21: The City of Paramount will continue to cooperate with the other agencies that are charged with improving air and water quality in the region.

Policy RM-22: The City of Paramount will continue to cooperate with surrounding cities in the formulation and implementation of regional resource management plans and programs.

City of Paramount 2020 Urban Water Management Plan

The City is a water supplier and is required to prepare a Plan in accordance with the Urban Water Management Planning Act (UWMP) Act established in 1983. The UWMP Act is included in the California Water Code (CWC) under Sections 10610 through 10656. The UWMP Act requires water agencies to develop UWMPs which provide a framework for long-term water planning and information regarding long-term resource planning to ensure sufficient water supplies are available to meet existing and future demands. Urban water suppliers are required to report, describe, and evaluate water deliveries and uses, water supply sources, efficient water uses, demand management measures, and water shortage contingency planning.

Municipal Code

Chapter 8.20 (Urban Stormwater Management) of the City's Municipal Code addresses discharges to the storm drain system and runoff management requirements. Chapter 13.04 (Water Works System) of the City's Municipal Code addresses protection of the public water supply, water service within the City, and water conservation. Chapter 13.08 (Sewers and Sewage Disposal) of the City's Municipal Code addresses adequate sewer capacity.

4.10.3 – SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLDS

The methodology used to evaluate potential environmental impacts is described in Section 4.0. As identified in Appendix G of the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Specific Plan Update could result in a significant impact if it would:

A. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality.

B. Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin.

C. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would; (i) result in substantial erosion or siltation on-or off-site; (ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on-or offsite; (iii) create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff.

D. In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation.

E. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan.

F. Cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to hydrology or water quality.

4.10.4 – IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

This section describes potential impacts related to biological resources which could result from the implementation of the project and recommends mitigation measures as needed to reduce significant impacts to less than significant levels.

Degrade Surface or Groundwater Quality

Impact HYD-1 - Would the Specific Plan violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?

<u>Analysis of Impacts</u>

A project normally would have an impact on surface water quality if discharges associated with the project would create pollution, contamination, or nuisance as defined in Water Code Section 13050, or that cause regulatory standards to be violated as defined in the applicable National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) stormwater permit or Water Quality Control Plan for the receiving water body. A significant impact could occur if the proposed project would discharge water that does not meet the quality standards of the agencies that regulate surface water quality and water discharge into stormwater drainage systems. Significant impacts could also occur if the project does not comply with all applicable regulations with regard to surface water quality as governed by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB). These regulations include preparation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) to reduce potential water quality impacts during construction activity and the implementation of post-construction best management practices (BMPs) such as detention basins, infiltration ponds, porous pavement, sand and organic filters, etc.

Construction Impacts. All new development projects within the Specific Plan area equal to one acre or more would be subject to Los Angeles County NPDES Permit No. CAS004001. In addition, pursuant to Municipal Code Chapter 8.20 (Urban Stormwater Management), a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) would be required to be prepared and submitted for all future projects. All construction projects must apply Best Management Practices (BMPs) that

include drainage controls such as detention ponds, dikes, filter berms, and down drains to prevent runoff, and utilizing plastic covering to prevent erosion. Compliance with county and City discharge requirements would ensure that construction resulting from implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would not violate any water quality standards or discharge requirements, or otherwise substantially degrade water quality. Impacts would be less than significant with implementation of existing regulations.

Operational Impacts. Future residential and nonresidential development proposals that would occur over the life of the proposed Specific Plan would not individually result in wastewater treatment violations because these types of projects would not discharge sufficient discharge volumes or constituents such that the wastewater treatment plant would require modified wastewater discharge requirements. The proposed Specific Plan would also not significantly impact existing City of Paramount water quality as no land uses are allowed in the Planning Area that would be permitted to discharge waste or be permitted to violate water quality standards. Additionally, individual developments within the Planning Area would be subject to federal, State, and local water discharge regulations. Finally, stormwater management programs are required to address illicit discharges into the MS4 system. According to the California Water Boards Los Angeles R4 San Gabriel River Watershed Non-stormwater permits database, there are no facilities within the City of Paramount with an open or active permit to discharge non-stormwater.

In addition, the Environmental Justice Element of the Paramount General Plan includes Policy EJ 5.3 which encourages urban greening and green infrastructure elements to increase improve water quality. Similarly, the Public Facilities Element of the Paramount General Plan includes Policy PF-1 which mandates the City to maintain good water quality, and PF-3 which mandates the City to identify sources of industrial pollution and require any pertinent remediation to be undertaken in a timely manner. Policy PF-8 requires the City of Paramount to provide adequate sewage service to ensure that waste disposal practices are in accordance with policies and procedures of the Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County. Further, the Resource Management Element of the General Plan includes Policy RM-21 which directs the City to continue to cooperate with the other agencies that are charged with improving air and water quality in the region.

With the continued implementation of several regulatory/agency mechanisms by which water quality, waste discharge, surface water, and groundwater is protected by law and policy, including the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act and the Construction General Permit, as well as implementation of General Plan policies, as described above, future development under the Specific Plan would not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality.

<u>Level of Significance Before Mitigation</u>

Less than significant.

<u>Mitigation Measures</u>

None required.

Impacts to Groundwater Supply and Recharge

Impact HYD-2 – Would the Specific Plan substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?

Analysis of Impacts

According to the City's 2020 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP), the City was projected to have a service population of approximately 57,404 in 2025, and is projected to have a service population of approximately 61,266 by 2040. This represents an estimated increase in population of approximately 3,862. The estimated future population for the City's service area was based on projections obtained from the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). The SCAG data incorporates demographic trends, existing land use, general plan land use policies, and input and projections from the Department of Finance (DOF) and the US Census Bureau at the time those documents were prepared (circa 2020). The UWMP indicated these population estimates were used to prepare its water consumption estimates (page 5-2). It should be noted that the City's population has been declining in recent years and is now estimated to be less than 53,000 residents (DOF, 2025). Table 3-3 in Section 3, Project Description, shows the anticipated growth in both the residential and nonresidential components beyond existing conditions within the Specific Plan area. As shown in Table 3-3, it is anticipated that buildout of the proposed Specific Plan would result in approximately 4,643 additional permanent residents within the Paramount water service area by 2045, which is in excess of that estimated in the UWMP to adequately supply future growth. Since most of the City's water supply comes from groundwater sources, the growth represented by the proposed Specific Plan exceeds that upon which the UWMP was developed. Therefore, long-term local groundwater supply is a potentially significant impact that requires mitigation.

In addition, future development within the Planning Area under the propose Specific Plan could result in increased runoff and pollutant contributions to local groundwater supplies. However, as stated in Impact HYD-1 above, the continued implementation of several regulatory/agency mechanisms by which water quality, waste discharge, surface water, and groundwater is protected by law and policy, including the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act and the Construction General Permit, as well as implementation of General Plan policies, as described above, would ensure that future development under the Specific Plan would not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality.

The Environmental Justice Element of the Paramount General Plan includes Policy EJ 5.3 which encourages urban greening and green infrastructure elements to increase groundwater recharge. Further, the Health and Safety Element of the Paramount General Plan includes Policy HS-54, which directs the City to consult with Central Basin Water District to implement Drought Response Plan. Policy PF-2 requires the City of Paramount to provide water storage and delivery capacity to meet normal usage requirements. Policy PF-4 requires the City to protect, conserve, and enhance water resources through implementation of the Water Master Plan. Finally, Policy RM-22 which directs the City to continue to cooperate with surrounding cities in the formulation and implementation of regional resource management plans and programs. By reducing water consumption and helping remediate existing groundwater contamination, these goals and policies help the City to secure its groundwater supply into the future.

Future development under the proposed Specific Plan would comply with existing General Plan policies regarding water supply and quality; State and regional regulatory requirements; the City's development review process; and City Municipal Code requirements. However, even with this compliance, the potential population increase from the proposed Specific Plan means that long-term impacts to groundwater supply from the proposed project could potentially be significant. Therefore, Mitigation Measure HYD-1 is incorporated to help assure there will be adequate groundwater supplies for future City and Planning Area residents. With implementation of Mitigation Measure HYD-1, and given the drop in total population in Paramount to less than 53,000 residents, development within the Planning Area under the proposed Specific Plan would result in less than significant groundwater supply impacts.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Potentially significant.

Mitigation Measures

HYD-1 **Water Demand Management.** New developments under the Specific Plan that will be served by local water utility providers shall not be approved if they increase water use in excess of what is identified for supply in 2045 under the most recent Urban Water Management Plan for the involved local water providers.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Less than significant.

Impacts to Drainage Patterns, Erosion, Siltation, or Water Quality

Impact HYD-3 – Would the Specific Plan substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would; (i) result in substantial erosion or siltation on-or off-site; (ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on-or offsite; (iii) create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?

Analysis of Impacts

The Planning Area is generally flat and almost completely developed, with the only permeable areas being the recreational field at the Our Lady of the Rosary School, and landscaping around buildings and in parking lots throughout the Planning Area. There are no streams or rivers that traverse the Planning Area. Stormwater in the Planning Area is collected via a system of storm drains that connect to the municipal stormwater conveyance systems under Rosecrans Avenue, Paramount Boulevard, and Somerset Boulevard. Therefore, there is no significant anticipated risk of erosion resulting from steep slopes or from wind and rain in areas of exposed soils within the Planning Area. Additionally, the proposed Specific Plan does not include any specific development or project that would substantially alter existing drainage patterns in the Planning Area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces.

The Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) regulates the discharge of stormwater from municipalities and activities within their jurisdiction including construction activities. The City is a signatory of the Los Angeles County Waste Discharge Requirements for Municipal Storm Water and Urban Runoff Discharge. The requirements include guidance and regulations for construction related erosion control, including the preparation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) for projects which would disturb one or more acres. The requirements also include appropriate best management practices (BMPs) that should be included to help prevent substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil. Typical construction BMPs to prevent soil erosion include: covering exposed soil with mulch or temporary vegetation (like hydroseeding); installing silt fences along perimeters; diverting stormwater runoff with drainage channels; grading slopes to reduce steepness; using erosion control blankets on slopes; and establishing permanent vegetation once construction is complete. All of these BMPs are aimed at minimizing soil disturbance and protecting exposed areas from rain impact and water flow during construction activities.

Future development resulting from implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would have the potential to expose surficial soils during construction and, as a result, local soils may be subject to erosion or loss of topsoil during development. Development may also increase downstream runoff by increasing impervious surfaces on specific sites. However, future projects developed within the Planning Area under the proposed Specific Plan would be assessed on a site-specific basis. Potential impacts would be required to be analyzed in subsequent project-level CEQA documentation, wherein any potentially significant impacts would be required to be mitigated to less than significant levels, or otherwise compensate for any unavoidable impacts. Future development projects would also be required to adhere to local, State, and federal laws and policies regulating impacts to streams, rivers, and drainage patterns through the area that may also lead to an increase in impervious surfaces.

In addition, the City's Municipal Code, Chapter 8.20 (Urban Stormwater Management), requires the City to review all project plans and impose conditions as required to safeguard water quality and erosion control prior to the issuance of either a building permit or grading plan approval. Municipal Code Chapter 8.20 seeks to protect and improve water quality receiving waters by: reducing illicit discharges to the municipal stormwater system to the maximum extent practicable; eliminating illicit connections to the municipal stormwater system; eliminating spillage, dumping, and disposal of pollutant materials into the municipal stormwater system; and reducing pollutant loads in stormwater and urban runoff, from land uses and activities identified in the municipal NPDES permit. The City's development review process would evaluate proposed development against established BMPs and other water quality-related guidelines, many of which are designed to control runoff and erosion. In addition, the City's development review process would examine potential increases in runoff from development sites and require post-development runoff to not exceed pre-development levels through project design such as the use of detention/retention basins, pipes, swales, etc.

In addition, the Environmental Justice Element of the Paramount General Plan includes Policy EJ 5.3 which encourages urban greening and green infrastructure elements to increase groundwater recharge, reduce urban runoff, improve water quality, and create public green spaces. Similarly, the Health and Safety Element of the General Plan includes Policy HS-44 which seeks to maximize the resiliency of essential public facilities to risks and hazards of flooding. Policy HS-45 mandates the City to evaluate the need to expand the capacity of flood control facilities to minimize flood hazards resulting from extreme weather events. Policy HS-47 encourages natural flood control infrastructure and techniques to capture stormwater, recharge aquifers, and prevent flooding near established drainage systems and channels. Under Policy

PF-3 the City of Paramount will continue to identify sources of industrial pollution and require any pertinent remediation to be undertaken in a timely manner. Finally, Policy PF-9 directs the City to work to eliminate problems of ponding on local streets.

With implementation of existing General Plan policies, continued regulatory compliance with State and regional water quality standards, and guidelines for erosion control in the Municipal Code, development within the Planning Area under the proposed Specific Plan would not result in significant impacts related to drainage patterns, erosion, siltation, flooding, stormwater drainage capacity, or polluted runoff.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Pollutant Risk from Site Inundation

Impact HYD-4 – Would the Specific Plan, in flood hazard, tsunami or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?

Analysis of Impacts

As outlined in Section 4.10.1, according to the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rates Maps (FIRM) system, the City of Paramount is located in Zone X and characterized as an area with reduced flood risks due to levees (FEMA, 2024). There are, however, two major dams that could potentially affect the City in the event of a dam failure. The Whittier Narrows Dam on the San Gabriel River at the southern end of the San Gabriel Valley, and the Hansen Dam located on the northern edge of the San Fernando Valley. In particular, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has determined that the 60-year-old Whittier Narrows Dam is structurally unsafe and poses a potentially catastrophic risk to the communities along the San Gabriel River floodplain, including the City of Paramount, which is geographically located in the flood inundation area should a dam failure occur. The proposed Specific Plan does not include any specific project that would risk release of pollutants due to property inundation. Any future projects within the Planning Area would be required to adhere to the County of Los Angeles's NPDES permit (see Section 4.10.2) regulating impacts and potential pollutant discharge within flood hazard or tsunami inundation areas.

The City of Paramount is entirely landlocked with no major isolated waterbodies and is, therefore, not at risk of seiche. At its closest point, the City is approximately 12.75 miles from the Pacific Ocean and at an elevation of at least 70-75 feet above mean sea level, so it is unlikely any tsunami event affecting the Pacific Ocean coast would reach the Planning Area. Based on available evidence, it is unlikely the Planning Area would face any significant pollutant contamination or release during flood, seiche, or tsunami conditions. Therefore, no significant impacts to pollutant discharge in flood or tsunami inundation zones are anticipated from the implementation of the updated 2045 General Plan within the Planning Area.

Lastly, the Health and Safety Element of the General Plan includes Policy HS-46 which requires the City to monitor the work of the Army Corps of Engineers' and other federal agencies'

response plans to repair the Whittier Narrows Dam. Continued implementation of this General Plan policy and the County NPDES permit requirements would ensure that potential impacts related to polluted inundation as a result of the proposed Specific Plan would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Project Compliance with Water Quality and Groundwater Management Plans

Impact HYD-5 – Would the Specific Plan conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?

Analysis of Impacts

Surface Water Quality Plan. The Los Angeles RWQCB is responsible for the protection of the beneficial uses of waters within the coastal watersheds of Los Angeles and Ventura counties, including the City of Paramount. The Water Quality Control Plan for the Los Angeles Region (Basin Plan) designates beneficial uses, establishes water quality objectives, and contains implementation programs and policies to achieve those objectives for all waters addressed through the Basin Plan. The RWQCB can prohibit or limit water discharges based on particular conditions, areas, or types of waste. The Basin Plan: (i) identifies beneficial uses for surface and ground waters, (ii) includes narrative and numerical water quality objectives that must be attained or maintained to protect the designated beneficial uses and conform to the state's anti-degradation policy, and (iii) describes implementation programs and other actions that are necessary to achieve the water quality objectives established in the Basin Plan.

Construction General Permit. For stormwater discharges associated with construction activities in the state, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) has adopted the Construction General Permit (CGP) to avoid and minimize water quality impacts from such activities.[i] The CGP requires the development and implementation of a stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWPPP) which would include and specify water quality Best Management Practices (BMPs) to prevent pollutants from contacting stormwater and keep erosion from moving off-site into receiving waters. Through the City's development review process, future development in the Planning Area must comply with the various requirements of the Basin Plan and the CGP. In this way, future development in the Planning Area would have less than significant impacts on surface water management plans.

Groundwater Management Plan. The Water Replenishment District of Southern California (WRD) was formed in 1959 to protect local groundwater supply and quality. The Central Basin is within the WRD and managed by the Central Basin Watermaster. Through the City's development review process, future development in the Planning Area must comply with the various requirements of the Central Basin Watermaster. In this way, future development in the Planning Area would have less than significant impacts on groundwater management plans.

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[i] SWRCB Order 2009-0009-DWQ, as amended

In addition, the Environmental Justice Element of the Paramount General Plan includes Policy EJ-5.3 which encourages urban greening and green infrastructure elements to increase groundwater recharge and improve water quality. Similarly, the Health and Safety Element of the General Plan includes Policy HS-44 which seeks to maximize the resiliency of essential public facilities to risks and hazards of flooding, while Policy HS-45 aims to evaluate the need to expand the capacity of flood control facilities to minimize flood hazards resulting from extreme weather events. Policy HS-47 encourages natural flood control infrastructure and techniques to capture stormwater, recharge aquifers, and prevent flooding near established drainage systems and channels. Further, the Public Facilities Element of the General Plan includes Policy PF-1 which directs the City of Paramount to work to maintain good water quality. Lastly, the Resource Management Element of the General Plan includes Policy RM-21 which directs the City of Paramount to continue to cooperate with the other agencies that are charged with improving water quality in the region.

Therefore, with implementation of existing General Plan policies, as outlined above, and continued compliance with existing State and local regulations, implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan for the Basin.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Cumulative Impacts

Impact HYD-6 - Would the Specific Plan cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to hydrology and water quality?

Analysis of Impacts

The Planning Area and surrounding communities contain water-related hazards and surface and groundwater resources that must be protected. State law requires that the Safety Elements of city general plans, including Paramount, address potential flooding, erosion, changing drainage patterns, and other water-related hazards. The existing General Plan identifies ways the City will coordinate with other agencies to protect surface and groundwater supplies and provide adequate levels of safety for the community. In addition, the general plans for the surrounding cities and the County General Plan are all required to identify potential risks from flooding, geologic, and seismic conditions and contain goals and policies to address these risks and protect the public. These goals and policies are intended to be consistent with State law and are similar to those of the City's General Plan. In addition to local general plans, various State laws including CEQA require the City as a lead agency to identify potential water-related hazards related to new development and protect important water resources as development occurs in the future under the proposed Specific Plan. Local water districts are also required to prepare Urban Water Management Plans and Groundwater Sustainability Plans to provide long-term protection for both surface and groundwater supplies for the region. In these ways, potential cumulative impacts from future development related to flooding and water-related

hazards would be minimized, and important regional water resources would be protected. Therefore, future development in the Planning Area under the proposed Specific Plan would not have a significant contribution to any cumulative regional impacts on flooding or other water-related hazards and protect surface and groundwater resources in the future.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.10.5 – REFERENCES

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4.11 – LAND USE AND PLANNING

This EIR chapter addresses land use and planning impacts associated with the proposed Specific Plan. Issues of interest are land use and planning impacts identified by the CEQA Guidelines: whether the Specific Plan will physically divide an established community or cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

4.11.1 – ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The Clearwater East Specific Plan Area is located centrally within the City of Paramount and is surrounded by a variety of land uses on all sides. To the east of the Planning Area is Paramount Park, Paramount Park Middle School, and Paramount High School (West Campus). Immediately north of the Planning Area across Rosecrans Avenue is a railway right-of-way and utility property. The area is also zoned for Industrial uses. The railroad line is identified as the Southeast Gateway Line corridor for LA Metro's light rail transit line connecting Southeast Los Angeles County to Downtown Los Angeles. South of the Planning Area across Somerset Boulevard is a mixture of commercial and residential uses. West of the Planning Area is the Clearwater West Specific Plan Area, which features warehouses, logistics, light industrial, and commercial areas. The two Specific Plan areas are separated by a railroad operated by the Union Pacific San Pedro Subdivision (Paramount, 2024).

Existing Land Uses

Existing land use and development plans and regulations provide a starting point for understanding past planning efforts that have shaped and continue to shape the city of Paramount. Relevant documents include the General Plan, Zoning Code (Title 17 of the Municipal Code), and specific plans. Existing land uses reflect the current condition of the built environment in a City, which may not always align with the zoning code and map. The City is approximately 3,072 acres in size, with the project site constituting approximately 71 acres of the City. The Paramount General Plan Land Use Map designates the project site Specific Plan. All Specific Plans prepared within the City are in compliance with the respective General Plan Land Use Designation at the time they were adopted. The Clearwater East Specific Plan was adopted in 1987 and most recently updated in 2018, establishing a specific regulatory vision for the Clearwater area of Paramount.

The Specific Plan area in its existing condition contains a wide representation of nonresidential land uses found within the City of Paramount. The site is most well-known for its special land uses; the Paramount Swap Meet and the Bianchi Drive-In Theater, comprising the "Paramount Entertainment Center". Along Paramount Boulevard in the northern portion of the site is a small shopping plaza with restaurants and clothing stores, the Paramount Adult Education Center, and the Our Lady of the Rosary Parish catholic church. The southern portion of the site along Somerset Boulevard is the Somerset Business Park, which features multiple retail and warehouse uses, as well as the Paramount Sheriff's Station.

Residential Uses and Housing Density

According to the Land Use Element of the City's General Plan, approximately 52% of the City is developed with residential uses. Industrial land uses account for 23% of the City's total land area,

with commercial land uses accounting for approximately 5%. The remaining 20% of the City's land area is devoted to streets, freeways, and other rights-of-way. The City has two residential land use designations; single and multi-family. The maximum development intensity permitted under these land use designations is 8 dwelling units per acre for single-family residential, and 22 dwelling units per acre for multi-family residential uses. The Planning Area in its existing condition contains no residential land uses (with the exception of a few apartments on the church property for priests and nuns), instead consisting primarily of commercial and institutional uses.

Business, Commercial, and Industrial Land Uses

Commercial and Industrial uses within Paramount are primarily located centrally within the City. The City has subdivided multiple areas of the City into Specific Plan areas with focuses on business, commercial, and industrial uses. As outlined in the City's General Plan, the Commercial Land Use designation applies to a variety of uses that includes retail sales and services. Development under this designation is characterized by a number of uses, including smaller neighborhood commercial establishments, community shopping centers, offices, and other service-providers. The full breadth of permitted uses under this designation is established as part of the City's Zoning Ordinance, and through the use of specific plans. Development under this designation relies on measurements carried out through a "floor area ratio" (FAR); with the maximum allowable FAR for commercial uses being 2 to 1. Commercial and residential developments are permitted within areas designated as Commercial in accordance with the Zoning Ordinance and State law.

The Industrial land use designation encompasses those uses involved in manufacturing, processing, and warehousing activities. The full breadth of permitted uses under this designation is established as part of the City's Zoning Ordinance, and through the use of specific plans. The development standards for this land use category also rely on a FAR with the maximum allowable intensity of 2 to 1. The Business Park land use designation includes those uses that involve light industrial, limited retail commercial, and office uses. This type of land use designation is to be implemented either by Planned Development with Performance Standards zoning, or regulatory specific plans. As with the Commercial and Industrial land uses, the maximum allowable intensity is a FAR of 2 to 1. As outlined in the Land Use Element of the City's General Plan, the Clearwater East Specific Plan Area in its existing condition is designed to promote office, commercial, and light industrial uses arranged adjacent to nearby arterial highways.

Public Facilities

Public and Quasi-public facilities within the City of Paramount include, but are not limited to, schools, parks, power line easements, flood control facilities, churches, and similar uses. This designation includes publicly owned lands and properties of quasi-public institutions containing existing or proposed support uses for local, community-wide, or regional support facilities. Existing public and/or quasi-public facilities within the Planning Area includes the Adult Education Center operated by the Paramount Unified School District (PUSD), the Our Lady of the Rosary Parish Catholic church, as well as the Paramount Sheriff's Station.

Park Uses

The largest park use within the City of Paramount is the Paramount Park located adjacent to the Planning Area across Paramount Boulevard. There are, however, no Park or Open Space uses located within the Clearwater East Specific Plan Area.

4.11.2 – REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Federal

Clean Air Act

The Federal Clean Air Act was enacted to protect and enhance air quality and promote the health and welfare of the public. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has established ambient air quality standards for certain criteria pollutants, which are generally implemented by State and local agencies.

Clean Water Action (Section 404)

Section 404(b) of the Federal Clean Water Act was established to preserve water quality and discourages the alteration or destruction of wetlands. This act requires that the United States Army Corps of Engineers (Army Corps) evaluate the impacts of discharge of dredged or fill materials into any water of the United States (U.S.). The Army Corps Wetlands Policy requires the implementation of mitigation measures for any impacts to designated wetland areas.

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit Program

The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program requires the owner or operator of any facility, or person responsible for any activity that discharges waste into the surface waters of the U.S. to obtain a NPDES permit from the Regional Water Quality Control Board, as mandated by the National Clean Water Act. The existing NPDES (Phase 1) stormwater program requires municipalities serving greater than 100,000 persons to obtain a NPDES storm water permit for construction projects greater than five acres. Phase II of the NPDES storm water regulations expanded the national program to smaller municipalities with populations of 10,000 or more and construction sites that disturb greater than one acre of land.

Federal Endangered Species Act

The Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) was passed in 1973 and is administered by the U.S. Department of Fish and Wildlife Service. The ESA provides a process for listing species as endangered or threatened and establishes requirements for the protection of all listed species.

State

California Wetlands Policy

The State Wetlands Policy, administered by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife under Fish and Game Code Sections 1601 to 1606, protects marshlands and other designated wetland areas, and requires mitigation for disturbance of wetland areas.

California Endangered Species Act

Similar to the Federal ESA, the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) was created to protect rare, threatened, and endangered species in California. The CESA was enacted in 1984 and is administered by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Regional

Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is a Joint Powers Authority under California law, established as an association of local governments and agencies that voluntarily convene as a forum to address regional issues. SCAG encompasses the counties of Los Angeles, Orange, Ventura, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Imperial. SCAG is designated as a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and as a Regional Transportation Planning Agency. SCAG is responsible for regional planning in the Southern California area. As SCAG is the largest MPO in the United States, it has sub-regional councils of government to provide for the subregions' land use and transportation planning at a more local level. The sub-regional council for Paramount is the Gateway Cities Council of Governments (GCCOG). SCAG provides a framework to coordinate local and regional decisions regarding future growth and development and prepares future growth forecasts for the region. As the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the area, SCAG is mandated by the Federal government to research and develop plans for transportation, growth management, hazardous waste management, and air quality based on the regional growth projections. Under Senate Bill 375 (SB 375), SCAG, as a designated MPO, is required to prepare a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) as an integral part of its Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). RTP/SCS documents are long-range visioning plans that balance future mobility and housing needs with economic, environmental, and public health goals. SCAG's current adopted RTP/SCS, Connect SoCal 2024, was adopted in April 2024.

SCAG's Connect SoCal 2024

As part of developing a Sustainable Communities Strategy per SB 375, SCAG is required to include a "forecasted development pattern for the region." This Forecasted Regional Development Pattern details where people, households, and employment will be located through 2050, the horizon year of the Plan. To develop this forecast, SCAG first prepared a Regional Growth Forecast to understand how many people, households, and jobs we needed to plan for. Then SCAG developed a preliminary Forecasted Regional Development Pattern based on local general plans and known development entitlement agreements. RHNA allocations, to the extent that they had been embedded into certified housing elements, were taken into account. In addition, regional sustainability strategies from the final, adopted Connect SoCal 2020, including priority growth and environmentally constrained areas, were embedded into the forecast. These are detailed further in the Priority Development Area and Green Region Resource Area sections. Then SCAG met with local jurisdictions across the region to verify that our understanding of the future matched with local planning efforts. This input from local jurisdictions was integrated into the Forecasted Regional Development Pattern for Connect SoCal 2024.

The Regional Growth Forecast assumes the region is successful in alleviating much of the latent housing demand that has built up over past decades by projecting 30 percent higher household growth during the 2020s than Connect SoCal 2020. This reflects changes to state- and local-housing-supportive policy as well as stronger housing production numbers in recent years, including ADUs, which are historically undercounted. In contrast to past cycles in which local review usually yields lower household growth and higher job growth, the locally reviewed Connect SoCal 2024 household forecast was actually 2.3 percent higher than the preliminary version developed with a demographic panel of experts. The share of household growth in Connect SoCal 2024 in more than one priority area and outside environmental constraint areas is 39 percent compared to only 36 percent in Connect SoCal 2020.

Local

2007 General Plan

The City of Paramount 2007 General Plan with 2022 revisions includes the following issues, goals, and policies related to land use:

Clearwater East Specific Plan

Policy CESP-1: Mixed uses are allowed only where designated in order to avoid overloading the commercial market and reducing shared parking potential with the swap meet.

Policy CESP-2: Office use is acceptable in lieu of other types of commercial uses if market feasibility is demonstrated.

Policy CESP-3: Frontage treatments involving architectural elevations, materials, color, texture, landscaping, and signs shall be the subject of the Site Plan review in accordance with City design guidelines.

Policy CESP-4: The City, the Redevelopment Agency or the Parking Authority will share in property acquisition and/or development costs of improvements where it is cost effective.

Policy CESP-5: The "stacking" of vehicles entering the swap meet shall occur entirely on-site so Paramount Boulevard, Rosecrans Avenue, and Somerset Boulevard are not impacted.

Policy CESP-6: The preferred method of land use regulation is the Planned Development with Performance Standards (PD-PS) zone, although conventional zone districts may be used if they are consistent with the intent of this Area Plan.

Economic Development Element

Policy EDE-12: The City of Paramount will continue to utilize redevelopment to consolidate and redevelop underutilized and blighted parcels and properties. The City will continue to promote economic development through the use of redevelopment.

Policy EDE-13: The City of Paramount will promote quality design as a means to ensure compatibility among commercial, industrial, and residential uses.

Policy EDE-14: The City of Paramount will continue to improve the infrastructure in those areas that are deficient in infrastructure.

Policy EDE-15: The City of Paramount will ensure that future development, supported in whole or part through redevelopment, is fiscally sound and benefits the community.

Housing Element

Goal HE-1: Housing and Residential neighborhoods that are well maintained.

Policy HE-1.1: Preserve the character, scale, and quality of established residential neighborhoods.

Policy HE-1.2: Continue to promote the maintenance and rehabilitation of the existing housing stock in Paramount.

Policy HE-1.3: Protect established residential neighborhoods from potential adverse impacts associated with existing and proposed nonresidential land uses.

Goal HE-2: A range of housing types, densities, and affordability levels that meet the diverse needs of the community, including a balanced supply of ownership and rental units.

Policy HE-2.1: Provide a zoning context that creates adequate sites to support the production of 364 housing units through October 2029 to meet the demands of present and future residents, including an adequate number and range of new dwelling types affordable to extremely low-, very low-, low-, moderate-, and above moderate-income households.

Policy HE-2.2: Facilitate the development of a range of residential development types which fulfill regional housing needs, including accessory dwelling units, low- to moderate-density townhomes, and higher-density apartments and condominiums and mixed-use projects.

Policy HE-2.3: Promote new residential development and ensure this housing—including affordable units—provides a healthy, safe, and attractive living environment.

Policy HE-2.4: Encourage transit-oriented development within walking distance of planned light rail stations and high-frequency bus stops, including higher residential densities, public gathering places, urban parks, streetscape amenities, and commercial and entertainment uses.

Policy HE-2.5: Encourage infill housing development that is compatible in character with the surrounding established residential neighborhood.

Land Use Element

Policy LU-1: The City of Paramount will continue to stimulate large-scale transition to industrial development in the central portion of the City between Paramount Boulevard and Garfield Avenue.

Policy LU-2: The City of Paramount will continue to improve the character of individual neighborhoods through City policies designed to protect and preserve a high quality of life in Paramount.

Policy LU-3: The City of Paramount will provide guidance for land use and development within specific geographic areas of the City in the form of Specific Plans and Area Plans.

Policy LU-4: The City of Paramount will limit the intrusion of dissimilar uses as a means to minimize potential land use conflicts and incompatibility in the future.

Policy LU-5: The City of Paramount, through continued comprehensive land use planning, will strive to preserve the overall mix of land uses and development in the City.

Policy LU-6: The City of Paramount will strive to improve the unity and identity of individual neighborhoods as a means to protect and preserve a high quality of life in Paramount.

Policy LU-7: The City of Paramount will continue to maintain and conserve its existing residential neighborhoods.

Policy LU-8: The City of Paramount will continue to examine future potential opportunities for residential development.

Policy LU-9: The City of Paramount will promote development that capitalizes on its location near the I-105 Freeway, the 710 Freeway, and the 91 Freeway.

Policy LU-10: The City of Paramount will continue to promote the development of larger, more efficient, commercial retail shopping centers as opposed to smaller "strip commercial" centers.

Policy LU-11: The City of Paramount will continue to preserve and promote the improvement of the existing commercial areas, including those districts located along Paramount Boulevard and Alondra Boulevard.

Policy LU-12: The City of Paramount will continue to actively pursue the goals and objectives of the Redevelopment Project Areas.

Policy LU-13: The City of Paramount will continue to provide safe, convenient pedestrian linkages across and along streets containing commercial centers and uses.

Policy LU-14: The City of Paramount will encourage the continued revitalization of its industrial districts to accommodate economic development and growth.

Policy LU-15: The City of Paramount will promote the development of modern and attractive business parks that will enhance the community's economic well-being.

Policy LU-16: The City of Paramount will continue to maintain, and where possible, expand its open space resources.

Policy LU-17: The City of Paramount will develop new open space areas in utility rights-of-way, along the Los Angeles River, and as part of future park development.

Policy LU-18: The City of Paramount will continue to promote the maintenance of existing properties.

Policy LU-19: The City of Paramount will continue to work towards improving the appearance of the entryways leading into the City.

Policy LU-20: The City of Paramount will continue to work towards the implementation of streetscape and sign standards.

Policy LU-21: The City of Paramount will work with adjacent cities to improve the appearance of major entry points into the City.

Policy LU-22: The City of Paramount will continue to promote quality design in the review of residential, commercial and industrial development.

Policy LU-23: The City of Paramount will continue to employ a design theme in the review of future commercial development and in the rehabilitation of existing commercial uses.

Resource Management Element

Policy RM-1: The City of Paramount will develop new areas of open space to the extent that opportunities present themselves for such development.

Policy RM-2: The City of Paramount will continue to make effective use of the open space lands that are available.

Policy RM-3: The City of Paramount will strive to maintain utility rights-of-way in open space uses that do not conflict with utility needs but provide attractive open space for the community, such as parks, trails, etc.

Policy RM-4: The City of Paramount will require new larger residential developments to provide sufficient open space (including pedestrian and bicycle linkages) to meet the local need.

Transportation Element

Policy Tran-1: The City of Paramount will increase the efficiency of the local street system by reducing the conflicts associated with through traffic.

Policy Tran-2: The City of Paramount will close selected local streets along major arterials to improve through circulation and to eliminate through traffic impacts on local streets.

Policy Tran-3: The City of Paramount will continue to develop and enhance the existing streets and intersections in the City.

Policy Tran-4: The City of Paramount will continue to develop and implement a designated system of truck routes as a means to keep industrial traffic out of residential neighborhoods.

Policy Tran-5: The City of Paramount will strive to ensure that new development implements its “fair-share” of improvements to offset the potential adverse impacts associated with the additional traffic that will be generated by the new development.

Policy Tran-6: The City of Paramount will continue to support the development and expansion of the region’s public and mass transit system.

Policy Tran-7: The City of Paramount will design and locate increased off-street parking in commercial areas to reduce conflicts with arterial traffic and improve viability of commercial districts.

Policy Tran-8: The City of Paramount will promote shared parking in its commercial areas, where feasible.

Policy Tran-9: The City of Paramount will continue to support the maintenance and expansion of the existing public transit system.

Policy Tran-10: The City of Paramount will encourage new and existing businesses to include those improvements that will promote the use of alternative forms of transit.

Policy Tran-11: The City of Paramount will continue to support the local public transit system and ongoing efforts to improve connections with other regional transit facilities and services (Metro bus service, Long Beach Transit, Green Line, etc.).

Municipal Code

Chapter 17.88 of the Paramount Municipal Code describes the Specific Plan zone for the Clearwater East Specific Plan Area. The Chapter outlines regulations to guide its development implement the Paramount General Plan objectives, policies and general land uses as they pertain to the subject area.

4.11.3 – SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLDS

As identified in Appendix G of the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Specific Plan could result in a significant impact if it:

A. Physically divides an established community.
B. Causes a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.
C. Causes substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to land use and planning.

4.11.4 – IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

This section describes potential impacts related to land use and planning that could result from the implementation of the Specific Plan and recommends mitigation measures as needed to reduce significant impacts.

Established Communities

Impact LAND-1 – Would the Specific Plan physically divide an established community?

Analysis of Impacts

The physical division of an established community typically refers to the construction of a physical feature (such as a new freeway, railway, or other large transportation projects) or the removal of a means of access (such as a bridge) that would impede or restrict movements within a

community. It also may refer to policies that limit or preclude access between adjacent areas or neighborhoods within a city. Implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would not physically divide an established community. The Specific Plan proposes a framework for future redevelopment of parcels with new transit-oriented, mixed-use development including medium-to-high density multifamily residential located directly above or adjacent to commercial, neo industrial, and quasi-public uses. The proposed Specific Plan includes a Mobility Plan consisting of six street types, including minimum/maximum design requirements and guidelines to facilitate a multi-modal roadway network that will provide low-speed vehicular travel lanes, sidewalks, bicycle lanes, curb extensions, and enhanced parkway/amenity zones. Future development proposals under the proposed Specific Plan would be subject to the City's standard development review and approval process requiring compliance with the City's Municipal Code and fire code compliance review to meet California Fire Code (CCR Title 24 Part 9), Section 503. Therefore, implementation of the proposed Specific plan would not physically divide an established community.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Plan Conflicts

Impact LAND-2 – Would the Specific Plan cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

Analysis of Impacts

This section includes a discussion of potential conflicts between the Specific Plan and applicable planning documents, which are described in Section 4.11.2 above. It should be noted that policy conflicts do not, in and of themselves, constitute a significant environmental impact. However, policy inconsistency is a significant adverse environmental impact only when it is related to a policy adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect and it is anticipated that the inconsistency would result in a significant adverse *physical* impact. Please note that planning documents that pertain to specific technical topics (e.g., Air Quality) are discussed in those topical sections of this Draft EIR.

Proposed Specific Plan development zones are illustrated in Exhibit 3-5 of the Project Description (Section 3.0). The Planning Area would continue to be identified as Area Plan land use as part of Paramount's General Plan, with the Specific Plan establishing new standards for development within its existing boundaries. These standards allow for flexibility between a variety of residential, commercial, office, and neo (light) industrial uses across the entire Specific Plan Area. Overall, the Specific Plan proposes up to 2,000 housing units, which could result in an increase in the City's population by an estimated 4,643 new residents. The proposed Specific Plan would also allow for development of approximately 1 million additional square feet of new nonresidential uses including retail/restaurant, office, neo industrial, and community facilities.

Connect SoCal 2024. The SCAG Regional Council adopted the Connect SoCal 2024 in April 2024. The long-range visioning plan identifies several goals from the Connect SoCal 2020 which are intended to help carry out the vision for improved mobility, a strong economy, and sustainability. These goals, and the Specific Plan's relationship to these goals, are presented in Table 4.11-1 (Connect SoCal 2024 Consistency Analysis). As shown in Table 4.11-1, the implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would not cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any regional (SCAG) land use-related policies adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

Table 4.11-1
Connect SoCal 2024 Consistency Analysis

Connect SoCal 2024	Consistency Analysis
RTP/SCS G1: Align the plan investments and policies with improving regional economic development and competitiveness.	**Consistent.** Implementation of the Specific Plan would result in the development of approximately 2,000 new residential housing units, as well as an estimated 440,137 square feet of net new nonresidential building area within the existing boundaries of the Specific Plan Planning Area. The Specific Plan includes a comprehensive Mobility Plan that would establish new circulation patterns within the Specific Plan area to connect new developments to the local street network, which will replace current surface parking lot circulation routes. The Specific Plan would include a mix of uses in order to avoid overloading the commercial market and reducing shared parking potential with the swap meet. The Specific Plan would also allow office uses in lieu of other types of commercial uses if market feasibility is demonstrated. The Specific Plan also capitalizes on the Planning Area's location near the I-105 Freeway, the I-710 Freeway, the SR-91 Freeway, and a future Southeast Gateway Station which would be adjacent to the Planning Area along the LA Department of Water and Power (LADWP) corridor north of Rosecrans Avenue. Finally, the Specific Plan aims to create a transit-oriented development mixed-use town center that provides a range of housing, commercial, and open space uses while preserving the economic viability of existing commercial and institutional uses within the Planning Area.
RTP/SCS G2: Maximize mobility and access for all people and goods in the region.	**Consistent.** The proposed Specific Plan includes public realm improvement strategies which establish street standards and guidelines to ensure long-term provision of pedestrian-oriented sidewalks, landscape amenities, and active transportation infrastructure that encourages walking and biking, and maximization of curbside parking resources throughout Clearwater. Addressing the lack of adequate sidewalks and basic streetscape facilities is a key Specific Plan objective.

RTP/SCS G3: Ensure travel safety and reliability for all people and goods in the region.	**Consistent.** The intent of the new circulation patterns would be a traditional urban block structure defined by pedestrian-oriented streets. These streets are envisioned as a creative space that merges the boundary between sidewalk and street to provide a common public space shared by pedestrians, cyclists and low-speed vehicles. New streets would range in facility types including with or without bike lanes, sidewalk width, parkway width, center medians, curbside management, and number of travel lanes. All streets are proposed to include curb extensions and mid-block crossings and intersections, a minimum of eight-foot-wide sidewalks (excluding parkway), and planted parkways that are bioswales or flow-through planters. The maximum number of lanes would be three lanes (one travel lane in each direction and a center turn lane). Additionally, the streets would be designed to encourage slow speeds with features such as raised intersections and curbless street design. The Specific Plan would also work to update pedestrian facilities at intersections to increase safety such as new crosswalk legs, high-visibility crosswalks, and new alignment for crosswalk geometries.
RTP/SCS G4: Preserve and ensure a sustainable regional transportation system.	**Consistent.** The Specific Plan aims to create a transit-oriented development mixed-use town center that provides a range of housing, commercial, and open space uses while preserving the economic viability of existing commercial and institutional uses within the Planning Area. The mixed-use town center would serve as a gateway between the City of Paramount and regional transit access. Finally, the Specific Plan circulation patterns are designed to work in concert with the surrounding regional freeway and rail networks.
RTP/SCS G5: Maximize the productivity of our transportation system.	The Specific Plan would capitalize on the Planning Area's location near the I-105 Freeway, the I-710 Freeway, the SR-91 Freeway, and the future Southeast Gateway Station which would be adjacent to the Planning Area along the LADWP corridor north of Rosecrans Avenue. The Specific Plan would support the local public transit system and ongoing efforts to improve connections with other regional transit facilities and services (Metro bus service, Long Beach Transit, Green Line, etc.).
RTP/SCS G6: Protect the environment and health for our residents by improving air quality and encouraging active transportation (e.g., bicycling and walking).	**Consistent.** Implementation of the Specific Plan includes the development of a robust pedestrian network throughout the Planning Area to connect residents, and promote a more active lifestyle for the community. Additionally, the Specific Plan proposes the development of bicycle linkages and expanded park and open space opportunities within the Planning Area. The expansion of green spaces, as well as the promotion of pedestrian activity within the community are effective strategies in protecting residents' health by improving air quality and in encouraging active transportation.

RTP/SCS G7: Actively encourage and create incentives for energy efficiency, where possible.	**Consistent.** New developments as proposed in the Specific Plan would be built in compliance with the latest California Building Code Standards as adopted by the City, as well as in compliance with the City's General Plan and Municipal Code. These codes include energy efficiency standards for residential and nonresidential buildings. These standards address electricity and natural gas efficiency in lighting, water, heating, and air conditioning, as well as the effects of the building envelope (e.g., windows, doors, walls, and roofs, etc.) on energy consumption.
RTP/SCS G8: Encourage land use and growth patterns that facilitate transit and active transportation.	**Consistent.** Implementation of the Specific Plan would encourage physical development of buildings and open space that provides a transition between existing uses that represent past development patterns and future development that will follow best practices for TOD. Additionally, the Specific Plan proposes the development of bicycle linkages and expanded park and open space opportunities within the Planning Area. The expansion of green spaces, as well the promotion of pedestrian and bicycle activity within the Planning Area are effective strategies in facilitating active transportation. The Specific Plan would also support the local public transit system and ongoing efforts to improve connections with other regional transit facilities and services (Metro bus service, Long Beach Transit, Green Line, etc.).
RTP/SCS G9: Maximize the security of the regional transportation system through improved system monitoring, rapid recovery planning, and coordination with other security agencies.	This goal is not applicable to the Specific Plan. However, the proposed Specific Plan aims to increase active transportation and use of transit in the area, which would have the indirect effect of added security at existing and future transportation facilities via the increased presence of pedestrians, transit users, cyclists, and other visitors to the area.

The Connect SoCal 2024 also includes growth projections for cities and counties within the region. SCAG's growth forecasts estimate that the City of Paramount's population would increase from 54,000 in the year 2019 to 57,500 in the year 2050, which is an increase of 3,500 persons. SCAG also estimated that the number of households in Paramount would increase from 14,400 in 2019 to 14,900 in 2050, an increase of 500 households. Finally, SCAG estimated that the number of employees in the City would increase from 22,500 in 2019 to 23,400 in 2050, an increase of 900 employees.

The proposed Specific Plan includes land use designations that support development of 2,000 new dwelling units, accommodating an additional population of 4,643 residents by 2045. Employment within the Planning Area would increase from 1,621 to 1,759 employees, a net increase of 138 employees). While falling within the accounted employment growth, the anticipated population and household growth under the proposed Specific Plan would exceed SCAG's growth potential accounted for by the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS. As such, from a strict numbers standpoint the population and housing growth from the proposed Specific Plan would exceed the RTP/SCS growth projection for the City. However, as shown in Table 4.11-1 above, the project is consistent with and supportive of all of the applicable goals of the current RTP/SCS and promotes many of the City's General Plan goals and policies as discussed below. Population growth within the City of Paramount related to the Specific Plan would not be substantial, as it is

encouraged as the main objective of the Specific Plan. Additionally, the future residents of the Planning Area would most likely come from Paramount or surrounding communities and would not represent a substantial change relative to the region as a whole. Further, the proposed Specific Plan would help the City achieve its RHNA allotment of 364 dwelling units during the 6th RHNA Cycle.

Additionally, as outlined in the Regulatory Framework section above, there are multiple existing General Plan Housing and Land Use Element policies related to effects of population growth within Paramount. Policy HE-2 requires the City to provide a zoning context that creates adequate sites to support the production of 364 housing units through October 2029 to meet the demands of present and future residents, including an adequate number and range of new dwelling types affordable to extremely low-, very low-, low-, moderate-, and above moderate-income households. Policy HE-2.2 seeks to facilitate the development of a range of residential development types which fulfill regional housing needs, including accessory dwelling units, low- to moderate-density townhomes, and higher-density apartments and condominiums and mixed-use projects. Policy HE-2.3 aims to promote new residential development and ensure this housing—including affordable units—provides a healthy, safe, and attractive living environment. Policy HE-2.5 encourages infill housing development that is compatible in character with the surrounding established residential neighborhood. Policy LU-8 guides the City of Paramount to examine future potential opportunities for residential development.

City of Paramount General Plan and Municipal Code

The Planning Area would continue to be identified as Area Plan land use in Paramount's General Plan, and as CESP Clearwater East Specific Plan (or abbreviated to "Clearwater Specific Plan") in the City's Zoning Code. The proposed Specific Plan establishes new development standards within its current boundaries. The City's General Plan is the long-term policy guide for the development of the City, reflecting the ever-changing economic and physical needs of the community, while in keeping with its core values. The Specific Plan implements the goals and policies of the City's General Plan in a specific direction to reflect the unique conditions of the Planning Area. The Specific Plan is consistent with the City's General Plan as amended. The City of Paramount Municipal Code is one of the primary tools for implementing the General Plan. The Municipal Code will be followed in tandem with the General Plan and Specific Plan for the construction of new developments as proposed in the Specific Plan. In instances where there is a conflict between the Municipal Code and Specific Plan, the Specific Plan would supersede the requirements of the code. However, in instances where the Specific Plan is silent, the Zoning Ordinance's regulations would prevail. For this reason, the proposed Specific Plan would comply with the City's Municipal Code and zoning.

<u>Level of Significance Before Mitigation</u>

Less than significant.

<u>Mitigation Measures</u>

None required.

Cumulative Impacts

Impact LAND-3 – Would the Specific Plan cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to land use and planning?

Analysis of Impacts

The proposed Specific Plan would not physically divide an established community, and would not cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with a land use plan, policy, or regulation. While the growth potential of the proposed Specific Plan is exceeds the growth expectations of the region as estimated in the Connect SoCal 2024, it is consistent with the goals of the RTP/SCS, as well as the City's General Plan and Municipal Code and would help the City achieve its RHNA allotment. Therefore, implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would not cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to land use and planning.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less Than Significant.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

4.11.5 – REFERENCES

City of Paramount. 2007. *Final Paramount General Plan*. Adopted August 7, 2007. Revisions: Health and Safety Element Update and Environmental Justice Element; Adopted February 8, 2022.

City of Paramount, 2024. *Clearwater East Specific Plan Existing Conditions Report – Draft*. October 2024.

Southern California Association of Governments. Connect SoCal 2024: Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS). Adopted April 2024.

4.12 – MINERAL RESOURCES

This EIR chapter addresses mineral resources impacts associated with the proposed Specific Plan. Issues of interest are mineral resources impacts identified by the CEQA Guidelines: whether the Specific Plan will result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource or result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site.

4.12.1 – ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Mineral Resource Zones

Minerals refer to aggregate resources, or rock, sand, and gravel, energy-producing fields, including oil, gas, and geothermal substances, and related mining operations. The California Department of Conservation (DOC) classifies land in the state into mineral resource zones based on the known or inferred mineral resource potential of that land (DOC, 2023a). The Planning Area is located in the San Gabriel Valley Production-Consumption (P-C) Region of the greater Los Angeles metropolitan area (DOC, 2023b). Land in the region has been classified by the California Division of Mines and Geology (CDMG) according to the presence or absence of significant sand and gravel deposits (suitable for use in construction-grade aggregate). The land classification is presented in the form of maps showing Mineral Resource Zones (MRZ). There are four MRZ classifications, MRZ-1 through MRZ-4 as described below:

- MRZ-1 are areas where adequate information indicates that no significant mineral deposits are present, or where it is judged that little likelihood exists for their presence.
- MRZ-2 are areas where adequate information indicates that significant mineral deposits are present or where it is judged that a high likelihood for their presence exists.
- MRZ-3 are areas containing mineral deposits the significance of which cannot be evaluated from available data.
- MRZ-4 are areas where availability information is inadequate for assignment to any other MRZ-zone.

According to the DOC, no portions of the City of Paramount are classified as MRZ-2, indicating that there are no significant mineral deposits likely to be present (DOC, 2023b). There are no areas where adequate information indicates that significant mineral deposits are present or where it is judged that a high likelihood for their presence exists within the project area or City of Paramount.

4.12.2 – REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

State

<u>Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975</u>

The Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 (SMARA) was enacted by the California legislature to promote the conservation of the State's mineral resources and to ensure adequate reclamation of mined lands. Among other provisions, SMARA requires the State Geologist to classify land in California into Mineral Resource Zones (MRZ), according to the known or

inferred mineral potential of the land. The process is based solely on geology, without regard to existing land use or land ownership. Upon completion of each study, the State Geologist submits the mineral land classification report to the State Mining and Geology Board, which transmits the information to appropriate local governments that maintain jurisdictional authority in mining, reclamation, and related land-use activities. Local governments are required to incorporate the report and maps into their general plans and consider the information when making land use decisions.

SMARA addresses the need for a continuing supply of mineral resources and to prevent or minimize the negative impacts of surface mining to public health, property, and the environment. The Act applies to anyone, including government agencies, engaged in surface mining operations in California, including federally managed lands that disturb more than one acre or remove more than 1,000 cubic yards of material cumulatively from one site. Regulated mining activities include prospecting and exploratory activities, dredging and quarrying, streambed skimming, borrow pitting, and the stockpiling of mined materials. The current General Plan incorporates the requirements and mineral classification and designation information of SMARA.

The California Department of Conservation, Division of Mines and Geology (DMG) 'Mineral Land Classification Project' publishes mineral resource maps which have proven to be of value in land use planning and mineral conservation. This is an ongoing process with updates taking place approximately every 10 years. DMG is also in the process of identifying lands throughout the county with the potential for mineral resource recovery and will be used by the County in identifying new mineral resource areas to help ensure their preservation.

4.12.3 – SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLDS

The methodology used to evaluate potential environmental impacts is described in Section 4.0. As identified in Appendix G of the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Specific Plan Update could result in a significant impact if it would:

A. Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state.
B. Result in the loss of availability of a local important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan.
C. Would the project cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to mineral resources?

4.12.4 – IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

This section describes potential impacts related to the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that is of value to the region and the residents of the state and the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site.

Loss of Statewide or Regional Mineral Resources

Impact MINERAL-1 – Would the Specific Plan result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?

Analysis of Impacts

According to the Department of Conservation (DOC), the City of Paramount is located within the San Gabriel Valley Production Consumption (P-C) Region, an area where it has been determined significant PCC-grade aggregate resources are present. Portions of this geologic region are designated as MRZ-2, indicating there are significant mineral deposits present. While the City is located within the San Gabriel P-C Region, the City, and the Specific Plan area, are not located in an area designated by the State Mining and Geology Board as containing regionally significant PCC-grade aggregate resources (DOC, 2010). Furthermore, the project site is already developed, and project improvements will not result in the loss of availability of mineral resources of value to the state. Future development as part of the Specific Plan would not result in a loss of availability of a known mineral resource of value to the region.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

No Impacts.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Loss of Locally Important Mineral Resources

Impact MINERAL-2 – Would the Specific Plan result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?

Analysis of Impact

According to the Department of Conservation, the City of Paramount is not located in an area indicated by the State Mining and Geology Board as containing regionally significant PCC-grade aggregate resources (DOC, 2010). As such, implementation of the Specific Plan would not result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource. No impacts would occur.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Cumulative Impacts

Impact MINERAL-3 – Would the Specific Plan cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to mineral resources?

Analysis of Impacts

The proposed Specific Plan would not result in any impacts related to mineral resources. Because of the developed nature and location of the Specific Plan area, and because the

Specific Plan would not impact mineral resources, there would also be no cumulative impacts with respect to mineral resources.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

No cumulative impact.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.12.5 – REFERENCES

City of Paramount. 2007. *Final Paramount General Plan*. Adopted August 7, 2007. Revisions: Health and Safety Element Update and Environmental Justice Element; Adopted February 8, 2022.

City of Paramount, 2024. *Clearwater East Specific Plan Existing Conditions Report – Draft*. October 2024.

Department of Conservation (DOC). 2023a. California Geological Survey (CGS) Warehouse: Mineral Land Classification. Web: https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/informationwarehouse/index.html?map=mlc [Accessed June 2024].

DOC. 2023b. DOC Maps: Mines and Minerals. Web: https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/mineralresources/ [Accessed June 2024].

Department of Conservation (DOC). 2010. Special Report 209. S.L. Kohler. Web: https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/informationwarehouse/index.html?map=mlc. [Accessed June 2024].

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4.13 – NOISE

The following section of the EIR provides pertinent background information on the nature of sound and vibration transmission; describes the existing noise environment in the Planning Area; summarizes applicable noise guidelines, standards, and regulations; and evaluates potential noise and vibration impacts that could result from implementation of the proposed Specific Plan. Where necessary, this section includes mitigation measures that would reduce noise and vibration impacts associated with the project.

4.13.1 – FUNDAMENTALS OF ENVIRONMENTAL ACOUSTICS

Noise is generally defined as unwanted sound and is widely recognized as a form of environmental degradation. Airborne sound is the rapid fluctuation of air pressure above and below atmospheric pressure. The frequency (pitch), amplitude (intensity or loudness), and duration of a sound all contribute to the effect on a listener, or receptor, and whether or not the receptor perceives the sound as “noisy” or annoying.

Pitch is the height or depth of a tone or sound and depends on the frequency of the vibrations by which it is produced. Sound frequency is expressed in terms of cycles per second, or Hertz (Hz). Humans generally hear sounds with frequencies between 20 and 20,000 Hz and perceive higher frequency sounds, or high pitch noise, as louder than low-frequency sound or sounds low in pitch. Sound intensity or loudness is a function of the amplitude of the pressure wave generated by a noise source combined with the reception characteristics of the human ear. Atmospheric factors and obstructions between the noise source and receptor also affect the loudness perceived by the receptor. Sound pressure levels are typically expressed on a logarithmic scale in terms of decibels (dB). A dB is a unit of measurement that indicates the relative amplitude (i.e., intensity or loudness) of a sound, with 0 dB corresponding roughly to the threshold of hearing for the healthy, unimpaired human ear.

Sound levels in decibels are calculated on a logarithmic basis. An increase of 10 dBs represents a ten-fold increase in acoustic energy, while 20 dBs is 100 times more intense, 30 dBs is 1,000 times more intense, and so on. In general, there is a relationship between the subjective noisiness or loudness of a sound and its intensity, with each 10 dB increase in sound level perceived as approximately a doubling of loudness. Due to the logarithmic basis, decibels cannot be directly added or subtracted together using common arithmetic operations:

$$50\ decibels + 50\ decibels\ \neq 100\ decibels$$

Instead, the combined sound level from two or more sources must be combined logarithmically. For example, if one noise source produces a sound power level of 50 dBA, two of the same sources would combine to produce 53 dB as shown below.

$$10 * 10log\left(10^{\left(\frac{50}{10}\right)} + 10^{\left(\frac{50}{10}\right)}\right) = 53\ decibels$$

In general, when one source is 10 dB higher than another source, the quieter source does not add to the sound levels produced by the louder source because the louder source contains ten times more sound energy than the quieter source.

Sound Characterization

Although humans generally can hear sounds with frequencies between 20 and 20,000 Hz, most of the sounds humans are normally exposed to do not consist of a single frequency, but rather a broad range of frequencies perceived differently by the human ear. In general, humans are most sensitive to the frequency range of 1,000–8,000 Hz and perceive sounds within that range better than sounds of the same amplitude in higher or lower frequencies. Instruments used to measure sound, therefore, include an electrical filter that enables the instrument's detectors to replicate human hearing. This filter, known as the "A-weighting" or "A-weighted sound level," filters low and very high frequencies, giving greater weight to the frequencies of sound to which the human ear is typically most sensitive. Most environmental measurements are reported in dBA, meaning decibels on the A-scale. See Table 4.13-1 for a list of common noise sources and their A-weighted noise levels.

Sound levels are usually not steady and vary over time. Therefore, a method for describing either the average character of the sound or the statistical behavior of the variations over a period of time is necessary. The continuous equivalent noise level (L_{eq}) descriptor is used to represent the average character of the sound over a period of time. The L_{eq} represents the level of steady-state noise that would have the same acoustical energy as the time-varying noise measured over a given time period. L_{eq} is useful for evaluating shorter time periods over the course of a day. The most common L_{eq} averaging period is hourly, but L_{eq} can describe any series of noise events over a given time period.

Variable noise levels are the values that are exceeded for a portion of the measured time period. Thus, the L_{01}, L_{10}, L_{50}, and L_{90} descriptors represent the sound levels exceeding 1%, 10%, 50%, and 90% of the time the measurement was performed. The L_{90} value usually corresponds to the background sound level at the measurement location.

When considering environmental noise, it is important to account for the different responses people have to daytime and nighttime noise. In general, during the nighttime, background noise levels are generally quieter than during the daytime but also more noticeable due to the fact that household noise has decreased as people begin to retire and sleep. Noise exposure over the course of an entire day is described by the day/night average sound level, DNL (or L_{dn}), and the community noise equivalent level (CNEL), descriptors. Both descriptors represent the 24-hour noise exposure in a community or area. For DNL, the 24-hour day is divided into a 15-hour daytime period (7 AM to 10 PM) and a 9-hour nighttime period (10 PM to 7 AM), and a 10 dB "penalty" is added to measure nighttime noise levels when calculating the 24-hour average noise level. For example, a 45 dBA nighttime sound level would contribute as much to the overall day-night average as a 55 dBA daytime sound level. The CNEL descriptor is similar to DNL, except that it includes an additional 5 dBA penalty for noise events that occur during the evening time period (7 PM to 10 PM). The artificial penalties imposed during DNL and CNEL calculations are intended to account for a receptor's increased sensitivity to noise levels during quieter nighttime periods.

Table 4.13-1
Typical Noise Levels

Common Outdoor Activities	Noise Level (dBA)	Common Indoor Activities
	110	Rock Band
Jet flyover at 1,000 feet	105	
	100	
Gas lawn mower at 3 feet	95	
	90	
Diesel truck at 50 feet at 50 mph	85	Food blender at 3 feet
	80	Garbage disposal at 3 feet
Noise urban area, daytime	75	
Gas lawn mower, 100 feet	70	Vacuum cleaner at 10 feet
Commercial area	65	Normal speech at 3 feet
Heavy traffic at 300 feet	60	
	55	Large business office
Quiet urban daytime	50	Dishwasher next room
	45	
Quiet urban nighttime	40	Theater, large conference room
Quiet suburban nighttime	35	
	30	Library
Quite rural nighttime	25	Bedroom at night
	20	
	15	Broadcast/recording studio
	10	
	5	
Typical threshold of human hearing	0	Typical threshold of human hearing

Source: Caltrans, 2013

Sound Propagation

The energy contained in a sound pressure wave dissipates and is absorbed by the surrounding environment as the sound wave spreads out and travels away from the noise-generating source. The strength of the source is often characterized by its “sound power level.” Sound power level is independent of the distance a receiver is from the source and is a property of the source alone. Knowing the sound power level of an idealized source and its distance from a receiver, the sound pressure level at a specific point (e.g., a property line or a receiver) can be calculated based on geometrical spreading and attenuation (noise reduction) as a result of distance and environmental factors, such as ground cover (asphalt vs. grass or trees), atmospheric absorption, and shielding by terrain or barriers.

For an ideal “point” source of sound, such as mechanical equipment, the energy contained in a sound pressure wave dissipates and is absorbed by the surrounding environment as the sound wave spreads out in a spherical pattern and travels away from the point source. Theoretically, the

sound level attenuates, or decreases, by 6 dB with each doubling of distance from the point source. In contrast, a “line” source of sound, such as roadway traffic or a rail line, spreads out in a cylindrical pattern and theoretically attenuates by 3 dB with each doubling of distance from the line source; however, the sound level at a receptor location can be modified further by additional factors. The first is the presence of a reflecting plane such as the ground. For hard ground, a reflecting plane typically increases A-weighted sound pressure levels by 3 dB. If some of the reflected sound is absorbed by the surface, this increase will be less than 3 dB.

Other factors affecting the predicted sound pressure level are often lumped together into a term called “excess attenuation.” Excess attenuation is the amount of additional attenuation that occurs beyond simple spherical or cylindrical spreading. For sound propagation outdoors, there is almost always excess attenuation, producing lower levels than what would be predicted by spherical or cylindrical spreading. Some examples include attenuation by sound absorption in air; attenuation by barriers; attenuation by rain, sleet, snow, or fog; attenuation by grass, shrubbery, and trees; and attenuation from shadow zones created by wind and temperature gradients. Under certain meteorological conditions, like fog and low-level clouds, some of these excess attenuation mechanisms are reduced or eliminated due to noise reflection.

Noise Effects

Noise effects on human beings are generally categorized as:

- Subjective effects of annoyance, nuisance, and/or dissatisfaction
- Interference with activities such as speech, sleep, learning, or relaxing
- Physiological effects such as startling and hearing loss

Most environmental noise levels produce subjective or interference effects; physiological effects are usually limited to high noise environments such as industrial manufacturing facilities or airports.

Predicting the subjective and interference effects of noise is difficult due to the wide variation in individual thresholds of annoyance and past experiences with noise; however, an accepted method to determine a person’s subjective reaction to a new noise source is to compare it with the existing environment without the noise source, or the “ambient” noise environment. In general, the more a new noise source exceeds the ambient noise level, the more likely it is to be considered annoying and to disturb normal activities.

Under controlled conditions in an acoustical laboratory, the trained, healthy human ear is able to discern 1-dB changes in sound levels when exposed to steady, single-frequency (“pure-tone”) signals in the mid-frequency (1,000–8,000 Hz) range. In typical noisy environments, changes in noise of 1 to 2 dB are generally not perceptible. However, it is widely accepted that people are able to begin to detect sound level increases of 3 dB in typical noisy environments. Further, a 5 dB increase is generally perceived as a distinctly noticeable increase, and a 10 dB increase is generally perceived as a doubling of loudness that would almost certainly cause an adverse response from community noise receptors.

Groundborne Vibration and Noise

Vibration is the movement of particles within a medium or object such as the ground or a building. Vibration may be caused by natural phenomena (e.g., earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, sea waves, landslides) or humans (e.g., explosions, machinery, traffic, trains, construction

equipment). Vibration sources are usually characterized as continuous, such as factory machinery, or transient, such as explosions.

As is the case with airborne sound, groundborne vibrations may be described by amplitude and frequency; however, unlike airborne sound, there is no standard way of measuring and reporting amplitude. Vibration amplitudes can be expressed in terms of velocity (inches per second) or discussed in dB units in order to compress the range of numbers required to describe vibration. Vibration impacts to buildings are usually discussed in terms of peak particle velocity (PPV) in inches per second (in/sec). PPV represents the maximum instantaneous positive or negative peak of a vibration signal and is most appropriate for evaluating the potential for building damage. Vibration can impact people, structures, and sensitive equipment. The primary concern related to vibration and people is the potential to annoy those working and residing in the area. Vibration with high enough amplitudes can damage structures (such as crack plaster or destroy windows). Groundborne vibration can also disrupt the use of sensitive medical and scientific instruments, such as electron microscopes.

Common sources of vibration within communities include construction activities and railroads. Groundborne vibration generated by construction projects is usually highest during pile driving, rock blasting, soil compacting, jack hammering, and demolition-related activities. Next to pile driving, grading activity has the greatest potential for vibration impacts if large bulldozers, large trucks, or other heavy equipment are used.

Groundborne noise is noise generated by vibrating building surfaces such as floors, walls, and ceilings that radiate noise inside buildings subjected to an external source of vibration. The vibration level, the acoustic radiation of the vibrating element, and the acoustical absorption of the room are all factors that affect potential groundborne noise generation.

4.13.2 – ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The City's main noise sources include freeways (including the Long Beach and Century Freeways), major and minor arterial roadways, trains, and stationary sources, Roadways in the city that contribute to relatively high noise levels include Alondra Boulevard, Somerset Boulevard, Paramount Boulevard, Rosecrans Avenue, Garfield Avenue, Downey Avenue, and Orange Avenue. Noise levels along these roadways are influenced by a number of variables including traffic volumes, the percentage of truck traffic, vehicle speeds, the time distribution of traffic, and gradient of the roadway. Stationary sources include manufacturing processes at the Carlton Forge Works.

Measured Ambient Noise Levels

The existing ambient noise levels at the Planning Area were monitored on May 11, 2025, to May 14, 2025. Ambient noise levels were measured with a Larson Davis Soundtrack LxT Type 1 and a Piccolo Type 2 sound level meter. Conditions during the monitoring were generally clear to partly cloudy during the daytime, with daily temperatures between the low-to-mid 50s (at night) and 89 degrees (during the daytime). Temperatures reached 89 degrees only on Sunday, May 11, while May 12 through May 14 had cooler temperatures, with a high in the low-to-mid 70s on May 12 and May 14, and a high in the mid-to-high 60s on May 13, when the short-term monitoring occurred. Winds were generally calm to mild.

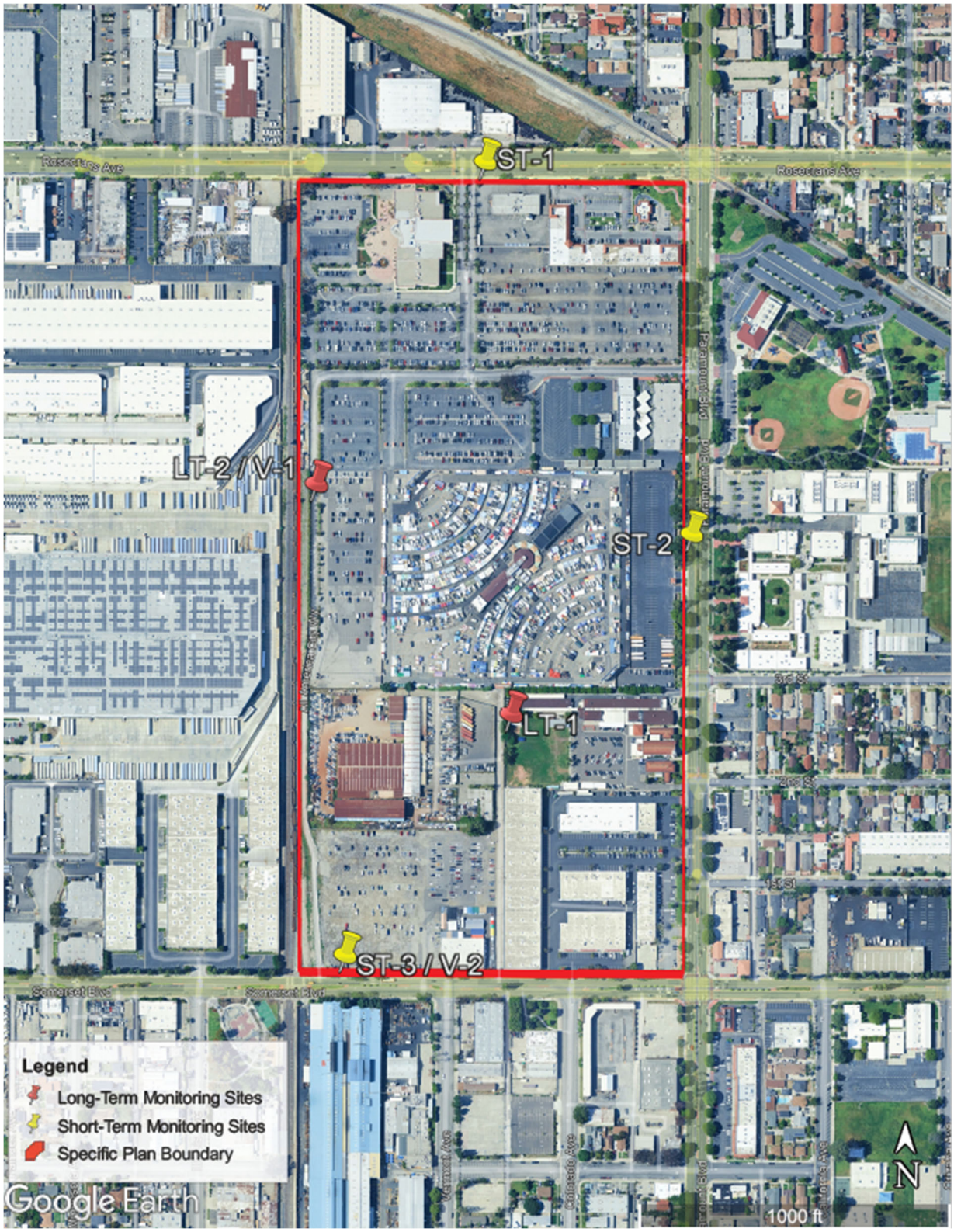
The ambient noise monitoring conducted for this EIR included two (2) long-term and three (3) short-term (ST) measurements at locations selected to:

- Provide direct observations of existing noise sources at and near the Planning Area;
- Determine ambient noise levels at and near the Planning Area; and
- Evaluate potential changes in noise levels at sensitive receptors (see "Noise Sensitive Receptors" below).

The ambient noise monitoring locations are shown in Exhibit 4.13-1 and described below.

- **LT-1** was located near the center of the Planning Area, in the western portion of the Our Lady of the Rosary Parish and School. This location was approximately 620 feet west of Paramount Boulevard and approximately 815 feet north of Somerset Boulevard. The location was largely shielded from Paramount Boulevard, Somerset Boulevard, and the Swap Meet by existing school and church buildings. The ambient noise levels measured at location LT-1 are considered representative of the typical daily noise levels in the center of the Planning Area and from existing school and church operations.
- **LT-2** was located on the western boundary of the Planning Area along All America City Way. This location was approximately 50 feet east of the centerline of the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) corridor and near an existing Swap Meet parking lot. The ambient noise levels measured at location LT-2 are considered representative of the typical daily noise levels in the western portion of the Planning Area.
- **ST-1** was on the central-north portion of the Planning Area, east of the intersection of Rosecrans Avenue and Bianchi Way. This location was approximately 50 feet south of the centerline of Rosecrans Avenue and 43 feet east of the centerline of Bianchi Way. The ambient noise levels measured at location ST-1 are considered representative of the typical daytime noise levels in the northern portion of the Planning Area and from existing traffic conditions on Rosecrans Avenue.
- **ST-2** was on the eastern portion of the Planning Area along Paramount Boulevard. This location was approximately 35 feet west of the centerline of Paramount Boulevard. The ambient noise levels measured at location ST-2 are considered representative of the typical daytime noise levels in the eastern portion of the Planning Area and from existing traffic conditions on Rosecrans Avenue, including the level of traffic noise other uses along Rosecrans Avenue, such as the Paramount Adult School and Paramount High School West Campus, would experience.
- **ST-3** was on the southwest portion of the Planning Area, directly south of an adjacent parking lot, .approximately 45 feet north of the centerline of Somerset Boulevard, and approximately 90 feet north of the Carlton Forge Works. The ambient noise levels measured at location ST-1 are considered representative of the typical daytime noise levels in the southern portion of the Planning Area and from existing traffic conditions on Somerset Boulevard.

Exhibit 4.13-1
Ambient Noise and Vibration Monitoring



Source: MIG 2025

Based on observations made during the ambient noise monitoring, the existing noise environment in the project area consists primarily of transportation noise sources (motor vehicles and aircraft). Swap meet operations and local commercial, industrial, and educational land use operations also contribute to the local ambient noise environment on the interior of the Planning Area.

Table 4.13-2
Measured Long-Term Ambient Noise Levels (dBA) in the Planning Area

Day / Site	Duration	Measured Range in Hourly Noise Levels (dBA L_{eq})(A)			Calculated CNEL(B)
		Daytime (7 AM to 7 PM)	Evening (7 PM to 10 PM)	Nighttime (10 PM to 7 AM)q	
Sunday, May 11 to Monday, May 12, 2025					
LT-1	24 Hours	51.0 - 69.3	48.0 - 53.6	46.5 - 53.0	59.2
LT-2	24 Hours	52.1 - 77.6	50.5 - 58.4	48.2 -54.6	65.4
Monday, May 12 to Tuesday, May 13, 2025					
LT-1	24 Hours	51.4 - 67.9	48.0 - 51.6	46.2 - 53.0	60.8
LT-2	24 Hours	51.6 - 60.7	49.5 - 54.7	47.1 - 54.9	58.8
Tuesday, May 13 to Wednesday, May 14, 2025					
LT-1	24 Hours	53.0 - 67.5	48.8 - 62.0	44.7 - 52.2	61.8
LT-2	23 Hours	50.1 - 61.7	51.3 - 56.2	46.2 - 53.1	59.0

Source: MIG, 2025 (see Appendix F)
(A) Values are the lowest and highest measured average hourly values during the listed time.
(B) The 24-hour CNEL value is calculated by applying a 5 dB penalty to measured evening noise levels and a 10 dB penalty to measured nighttime noise levels. The CNEL is calculated for the following periods for LT-1: 10 AM on Sunday, May 11 to 10 AM Monday, May 12, 2025; 10 AM on Monday, May 12 to 10 AM on Tuesday, May 13, 2025; and 10 AM on Tuesday, May 13 to 10 AM on Wednesday, May 14, 2025. The CNEL is calculated for the following periods for LT-2: 11 AM on Sunday, May 11 to 11 AM Monday, May 12, 2025; 11 AM on Monday, May 12 to 11 AM on Tuesday, May 13, 2025; and 11 AM on Tuesday, May 13 to 10 AM on Wednesday, May 14, 2025.

Table 4.13-3
Measured Short-Term Ambient Noise Levels (dBA) in the Planning Area

Site	Duration	Measured Noise Levels (dBA)					
		L_{eq}(A)	L_{min}(B)	L_{90}(C)	L_{50}(C)	L_8(C)	L_{max}(B)
Tuesday, May 13, 2025 (11 AM to 12 PM)							
ST-1	1 hour	70.8	54.7	66.3	69.2	74.6	93.7
LT-1	1 hour	53.9	45.9	51.9	53.3	55.8	75.0
LT-2	1 hour	58.9	45.2	51.0	54.0	62.0	85.0
Tuesday, May 13, 2025 (12:30 PM to 1:30 PM)							
ST-2	1 hour	70.9	47.9	66.1	69.9	74.5	87.1
LT-1	1 hour	52.6	45.2	50.6	52.1	54.6	66.5
LT-2	1 hour	66.8	45.3	49.9	53.2	66.1	103.4
Tuesday, May 13, 2025 (2:15 PM to 3:15 PM)							
ST-3	1 hour	73.1	60.9	69.0	71.7	76.8	97.3
LT-1	1 hour	54.5	47.2	52.4	53.9	56.5	74.1
LT-2	1 hour	57.6	45.4	50.9	53.3	60.1	91.8

Source: MIG, 2025 (see Appendix F)
(A) The L_{eq} value represents the equivalent steady-state noise level that would contain the same amount of acoustical energy as the time-varying noise level during the listed period.
(B) The L_{min} and L_{max} represent the lowest and highest instantaneous noise levels measured during the listed period, respectively.
(C) Values represent the noise level exceed a certain percentage of the period, e.g., L_{90} is the noise level that was exceeded 90% of the time for the listed period.

As summarized in Table 4.13-2 and Table 4.13-3, measured daytime noise levels were generally higher in the areas near busier roadways such as Rosecrans Avenue (ST-1), Paramount Boulevard (ST-2), and Somerset Boulevard (ST-3) than toward the center of the site (LT-1 and LT-2). The calculated CNEL was highest on May 11 through May 12, 2025, at 65.4 CNEL. All other calculated CNEL for LT-1 and LT-2 were less than 65 CNEL. Noise levels at LT-1 were driven by school operations (e.g., children at recess, HVAC operations) and noise levels at LT-2 were driven by vehicles driving or parking at the swap meet, industrial operations to the west of the site, and occasional train activity. Occasional overhead aircraft also contributed to the noise environment. Discrete short-term noise events associated with loud passing vehicles or trains during the Sunday, May 11 to Monday May 12 2025 time period resulted in an increase in the highest average noise level and calculated CNEL during that time period.

Measured Vibration Levels

Vibration levels from the railway along the western property line and across from the forge south of the Planning Area were monitored on May 13, 2025, and May 14, 2025. Vibration levels were measured with an Instantel Micromate vibration monitor with triaxial geophone securely affixed to the ground via ground spikes. The vibration monitoring locations are described below and shown in Exhibit 4.13-1 above.

- V-1 was located was located on the western boundary of the Planning Area, approximately 50 feet east of the UPRR rail line.
- V-2 was located southwest portion of the Planning Area. This location was approximately 45 feet north of the centerline of Somerset Boulevard and 90 feet north of the Carlton Forge Works.

The vibration monitoring along the rail line (V-1) did not detect any events that exceeded the vibration meter's detection threshold of 0.05 inches/second. This is likely due to slow speed rail travel along the rail line.

The vibration monitoring along Somerset Boulevard (V-2) detected a single event that exceeded the meter's detection threshold. The highest peak particle velocity (PPV) level recorded in any direction, 0.066 in/sec, occurred while a bus was traveling to a stop and idling near the meter. The corresponding vibration velocity level, in decibels (VdB) is 84.4 VdB (refer to Appendix F for vibration monitoring results). No vibration from Carlton Forge Works was observed at V-2.

Railroads

A Union Pacific railroad (UPRR) freight rail line runs north-south to the west of the Planning Area boundary. Railroad noise is generated from a variety of sources. The locomotive engine's propulsion system generates noise from mechanical and electrical systems as well as exhaust pipes. The interaction of wheels with the track produces various noises, particularly where the wheel encounters a flaw or defect along smooth wheel / track surfaces. Finally, train horns and railroad crossing warning devices generate short but loud (up to 105 dBs for train horns) alerts pursuant to federal safety regulations.

Additionally, a railway right-of-way, the Southeast Gateway Line corridor, runs north of and diagonal to the Planning Area, northwest to southeast. This rail line would be the site of the proposed Southeast Gateway Line corridor, a proposed 20-mile light rail line set to be operational in 2035, would operate from approximately 4:00 AM to 2:00 daily, seven days per week. The rail

line is approximately 60 feet northeast of the Planning Area at its closest point, the intersection of Rosecrans Avenue and Paramount Boulevard, which is also the location of the proposed Southeast Gateway Station. The segment of the proposed light rail from the northwest of the Planning Area to the northeast of the Planning Area, including the proposed Southeast Gateway Station, would be aerial. The North Paramount Gateway Specific Plan, which has portions of its planning area adjacent to the proposed Southeast Gateway Line corridor, states that the Southeast Gateway Line (referred to as the West Santa Ana Branch Rail Line in the North Paramount Gateway Specific Plan) would generate approximately 65 dBA Ldn at a distance of 60 feet from the rail line. Crossing signal bells associated with the rail line could produce approximately 75 dBA L_{max} at a distance of 10 feet from at-grade crossings; however, there are no at-grade crossings within the vicinity of the Planning Area (Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority 2024).

Airports and Heliports

The nearest airport is the Compton/Woodley Airport, located approximately 4.0 miles southwest of the Planning Area. The Planning Area is not located within an airport land use compatibility zone.

Stationary Sources

The Planning Area contains stationary noise sources, such as HVAC equipment, that are typical of commercial or institutional operations. Additionally, Carlton Forge Works, located south of the Planning Area across Somerset Boulevard, contains machinery that generates noise. Observations from ambient noise monitoring in the southern portion of the Planning Area conclude that while the noise environment is most influenced by traffic along Somerset Boulevard, machinery from Carlton Forge is audible approximately 90 feet from the building. During the one-hour monitoring period across from the forge, the hourly average noise level was 73.1 dBA L_{eq} and the minimum noise level was 60.9 dBA.

Noise Sensitive Receptors

Noise-sensitive receptors are buildings or areas where unwanted sound or increases in sound may have an adverse effect on people or land uses. Residential areas, motels and hotels, hospitals and health care facilities, school facilities, and parks are examples of noise receptors that could be sensitive to changes in existing environmental noise levels. In general, potential noise-sensitive receptors within located in and within 1,000 feet of the Planning Area include:

- Our Lady of the Rosary School, in the southeastern portion of the Planning Area, approximately 75 feet west of the centerline of Paramount Boulevard.
- Paramount Adult School, in the northeastern portion of the Planning Area, approximately 60 feet west of the centerline of Paramount Boulevard.
- Paramount Park Middle School, approximately 90 feet east of the Planning Area boundary, across Paramount Boulevard
- Paramount High School, approximately 90 feet east of the Planning Area boundary, across Paramount Boulevard
- Single-family residences, approximately 100 feet east of the Planning Area boundary, along Paramount Boulevard

- Paramount Park, approximately 170 feet east of the Planning Area boundary, across Paramount Boulevard
- Paramount Pool, approximately 650 feet east of the Planning Area boundary, across Paramount Boulevard
- Single family residences, approximately 360 feet southeast of the Planning Area boundary, along California Avenue
- Lincoln Elementary School, approximately 630 feet southeast of the Planning Area boundary, along California Avenue
- Single-family residences, approximately 480 feet south of the Planning Area boundary, along Adams Street
- Village Skate Park, approximately 175 feet southwest of the Planning Area boundary, across Somerset Boulevard
- Single-family residences, approximately 690 feet southwest of the Planning Area boundary, along Minnesota Avenue
- Single-family residences, approximately 260 feet north of the Planning Area boundary, across Rosecrans Avenue and Pacific Electric railroad right-of-way
- Multifamily residences, approximately 480 feet northeast of the Planning Area boundary along Paramount Boulevard

In addition to existing sensitive noise receptors, the proposed Specific Plan would add new residential land uses to the Planning Area.

4.13.3 – REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Federal

Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

The FTA's 2018 Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual provides guidance on when a construction noise assessment may be needed for a project, whether a qualitative or quantitative noise assessment may be required, and what construction-related noise impact criteria may be appropriate for a project. The FTA guidance identifies that a construction noise assessment may not be required for small projects such as small building construction that is similar in scale to surrounding development. The guidance also identifies that a qualitative assessment may be required for projects with less than one month of construction time in a noise sensitive area, while a quantitative assessment may be required for projects more than one month of construction in noise sensitive areas or if particularly noise equipment will be used. Finally, for quantitative assessments, the FTA manual recommends construction noise impact criteria, expressed in dBA, that vary based on the type of construction noise assessment conducted for a project. The FTA's construction noise impact criteria are summarized in Table 0.13-4.

Table 0.13-4
FTA Construction Noise Criteria

Land Use	General Analysis Criteria(A)		Detailed Analysis Criteria(B)		
	Daytime $L_{eq(1hr)}$	Nighttime $L_{eq(1hr)}$	Daytime $L_{eq(8hr)}$	Nighttime $L_{eq(8hr)}$	30-Day Average L_{dn}
Residential	90 dBA	80 dBA	80 dBA	70 dBA	75 dBA
Commercial	100 dBA	100 dBA	85 dBA	85 dBA	80 dBA(C)
Industrial	100 dBA	100 dBA	90 dBA	90 dBA	85 dBA(C)

Source: FTA 2018, Table 7-2 and Table 7-3

(A) A general analysis is warranted for projects in an early assessment stage when the equipment roster and schedule are undefined and only a rough estimate of construction noise levels is practical.

(B) A detailed analysis is warranted when many noise sensitive sites are adjacent to a construction project or where contractors are faced with stringent local ordinances or heightened public concerns expressed in early outreach efforts.

(C) Standard is $L_{eq(24hr)}$ instead of L_{dn}.

The FTA's 2018 Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual document also sets groundborne vibration annoyance criteria for general assessments. The criteria vary by the type of building being subjected to the vibrations, and the overall number of vibration events occurring each day. Category 1 buildings are considered buildings where vibration would interfere with operation, even at levels that are below human detection. These include buildings with sensitive equipment, such as research facilities and recording studios. Category 2 buildings include residential lands and buildings where people sleep, such as hotels and hospitals. Category 3 buildings consist of institutional land uses with primarily daytime uses. The FTA standards vary for "frequent" events (occurring more than 70 times per day, such as a rapid transit project), "occasional" events (occurring between 30 to 70 times per day), and "infrequent" events (occurring less than 30 times per day). The FTA's vibration annoyance criteria are summarized in Table 4.13-5.

Table 4.13-5
FTA Ground-Borne Vibration Impact Criteria for General Assessment

Land Use Category/Type	Impact Level (Velocity Decibels)		
	Frequent Events	Occasional Events	Infrequent Events
Category 1 – Buildings with sensitive equipment	65 VdB	65 VdB	65 VdB
Category 2 – Buildings where people sleep	72 VdB	75 VdB	80 VdB
Category 3 – Institutional buildings	75 VdB	78 VdB	83 VdB

Source: FTA 2018

State

<u>Assembly Bill 1307</u>

Assembly Bill (AB) 1307 was signed into law in September 2023. The bill adds new Section 20185 to the Public Resources Code, establishing that, for the purposes of CEQA, for residential projects, "the effects of noise generated by project occupants and their guests on human beings

is not a significant effect on the environment." AB 1307 defines residential or mixed-use housing projects to mean a project consisting of residential uses only or a mix of residential and nonresidential uses, with at least two-thirds of the square footage of the development designated for residential uses.

California Building Standards Code

The California Building Standards Code is contained in Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations and consists of 11 different parts that set various construction and building requirements. Part 2, California Building Code, Section 1206, Sound Transmission, establishes sound transmission standards for interior walls, partitions, and floor/ceiling assemblies between adjacent dwelling units and sleeping units and between dwelling units and sleeping units and adjacent public areas. In summary, this code section requires:

- **Airborne Sound:** Walls, partitions, and floor-ceiling assemblies separating dwelling units and sleeping units from each other or from public or service areas shall have a sound transmission class (STC) of not less than 50 if laboratory tested or have a Normalized Isolation Class of not less than 45 if field tested (Section 1206.2).
- **Structure-borne Sound:** Floor-ceiling assemblies between dwelling units and sleeping units or between a dwelling unit or sleeping unit and a public or service area within the structure shall have an impact insulation class rating of not less than 50 if laboratory tested or have a Normalized Impact Sound Rating of not less than 45 if field tested. Impact sound insulation is not required for floor-ceiling assemblies over nonhabitable rooms or spaces not designed to be occupied such as garages, mechanical rooms, and storage areas (Section 1206.3).
- **Allowable Interior Noise Levels:** Interior noise levels attributable to exterior noise sources shall not exceed 45 DNL or CNEL (as set by the local General Plan) in any habitable room.[1].

The California Green Building Standards (CALGreen) Code is Part 11 to the California Building Standards Code. Chapter 5, Nonresidential Mandatory Standards, Section, establishes acoustical control requirements for non-residential buildings.[2] In summary, this code section requires:

- **Prescriptive Exterior Noise Transmission Control:** Wall and roof-ceiling assemblies that are part of the building envelope within the 65 CNEL noise contour of an airport or within the 65 DNL or 65 CNEL noise contour of a freeway, expressway, railroad, industrial source, or fixed-guideway source, shall meet a composite STC rating of at least 50 (with exterior windows a minimum STC of 40) or a composite Outdoor-Indoor Sound Transmission Class (OITC) of no less than 40 (with exterior windows a minimum OITC of 30) (Section 5.507.4.1). Buildings exposed to a noise of 65 dB L_{eq} (1-hour) during any hour of operation shall have wall and roof-ceiling

[1] Title 24, Part 2, Section 202, Definitions, defines "habitable space" to be "space for living, sleeping, eating, or cooking." Bathrooms, toilet rooms, closets, halls, storage or utility spaces and similar areas are not considered habitable spaces.

[2] Section 5.507.4 excepts buildings with few or no occupants or where occupants are not likely to be affected by exterior noise from the nonresidential acoustical control requirements, as determined by the enforcement authority, such as factories, stadiums, storage, enclosed parking structures, and utilities buildings.

assemblies meeting a composite STC of at least 45 (or OITC of at least 35), with exterior windows a minimum STC of 40 (or OITC 30) (Section 5.507.4.1.1).

- **Performance Method Exterior Noise Transmission Control:** For buildings located within the 65 DNL, 65 CNEL, or 65 db L_{eq} (1-hour) areas described above, wall and roof-ceiling assemblies shall be constructed to provide an interior noise environment attributable to exterior sources that does not exceed an L_{eq} (1-hour) of 50 dBA in occupied areas during any hour of operation (Section 5.507.4.2). This requirement shall be documented by preparing an acoustical analysis documenting interior sound levels prepared by personnel approved by the architect or engineer of record.
- **Interior Sound Transmission:** Wall and floor assemblies separating tenant spaces and tenant spaces and public spaces shall have an STC of at least 40 (Section 5.507.4.3).

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)

The California Department of Transportation's (Caltrans) Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual provides a summary of vibration criteria that have been reported by researchers, organizations, and governmental agencies (Caltrans 2020). Chapters Six and Seven of this manual summarize vibration detection and annoyance criteria from various agencies and provide Caltrans' recommended guidelines and thresholds for evaluating potential vibration impacts on buildings and humans from transportation and construction projects. These thresholds are summarized in Table 4.13-6 and Table 4.13-7.

Table 4.13-6
Caltrans' Vibration Threshold Criteria for Building Damage

Structural Integrity	Maximum PPV (in/sec)	
	Transient	Continuous
Historic and some older buildings	0.50	0.12 to 0.2
Older residential structures	0.50	0.30
New residential structures	1.00	0.50
Modern industrial and commercial structures	2.00	0.50
Source: Caltrans 2020		

Table 4.13-7
Caltrans' Ground-Borne Vibration Impact Criteria for Human Response

Human Response	Maximum PPV (in/sec)	
	Transient	Continuous
Slightly perceptible	0.035	0.012
Distinctly perceptible	0.24	0.035
Strongly perceptible	0.90	0.10
Severe/Disturbing	2.0	0.7 (at 2 Hz) to 0.17 (at 20 Hz)
Very disturbing	--	3.6 (at 2 Hz) to 0.4 (at 20 Hz)
Source: Caltrans 2020		

Local

City of Paramount General Plan

The City of Paramount adopted the General Plan in 2007. The Health and Safety Element, which contains discussion of noise issues, was adopted in 2022 and amended in 2025. The City's General Plan identifies eight Health and Safety policies related to noise control that address noise exposure through building design measures (e.g., insulation) and land use compatibility planning (City of Paramount 2025).

Health and Safety Element

Policy HS-31: The City of Paramount will strive to ensure that public buildings (schools, libraries, etc.) are sufficiently noise insulated to permit their intended function to be uninterrupted by exterior noise.

Policy HS-32: The City of Paramount will cooperate with State and Federal agencies so as to minimize transportation related noise.

Policy HS-33: The City of Paramount will ensure that the design and improvement of future master planned roadway links in the City are accomplished in a manner that minimizes noise impacts on adjacent noise sensitive land uses.

Policy HS-34: The City of Paramount will promote the development of a compatible noise environment throughout the City.

Policy HS-35: The City of Paramount will continue to require noise attenuation in new residential developments that are exposed to significant noise levels from freeway and arterial roadway traffic.

Policy HS-36: The City of Paramount will periodically review County and regional plans for land use, transportation, airport operation, etc. to identify any potential noise impacts and to develop corresponding noise attenuation strategies.

Policy HS-37: The City of Paramount will continue to promote the application of noise insulation and other noise control techniques in new schools, hospitals, and convalescent homes consistent with State and Federal regulations.

Policy HS-38: The City of Paramount will consider the effects of truck mix, speed limits, and ultimate motor vehicle volumes on noise levels adjacent to master planned roadways when improvements to the circulation system are planned.

Table 4.13-8
City of Paramount General Plan Update Noise and Land Use Compatibility Guidelines

Land Use	Maximum Desirable Noise Level	Maximum Acceptable Noise Level
Low Density Residential	55 dBA	65 dBA
Medium Density Residential	60 dBA	65 dBA
High Density Residential	65 dBA	70 dBA
Schools	60 dBA	70 dBA
Office and Commercial	65 dBA	70 dBA
Industrial	70 dBA	75 dBA
Source: City of Paramount General Plan Health and Safety Element, Table 5-3		

Municipal Code

Municipal Code Title 9 (Public Peace and Welfare), Chapter 9.12 Noise, Section 9.12.040 (Noise Performance Standards) establishes the noise standards shown in Table 4.13-9. The standards apply to all property within assigned zones and constitute the maximum permissible noise level within the respective zones.

Table 4.13-9
City of Paramount Municipal Code Noise Standard

Noise Zone	Day (maximum) 6:00 AM to 10:00 PM	Night (maximum) 10:00 PM to 6:00 AM
R1 and R2	62 decibels	57 decibels
R3 and R4 (R-M)	67 decibels	62 decibels
Industrial and Commercial	82 decibels	77 decibels

In addition to noise performance standards, Municipal Code Section 9.12.060 (Prohibited Types of Noise) prohibits the creation of noise that exceeds the noise standards replicated in Table 4.13-9 above, including noise from commercial and industrial uses, from vendors, and from air conditioning units, refrigeration equipment, fans, blowers, pumps, engines, turbines, compressors, generators, saws, grinders, motors or other similar devices, equipment or apparatus.

Municipal Code Section 9.12.060 (C) and (D) (Prohibited Types of Noise) additionally establishes that it is unlawful for any person to create, maintain, or cause

- Any noise within the interior of any multiple family dwelling unit that exceeds 55 dBA as measured in any adjoining dwelling unit between the hours of 10 PM and 6 AM.
- Any noise or sound upon any in-use school, hospital or church which exceeds the noise standards in Table 4.13-9 for its assigned noise zone or which unreasonably interferes with the working of such installations or which disturbs or unduly annoys patients in the hospital, provided conspicuous signs are displayed in three separate locations within one-tenth of a mile indicating the presence of a school, church or hospital.

Municipal Code Section 9.12.060 also exempts construction equipment and work from the City's noise standards provided a permit is obtained from the City Building and Safety Division and construction activity does not take place between the hours of 8 PM and 7 AM.

4.13.4 – SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLDS

The methodology used to evaluate potential environmental impacts is described in Section 4.0. As identified in Appendix G of the Guidelines for Implementation of CEQA, the Specific Plan Update has the potential to result in significant impacts if it would result in:

a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies;

b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels; or

c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels.

With regard to criteria (a), the proposed project would result in a significant construction noise impact if it would:

- Violate or conflict with the permit provisions and controlled hours of operation for construction work established in Municipal Code Section 9.12.060(4); or
- Generate construction noise levels at noise-sensitive receptors above the FTA's daytime (80 dBA L_{eq}) or nighttime (70 dBA L_{eq}) detailed construction noise analysis criteria.

In addition, the proposed project would result in a significant operational noise impact if it would:

- Conflict with or violate any applicable provision of Municipal Code Chapter 9.12.
- Conflict with or violate any applicable standard or policy in the City's General Plan Update Health and Safety Element;
- Generate operational traffic noise levels that increase ambient noise levels at off-site locations by 5 dBA or more or 3 dBA or more where the existing ambient noise would increase to be above the maximum desirable noise level or the maximum acceptable noise level, as defined in the General Plan.

With regard to criterion (b), the proposed project would result in a significant construction and/or operational vibration impact if it would:

- Generate construction-related vibration levels that exceed Caltrans' guidance for potential building damage (see Table 4.13-6); or
- Generate construction-related vibration levels that exceed FTA or Caltrans' criteria for human annoyance (see Table 4.13-5 and 4.13-7, respectively).

With regard to criterion (c), the proposed project would expose people living or working in the Plan Area to excessive airport-related noise levels if it would conflict with an applicable airport land use compatibility plan or otherwise expose people to excessive airport-related noise levels from a private air facility.

4.13.5 – IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

This section describes potential noise and vibration impacts associated with implementation of the Specific Plan and recommends mitigation measures as needed to reduce significant impacts.

Existing Noise Regulations

Impact NOISE-1 – Would the project result in the generation of a substantial temporary increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?

Analysis of Impacts

As shown in Table 3-2, Existing and Projected Year 2045 Land Use Intensity, and Table 3-3, Existing and Projected Year 2045 Development Capacity Comparison, the Specific Plan could modify existing uses and add up to 2,000 high density residential dwelling units, 113,445 square feet of commercial uses (e.g., retail and restaurants), and 800,000 square feet of neo industrial uses (e.g., light manufacturing, R&D) to the Plan Area by 2045. The Specific Plan could also increase open space and develop new roads in the planning area. The City has not received any specific development application for a project within the Plan Area and, therefore, the timing and nature of specific development projects within the Plan Area is unknown and subject to future market and other conditions that the City cannot control. Since project-specific information is not available at this time, potential construction-related noise impacts can only be evaluated based on the typical construction activities associated with residential, commercial, industrial, and infrastructure development. Potential construction noise levels were developed based on methodologies, reference noise levels, and equipment usage and other operating factors documented and contained in the FHWA Construction Noise Handbook (FHWA 2010), Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment document (FTA, 2018), and Caltrans' Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual (Caltrans, 2020). Reference levels are noise emissions for specific equipment or activity types that are well documented and for which their usage is common practice in the field of acoustics.

Construction activities associated with potential development projects could include: staging, demolition, site preparation (e.g., land clearing), fine and mass grading, utility trenching, foundation work (e.g., excavation, pouring concrete pads, drilling for piers), material deliveries (requiring travel along City roads), building construction (e.g., framing, concrete pouring, welding), paving, coating application, and site finishing work. Construction activities may also include road and infrastructure improvements. In general, construction activities would involve the use of worker vehicles, delivery trucks, dump trucks, and heavy-duty construction equipment such as (but not limited to) backhoes, tractors, loaders, graders, excavators, rollers, cranes, material lifts, generators, and air compressors. These types of construction activities would generate noise and vibration from the following sources:

- Heavy equipment operations at different work areas. Some heavy equipment would consist of mobile equipment such as a loader and excavator that would move around work areas; other equipment would consist of stationary equipment (e.g., cranes or material hoists/lifts) that would generally operate in a fixed location until work activities are complete. Heavy equipment generates noise from engine operation, mechanical systems, and components (e.g., fans, gears, propulsion of wheels or tracks), and other sources such as back-up alarms. Mobile equipment generally operates at different loads, or power

outputs, and produces higher or lower noise levels depending on the operating load. Stationary equipment generally operates at a steady power output that produces a constant noise level.

- Vehicle trips, including worker, vendor, and haul truck trips. These trips are likely to primarily occur on Rosecrans Avenue, Paramount Boulevard, Somerset Boulevard, and local roads in the Plan Area.

Table 4.13-10 presents the noise levels associated with the typical types of construction equipment that could be used in the Planning Area for future individual projects.

Table 4.13-10
Typical Construction Equipment Noise Levels (dBA)

Equipment	Reference Noise Level at 50 Feet (L_{max})(A)	Percent Usage Factor(B)	Predicted Noise Levels (L_{eq}) at Distance(C)						
			50 Ft	75 Ft	100 Ft	150 Ft	200 Ft	300 Ft	400 Ft
Auger Drill Rig	85	0.2	78	74	72	68	66	62	60
Backhoe	80	0.4	76	72	70	66	64	60	58
Boring Jack Power Unit	80	0.5	77	73	71	67	65	61	59
Bulldozer	85	0.4	81	77	75	71	69	65	63
Compact roller	80	0.2	73	69	67	63	61	57	55
Compressor	80	0.4	76	72	70	66	64	60	58
Concrete Mixer	85	0.4	81	77	75	71	69	65	63
Crane	85	0.16	77	74	71	67	65	61	59
Delivery Truck	84	0.4	80	76	74	70	68	64	62
Excavator	85	0.4	81	77	75	71	69	65	63
Front End Loader	80	0.4	76	72	70	66	64	60	58
Generator	82	0.5	79	75	73	69	67	63	61
Horizontal Boring Hydraulic Jack	80	0.25	74	70	68	64	62	58	56
Man Lift	85	0.2	78	74	72	68	66	62	60
Paver	85	0.5	82	78	76	72	70	66	64
Pneumatic tools	85	0.5	82	78	76	72	70	66	64
Pumps	77	0.5	74	70	68	64	62	58	56
Roller	85	0.2	78	74	72	68	66	62	60
Scraper	85	0.4	81	77	75	71	69	65	63
Tractor	84	0.4	80	76	74	70	68	64	62

Sources: Caltrans 2020 and FHWA 2010
(A) L_{max} noise levels based on manufacturer's specifications.
(B) Usage factor refers to the amount of time the equipment produces noise over the time period.
(C) Estimate does not account for any atmospheric or ground attenuation factors. Calculated noise levels based on Caltrans, 2020b: L_{eq} (hourly) = L_{max} at 50 feet – 20log (D/50) + 10log (UF), where: L_{max} = reference L_{max} from manufacturer or other source; D = distance of interest; UF = usage fraction or fraction of time period of interest equipment is in use.

Construction noise impacts generally occur when construction activities occur in areas immediately adjoining noise sensitive land uses, during noise sensitive times of the day, or when construction durations last over extended periods of time. Construction activities associated with

the proposed project would occur intermittently and may last several years in total. The closest that construction activities could occur to nearby sensitive receptors located outside the Plan Area would be:

- Approximately 150 feet from recreational use areas located across Paramount Boulevard, in Paramount Park.
- Approximately 165 feet from classroom buildings located across Paramount Boulevard, at Paramount Park Middle School.
- Approximately 225 feet from residences located across Paramount Boulevard, on 3rd Street.
- Approximately 85 feet from an Alta Medical Group health care building located across Paramount Boulevard.

In addition to these noise-sensitive land uses located outside the Plan Area, existing (e.g., Our Lady of the Rosary School and Parish, Paramount Adult School) and future noise-sensitive land uses the envisioned by the Specific Plan (e.g., residential dwelling units) could be located near construction zones within the Plan Area.

The City's Municipal Code limits permitted construction activities to the hours of 7 AM to 8 PM (Municipal Code Section 9.12.060(4)). Although neither the General Plan or Municipal Code establish a specific, numeric noise standard, the City has historically considered construction activities that result in noise levels in excess of the FTA's daytime (80 dBA L_{eq}) or nighttime (70 dBA L_{eq}) detailed construction noise analysis criteria to result in a significant noise impact on noise-sensitive land uses.

With regard to construction noise, demolition, site preparation, and grading phases typically result in the highest temporary noise levels due to the use of heavy-duty equipment such as dozers, excavators, graders, loaders, scrapers, and trucks. The use of specialized equipment such as impact or vibratory pile drivers can also generate high noise levels during initial foundation work stages. As shown in Table 4.13-10, the worst-case L_{eq} and L_{max} noise levels associated with the operation of a dozer, excavator, scraper, etc., are predicted to be approximately 82 and 85 dBA, respectively, at a distance of 50 feet from the equipment operating area. At an active construction site, it is not uncommon for two or more pieces of construction equipment to operate at the same time and in close proximity. The concurrent operation of two or more pieces of construction equipment would result in noise levels of approximately 85 to 88 dBA at a distance of 50 feet from equipment operating areas.[3] The magnitude of each individual future project's temporary and periodic increase in ambient noise levels would be dependent upon a number of project-specific factors that are not known at this time, including: the amount and type of equipment being used; the distance between the area where equipment is being operated and the location of the specific land use, receptor, etc., where noise levels are being evaluated; the time of day construction activities are occurring; the presence or absence of any walls, buildings, or other barriers that may absorb or reflect sound waves, the total duration of the construction activities, and the existing ambient noise levels near construction areas.

[3] As shown in Table 4.13-10, a single bulldozer provides a sound level of 87 dBA L_{eq} at a distance of 25 feet; when two identical sound levels are combined, the noise level increases to 90 dBA L_{eq} and when three identical sound levels are combined, the noise level increases to 91 dBA L_{eq}. These estimates assume no shielding or other noise control measures are in place at or near the work areas.

For example, a noise level of 88 dBA L_{max} would be similar to or lower than typical L_{max} levels measured near the northern, eastern, western, and southern boundary of the Planning Area (ST-1, ST-2, ST-3, and LT-2, respectively), but sustained L_{eq} levels of 85 dBA would be approximately 17 to 38 dBA above daytime ambient conditions near the boundaries of the Planning Area (see Tables 4.13-2 and 4.13-3). The same noise levels would be approximately 13 to 37 dBA above ambient L_{max} and L_{eq} noise levels measured near the interior (LT-1).Typically, sustained construction noise levels of 80 to 85 dBA or higher would require the implementation of construction noise control practices such as staging area restrictions (e.g., siting staging areas away from sensitive receptors), equipment controls (e.g., covered engines and use of electrical hook-ups instead of generators), and/or the installation of temporary noise barriers of sufficient height, size (length or width), and density to achieve targeted noise reductions.

As discussed above, while all projects in the Planning Area would be subject to the permissible construction hours established by the Municipal Code, construction activities could result in temporary increases in noise levels above ambient conditions of 10 to 30 dBs or more during permissible timeframes, which would be perceived by noise-sensitive land uses as doubling or quadrupling of loudness, respectively. Additionally, as shown in Table 4.13-10, typical construction equipment activities could exceed the FTA's 80 dBA L_{eq} significance thresholds at onsite institutional use (e.g., Our Lady of the Rosary School and Parish, Paramount Adult School) and future onsite residential receptors that could be developed under the Specific Plan within approximately 100 feet of work areas. This is considered a potentially significant impact.

<u>Level of Significance Before Mitigation</u>

Potentially Significant.

<u>Mitigation Measures</u>

NOI-1: **Reduce Potential Planning Area Construction Noise Levels.** To ensure receptors in the vicinity of the Planning Area are aware of the projects and their planned construction activities, all future development in the Planning Area shall implement the measures listed below.

1) *Provide Notification of Construction Activities.* The notice shall be provided at least 14 calendar days prior to the start of any construction activities, describe the planned phasing and schedule of construction activities, describe the noise control measures to be implemented during construction, and include the name, phone number, and email address of a designated contact for the construction contractor and the City of Paramount responsible for handling construction-related noise complaints. The notice shall be provided to the owner/occupants of all occupied dwelling units within 200 feet of planned construction work areas.

2) *Restrict Work Hours:* Unless otherwise authorized by the City, all construction-related work activities, including material deliveries, shall be conducted only during the hours of 7 AM to 8 PM consistent with Municipal Code Section 9.12.060(4). Each development project shall post a sign at all entrances to and exits from the construction site informing contractors, subcontractors, construction workers, etc. of the allowable work hour requirements.

3) *Control Construction Traffic and Site Access*. Construction traffic, including soil and debris hauling, shall follow City-designated truck routes and shall avoid routes that contain residential dwelling units to the maximum extent feasible given specific project location and access needs.

4) *Construction Equipment Selection, Use, and Noise Control Measures*. The following measures shall apply to all future development in the Project area:

    a. Construction staging activities such as receipt of deliveries, equipment and material storage, etc., shall occur as far away from sensitive land uses as possible.
    b. All stationary noise generating equipment such as pumps, compressors, and welding machines shall be shielded and located as far from sensitive receptor locations as practical. Shielding may consist of trailers, stored materials, or a three- or four-sided enclosure provided the structure/barrier breaks the line of sight between the equipment and the receptor, provides for proper equipment ventilation and operations, and complies with all other applicable occupational safety and health requirements.
    c. Heavy equipment shall include standard noise suppression devices such as mullers, engine covers, and engine/mechanical isolators, mounts, etc. Equipment and noise suppression devices shall be maintained in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations while onsite.
    d. Pneumatic tools shall include a noise suppression device on the compressed air exhaust.
    e. Connect to existing electrical service to power stationary and portable equipment (e.g., pumps, generators, compressors, and welding sets). This measure shall be subject to the approval of the local electric utility.

5) *Install Temporary Noise Barriers.* To reduce potential construction noise levels at receptors near active work areas, all future development in the Project area shall install a temporary noise barrier during all site preparation, grading, and paving work activities that have a line of sight to and occur within 100 feet of an occupied dwelling unit or educational land use. The barrier shall only be required along the portion of the job site perimeter that lies between the active work area and the affected dwelling unit(s). In addition, a temporary barrier shall not be required if a permanent barrier is already present between the work area and the affected dwelling unit. The barrier shall consist of the following:

    a. When activities occur no closer than 50 feet from an occupied dwelling unit, the physical noise barrier shall extend to a height of 6 feet above grade and consist of nominal 0.5-inch plywood with a minimum material density of 1.7 pounds per square foot installed. Alternatively, the barrier may consist of commercially available acoustic panels, blankets, etc. that have a minimum sound transmission class (STC) or transmission loss value of 20 dB.
    b. When activities occur within 25 to 50 feet of an occupied dwelling unit, the physical noise barrier shall extend to a height of 8 feet above grade and consist of nominal 0.5-inch plywood with a minimum material density of 1.7 pounds per square foot installed. Alternatively, the barrier may consist of commercially available acoustic panels, blankets, etc. that have a minimum STC or transmission loss value of 20 dB.

c. When activities occur within 25 feet of an occupied dwelling unit, the physical noise barrier shall extend to a height of 10 feet above grade and consist of nominal 1.0-inch plywood with a minimum material density of approximately 3 pounds per square foot installed. Alternatively, the barrier may consist of commercially available acoustic panels, blankets, etc. that have a minimum STC or transmission loss value of 23 dB or higher.

The barrier shall be installed at grade, or mounted to structures located at grade, such as a K-rail, and be maintained free of openings or gaps other than weep holes. Construction ingress/egress shall not be permitted through the barrier unless there is no other viable access point due to specific project constraints or other access requirements. The noise barrier may be removed following the completion of all site preparation, grading, and paving activities (i.e., it is not necessary once framing and typical vertical building construction begins provided no other site preparation, grading, or paving work is still occurring in the area).

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Less than Significant with Mitigation. The implementation of Mitigation Measure NOI-1 would reduce construction noise levels associated with future development in the Planning Area through a combination of notification/disclosure, permissible work times, equipment noise controls, and construction activity management measures designed to ensure the FTA construction noise threshold is not exceeded. Mitigation Measure NOI-1 would require future development in the Planning Area to provide advanced notification of construction activities, restrict work hours to periods when humans are less sensitive to elevated noise levels consistent with Municipal Code requirements, implement equipment noise control measures, and install temporary noise barriers. The combined reduction in construction noise levels is estimated to range from 7 dBA L_{eq} to 16 dBA L_{eq} and result in less than significant construction noise levels. Therefore, this impact would be less than significant with mitigation.

Impact NOISE-2 – Would the project result in generation of a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?

Analysis of Impacts

Project implementation could have the potential to change the existing types and intensity of land uses within the Planning Area and increase the number of residents and employees. This possible increase in population and employment could lead to increased vehicle traffic on the local roadway system, which could result in traffic-related noise levels that pose land use compatibility issues or result in a substantial permanent increase in traffic-related noise levels throughout the Planning Area. Project implementation could also involve increases in stationary noise and other sources of noise within the Planning Area. These potential effects are evaluated below.

Increases in Traffic and Rail Noise Levels. The City contracted with a professional transportation engineering firm (Ganddini) to conduct a transportation analysis for the proposed Specific Plan land use changes (Ganddini 2025); see Chapter 4.17, Transportation, and Appendix G), which was used evaluate the potential future increases in traffic-related noise levels associated with projected growth.

Caltrans considers a doubling of total traffic volume to result in a three (3) dBA increase in traffic-related noise levels (Caltrans, 2013). The traffic study estimated that existing land uses that would be replaced by the Specific Plan generated approximately 7,960 trips, and that the new Specific Plan land uses would generate approximately 19,078 trips, an increase of approximately 11,118 trips.[4] This increase could result in a doubling of trips, and therefore an approximate 3 dBA increase, along Rosecrans Avenue, Paramount Boulevard, and Somerset Boulevard. The increase in offsite traffic noise is potentially significant.

The Specific Plan does not include plans for the expansion of freight or light rail, and is not anticipated to increase noise levels at these sources.

Increases in Stationary and Other Sources of Noise. Planned development under the Specific Plan could result in new stationary and other sources, and the exposure of new sensitive land uses (e.g., residences) and existing sensitive land uses (e.g., schools) to noise sources. Stationary and other sources of noise in the Planning Area include, but are not limited to, landscape and building maintenance activities, stationary mechanical equipment (e.g., HVAC units), garbage collection activities, vehicle parking activities, commercial and industrial activities, and school activities (e.g., voices, bells). The Specific Plan would increase residential, commercial, and neo-industrial development within the Planning Area and decrease parking lot and swap meet space. Under the implementation of the Specific Plan, new land uses including residential uses, shopping centers, and neo-industrial uses would generate noise from sources including HVAC units, light manufacturing equipment, truck loading and unloading activities, and passenger vehicle activities. An increase in activity (e.g., the amount of mechanical equipment, intensity of parking, etc.) would likely occur due to the higher density and additional land uses envisioned by the Specific Plan, increasing noise levels.

Although the Specific Plan could increase the amount of noise sources and noise-generating activities compared to existing conditions, the Specific Plan would have a limited potential to generate significant onsite noise levels for the following reasons. In general, residential land uses (including the proposed medium-density residential land uses) are not a substantial noise-generating land use type because they do not involve substantial noise-generating activities during the nighttime, mechanical equipment associated with elevators, residential amenities such as pools, and other building systems are typically enclosed within the closets, sheds, or equipment rooms, and HVAC equipment is typically screened from public view by landscaping, fences, or walls and, therefore, shielded from adjacent property lines. Furthermore, the General Plan Health and Safety Element contains policies that would reduce noise exposure through attenuation, compatible noise environments, and noise insulation (e.g., Policies HS-31, HS-34, and HS-35).

The closest offsite receptors, Paramount Park High School and single-family residences located approximately 100 feet east of the Planning Area across Paramount Boulevard, would be closest to existing school uses and new town residential uses in the Planning Area. Due to the characteristics of land use types closest to the offsite sensitive receptors and the distance between the Planning Area and receptors, it is anticipated that noise from Paramount Boulevard would be the predominant noise source at these receptor locations, and that there would not be a substantial increase in noise from onsite Planning Area sources. However, onsite sensitive

[4] These values underestimate existing trips, since they do not account for trips generated by the swap meet. Additionally, they do not account for existing land uses that would be retained under the Specific Plan (e.g., Our Lady of the Rosary School). This underestimation of existing trips provides a conservative estimate for the change in noise from conditions under the Specific Plan.

receptors such as the existing schools and proposed residential uses may be directly adjacent to neo-industrial or commercial uses that could exceed City standards. For example, typical onsite truck travel and maneuvering activities may generate noise levels of approximately 63.4 dBA L_{eq} at a distance of 50 feet (MIG 2022), while generators could exceed 72 dBA at 100 feet, which could exceed Municipal Code standards. Exterior noise impacts would be potentially significant.

As described in Section 4.13.1, pursuant to the California Building Code, new residential structures would be required to be constructed such that interior noise levels do not exceed 45 dBA CNEL. Potential interior noise levels resulting from the Project would be contingent on specific information that cannot be known at this time, including the distance between a noise source and the exterior building façade, the exterior-to-interior noise reduction achieved by the façade, including any windows and doors, and whether windows and doors are in an open or closed condition. In general, standard construction techniques for new residential, commercial, and industrial buildings in California provides a minimum of 12 dBA of exterior to interior noise attenuation with windows open and between 20 dBA to 30 dBA of exterior to interior noise attenuation with windows closed.[5] Exterior noise levels, therefore, must generally be 65 CNEL or below to meet an interior noise level of 45 CNEL. The City's Municipal Code requirements and Maximum Acceptable Noise Level General Plan land use compatibility designations allows for noise levels above 65 CNEL (see section 4.13.3). Additionally, the existing noise levels from offsite traffic noise may result in noise levels above 65 CNEL.[6] Although unlikely to occur, the proposed Project could result in the operation of noise generating equipment and activities in close proximity to building facades within the Project area that have the potential to exceed interior noise standards. This would be a potentially significant impact.

<u>Level of Significance Before Mitigation</u>

Potentially significant impact.

<u>Mitigation Measures</u>

See Mitigation Measure Tran-1.

NOI-2: **Control On-site Noise Generating Sources and Activities.** To ensure onsite, operations-related equipment and other activities associated with the future development in the Project area do not generate noise levels that exceed City standards, future mixed-use residential/commercial, commercial and neo-industrial development shall submit a project-specific operational noise analysis to the City for review and approval prior to the issuance of building permits. The noise analysis shall be prepared by a qualified acoustical consultant and shall:

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[5] The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Noise Guidebook and supplement (HUD 2009a, 2009b) includes information on noise attenuation provided by building materials and different construction techniques. As a reference, a standard exterior wall consisting of 5/8-inch siding, wall sheathing, fiberglass insulation, two by four wall studs on 16-inch centers, and 1/2-inch gypsum wall board with single strength windows provides approximately 35 dBs of attenuation between exterior and interior noise levels. This reduction may be slightly lower (2-3 dBs) for traffic noise due to the specific frequencies associated with traffic noise. Increasing window space may also decrease attenuation, with a reduction of 10 dBs possible if windows occupy 30% of the exterior wall façade.

[6] As discussed in Section 4.13.2, ambient noise monitoring was conducted along the roads surrounding the Planning Area. Noise levels 50 feet from the centerline of Rosecrans Avenue, Paramount Boulevard, and Somerset Boulevard were 70.8 dBA Leq, 69.4 dBA Leq, and 72.6 dBA L_{eq}, respectively.

1) Identify surrounding land uses and noise-sensitive receptors in the vicinity of the project.

2) Identify the ambient noise level at and in the vicinity of the project, including at noise-sensitive receptors that could be impacted by the project. Ambient noise levels may be based on information in the Clearwater Specific Plan EIR, or new ambient noise measurements conducted for the project.

3) Describe the noise levels generated by the project's onsite noise sources, including all stationary equipment (e.g., pumps, compressors, generators, dryers, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning equipment, etc.), truck docks/dedicated loading areas, waste collection areas, and vehicle parking areas included in the final project design/site plan.

4) Demonstrate how project noise sources and activities will comply with the exterior sound limits established in Municipal Code Chapter 9.12, Noise, the noise compatibility guidelines in General Plan Table 5-3, and applicable interior sound limits. Measures for reducing project noise to may include, but are not limited to, setbacks, equipment enclosures, noise barriers or other means of shielding on-site noise levels from surrounding land uses and noise-sensitive receptors, and operating restrictions (e.g., prohibiting certain equipment or activities from operating at certain times such as nighttime hours).

Level of Significance After Mitigation

For offsite noise, since a reduction in vehicle trips on specific, impacted roadway segments cannot be guaranteed, and future traffic noise levels have the potential to increase by 3 dBA or more, this impact would remain significant and unavoidable. For onsite noise, the implementation of Mitigation Measure NOI-2 would limit the potential for development under the Specific Plan to impact residential, educational, and other noise-sensitive land uses, and would require future development in the Project area to identify and control on-site noise to comply with the City's exterior and interior noise standards. This impact would be less than significant with mitigation.

Ground-borne Vibration and Noise Levels

Impact NOISE-3– Would the project result in generation of excessive groundborne noise levels?

Analysis of Impacts

Temporary Construction Vibration Levels. Construction activities have the potential to result in varying degrees of temporary ground vibration, depending on the specific construction equipment used and activities involved. Vibration generated by construction equipment spreads through the ground and diminishes with increases in distance. The effects of ground vibration may be imperceptible at the lowest levels, result in low rumbling sounds and detectable vibrations at moderate levels, and at high levels can cause sleep disturbance in places where people normally sleep or annoyance in buildings that are primarily used for daytime functions and sleeping (e.g., a hospital). Ground vibration can also potentially damage the foundations and exteriors of existing structures even if it does not result in a negative human response. Pile drivers and other pieces of high-impact construction equipment are generally the primary cause of construction-related vibration impacts. The use of such equipment is generally limited to sites where there are

extensive layers of very hard materials (e.g., compacted soils, bedrock) that must be loosened or penetrated to achieve grading and foundation design requirements. The need for such methods is usually determined through site-specific geotechnical investigations that identify the subsurface materials within the grading envelope, along with foundation design recommendations and the construction methods needed to safely permit development of a site.

Construction equipment and activities are categorized by the nature of the vibration they produce. Equipment or activities typical of continuous vibration include excavation equipment, static compaction equipment, vibratory pile drivers, and pile-extraction equipment. Equipment or activities typical of transient (single-impact) or low-rate, repeated impact vibration include impact pile drivers, and crack-and-seat equipment. Pile driving and blasting activities produce the highest levels of ground vibration and can result in structural damage to existing buildings. Since individual project-specific information is not available at this time, potential short-term construction-related vibration impacts can only be evaluated based on the typical construction activities associated with residential, commercial, and neo-industrial development.

Future development as a result of the Specific Plan would occur within the Planning Area where land is already disturbed and, therefore, is not likely to require blasting, which is typically used to remove unwanted rock or earth. Additionally, based on the conditions at the Project area, the use of large pile driving equipment is not expected to be required and, therefore, potential vibration impacts from this equipment are not considered in this analysis. Standard construction equipment (e.g., bulldozers, trucks, jackhammers) generally does not cause vibration that could cause structural or cosmetic damage but may be felt by nearby receptors. Table 4.13-11 presents the typical types of equipment that could be used for future development activities in the Planning Area.

Table 4.13-11
Ground-borne Vibration and Noise from Typical Construction Equipment

Equipment	Peak Particle Velocity (in/sec) (A)					Velocity Decibels (VdB) (B)				
	25 ft	50 ft	100 ft	150 ft	250 ft	25 ft	50 ft	100 ft	150 ft	250 ft
Small bulldozer	0.003	0.001	0.001	0.004	0.002	58	49	40	35	28
Jackhammer	0.035	0.016	0.008	0.005	0.003	79	70	61	56	49
Rock Breaker	0.059	0.028	0.013	0.008	0.005	83	74	65	60	53
Loaded truck	0.076	0.035	0.017	0.011	0.006	86	77	68	63	56
Auger Drill Rig	0.089	0.042	0.019	0.012	0.007	87	78	69	64	57
Large bulldozer	0.089	0.042	0.019	0.012	0.007	87	78	69	64	57
Vibratory Roller	0.210	0.098	0.046	0.029	0.017	94	85	76	71	64

Sources: Caltrans 2020 and FTA 2018
(A) Estimated PPV calculated as: PPV(D)=PPV(ref)*(25/D)^1.1 where PPV(D)= Estimated PPV at distance; PPVref= Reference PPV at 25 ft; D= Distance from equipment to receiver; and n= ground attenuation rate (1.1 for dense compacted hard soils).
(B) Estimated Lv calculated as: Lv(D)=Lv(25 feet)-30Log(D/25) where Lv(D)= estimated velocity level in decibels at distance, Lv(25 feet)= RMS velocity amplitude at 25 ft; and D= distance from equipment to receiver.

As shown in Table 4.13-11, the proposed Project's potential construction vibration levels are dependent on the type of equipment used. For potential structural damage effects, typical equipment used during construction activities (e.g., bulldozer, jack hammer, trucks etc.) would produce PPV levels up to 0.089 in/sec at 25 feet, while the use of specific vibration-generating equipment such as a vibratory roller would produce PPV levels of up to 0.210 in/sec at 25 feet. These PPV values are well below Caltrans' guidelines standards for potential structural damage for the types of buildings in and adjacent to the Planning Area (0.3 to 0.5 PPV for continuous vibration sources and 0.5 to 2.0 for transient vibration sources for older residential, new residential, and modern commercial and industrial structures; see Table 4.13-6).

For human responses and interference responses, the FTA annoyance criteria (see Table 4.13-5) are used to determine if equipment would generate vibration that would exceed annoyance thresholds for Category 1 (buildings with sensitive equipment), Category 2 (buildings where people sleep) or Category 3 (institutional buildings) land uses. There are no existing Category 1 buildings within or in the vicinity of the Planning Area; however, there is the potential for onsite Category 1 buildings to be developed in the neo-industrial/research and development land uses under the specific Plan. The closest offsite Category 2 buildings are the residences located across Paramount Boulevard, approximately 200 feet from the nearest construction work area, and the closest offsite Category 3 building is the Paramount High School located across Paramount Boulevard, approximately 100 feet from construction work areas. Cateogry 2 buildings would be developed onsite under the Specific Plan, and there are Cateogry 3 buildings located on-site that would be retained under the Specific Plan (e.g., Our Lady of the Rosary, Paramount Adult School). These onsite buildings would be adjacent to construction areas under the Specific Plan.

As shown in Table 4.13-17, a vibratory roller operating and typical construction equipment operating within 250 feet and 150 feet, respectively, from Cateogry 1 facilities would produce maximum groundborne vibration levels that has the potential to exceed the FTA's Category 1 (65 VdB) threshold. Additionally, a vibratory roller and typical construction equipment operating at least 150 feet and 80 feet, respectively, from a building have the potential to exceed the FTA's Category 2 (72 VdB) criteria, and a vibratory roller and typical construction equipment operating within 110 feet and 65 feet, respectively, from a building have the potential to exceed Category 3 (75 VdB) annoyance criteria. A vibratory roller operating within 50 feet of a building also has the potential to exceed Caltrans' strongly perceptible vibration annoyance criterion (0.1 in/sec for continuous vibration sources) while operating within 50 feet of a building and the potential to exceed Caltrans' distinctly perceptible criterion (0.035 in/sec) while operating within 130 feet of a building.

It is noted that potential construction-related vibrations would be intermittent (not occur every day), limited in duration (equipment would move throughout work areas and not operate in the same location for a prolonged amount of time), and occur during the daytime (when receptors would not be sleeping and, therefore, are considered less sensitive to vibration levels). As described above, the proposed project's construction activities would not result in physical damage to any existing structures, but could exceed FTA and Caltrans criteria for annoyance for potential onsite research and development uses and potential onsite residential receptors.[7] Construction vibration would be a potentially significant impact.

[7] While there are offsite residences across Paramount Boulevard located within 150 feet (i.e., the distance within which a vibratory roller could exceed Category 2 annoyance thresholds), the residences are located directly across from Our Lady of the Rosary School and Parish, which would be retained under the Specific Plan and would not undergo construction. The nearest construction area would be approximately 200 feet from the nearest residences across

Operations-Related Ground borne Vibration Levels. Neo-industrial (light manufacturing/research and development) land uses may include machinery and equipment that generate vibration. However, equipment vibration from light manufacturing uses are not anticipated to be excessive to adjacent onsite land uses, and would not be perceptible to the nearest offsite sensitive receptors located hundreds of feet away. The Specific Plan does not include plans for the expansion of freight or light rail, and is not anticipated to increase vibration levels from these sources. Operational vibration would be a less than significant impact.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Potentially significant.

Mitigation Measures

NOI-3: **Prohibit Vibratory Equipment**. To reduce the potential for construction equipment to generate substantially perceptible groundborne vibrations, the use of vibratory rollers, vibratory/impact hammers and other potential large vibration-generating equipment (e.g., hydraulic breakers/hoe rams) shall be prohibited within 110 feet of any occupied institutional building, 150 feet of any occupied residential dwelling unit or within 250 feet of an occupied research building. Additionally, the use of large bulldozers, large loaded trucks, and/or auger drill rigs shall not be permitted within 65 feet of any occupied institutional building, 80 feet of any occupied residential dwelling unit or within 150 feet of an occupied research building.

If it is not feasible to prohibit the use of the specified equipment within the ranges defined above due to site- or project-specific conditions or design considerations, a project-specific construction vibration evaluation plan shall be prepared that identifies planned vibration-generating construction activities and potential ground-borne vibration levels (given specific equipment and soil conditions) at specific receptor locations and the vibration control measures that will be employed to ensure equipment and work activities would not result in vibrations that exceed the FTA standards of 65 VdB, 72 VdB, and 75 VdB for Category 1, Category 2, and Category 3 land use types, respectively or Caltrans' strongly perceptible human annoyance criterion of 0.1 inches/second peak particle velocity. Such measures may include but are not limited to the use of vibration monitoring to measure actual vibration levels, the use of photo monitoring or documentation of building conditions prior to, during, and after construction activities, and/or the use of trenches or barriers that attenuate ground-borne vibration.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant with mitigation.

Paramount, limiting the potential for excessive vibration. Therefore, this analysis is focused on potential onsite land uses.

Excessive Airport-related Noise Levels

Impact NOISE-4 – For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

Analysis of Impacts

The closest airport to the Planning Area is the Compton/Woodley Airport, located approximately 4.0 miles west of the Planning Area. The Planning Area is not located in any noise contour zone associated with this airport (Los Angeles County Airport Land Use Commission 2004). Additionally, the Planning Area is not located within the vicinity of a private air strip or an airport land use plan and would not expose people residing or working in the Planning Area to excessive airport-related noise levels.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Other Disclosures and Planning Considerations (Potential Impacts of the Environment on the Project). The California Supreme Court in *California Building Industry Association v. Bay Area Air Quality Management District*, 62 Cal.4th 369 (2015) ruled that CEQA review is focused on a project's impact on the environment "and not the environment's impact on the project." Per this ruling, a Lead Agency is not required to analyze how existing conditions might impact a project's existing or future population except where specifically required by CEQA; however, a Lead Agency may elect to disclose information relevant to a project even if it is not considered an impact under CEQA. Furthermore, the City's Municipal Code and General Plan Noise Element set noise standards for receiving land uses which require evaluation for consistency and compliance even if such evaluation is not required by CEQA to be identified as a physical impact of the project.

As discussed in Section 4.13.2, the North Paramount Gateway Specific Plan, which has portions of its planning area adjacent to the proposed Southeast Gateway Line corridor, states that the Southeast Gateway Line would generate approximately 65 dBA Ldn at a distance of 60 feet from the rail line. Only a small portion of the open space area in the northeast corner of the Planning Area would be approximately 60 feet from the rail line. All other portions of the Planning Area would be located further than 60 feet from the rail line, and noise levels would decrease with distance attenuation. The Planning Area, therefore, would not experience excessive noise from the Southeast Gateway Line.

Based on the long-term noise monitoring conducted adjacent to the UPRR line along the western property line of the Planning Area (LT-2, see Section 4.13.2), the noise levels 50 feet from the centerline of the UPRR line ranged from 58.8 to 65.4 CNEL. This noise monitoring occurred at the property line. Due to setback requirements from the rail line, the noise level at residential properties would not exceed 65 CNEL due to rail noise, and the project would not place residential land uses in an incompatible location. As described under Impact NOISE-2, offsite traffic noise

from Rosecrans, Paramount, and Somerset have the potential to exceed land use compatibility guidelines; however, individual projects would comply with the requirements of Mitigation Measure NOI-2, which would reduce noise exposure to levels within compatibility guidelines.

As discussed in Section 4.13.2, vibration monitoring adjacent to the UPRR line indicated that freight train vibration did not exceed the 0.05 monitoring threshold, and is therefore not anticipated to create substantial vibration at future residential receptors in the Planning Area.

Cumulative Impacts

Would the project cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to noise or vibration?

Analysis of Impacts

Project implementation would result in construction noise and vibration as individual development projects are constructed over time (Impact NOISE-1 and NOISE-3). Construction noise and vibration from individual development projects could combine (when within 1,000 feet of each other); however, each individual development would be subject to City's construction hour limitations and project-specific conditions on construction, which would protect existing and future residents from potential substantial, temporary increases in ambient noise and ground-borne vibration levels associated with construction activities. For these reasons, the proposed Project would not make a cumulatively considerable contribution to cumulative construction noise or vibration impacts at on- or off-site receptor locations near future development projects.

The Specific Plan would result in long-term increases in vehicle trips and traffic-related noise levels (Impact NOISE-2) which have the potential to generate significant increases in traffic noise levels on a cumulative basis. The Specific Plan could also result in stationary and other sources of operational noise associated with future development; however, the City's Municipal Code sets forth noise limitations (Chapter 9.12) that would prevent stationary and area sources from generating noise increases on a cumulative basis.

The Specific Plan does not propose any large vibration-inducing equipment or land use activities and would not result in excessive ground-borne vibration levels that have the potential to combine with vibration levels from other project within or outside of the Planning Area (Impact NOISE-3). No cumulative operational vibration impact would occur.

The Specific Plan would not expose people living or working in the Planning Area to excessive airport-related noise levels (Impact NOISE-4). This impact is Project-specific and would not combine with any other project. No cumulative impact would occur.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Impact NOISE 1, NOISE 3, and NOISE 4: Less than significant.

Impact NOISE 2: Potentially significant.

Mitigation Measures

See Tran-1, NOI-1, and NOI-2, and NOI-3.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Impact NOISE 1, NOISE 3, and NOISE 4: None required.

Impact NOISE 2: Significant and unavoidable.

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List of Acronyms, Abbreviations, and Symbols	
Acronym / Abbreviation	**Full Phrase or Description**
BNSF	Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway
C	Circulation Element
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CCR	California Code of Regulations
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CNEL	Community Noise Equivalent Level
D	Distance
dB	Decibel (unweighted)
dBA	Decibels, A-Weighted
DNL / L_{dn}	Day-Night Noise Level
FHWA	Federal Highway Works Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
HUD	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
HVAC	Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning
Hz	Hertz
I	Interstate
In/sec	Inches per Second
kH	Kilohertz
L_{eq}	Average / Equivalent Noise Level
L_{max}	Maximum Noise Level
L_{min}	Minimum Noise Level
LT	Long-term
OITC	Outside-Indoor Transmission Class
OPR	Office of Planning and Research
Pa	Pascals
PRC	Public Resources Code
PPV	Peak Particle Velocity (inches/second)
ST	Short-term
STC	Sound Transmission Class
UF	Usage Factor
UPRR	Union Pacific Railroad
VdB	Velocity Decibels
VMT	Vehicle Miles Travelled
§	Section
%	Percent

4.14 – POPULATION AND HOUSING

This EIR chapter addresses population and housing impacts associated with the proposed Specific Plan. Issues of interest are population and housing impacts identified by the CEQA Guidelines: whether the Specific Plan will induce substantial unplanned population growth or displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing necessitating the construction of replacement housing.

4.14.1 – ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The Clearwater East Specific Plan Area contains a wide representation of nonresidential land uses found within the City of Paramount. The site is most well-known for its special land uses; the Paramount Swap Meet and the Bianchi Drive-In Theater, comprising the "Paramount Entertainment Center". Along Paramount Boulevard in the northern portion of the site is a small shopping plaza with restaurants and clothing stores, the Paramount Adult Education Center, and the Our Lady of the Rosary Parish Catholic church. The southern portion of the site along Somerset Boulevard is the Somerset Business Park, which features multiple retail and warehouse uses, as well as the Paramount Sheriff's Station.

Population

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) develops socioeconomic estimates and growth projections including population, households, and employment. These estimates and projections provide the analytical foundation for SCAG's transportation planning and other programs. However, it should be noted that the RTP/SCS does not include growth forecasts for specific communities or subsections within cities. As such, the RTP/SCS only has growth projections for Paramount, but not for the areas located within it, such as the project area. There are, however, with the exception of a few apartments for nuns and priests, no existing residential dwelling units within the Planning Area. The growth forecast used for SCAG's Connect SoCal 2024 (2025-2050 RTP/SCS) for Los Angeles County and the City of Paramount are included in Table 4.14-1 (Population Forecasts). As shown in Table 4.14-1, continued population growth is anticipated by SCAG at both the county and city level. Population growth at the county level from 2019 to 2050 is projected to be approximately 7.4%, while during the same period it is projected to be approximately 6.5% for the City of Paramount.

Table 4.14-1
Population Forecasts

	2019	2050	Growth Rate
County of Los Angeles	10,046,000	10,793,000	7.4%
City of Paramount	54,000	57,500	6.5%
Source: Connect SoCal 2024, SCAG.			

Housing

As noted above, SCAG develops socioeconomic estimates and growth projections including population, households, and employment. Table 4.14-2 (Household Forecasts) shows the anticipated growth in households for both Los Angeles County and the City of Paramount. As shown in Table 4.14-2, household growth at the county level from 2019 to 2050 is projected to be

approximately 22.5%, while during the same period it is projected to be approximately 3.5% for the City of Paramount. Other than a few apartments for nuns and priests, there are no existing housing units within the Planning Area.

Table 4.14-2
Household Forecasts

	2019	2050	Growth Rate
County of Los Angeles	3,393,000	4,155,000	22.5%
City of Paramount	14,400	14,900	3.5%
Source: Connect SoCal 2024, SCAG.			

Employment

As of 2019, SCAG estimated that there were 5,031,000 employees in Los Angeles County and 21,400 employees in the City of Paramount. Table 4.14-3 (Employment Forecasts) shows the anticipated growth in employment for both Los Angeles County and the City of Paramount. As shown in Table 4.14-3, employment growth at the county level from 2019 to 2050 is projected to be approximately 8.5%, while during the same period it is projected to be approximately 4.0% for the City of Paramount.

Table 4.14-3
Employment Forecasts

	2019	2050	Growth Rate
County of Los Angeles	5,031,000	5,461,000	8.5%
City of Paramount	22,500	23,400	4.0%
Source: Connect SoCal 2024, SCAG.			

4.14.2 – REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Federal

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

HUD oversees the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), the largest mortgage insurer in the world, and regulates housing industry business. HUD also provides Project-Based Rental Assistance and other rental assistance programs, which provide support for low and very low-income households.

State

California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD)

HCD enforces standards for housing construction, maintenance of farmworker housing, and manufactured / factory-built homes. HCD also proposes amendments to California's residential building standards for new construction to the California Building Standards Commission and helps train local governments to better understand new requirements. HCD works with regional governments to determine their housing needs and reviews every city and county's housing element of the general plan to determine compliance with State law.

Housing Element Law (California Government Code Article 10.6)

The State has established detailed legal requirements for the General Plan Update (GPU) Housing Element beyond Section 65300. State Law requires each city and county to prepare and maintain a current Housing Element as part of the community's GPU to attain a Statewide Goal of providing "decent housing and a suitable living environment for every California family." Under State law, Housing Elements must be updated every eight years and reviewed by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD).

California Department of Finance Demographic Research Unit

The Demographic Research Unit uses population data to establish appropriation limitations, distribute various federal program funds, and aid in the planning and evaluation of programs. State agencies and departments, local governments, the federal government, school districts, public utilities, the private sector, and the public use the data. Staff provide demographic research and analysis, produce current population estimates and future projections of population and school enrollment, and disseminate U.S. Census data.

Regional

Los Angeles County Housing Authority (LACHA)

The LACHA is a public agency chartered by the State to administer the development, rehabilitation, or financing of affordable housing programs. The LACHA works with the City to administer the Housing Choice Vouchers Program; support the County Housing Authority's applications for additional allocations; and assist the Housing Authority in marketing the program to home seekers and property owners.

Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is a Joint Powers Authority under California law, established as an association of local governments and agencies that voluntarily convene as a forum to address regional issues. SCAG encompasses the counties of Los Angeles, Orange, Ventura, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Imperial. SCAG is designated as a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and as a Regional Transportation Planning Agency. SCAG is responsible for regional planning in the southern California area. As SCAG is the largest MPO in the United States, it has sub-regional councils of government to provide for the subregions' land use and transportation planning at a more local level. The sub-regional council for Paramount is the Gateway Cities Council of Governments (GCCOG). SCAG provides a framework to coordinate local and regional decisions regarding future growth and development and prepares future growth forecasts for the region. As the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the area, SCAG is mandated by the Federal government to research and develop plans for transportation, growth management, hazardous waste management, and air quality based on the regional growth projections. Under Senate Bill 375 (SB 375), SCAG, as a designated MPO, is required to prepare a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) as an integral part of its Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). RTP/SCS documents are long-range visioning plans that balance future mobility and housing needs with economic, environmental, and public health goals. SCAG's current adopted RTP/SCS, Connect SoCal 2024, was adopted in April 2024.

Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA)

RHNA **i**s developed through a process directed by SCAG. The RHNA represents the number of housing units divided into various household income categories that have been calculated to represent the city's "fair share" of the regional housing need during the Housing Element planning period. By law, the City is required to show in the Housing Element that adequate sites are available to accommodate construction of new housing units consistent with the RHNA.

Local

City of Paramount General Plan

The City of Paramount 2007 General Plan includes the following goals and policies related to population and housing:

Clearwater East Specific Plan

Policy CE-1: Mixed uses are allowed only where designated in order to avoid overloading the commercial market and reducing shared parking potential with the swap meet.

Policy CE-2: Office use is acceptable in lieu of other types of commercial uses if market feasibility is demonstrated.

Policy CE-3: Frontage treatments involving architectural elevations, materials, color, texture, landscaping, and signs shall be the subject of the Site Plan review in accordance with City design guidelines.

Policy CE-4: The City, the Redevelopment Agency or the Parking Authority will share in property acquisition and/or development costs of improvements where it is cost effective.

Policy CE-5: The "stacking" of vehicles entering the swap meet shall occur entirely on-site so Paramount Boulevard, Rosecrans Avenue, and Somerset Boulevard are not impacted.

Policy CE-6: The preferred method of land use regulation is the Planned Development with Performance Standards (PD-PS) zone, although conventional zone districts may be used if they are consistent with the intent of this Area Plan.

Environmental Justice Element

Goal EJ-2: Improve physical conditions of residential areas adjacent to pollutions sources

Policy EJ 2.1: Mitigate impacts on residential neighborhoods immediately adjacent to industrial areas by utilizing tree and green buffers, sound walls, and similar strategies.

Policy EJ 2.2: Require new residential development and encourage established residential units to include building design features, equipment, and/or site planning measures to protect occupants from air pollution.

Policy EJ 2.3: Assist residents in retrofitting their homes to be more energy efficient, weatherproofed, and better protected from air and noise pollution.

Policy EJ 2.4: Develop a proactive process that allows the City to quickly connect with City departments and regional agencies in order to promptly respond to community complaints concerning odors, emissions, noise, and vibration from industrial businesses.

Policy EJ 2.5: Develop community programs to improve public awareness of State, regional and local agencies, and resources to assist with air quality and other environmental quality concerns.

Policy EJ 2.6: Consult with World Energy Paramount for development of a community education campaign about the use of biodiesel at the former Paramount Petroleum Refinery.

Housing Element

Goal HE-1: Housing and Residential neighborhoods that are well maintained.

Policy HE-1.1: Preserve the character, scale, and quality of established residential neighborhoods.

Policy HE-1.2: Continue to promote the maintenance and rehabilitation of the existing housing stock in Paramount.

Policy HE-1.3: Protect established residential neighborhoods from potential adverse impacts associated with existing and proposed nonresidential land uses.

Policy HE-1.4: Assist in the elimination of substandard construction, overcrowding, and other factors that contribute to the deterioration of the existing housing stock.

Policy HE-1.5: Support healthy neighborhoods by addressing public health and safety issues, proactively resolving code violations; and minimizing threats from pollution contamination, industrial uses, and incompatible uses.

Goal HE-2: A range of housing types, densities, and affordability levels that meet the diverse needs of the community, including a balanced supply of ownership and rental units.

Policy HE-2.1: Provide a zoning context that creates adequate sites to support the production of 364 housing units through October 2029 to meet the demands of present and future residents, including an adequate number and range of new dwelling types affordable to extremely low-, very low-, low-, moderate-, and above moderate-income households.

Policy HE-2.2: Facilitate the development of a range of residential development types which fulfill regional housing needs, including accessory dwelling units, low- to moderate-density townhomes, and higher-density apartments and condominiums and mixed-use projects.

Policy HE-2.3: Promote new residential development and ensure this housing—including affordable units—provides a healthy, safe, and attractive living environment.

Policy HE-2.4: Encourage transit-oriented development within walking distance of planned light rail stations and high-frequency bus stops, including higher residential densities, public gathering places, urban parks, streetscape amenities, and commercial and entertainment uses.

Policy HE-2.5: Encourage infill housing development that is compatible in character with the surrounding established residential neighborhood.

Goal HE-3: Adequate housing and resources that meet the needs of low- and moderate-income and special needs households

Policy HE-3.1: Ensure that affordable housing is developed to the highest standards possible in a manner consistent with local market-rate housing.

Policy HE-3.2: Encourage the development of residential units accessible to persons with disabilities or units that are adaptable for conversion for persons with disabilities.

Policy HE-3.3: Consult with local social service providers to address the needs of the homeless and persons at risk of homelessness.

Policy HE-3.4: Promote the development and rehabilitation of senior housing specifically designed to meet their needs and living arrangement.

Policy HE-3.5: Consider opportunities for new housing—including housing for special needs households—in the planning and review of new development proposals.

Goal HE-4: A regulatory environment that does not constrain housing production – and production of affordable housing in particular.

Policy HE-4.1: Amend existing codes, regulations, and interdepartmental development review processes for new residential development through implementation of streamlined review processes.

Policy HE-4.2: Explore innovative strategies that will facilitate the planning and design process while providing clear and consistent direction to housing providers.

Policy HE-4.3: Educate applicants on how to navigate the development approval process; facilitate building permit and development plan processing for residential construction.

Policy HE-4.4: Periodically review City regulations, ordinances, procedures, and fees to ensure they do not unduly constrain the production of housing.

Policy HE-4.5: Ensure that any voter-approved ordinance related to housing does not conflict with State and federal housing laws.

Goal HE-5: Affirmatively furthering equal and fair access to housing and housing services for all residents.

Policy H-5.1: Prohibit discrimination in the sale, rental, or funding of housing based on race, color, ancestry, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, disability/medical condition, familial status, marital status, source of income, or any other arbitrary factor.

Policy HE-5.2: Incorporate housing plan strategies and the enforcement of fair housing laws to eliminate barriers to fair housing choice or access to opportunity; support activities of fair housing organizations, including receiving and investigating fair housing allegations, monitoring compliance with fair housing laws, referring possible violations to enforcing agencies, counseling and training to tenants and landlords, and multilingual outreach.

Policy HE-5.3: Encourage investments and the siting of new housing in an equitable and fair manner that prevents discrimination, overcomes pattern of segregation, and fosters inclusive communities.

Policy HE-5.4: Facilitate increased participation among traditionally underrepresented groups in the public decision-making process.

Land Use Element

Policy LU-2: The City of Paramount will continue to improve the character of individual neighborhoods through City policies designed to protect and preserve a high quality of life in Paramount.

Policy LU-3: The City of Paramount will provide guidance for land use and development within specific geographic areas of the City in the form of Specific Plans and Area Plans.

Policy LU-4: The City of Paramount will limit the intrusion of dissimilar uses as a means to minimize potential land use conflicts and incompatibility in the future.

Policy LU-5: The City of Paramount, through continued comprehensive land use planning, will strive to preserve the overall mix of land uses and development in the City.

Policy LU-6: The City of Paramount will strive to improve the unity and identity of individual neighborhoods as a means to protect and preserve a high quality of life in Paramount.

Policy LU-7: The City of Paramount will continue to maintain and conserve its existing residential neighborhoods.

Policy LU-8: The City of Paramount will continue to examine future potential opportunities for residential development.

4.14.3 – SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLDS

As identified in Appendix G of the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Specific Plan could result in a significant impact if it would:

A. Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?
B. Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?
C. Cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to population and housing?

4.14.4 – IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

This section describes potential impacts related to population and housing that could result from the implementation of the Specific Plan and recommends mitigation measures as needed to reduce significant impacts.

Population Growth

Impact POP-1 – Would the Specific Plan induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?

Analysis of Impacts

The Specific Plan proposes development that would directly induce population growth and employment growth within the Planning Area and the City of Paramount. The proposed Specific Plan would result in up to 2,000 housing units, which could result in an increase in the City's population by an estimated 4,643 new residents. The proposed Specific Plan would also allow for development of up to 926,731 square feet of new nonresidential building area within the existing Specific Plan boundaries, which would potentially result in up to 138 additional employees within Planning Area.

SCAG's Connect SoCal 2024 growth forecasts estimate that the City of Paramount's population would increase from 54,000 in the year 2019 to 57,500 in the year 2050, and that the number of households in Paramount would increase from 14,400 in 2019 to 14,900 in 2050, which is an increase of 3,500 residents and 500 households, respectively. SCAG also estimated that the number of employees in the City would increase from 22,500 in 2019 to 23,400 in 2050, an increase of 900 employees. While falling within the accounted employment growth, the anticipated population and household growth under the proposed Specific Plan would exceed SCAG's growth potential accounted for by the Connect SoCal 2024. As such, from a population and housing growth standpoint, the proposed Specific Plan would be inconsistent with the RTP/SCS.

New development within the Planning Area under the proposed Specific Plan would be planned and would be phased over the lifespan of the Plan (approximately 20 years). Population growth within the City of Paramount related to the Specific Plan would not be substantial, as it is encouraged as the main objective of the Specific Plan. Further, the incoming residents who would inhabit the residential dwelling units under the proposed Specific Plan would likely come from Paramount or surrounding communities and would not represent a substantial change relative to

the region as a whole. Therefore, the projected population growth within the Planning Area under the proposed Specific Plan would not be unplanned and would be consistent with and supportive of the goals and policies of the current RTP/SCS and the City's General Plan.

As outlined in the Regulatory Framework section above, there are multiple existing General Plan Housing and Land Use Element policies related to effects of population growth within Paramount. Policy HE-2 requires the City to provide a zoning context that creates adequate sites to support the production of 364 housing units through October 2029 to meet the demands of present and future residents, including an adequate number and range of new dwelling types affordable to extremely low-, very low-, low-, moderate-, and above moderate-income households. Policy HE-2.2 seeks to facilitate the development of a range of residential development types which fulfill regional housing needs, including accessory dwelling units, low- to moderate-density townhomes, and higher-density apartments and condominiums and mixed-use projects. Policy HE-2.3 aims to promote new residential development and ensure this housing—including affordable units—provides a healthy, safe, and attractive living environment. Policy HE-2.5 encourages infill housing development that is compatible in character with the surrounding established residential neighborhood. Policy LU-8 guides the City of Paramount to examine future potential opportunities for residential development.

For the reasons above, physical impacts from increased population and housing growth in itself are less than significant. Indirect impacts of population growth are addressed in other topical area chapters in the EIR, specifically:

- Air Quality
- Energy
- Greenhouse Gases
- Noise
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Utilities and Services

With adherence to General Plan policies related to future population growth within the City, the Specific Plan would not induce significant unplanned population growth. As such, the overall impacts of the Specific Plan regarding population growth would be less than significant.

<u>Level of Significance Before Mitigation</u>

Less than significant.

<u>Mitigation Measures</u>

No mitigation is required.

Housing Growth

Impact POP-2 – Would the Specific Plan displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

Analysis of Impacts

The Planning Area is currently comprised of commercial, industrial, and institutional uses. Other than a few apartments for nuns and priests, the Planning Area does not contain any residential dwelling units and there are no persons who reside within the Planning Area. The proposed Specific Plan supports development of up to 2,000 new housing units. Because there are no existing housing units or residents within the Planning Area, the proposed Specific Plan would not displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

No impact.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Cumulative Growth

Impact POP-3 – Would the Specific Plan cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to population and housing?

Analysis of Impacts

Implementation of the Specific Plan would result in increased residential density within the Planning Area, which would increase the population of the City if those residents moved from outside of Paramount. However, this growth would be incremental over a period of 20 years as new housing units are developed within the community. It is anticipated that most of the future residents of the housing units developed under the proposed Specific plan would likely come from Paramount or surrounding communities and would not represent a substantial change relative to the region as a whole. Potential population and housing growth under the proposed Specific Plan would not be so substantial as to create cumulative environmental impacts to the City or region. Additionally, implementation of the Specific Plan would not displace any currently existing people or housing.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.14.5 – REFERENCES

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4.15 – PUBLIC SERVICES

This EIR chapter addresses public services impacts associated with the proposed Specific Plan. Issues of interest are public services impacts identified by the CEQA Guidelines: whether the Specific Plan will result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of public services and facilities related to police, fire, schools, parks, and other public facilities which could cause environmental impacts.

4.15.1 – ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Fire Protection

Fire services are provided to the City of Paramount and the Specific Plan area by the Consolidated Fire Protection District of Los Angeles County, also known as the Los Angeles County Fire Department (LACFD). LACFD responds to medical emergencies, hazardous materials incidents, rescue calls, and motor-related accidents, as well as providing regular fire suppression services. The City of Paramount is served by Fire Station 31, which is located at 7521 Somerset Boulevard, less than half a mile west of the Specific Plan area. Fire Station 31 was built in 1966 and includes an engine, a quint, and a squad car.

The LACFD strives to arrive at nearly all 911 calls within 6:00 minutes; however, response times depend on location and incident type. The LACFD has several standards to maintain adequate fire protection within their service area (Los Angeles County, 2014). The current standards for response times are: 5 minutes or less for response times for urban areas; 8 minutes or less for suburban areas; and 12 minutes or less for rural areas. Emergency medical services (EMS) incident call processing takes 1 minute and 7 seconds, turn out takes 0 minutes and 54 seconds, and travel takes 5 minutes and 22 seconds. The operational response time is 7 minutes and 36 seconds. Non-EMS incident call processing takes 1 minute and 7 seconds, turn out takes 0 minutes and 54 seconds, and travel takes 5 minutes and 19 seconds. The operational response time is 7 minutes and 21 seconds.

LACFD services are funded primarily through a direct allocation of property taxes and a voter-approved special tax on all properties within the property tax cities served by the LACFD. The amount of property tax revenue generated within a city is based on assessed value and varies from city to city.

Police Protection

The City of Paramount contracts with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LACSD) to provide police protection services to the City of Paramount. The LACSD provides law enforcement services to more than one million people living within 90 unincorporated communities and to more than four million residents living within 40 contract cities. In addition, LASD provides law enforcement services to nine community colleges, Metro, and 48 Superior Courts (Los Angeles County, 2014). LASD comprises 11 divisions, including 3 patrol divisions and the Office of Homeland Security.

In addition to proactive enforcement of criminal laws, the LASD also provides investigative, traffic enforcement, accident investigation, and community education functions. LASD staff has indicated that an officer-to-population ratio of 1 officer to every 1,000 residents provides the

desired level of service for its service area (Los Angeles County, 2014). The LASD also has established an optimal service response time of 10 minutes or less for emergency response incidents (a crime that is presently occurring and is a life-or-death situation), 20 minutes or less for priority response incidents (a crime or incident that is currently occurring but is not a life-or-death situation), and 60 minutes or less for routine response incidents (a crime that has already occurred and is not a life-or-death situation). These response times represent the range of time required to handle a service call, which is measured from the time a call is received until the time a patrol car arrives at the incident scene. Response time is variable, particularly because the nearest responding patrol car may be located anywhere within the station's patrol area and may not necessarily respond directly from the station itself (Los Angeles County, 2014).

Policing services for Paramount residents are dispatched via the Lakewood Sheriff's Station, located at 5130 Clark Avenue in the City of Lakewood. The Specific Plan area is served by the Paramount Sheriff's Substation, which is located 15001 Paramount Boulevard, within the Somerset Business Park in the southeastern corner of the Specific Plan area. There are 30 Sheriff's personnel assigned to the Paramount Substation, including patrol deputies, a detective team, a special assignment team, and supervisors. Additionally, the City contracts with the County for a dedicated probation officer and district attorney.

The City's Public Safety Department also employs 30 staff members, including administrative staff, community service officers, code enforcement officers, public service assistants, and clerical staff (Paramount, 2024b). In the event of an extreme emergency, mutual aid is available via the Lakewood Station, which can include patrol cars from the cities of Bellflower, Artesia, Lakewood, and Hawaiian Gardens. According to the City, on average, Paramount had approximately 19 Special Assignment Officers (SAOs) and Community Service Officers (CSOs) working early morning/day shifts, 14 officers during the evening/night shifts, and 9 officers during the work-day/night shifts over the City's 4.8 square mile service area. The City had the lowest emergency response time among the five Lakewood Station cities in 2019 at 3.2 minutes and the second lowest in 2020 at 3 minutes.

Public Schools

The Paramount Unified School District (PUSD) serves as the primary school system for the City of Paramount, and also serves students from portions of the Cities of Lakewood, Long Beach, and South Gate. As shown in Table 4.15-1, the PUSD oversees 20 schools, three preschools, and an Adult Education Center, serving approximately 12,042 K-12 students, and 6,000 adult students (Paramount, 2024c; NCES, 2025). The Paramount Adult Education Center is located within the Clearwater East Specific Plan Area, and offers various educational programs such as Adult Basic Education, English as a Second Language, High School Equivalency Preparation, Career Technical Education, and Citizenship Preparation courses. Additionally, the Paramount Park Middle School and Paramount High School West Campus is located adjacent to the project area across Paramount Boulevard. The Paramount High School Senior Campus is also located near the Specific Plan area, at southwest corner of the intersection of Rosecrans and Downey Avenue. The PUSD office is also located in close proximity to the Specific Plan area, located at the southeastern corner of the intersection of Paramount and Somerset Boulevards.

Table 4.15-1
Existing PUSD Facilities

School Name	Address	City
Abraham Lincoln Elementary School	15324 California Avenue	Paramount
Alondra Middle School	16200 Downey Avenue	Paramount
Buena Vista High School	3717 Michelson Street	Lakewood
Collins Elementary School	6125 Coke Avenue	Long Beach
Community Day School	14507 Paramount Boulevard	Paramount
Gaines Elementary School	7340 Jackson Street	Paramount
Hollydale K-8 School	5511 Century Boulevard	South Gate
Jackson Elementary School	7220 Jackson Street	Paramount
Jefferson Elementary School	8600 Jefferson Street	Paramount
Keppel Elementary School	6630 Mark Keppel Street	Paramount
Leona Jackson School	7220 Jackson Steet	Paramount
Los Cerritos Elementary School	14626 Gundry Avenue	Paramount
Mokler Elementary School	8751 Flower Street	Paramount
Odyssey STEM Academy	3701 Michelson Street	Lakewood
Paramount High School Senior Campus	14429 Downey Avenue	Paramount
Paramount Park Middle School	14608 Paramount Boulevard	Paramount
Roosevelt Elementary School	13451 Merkel Avenue	Paramount
Tanner School	7210 Rosecrans Avenue	Paramount
Wirtz Elementary School	8535 Contreras Street	Paramount
Zamboni Middle School	15733 Orange Street	Paramount

Parks and Recreation Facilities

According to the City of Paramount Parks and Recreation Master Plan, there are 17 sites in the City of Paramount totaling approximately 60.5 acres of City parkland (Paramount, 2024d). These publicly accessible sites are managed by the City of Paramount to support recreation, social gathering, and greenspace. They include outdoor parks, landscaped green space, indoor recreation facilities, community centers and more. Some of these sites are owned by the City; others are leased by the City. Below are descriptions of the City's different parkland facilities.

Pocket Parks are the smallest of the park types, often less than one acre in size, with limited facilities and amenities such as picnic tables, lighting, landscaping, and walking paths. Existing pocket parks are privately-owned parcels leased by the City to provide public green space in neighborhood areas. There are three pocket parks in the City totaling 1.1 acres:

- Paramount Boulevard, north of Madison Street
- Somerset Boulevard & Colorado Avenue
- Wilbarn Pocket Park – Wilbarn Street, west of Downey Avenue

Neighborhood Parks are small parks ranging in size from 1-7 acres, and they provide greenspace or basic recreation opportunities such as playgrounds and sports courts for nearby neighbors within walking or biking distance. There are six neighborhood parks in the City totaling 14.1 acres:

- Garfield Park
- Meadows Park

- Pequeno Park
- Village Skate Park
- Spane Park
- All American Park

Community Parks are mid-size parks that are generally 10+ acres. They are intended to provide larger green spaces and diverse recreation opportunities to serve a portion of the City or several neighborhoods within driving distance. Community Parks typically provide support amenities such as onsite parking, restrooms, ballfields, picnic areas, and shade to encourage longer visits. There are four community parks in the City totaling 44.3 acres:

- Paramount Park
- Progress Park
- Ralph C. Dills Park
- Salud Park

Special Use Sites are single-purpose sites that vary in size and support specialized recreation uses such as a community garden, a splashpad, or a community center that is not located in a larger park. They may have minor supplemental facilities with support amenities such as onsite parking, restrooms, and shade. There are 4 special use parks totaling 1.1 acres.

- Carosmith Park
- Orange Avenue Splash Zone
- Paramount Community Garden (Cortland Avenue)
- Clearwater Building

School Joint-Use Sites

There are seven school joint-use sites, plus 15 PUSD sites. Current joint-use sites provide restricted public access to school sports fields and gymnasiums. Depending on the nature of the agreements, these sites could support access to other types of indoor and outdoor recreational spaces and amenities. Portions of existing school sites are scheduled by the City of Paramount through memorandum-of-understandings (MOUs) between the School District and the City.

Trail Corridors

There are two sites totaling 2.6 linear miles of trail corridors. These linear corridors with off-street trails support non-motorized transportation, bicycling, and pedestrian recreation. Often, trails in Paramount are part of a larger trail network that extends into neighboring cities. This category does not include walking/jogging paths or facility access paths located within park sites.

Parkland Level of Service Ratios

According to the Department of Finance, as of January 1, 2025, the City of Paramount had a population of approximately 52,371 and approximately 60.5 acres of parkland, resulting in a park ratio of 1.2 acres of parkland per 1,000 Paramount residents. Relative to state averages, this is a low level of service (Paramount, 2024d). Most cities in California strive to provide a minimum of 3.0 acres per 1,000 residents, as advised in California's Quimby Act. The California Quimby Act gives cities or counties the right, by ordinance, to require land dedication or impose in-lieu fees (or a combination) to acquire land for neighborhood and community parks as a condition of

approval for residential subdivision development. [Note: Joint-use sites and trail corridors are not counted toward Quimby requirements.] Relative to national averages, Paramount is similarly underserving parkland to its residents. Data provided by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) shows that for jurisdictions of similar populations as Paramount (50,000 to 99,000 residents), the median level of service is 11.2 acres per 1,000 residents and the lower quartile level of service is 5 acres per 1,000 residents. Paramount's 1.2 acres per 1,000 residents is thus significantly lower than national averages. In some cases, cities will include parkland that is owned by others to count toward their level of service. In the case of Paramount, there are 43.1 acres of non-City land used for recreation such as joint-use school sites and trail corridors (West Santa Ana Branch Multi-Use Trail and LA River Multi-Use Trail). Including these non-City sites' acreage augments Paramount's overall level of service to 2.0 acres per 1,000 people. This is an improvement, but still falls below State and national benchmarks.

Clearwater Specific Plan Area

There are currently no officially designated public open space, recreation, or public facilities within the Planning Area. Portions of the area contribute in some form to open space or recreational uses; however, they lack any natural surfaces (e.g., grass). The only significant open space within the Planning Area is the children's playfield located in the Our Lady of the Rosary School. The Paramount Swap Meet operates within the project area, which during operating hours provides a consumer-pedestrian area on an asphalt parking lot. There is also a plaza located at the entrance to the Bianchi Theatre in the northern portion of the site, which includes a pedestrian area with minimal landscaping. There are two recreational/open space facilities located adjacent to the Specific Plan area. Located to the east across Paramount Boulevard, Paramount Park is one of the City's largest park and open space areas. The park offers various amenities including two playgrounds, exercise stations, a gymnasium, illuminated baseball diamonds and basketball courts, picnic shelters and barbeque pits, a pool, two miniature soccer pitches, restrooms, and a walking path. Additionally, located adjacent to the southwest corner of the project area, at the northeastern intersection of Somerset Boulevard and the Union Pacific Railroad tracks, is the Village Skate Park. The 12,500 square-foot skating area also features a playground, picnic areas, and an illuminated basketball court (Paramount, 2024a).

Other Public Facilities

Public community facilities provide essential services to communities, including information, events, recreation, classes, and places to gather. These facilities can include libraries, community centers, wellness centers, and recreational buildings. Libraries can serve as cultural and community hubs, anchoring surrounding development and bringing diverse groups together in one space. Library services in Paramount are provided by the Paramount Library which is operated by the Los Angeles County Library system and was reopened in 2005 after an extensive remodel. The Paramount Library is located approximately 3/4-mile south of the project area at 16254 Colorado Avenue. Community centers offer residents opportunities to stay active and engage with fellow community members. They serve as inclusive meeting places, promoting a culture of health and well-being within the communities they serve. The Paramount Park Community Center located near the Specific Plan area within Paramount Park offers a banquet hall and several meeting rooms available for rent by the public. Additionally, the City's Community Services Department offers a variety of programs and classes for residents of all abilities and age groups, including summer programs, swim classes, recreational classes, and senior programs among other services.

4.4.2 – REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Federal

Standardized Emergency Management System and National Incident Management System (SEMS)

According to the State's SEMS, local agencies have primary authority regarding rescue and treatment of casualties and making decisions regarding protective actions for the community. When a major incident occurs the first few moments are critical in terms of reducing loss of life and property. First responders must be sufficiently trained to understand the nature and the gravity of the event to minimize the confusion that inevitably follows catastrophic situations. This on-scene authority rests with the local emergency services organization and the incident commander. Additional information regarding the City's SEMS program can be found in Section 4.9 Hazards and Hazardous Waste.

State

California Building Code

The City has adopted the 2022 California Building Code (CBC). The 2010 California Building Code became effective January 1, 2011, including Part 9 of Title 24, the California Fire Code. Section 701A.3.2 of the CBC requires that new buildings located in any Fire Hazard Severity Zone within State Responsibility Areas, any Local Agency Very-High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, or any Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Area designated by the enforcing agency for which an application for a building permit is submitted, comply with all sections of the chapter.

California Health and Safety Code (Sections 13000 et seq.)

This code establishes State fire regulations, including regulations for building standards (also set forth in the California Building Code), fire protection and notification systems, fire protection devices such as extinguishers and smoke alarms, high-rise building and childcare facility standards, and fire suppression training.

California Fire Code

The City has adopted the 2022 California Fire Code as published by the California Building Standards Commission.

Education Code Section 17620

The Code allows school districts to assess fees on new residential and commercial construction within their respective boundaries. These fees can be collected without special City or County approval to fund the construction of new school facilities necessitated by the impact of residential and commercial development activity. In addition, these fees can also be used to fund the reconstruction of school facilities or reopening schools to accommodate development-related enrollment growth. Fees are collected immediately prior to the time of the issuance of a building permit by the City or the County.

Leroy F. Green School Facilities Act (1998)

California Government Code Section 65995 sets base limits and additional provisions for school districts to levy development impact fees and to help fund expanded facilities to house new pupils that may be generated by the development project. Sections 65996(a) and (b) state that such fees collected by school districts provide full and complete school facilities mitigation under CEQA. These fees may be adjusted by the District.

Quimby Act (1975)

The Quimby Act allows cities and counties to adopt park dedication standards/ordinances requiring developers to set aside land, donate conservation easements, or pay fees toward parkland. Under the Quimby Act, residential development approved through the Subdivision Map Act is required to dedicate parkland or pay an in-lieu fee. Because the Quimby Act requirements are tied to the new population associated with new development, fees on single-family and multifamily development are distinguished due to differences in the average number of persons per household.

Regional

Los Angeles County Fire Department

The City's Sphere of Influence is served by the Los Angeles County Fire Department (LACFD) for fire protection and rescue services and emergency medical services. The LACFD also has mutual aid agreements with surrounding jurisdictions for assistance when needed during major fire events, including the City of Paramount. The LACFD establishes incident command centers and emergency operation centers as necessary depending on the involved event. The LACFD is a dependent special district formed under California law (LACFD, 2015). The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors acts as its board of directors. Prior to the passage of Proposition 13 (People's Initiative to Limit Property Taxation) in the late 1970s, when unincorporated areas were annexed or a city contracted with the LACFD, the LACFD levied its tax rate to generate funding to pay for services. This changed when the passage of Prop 13 restricted the total property tax levy to 1% of a property's assessed value. Today, the LACFD collects and expends revenues on a district-wide basis, providing a consistent level of service regardless of revenues derived. The LACFD continued to annex unincorporated areas into its boundaries as tracts were developed until 1991, when all remaining unincorporated areas in Los Angeles County were annexed to the LACFD. Since the LACFD had continued to annex developed areas after the passage of Proposition 13, most of the areas being incorporated were already within the LACFD's jurisdiction. Those areas of a newly incorporated city that were not in the LACFD's jurisdiction were concurrently annexed at the time of incorporation. In areas where the LACFD receives property tax, the LACFD receives an average of 17% of the 1% property tax.

In 1991, the Board of Supervisors adopted a "benefit assessment" to generate additional revenue due to the instability of growth in property taxes, the Fire District's primary revenue source. In 1996, voters passed the Right to Vote of Taxes Act, which required approval of the benefit assessment by affected property owners. At that time, it was decided to seek approval of a replacement special tax rather than approval of the benefit assessment. In a June 1997 election, over 77% of those voting approved the special tax. The tax is assessed on all taxable real property in the LAFCD's jurisdiction, except for ten "fee-for-service" cities. Special tax rates are based upon the use of the property. Single-family homes are assessed a flat rate per home. Commercial and industrial properties are assessed various other flat rates, plus an additional charge based upon

square footage of buildings. The special tax generates approximately 10% of the LACFD's revenue. This summary describes only property tax and special tax revenues; it is not all inclusive of the LACFD's revenues. See the Los Angeles County Fire Department's adopted budget for a description of all revenues, such as grants, State or Federal reimbursements, and many other various charges/revenues reflected in the Fire District's budget.

Los Angeles County Office of Emergency Management (OEM)

The OEM has the responsibility of comprehensively planning for, responding to, and recovering from large-scale emergencies and disasters that impact Los Angeles County. OEM's work is accomplished in partnership and collaboration with first response agencies, and nonprofit, private sector and government partners.

Local

City of Paramount General Plan

The City of Paramount 2007 General Plan includes the following goals and policies related to public services:

Environmental Justice Element

Goal EJ-4: Accessible open spaces and increased levels of physical activities.

Policy EJ 4.1: Develop park facilities in residential neighborhoods that are lacking park opportunities within a 10-minute walk.

Policy EJ 4.2: Develop methods to provide active recreation programming for residents in neighborhoods that are lacking park opportunities within a 10-minute walk.

Policy EJ 4.3: Improve existing parks to include active recreational opportunities, such as additional exercise equipment or walking trails and tracks.

Health and Safety Element

Policy HS-2: The City of Paramount will work to identify and improve existing buildings that do not meet fire or earthquake standards.

Policy HS-4: The City of Paramount will maintain an inventory of alternative emergency resources in the City (portable water, water delivery systems, communication, security, waste collection, and emergency power for critical facilities).

Policy HS-15: The City of Paramount will strive to protect life and property from fire damage.

Policy HS-16: The City of Paramount will work to reduce fire danger.

Policy HS-17: The City of Paramount will continue to provide efficient fire protection services.

Policy HS-18: The City of Paramount will continue code enforcement efforts as a means to reduce fire hazards often associated with older buildings and unpermitted structures.

Policy HS-19: The City of Paramount will require contemporary fire protection for multi-story structures and larger industrial facilities.

Policy HS-20: The City of Paramount will require all development to comply with established fire safety standards.

Policy HS-21: The City of Paramount will require new development to install sprinkler systems and smoke detectors, as appropriate.

Policy HS-22: The City of Paramount will encourage improved fire insurance programs.

Policy HS-23: The City of Paramount will monitor, review, and improve, as needed, the City's emergency response capabilities.

Policy HS-24: The City of Paramount will strive to provide an atmosphere of security and safety for residents and businesses in the City.

Policy HS-25: The City of Paramount will encourage good relations between all residents and police.

Policy HS-26: The City of Paramount will cooperate with local law enforcement as a means to suppress crime.

Policy HS-27: The City of Paramount will support "neighborhood watch" programs in conjunction with neighborhood improvement associations to encourage cooperation between residents, businesses, and police.

Policy HS-28: The City of Paramount will cooperate with police and probation departments in the rehabilitation of residents involved in crimes through employment assistance, counseling, and related programs.

Policy HS-29: The City of Paramount will strive to continue the development of youth programs.

Policy HS-30: The City of Paramount will incorporate defensible space design principles and other security measures into new development in the City.

Policy HS-44: Maximize the resiliency of essential public facilities to risks and hazards of flooding.

Resource Management Element

Policy RM-1: The City of Paramount will develop new areas of open space to the extent that opportunities present themselves for such development.

Policy RM-2: The City of Paramount will continue to make effective use of the open space lands that are available.

Policy RM-3: The City of Paramount will strive to maintain utility rights-of-way in open space uses that do not conflict with utility needs but provide attractive open space for the community, such as parks, trails, etc.

Policy RM-4: The City of Paramount will require new larger residential developments to provide sufficient open space (including pedestrian and bicycle linkages) to meet the local need.

Policy RM-7: The City of Paramount will maintain a recreation program that is responsive to the interests and needs of the City.

Policy RM-8: The City of Paramount will maintain existing park and recreation facilities in such a manner so as to protect the public's investment and facilitate their use.

Policy RM-9: The City of Paramount will maintain and improve the existing park facilities in the City for the benefit and enjoyment of the community.

Policy RM-10: The City Paramount will continue to evaluate the feasibility of the expanded joint-use of the open space lands used for flood control and utility easements.

Policy RM-11: The City of Paramount will continue to investigate new opportunities for recreational activities and services.

Policy RM-12: The City of Paramount will maintain existing joint-use agreements with the local school district so that school facilities may be used for community recreation.

Policy RM-13: The City of Paramount will continue to collect park fees from all new residential development.

Policy RM-14: The City of Paramount will negotiate agreements with the Southern California Edison Company, the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, the Port of Los Angeles, the Union Pacific Railroad, Metro, and the Los Angeles County Flood Control District for the establishment of trails, recreational use, and appropriate landscaping within their respective rights-of-way.

Policy RM-15: The City of Paramount will seek to establish a comprehensive bikeway and pedestrian trail system for the City.

Policy RM-16: The City of Paramount will seek to develop connections to park facilities and trails through the use of power line/rail line easements.

Public Facilities Element

Policy PF-10: The City of Paramount will cooperate with the local school districts as a means to promote quality education for Paramount students.

Policy PF-11: The City of Paramount will continue to cooperate with the Paramount Unified School District in the planning of future facilities.

Policy PF-12: The City of Paramount will promote quality maintenance of local school facilities.

Policy PF-13: The City of Paramount will continue joint use of school buildings and playgrounds for recreation.

Policy PF-14: The City of Paramount will work closely with the school districts in evaluating the impacts of new housing development on local schools.

4.4.3 – SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLDS

The methodology used to evaluate potential environmental impacts is described in Section 4.0. As identified in Appendix G of the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the proposed Specific Plan could result in a significant impact if it would:

A. Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

   i) Fire protection;
   ii) Police protection;
   iii) Schools;
   iv) Parks; and
   v) Other public facilities.

B. Cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to public services.

4.4.4 – IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

New or Altered Government Services

Impact PUB-1 – Would the Specific Plan result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

I. Fire Protection

<u>Analysis of Impacts</u>

As previously stated, the Specific Plan area is served by LACFD Fire Station 31 which is located at 7521 Somerset Boulevard, less than a half-mile west of the Specific Plan area. As part of the phased development of the Specific Plan area, the Specific Plan would support the development of up to 2,000 new dwelling units and an increase of 926,731 square feet of nonresidential building space. The Specific Plan also projects an estimated increase of approximately 4,600 residents and 138 jobs for the 2045 horizon year. The potential increase of nonresidential building space and the creation of new housing could result in an increase in the community's population, and could create an incremental increase in demand for fire services and existing fire protection resources within the City that would occur over the 20-year time horizon of the Specific Plan.

To offset any incremental demand in fire protection and emergency medical services to Fire Station 31, development impact fees would be collected by LACFD at the time of building permit issuance for approved projects under the proposed Specific Plan. Annual fees for fire protection services are based on staffing levels in the City plus overhead cost shares established at the time

the annual contracts are approved by the City Council. These fees are updated annually based on salary and employee benefits and overhead as agreed by the Fire District and the City. In the event that additional fire protection facilities and/or resources are needed in the Planning Area, property tax growth would provide the City with the funding to meet new growth needs. As development occurs in the future, projects developed within the Planning Area would fund their fair share of new fire facilities costs on a “pay as you go” basis to balance new growth with the need for expanded facilities. Further, development within the proposed Planning Area would be subject to current LACFD requirements for fire sprinkler systems, fire alarm systems, fire flow, and equipment and firefighter access, as well as fire code requirements. Compliance with these standards would be ensured through the development review and plan check processes prior to the issuance of building permits and would reduce the potential for fire emergencies at future project sites. Finally, based on the proximity of the Planning Area to the Fire Stations in the City, it is expected that the response times would be within the national standard of five minutes or less for fires and basic life support, and eight minutes or less for advanced life support. With continued payment of fees for Fire Protection services from Los Angeles County Fire Department, future projects developed within the Planning Area would not have a significant effect on service demands.

Additionally, as outlined in section 4.4.2 (Regulatory Framework), the Public Facilities and Health and Safety Elements of the Paramount General Plan include multiple policies related to maintaining the City’s public services facilities for residents and business owners. Policy HS-2 requires the City to work to identify and improve existing buildings that do not meet fire or earthquake standards. Policy HS-4 requires the City to maintain an inventory of alternative emergency resources in the City (portable water, water delivery systems, communication, security, waste collection, and emergency power for critical facilities). Policy HS-15 requires the City to continue to provide efficient fire protection services. Policy HS-16 requires the City to work to reduce fire danger. Policy HS-17 requires the City to continue to provide efficient fire protection services. Policy HS-18 requires the City to continue code enforcement efforts as a means to reduce fire hazards often associated with older buildings and unpermitted structures. Policy HS-19 requires contemporary fire protection for multistory structures and larger industrial facilities. Policy HS-20 requires all development to comply with established fire safety standards. Policy HS-21 requires new development to install sprinkler systems and smoke detectors, as appropriate. Policy HS-22 requires the City to encourage improved fire insurance programs. Policy HS-23 requires the City to monitor, review, and improve, as needed, the City's emergency response capabilities. These General Plan policies are intended to provide for adequate numbers of trained and certified emergency/medical technicians to address increased medical demands that would result from an increase in residential density as well as adequate fire response personnel staffing based upon changing conditions, density, and development type.

Finally, based on email correspondence with LACFD staff, buildout of the proposed Specific Plan is not anticipated to increase response times beyond the LACFD’s stated standards and would not result in the need for new or physically altered facilities (Khoi, 2025; Riggins, 2025). Development of the Specific Plan area would occur over the course of 20 years, creating a slow and incremental change, and is not anticipated to impact the reliability of fire services in the area.

With implementation of existing General Plan goals and policies, the construction or expansion of existing fire facilities would not be required as a result of adoption of the proposed Specific Plan. Therefore, the proposed Specific Plan would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered fire protection facilities.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

II. Police Protection

Analysis of Impacts

The City of Paramount contracts with the Los Angeles County Sheriff Department for policing services in the area. The City of Paramount is served by the County Sheriff's Station in Lakewood and through the Paramount Sheriff's Substation, which is located within the Somerset Business Park in the southeastern portion of the Specific Plan area. The Specific Plan proposes approximately 2,000 new housing units, which in turn would result in an increase in the local population of approximately 4,600 persons. Development of the Planning Area would occur incrementally over a period of 20 years, and police service expansion to serve the increased population and nonresidential building area would mainly require increased patrol and administrative staffing. As such, it is not anticipated that development in the Planning Area under the proposed Specific Plan would increase demand for police protection to the extent that new facilities would be required.

Additionally, as outlined in section 4.4.2 (Regulatory Framework), the Health and Safety Elements of the Paramount General Plan includes multiple policies related to maintaining the City's public services facilities for residents and business owners. Policy HS-23 requires the City to monitor, review, and improve, as needed, the City's emergency response capabilities. Policy HS-24 strives to provide an atmosphere of security and safety for residents and businesses in the City. Policy HS-25 seeks to encourage good relations between all residents and police. Policy HS-26 directs the City to cooperate with local law enforcement as a means to suppress crime. Policy HS-27 seeks to support "neighborhood watch" programs in conjunction with neighborhood improvement associations to encourage cooperation between residents, businesses, and police. Policy HS-28 strives to cooperate with police and probation departments in the rehabilitation of residents involved in crimes through employment assistance, counseling, and related programs. Finally, Policy HS-29 strives to continue the development of youth programs. The General Plan goals and policies allow the City to proactively plan for future public facility needs such as police stations and related improvements, as well as service expansion as the City's population and housing stock increases in the future.

With implementation of existing General Plan policies, the proposed Specific Plan would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered policing facilities.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

III. Schools

Analysis of Impacts

The Planning Area is served by the Paramount Unified School District (PUSD). The PUSD oversees 20 schools, three preschools, and an Adult Education Center, serving approximately 12,042 K-12 students and 6,000 adult students (Paramount, 2024c). Projects within the Planning Area would be required to pay school fees to the PUSD. Development Impact Fees would finance the construction and/or reconstruction of school facilities needed to accommodate students coming from new development. Development Impact Fees may be levied for both residential and commercial construction, pursuant to Education Code Section 17620 and California Government Code Section 65995. As stated in California Government Code Section 65996, payment of school impact fees in accordance with California Government Code Section 65995 and/or Education Code Section 17620 is deemed to constitute full and complete mitigation for potential impacts to schools caused by development. Because new development in the Planning Area would be required to pay Development Impact Fees, impacts related to the need for new school facilities as a result of the proposed Specific Plan would be less than significant**.**

Finally, as outlined in Section 4.4.2 (Regulatory Framework), the Health and Safety Element of the Paramount General Plan includes multiple policies related to public schools. Policy PF-10 mandates the City to cooperate with the local school districts as a means to promote quality education for Paramount students. Policy PF-11 directs the City to cooperate with the Paramount Unified School District in the planning of future facilities. Policy PF-12 promotes quality maintenance of local school facilities. Finally, Policy PF-13 directs the City to work closely with the school districts in evaluating the impacts of new housing development on local schools.

With implementation of existing General Plan goals and policies, and continued collection of PUSD development impact fees, the proposed Specific Plan would not result in the construction or expansion of existing school facilities that could result in significant environmental impacts.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

IV. Parks

Analysis of Impacts

As explained in Section 4.15-1, there are 17 park sites in the City of Paramount totaling approximately 60.5 acres of City parkland. With a January 1, 2025 population of approximately 52,371 (DOF, 2025), the City of Paramount currently has a park ratio of 1.2 acres per 1,000 residents. Most cities in California, including Paramount, strive to provide a minimum of 3.0 acres per 1,000 residents, as advised in California's Quimby Act. The California Quimby Act gives cities or counties the right, by ordinance, to require land dedication or impose in-lieu fees (or a combination) to acquire land for neighborhood and community parks as a condition of approval for residential subdivision development.

Data provided by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) shows that for jurisdictions of similar populations as Paramount (50,000-99,000 residents), the median level of service is 11.2 acres per 1,000 residents and the lower quartile level of service is 5 acres per 1,000 residents. Paramount's 1.2 acres per 1,000 residents is thus significantly lower than national averages. In some cases, cities will include parkland that is owned by others to count toward their level of service. In the case of Paramount, there are 43.1 acres of non-City land used for recreation such as joint-use school sites and trail corridors (West Santa Ana Branch Multi-Use Trail and LA River Multi-Use Trail) Including these non-City sites' acreage augments Paramount's overall level of service to 2.0 acres per 1,000 people. This is an improvement, but still falls below State and national benchmarks.

With limited options for land, it may not be possible for Paramount to secure enough additional acres of parkland, thus making a level of service of 3.0 acres unattainable. However, the City has established the goal to increase parkland and recreational opportunities wherever feasible through land development, acquisition, joint-use agreements, partnerships, increased investment, grant funding, and other creative strategies.

As described in Chapter 3.0 (Project Description), the proposed Specific Plan includes development of up to 5.5 acres of publicly accessible open space/parkland, up to 1.75 acres of resident/tenant common space, up to 4.5 acres of rooftop amenity/landscape space, and up to 3 acres of ground/storm water and bioswale planting area that would also be used as open space. The addition of up to 14.75 acres of new open space within the Planning Area under the proposed Specific Plan would increase the City's park ratio from 1.2 to 1.4 park acres per 1,000 residents. This increase would also make up approximately 39% of the 38 acres that would be required to achieve the City's goal for a moderate increase in the park level of service in the City, and would make up approximately 22% of the 66.3 acres that would be required to achieve the City's goal of achieving the park level of service recommended in the Quimby Act. Therefore, the proposed project would result in increased availability of parks and open space facilities in the City, would indirectly ease demand on other existing parks and recreation facilities in the City, and would help the City achieve its overall goal of increasing the park level of service ratio.

To further offset any incremental demand in park facilities, development impact fees would collected at the time of building permit issuance for approved projects under the proposed Specific Plan. According to the Paramount Parks and Recreation Master Plan, park-related Development Impact Fees are calculated based on Quimby fees, as determined by the City and regulated by the Quimby Act. Continued collection of Quimby fees would ensure that existing parks and recreation facilities would be incrementally maintained, improved, and/or updated as the population within the Planning Area increases over the life 20-year life of the plan.

As outlined in section 4.4.2 (Regulatory Framework), the Environmental Justice and Resource Management Elements of the existing Paramount General Plan include several goals and policies aimed at preserving and expanding the City's open space and park acreage. Environmental Justice Element Goal EJ-4 and its policies strive for accessible open spaces and increased levels of physical activities. Policy EJ-4.1 directs the City to develop park facilities in residential neighborhoods that are lacking park opportunities within a 10-minute walk. Policy EJ-4.2 directs the City to develop methods to provide active recreation programming for residents in neighborhoods that are lacking park opportunities within a 10-minute walk. Policy EJ-4.3 strives to improve existing parks to include active recreational opportunities, such as additional exercise equipment or walking trails and tracks. Similarly, Policy RM-1 directs the City to develop new areas of open space to the extent that opportunities present themselves for such development. Policy RM-2 seeks to make effective use of the open space lands that are available. Further,

Policy RM-3 strives to maintain utility rights-of-way in open space uses that do not conflict with utility needs but provide attractive open space for the community, such as parks, trails, etc. Policy RM-4 requires new larger residential developments to provide sufficient open space (including pedestrian and bicycle linkages) to meet the local need. Policy RM-7 aims to maintain a recreation program that is responsive to the interests and needs of the City. RM-8 directs the City to maintain existing park and recreation facilities in such a manner so as to protect the public's investment and facilitate their use. Policy RM-9 strives to maintain and improve the existing park facilities in the City for the benefit and enjoyment of the community. Policy RM-10 aims to continue to evaluate the feasibility of the expanded joint-use of the open space lands used for flood control and utility easements. Policy RM-11 seeks to continue to investigate new opportunities for recreational activities and services. Policy RM-12 directs the City to maintain existing joint-use agreements with the local school district so that school facilities may be used for community recreation. Policy RM-13 mandates that the City continue to collect park fees from all new residential development. Policy RM-14 directs the City to negotiate agreements with the Southern California Edison Company, the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, the Port of Los Angeles, the Union Pacific Railroad, Metro, and the Los Angeles County Flood Control District for the establishment of trails, recreational use, and appropriate landscaping within their respective rights-of-way. Policy RM-15 seeks to establish a comprehensive bikeway and pedestrian trail system for the City. Finally, Policy RM-16 strives to develop connections to park facilities and trails through the use of power line/rail line easements.

With implementation of existing development impact fees for parks, implementation of General Plan goals and policies related to maintaining and expanding open space in the City, and development of the planned open space improvements included as part of the proposed Specific Plan, impacts related to development of the proposed Specific Plan would not result in the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain an acceptable parks level of service ratio for the residents of Paramount. Therefore, the proposed Specific Plan would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered parks and recreation facilities.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

V. Other Public Facilities

Analysis of Impacts

Public community facilities provide essential services to communities, including information, events, recreation, classes, and places to gather. These facilities can include libraries, community centers, wellness centers, and recreational buildings. Library services in Paramount are provided by the Paramount Library which is operated by the Los Angeles County Library system and was reopened in 2005 after an extensive remodel. The Paramount Library is located approximately 3/4-mile south of the project area at 16254 Colorado Avenue. Community centers offer residents opportunities to stay active and engage with fellow community members. They serve as inclusive meeting places, promoting a culture of health and well-being within the communities they serve.

The Paramount Park Community Center located near the Specific Plan area within Paramount Park offers a banquet hall and several meeting rooms available for rent by the public. Additionally, the City's Community Services Department offers a variety of programs and classes for residents of all abilities and age groups, including summer programs, swim classes, recreational classes, and senior programs among other services.

Proposed development within the Planning Area would result in an incremental increase in population, which in turn may have an incremental impact on demand for the City's other public facilities. The City does not currently utilize development impact fees that would alleviate impacts to public facilities. Public facilities may see a larger distribution of the population over others, such as the City's Senior Center. However, new development within the Planning Area would take place in phases over a period of 20 years, representing an incremental change, and is not anticipated to impact the reliability of public facilities services in the City. There are no goals or policies within the existing Paramount General Plan that are specific to public facilities, such as libraries or community centers. The residents, employees, and customers of the Planning Area would likely continue to use the City's library services in the future, but the public use of similar internet-based services would likely blunt the potential increase in use of library facilities in the future. In addition, the prevalence of new kinds of post K-12 instruction and technology related to literacy has eased the direct demand on library facilities in recent years. As the functions and service demands for particular services for public libraries continues to evolve and the City grows, the City would continue to assess growth in demand for library services. As such, it is anticipated that existing libraries would be able to accommodate the incremental increase in demand for services that would result from implementation of the Specific Plan. As such, the proposed Specific Plan would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Cumulative Impacts

Impact PUB-2 – Would the Specific Plan cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to public services?

Analysis of Impacts

The proposed Specific Plan identifies the long-term vision and objectives for private development and public improvements, including creation of a new street grid within the Planning Area, while also improving the existing amenities already available to residents. New residential and non-residential development within Planning Area would result in incremental increases in demand for public services over a period of 20 years; as such, these services are not anticipated to be significantly impacted by buildout of the proposed Specific Plan. Further, residential development within the Planning Area would be responsible for impact fees related to public schools and parks within the City. The proposed Specific Plan also supports development of up to 14.75 acres of new open space within the Planning Area. Other public facilities such as libraries and community

centers are not anticipated to be significantly impacted, as a change in the community's population would be incremental over a period of 20 years. As such, because the proposed Specific Plan would result in less than significant incremental impacts to public services, cumulative impacts to the City's public services are also determined to be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.4.5 – REFERENCES

California Department of Finance. (DOF) 2025. *E-5 Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State 2020-2025, May 2025.* Web: https://dof.ca.gov/forecasting/demographics/estimates/e-5-population-and-housing-estimates-for-cities-counties-and-the-state-2020-2025/ [Accessed May 2025].

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4.16 – RECREATION

This EIR chapter addresses recreation impacts associated with the proposed Specific Plan. This chapter will evaluate whether the Specific Plan will: increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated. It will also determine whether the Specific Plan will include recreational facilities or requires the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

4.16.1 – ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

According to the City of Paramount Parks and Recreation Master Plan, there are 17 sites in the City of Paramount totaling approximately 60.5 acres of City parkland (Paramount, 2024b). These publicly accessible sites are managed by the City of Paramount to support recreation, social gathering, and greenspace. They include outdoor parks, landscaped green space, indoor recreation facilities, community centers, and more. Some of these sites are owned by the City; others are leased by the City. Below are descriptions of the City's different parkland facilities.

Pocket Parks are the smallest of the park types, often less than one acre in size, with limited facilities and amenities such as picnic tables, lighting, landscaping, and walking paths. Existing pocket parks are privately-owned parcels leased by the City to provide public green space in neighborhood areas. There are three pocket parks in the City totaling 1.1 acres:

- Paramount Boulevard, north of Madison Street
- Somerset Boulevard & Colorado Avenue
- Wilbarn Pocket Park – Wilbarn Street, west of Downey Avenue

Neighborhood Parks are small parks ranging in size from 1 to 7 acres, and they provide greenspace or basic recreation opportunities such as playgrounds and sports courts for nearby neighbors within walking or biking distance. There are six neighborhood parks in the City totaling 14.1 acres:

- Garfield Park
- Meadows Park
- Pequeno Park
- Village Skate Park
- Spane Park
- All American Park

Community Parks are mid-size parks that are generally 10+ acres. They are intended to provide larger green spaces and diverse recreation opportunities to serve a portion of the City or several neighborhoods within driving distance. Community Parks typically provide support amenities such as onsite parking, restrooms, ballfields, picnic areas, and shade to encourage longer visits. There are four community parks in the City totaling 44.3 acres:

- Paramount Park
- Progress Park
- Ralph C. Dills Park

- Salud Park

Special Use Sites are single-purpose sites that vary in size and support specialized recreation uses such as a community garden, a splashpad, or a community center that is not located in a larger park. They may have minor supplemental facilities with support amenities such as onsite parking, restrooms, and shade. There are four special use parks totaling 1.1 acres.

- Carosmith Park
- Orange Avenue Splash Zone
- Paramount Community Garden (Cortland Avenue)
- Clearwater Building

School Joint-Use Sites

There are seven school joint-use sites, plus 15 PUSD sites. Current joint-use sites provide restricted public access to school sports fields and gymnasiums. Depending on the nature of the agreements, these sites could support access to other types of indoor and outdoor recreational spaces and amenities. Portions of existing school sites are scheduled by the City of Paramount through memorandum-of-understandings (MOUs) between the School District and the City.

Trail Corridors

There are two sites totaling 2.6 linear miles of trail corridors. These linear corridors with off-street trails support non-motorized transportation, bicycling, and pedestrian recreation. Often, trails in Paramount are part of a larger trail network that extends into neighboring cities. This category does not include walking/jogging paths or facility access paths located within park sites.

Parkland Level of Service Ratios

According to the Department of Finance, as of January 1, 2025, the City of Paramount had a population of approximately 52,371 and approximately 60.5 acres of parkland, resulting in a park ratio of 1.2 acres of parkland per 1,000 Paramount residents. Relative to state averages, this is a low level of service (Paramount, 2024b). Most cities in California strive to provide a minimum of 3.0 acres per 1,000 residents, as advised in California's Quimby Act. The California Quimby Act gives cities or counties the right, by ordinance, to require land dedication or impose in-lieu fees (or a combination) to acquire land for neighborhood and community parks as a condition of approval for residential subdivision development. [Note: Joint-use sites and trail corridors are not counted toward Quimby requirements.]

Relative to national averages, Paramount is similarly underserving parkland to its residents. Data provided by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) shows that for jurisdictions of similar populations as Paramount (50,000 to 99,000 residents), the median level of service is 11.2 acres per 1,000 residents and the lower quartile level of service is 5 acres per 1,000 residents. Paramount's 1.2 acres per 1,000 residents is thus significantly lower than national averages. In some cases, cities will include parkland that is owned by others to count toward their level of service. In the case of Paramount, there is 43.1 acres of non-City land that are used for recreation such as joint-use school sites and trail corridors (West Santa Ana Branch Multi-Use Trail and LA River Multi-Use Trail). Including these non-City sites' acreage augments Paramount's overall level of service to 2.0 acres per 1,000 people. This is an improvement, but still falls below State and national benchmarks.

Clearwater Specific Plan Area

There are currently no officially designated public open space, recreation, or public facilities within the Planning Area. Portions of the area contribute in some form to open space or recreational uses; however, they lack any natural surfaces (e.g., grass). The only significant open space within the Planning Area is the children's playfield located in the Our Lady of the Rosary School. The Paramount Swap Meet operates within the project area, which during operating hours provides a consumer-pedestrian area on an asphalt parking lot. There is also a plaza located at the entrance to the Bianchi Theatre in the northern portion of the site, which includes a pedestrian area with minimal landscaping. There are two recreational/open space facilities located adjacent to the Specific Plan area. Located to the east across Paramount Boulevard, Paramount Park is one of the City's largest park and open space areas. The park offers various amenities including two playgrounds, exercise stations, a gymnasium, illuminated baseball diamonds and basketball courts, picnic shelters and barbeque pits, a pool, two miniature soccer pitches, restrooms, and a walking path. Additionally, located adjacent to the southwest corner of the project area, at the northeastern intersection of Somerset Boulevard and the Union Pacific Railroad tracks, is the Village Skate Park. The 12,500 square-foot skating area also features a playground, picnic areas, and an illuminated basketball court (Paramount, 2024a).

4.16.2 – REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

State

Quimby Act (1975)

The Quimby Act allows cities and counties to adopt park dedication standards/ordinances requiring developers to set aside land, donate conservation easements, or pay fees toward parkland.

State Public Park Preservation Act (California Public Resource Code Section 5400 – 5409)

The State Public Park Preservation Act is the primary instrument for protecting and preserving parkland in California. Under the Act, cities and counties may not acquire any real property that is in use as a public park for any non-park use unless compensation or land, or both, are provided to replace the parkland acquired. This ensures a no net loss of parkland and facilities.

Local

City of Paramount General Plan

The City of Paramount 2007 General Plan includes the following goals and policies related to parks and recreation:

Environmental Justice Element

Goal EJ-4: Accessible open spaces and increased levels of physical activities.

Policy EJ 4.1: Develop park facilities in residential neighborhoods that are lacking park opportunities within a 10-minute walk.

Policy EJ 4.2: Develop methods to provide active recreation programming for resident in neighborhoods that are lacking park opportunities within a 10-minute walk.

Policy EJ 4.3: Improve existing parks to include active recreational opportunities, such as additional exercise equipment or walking trails and tracks.

Resource Management Element

Policy RM-1: The City of Paramount will develop new areas of open space to the extent that opportunities present themselves for such development.

Policy RM-2: The City of Paramount will continue to make effective use of the open space lands that are available.

Policy RM-3: The City of Paramount will strive to maintain utility rights-of-way in open space uses that do not conflict with utility needs but provide attractive open space for the community, such as parks, trails, etc.

Policy RM-4: The City of Paramount will require new larger residential developments to provide sufficient open space (including pedestrian and bicycle linkages) to meet the local need.

Policy RM-7: The City of Paramount will maintain a recreation program that is responsive to the interests and needs of the City.

Policy RM-8: The City of Paramount will maintain existing park and recreation facilities in such a manner so as to protect the public's investment and facilitate their use.

Policy RM-9: The City of Paramount will maintain and improve the existing park facilities in the City for the benefit and enjoyment of the community.

Policy RM-10: The City Paramount will continue to evaluate the feasibility of the expanded joint-use of the open space lands used for flood control and utility easements.

Policy RM-11: The City of Paramount will continue to investigate new opportunities for recreational activities and services.

Policy RM-12: The City of Paramount will maintain existing joint-use agreements with the local school district so that school facilities may be used for community recreation.

Policy RM-13: The City of Paramount will continue to collect park fees from all new residential development.

Policy RM-14: The City of Paramount will negotiate agreements with the Southern California Edison Company, the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, the Port of Los Angeles, the Union Pacific Railroad, Metro, and the Los Angeles County Flood Control District for the establishment of trails, recreational use, and appropriate landscaping within their respective rights-of-way.

Policy RM-15: The City of Paramount will seek to establish a comprehensive bikeway and pedestrian trail system for the City.

Policy RM-16: The City of Paramount will seek to develop connections to park facilities and trails through the use of power line/rail line easements.

4.16.3 – SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLDS

The methodology used to evaluate potential environmental impacts is described in Section 4.0. As identified in Appendix G of the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Specific Plan could result in a significant impact if it would:

A. Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated.

B. Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

C. Cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to recreation.

4.16.4 – IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Recreational Facilities

Impact REC-1 – Would the Specific Plan increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?

Impact REC-2 - Would the Specific Plan include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

<u>Analysis of Impacts</u>

As explained in Section 4.15-1, there are 17 park sites in the City of Paramount totaling approximately 60.5 acres of City parkland. With a January 1, 2025 population of approximately 52,371 (DOF, 2025), the City of Paramount currently has a park ratio of 1.2 acres per 1,000 residents. Most cities in California, including Paramount, strive to provide a minimum of 3.0 acres per 1,000 residents, as advised in California's Quimby Act. The California Quimby Act gives cities or counties the right, by ordinance, to require land dedication or impose in-lieu fees (or a combination) to acquire land for neighborhood and community parks as a condition of approval for residential subdivision development.

Data provided by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) shows that for jurisdictions of similar populations as Paramount (50,000 to 99,000 residents), the median level of service is 11.2 acres per 1,000 residents and the lower quartile level of service is 5 acres per 1,000 residents. Paramount's 1.2 acres per 1,000 residents is thus significantly lower than national averages. In some cases, cities will include parkland that is owned by others to count toward their level of service. In the case of Paramount, there are 43.1 acres of non-City land used for recreation such as joint-use school sites and trail corridors (West Santa Ana Branch Multi-Use Trail and LA River Multi-Use Trail). Including these non-City sites' acreage augments Paramount's overall level of service to 2.0 acres per 1,000 people. This is an improvement, but still falls below State and national benchmarks.

With limited options for land, it may not be possible for Paramount to secure enough additional acres of parkland, thus making a level of service of 3.0 acres unattainable. However, the City has established the goal to increase parkland and recreational opportunities wherever feasible through land development, acquisition, joint-use agreements, partnerships, increased investment, grant funding, and other creative strategies.

As described in Chapter 3.0 (Project Description), the proposed Specific Plan includes development of up to 5.5 acres of publicly accessible open space/parkland, up to 1.75 acres of resident/tenant common space, up to 4.5 acres of rooftop amenity/landscape space, and up to 3 acres of ground/storm water and bioswale planting area that would also be used as open space. The addition of up to 14.75 acres of new open space within the Planning Area under the proposed Specific Plan would increase the City's park ratio from 1.2 to 1.4 park acres per 1,000 residents. This increase would also make up approximately 39% of the 38 acres that would be required to achieve the City's goal for a moderate increase in the park level of service in the City, and would make up approximately 22% of the 66.3 acres that would be required to achieve the City's goal of achieving the park level of service recommended in the Quimby Act. Therefore, the proposed project would result in increased availability of parks and open space facilities in the City, would indirectly ease demand on other existing parks and recreation facilities in the City, and would help the City achieve its overall goal of increasing the park level of service ratio.

To further offset any incremental demand in park facilities, development impact fees would collected at the time of building permit issuance for approved projects under the proposed Specific Plan. According to the Paramount Parks and Recreation Master Plan, park-related Development Impact Fees are calculated based on Quimby fees, as determined by the City and regulated by the Quimby Act. Continued collection of Quimby fees would ensure that existing parks and recreation facilities would be incrementally maintained, improved, and/or updated as the population within the Planning Area increases over the life 20 year life of the plan.

As outlined in section 4.4.2 (Regulatory Framework), the Environmental Justice and Resource Management Elements of the existing Paramount General Plan include several goals and policies aimed at preserving and expanding the City's open space and park acreage. Environmental Justice Element Goal EJ-4 and its policies strive for accessible open spaces and increased levels of physical activities. Policy EJ-4.1 directs the City to develop park facilities in residential neighborhoods that are lacking park opportunities within a 10-minute walk. Policy EJ-4.2 directs the City to develop methods to provide active recreation programming for residents in neighborhoods that are lacking park opportunities within a 10-minute walk. Policy EJ-4.3 strives to improve existing parks to include active recreational opportunities, such as additional exercise equipment or walking trails and tracks. Similarly, Policy RM-1 directs the City to develop new areas of open space to the extent that opportunities present themselves for such development. Policy RM-2 seeks to make effective use of the open space lands that are available.

Further, Policy RM-3 strives to maintain utility rights-of-way in open space uses that do not conflict with utility needs but provide attractive open space for the community, such as parks, trails, etc. Policy RM-4 requires new larger residential developments to provide sufficient open space (including pedestrian and bicycle linkages) to meet the local need. Policy RM-7 aims to maintain a recreation program that is responsive to the interests and needs of the City. RM-8 directs the City to maintain existing park and recreation facilities in such a manner so as to protect the public's investment and facilitate their use. Policy RM-9 strives to maintain and improve the existing park facilities in the City for the benefit and enjoyment of the community. Policy RM-10 aims to continue to evaluate the feasibility of the expanded joint-use of the open space lands used for flood control and utility easements. Policy RM-11 seeks to continue to investigate new opportunities for

recreational activities and services. Policy RM-12 directs the City to maintain existing joint use agreements with the local school district so that school facilities may be used for community recreation. Policy RM-13 mandates that the City continue to collect park fees from all new residential development., Policy RM-14 directs the City to negotiate agreements with the Southern California Edison Company, the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, the Port of Los Angeles, the Union Pacific Railroad, Metro, and the Los Angeles County Flood Control District for the establishment of trails, recreational use, and appropriate landscaping within their respective rights-of-way. Policy RM-15 seeks to establish a comprehensive bikeway and pedestrian trail system for the City. Finally, Policy RM-16 strives to develop connections to park facilities and trails through the use of power line/rail line easements.

With implementation of existing development impact fees for parks, implementation of General Plan goals and policies related to maintaining and expanding open space in the City, and development of the planned open space improvements included as part of the proposed Specific Plan, impacts related to development of the proposed Specific Plan would not result in the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain an acceptable parks level of service ratio for the residents of Paramount. Therefore, the proposed Specific Plan would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered parks and recreation facilities.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Cumulative Impacts

Impact REC-3 – Would the Specific Plan cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to recreation?

Analysis of Impacts

The proposed Specific Plan would result in increased availability of parks and open space facilities in the City. This would indirectly ease demand on other existing parks and recreation facilities in the City, and would help the City achieve its overall goal of increasing the park level of service ratio for its residents. Therefore, the proposed project would not make a significant contribution to cumulatively considerable impacts regarding regional park facilities and services.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.16.5 – REFERENCES

California Department of Finance. (DOF) 2025. *E-5 Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State 2020-2025, May 2025.* Web: https://dof.ca.gov/forecasting/demographics/estimates/e-5-population-and-housing-estimates-for-cities-counties-and-the-state-2020-2025/ [Accessed May 2025].

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4.17 – TRANSPORTATION

This EIR chapter addresses transportation and traffic impacts associated with the proposed Specific Plan. Issues of interest are transportation and traffic impacts identified by the CEQA Guidelines: whether the Specific Plan will conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system; will conflict with or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3 subdivision (b) regarding vehicle miles traveled or VMT; will substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature or incompatible uses; or will result in inadequate emergency access.

4.17.1 – ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

This section presents the existing transportation setting, including the existing street system, pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities, and the General Plan context. The information in this section is largely taken from the Transportation Impact Analysis report prepared by Ganddini Group, Inc. (see Appendix G).

Existing Roadway Network

Regional access for the City of Paramount and the Planning Area is primarily provided by Interstate 105 (I-105) located approximately one mile to the north, Interstate 710 (I-710) approximately 1.5 miles to the west, and State Route 91 (SR-91) approximately 1.5 to the south. The Planning Area is bounded by the Union Pacific rail corridor to the west, Rosecrans Avenue to the north, Paramount Boulevard to the east, and Somerset Boulevard to the south.

Paramount Boulevard is a four-lane divided roadway with intermittent raised medians trending in a north-south direction along the Planning Area's eastern boundary. The existing pavement width is approximately 68 feet. Sidewalks are provided on both sides of the roadway. On-street parking is generally permitted along the northbound side of the roadway. The posted speed limit is 40 miles per hour and there are no bicycle lanes in the vicinity of the Planning Area. Paramount Boulevard is designated as a Major Arterial in City of Paramount General Plan Transportation Element.

Rosecrans Avenue is a five-lane divided roadway (three lanes eastbound, two lanes westbound) with intermittent raised medians trending in an east-west direction along the northern boundary of the Planning Area. The existing pavement width is approximately 84 feet. Sidewalks are provided on both sides of the roadway. On-street parking is generally permitted except Monday through Friday from 3:00 PM – 6:00 PM along the eastbound side of the roadway. There is no posted speed limit or bicycle lanes in the Planning Area vicinity. Rosecrans Avenue is designated as a Major Arterial in City of Paramount General Plan Transportation Element.

Somerset Boulevard is a four-lane divided roadway with intermittent raised medians trending in an east-west direction along the eastern boundary of the Planning Area. The existing pavement width is approximately 64 feet in this area. Sidewalks are provided on both sides of the roadway. On-street parking is prohibited. The posted speed limit is 35 miles per hour and there are no bicycle lanes in the project vicinity. Somerset Boulevard is designated as a Secondary Arterial in the City of Paramount General Plan Transportation Element. Internally, there are two main roadways providing internal circulation for the Specific Plan area: Bianchi Way and All America City Way. These roadways connect existing parking areas to the surrounding street system via

signalized intersections at Rosecrans Avenue and Paramount Boulevard, respectively. Other existing access points on Rosecrans Avenue, Paramount Boulevard, and Somerset Boulevard provide direct access to/from onsite parking areas.

Existing Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Exhibit 4.17-1 shows existing pedestrian and bicycle facilities in the vicinity of the Planning Area. As shown on Exhibit 4.17-1, pedestrian sidewalks are currently provided along the Planning Area boundary roadway frontages, and marked crosswalks are provided on all legs of the major intersections of Paramount Boulevard/Rosecrans Avenue and Paramount Boulevard/Somerset Boulevard. Crosswalks at the signal-controlled intersections of Paramount Boulevard/All America City Way and Paramount Boulevard/3rd Street provide connectivity to Paramount Park and Paramount High School. A rectangular rapid flashing beacon (RRFB) provides enhanced pedestrian safety at the cross-street stop-controlled intersection of Paramount Boulevard/2nd Street. There are currently no bicycle facilities along the Planning Area-adjacent or internal roadways.

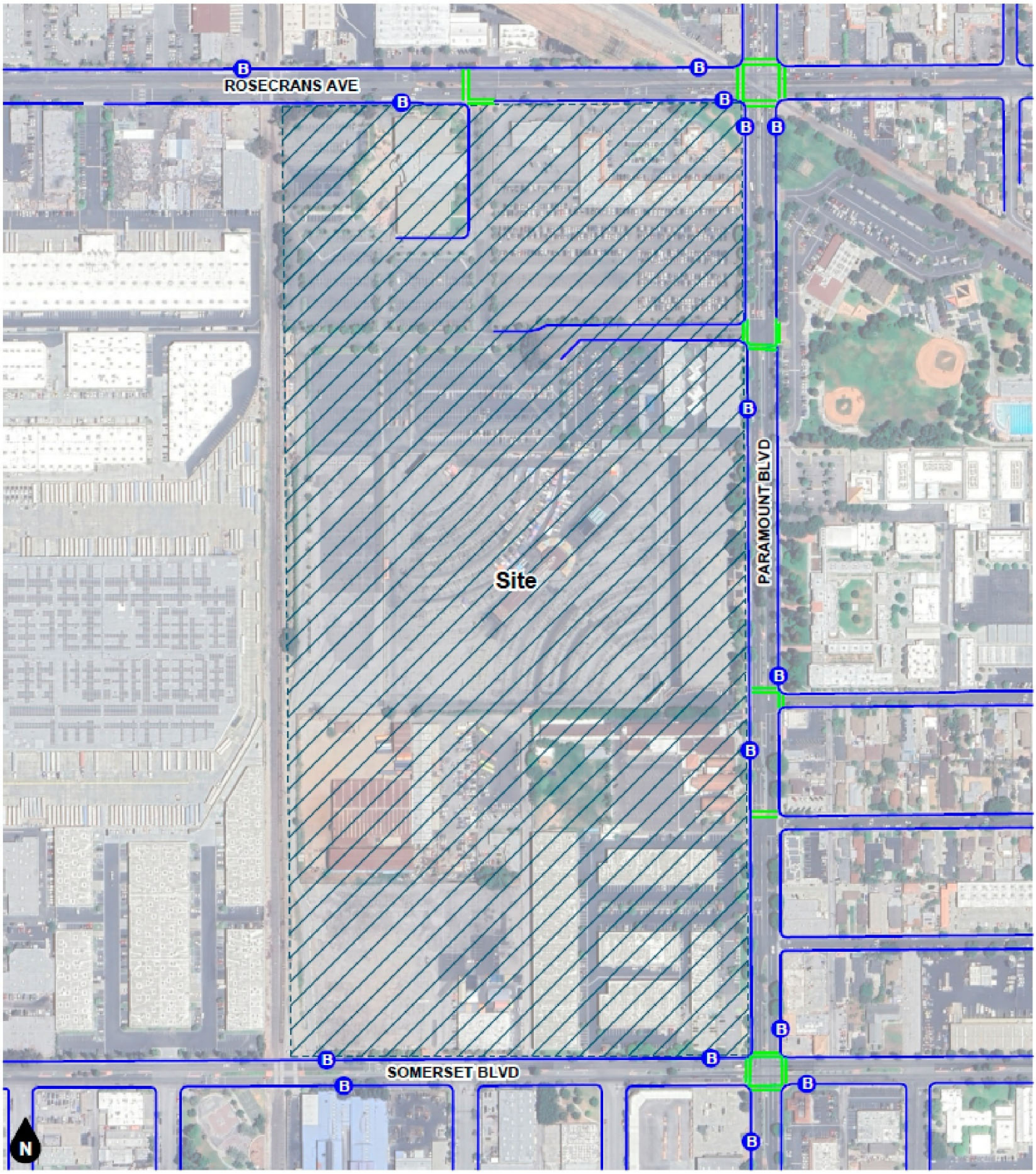
Existing Transit Facilities

Table 4.17-1 below provides a description of the existing bus transit services. Exhibit 4.17-2 shows existing transit services in the vicinity of the Planning Area. As shown in Exhibit 4.17-2, the Planning Area is served by Los Angeles Metro Bus Line 125 along Rosecrans Avenue, Line 265 along Paramount Boulevard, and Line 127 along Somerset Boulevard; Long Beach Transit Route 71 runs along Rosecrans Avenue.

Table 4.17-1
Existing Transit Service Descriptions

Provider/Route	Description	Direction[1]	Hours of Service (Mon.-Fri.)[2]	Peak Period Headways (Minutes)[3]	
				AM	PM
Long Beach Transit Route 71	Downtown Long Beach – Lakewood Blvd/Rosecrans Ave	NB	6:11 AM – 7:11 PM	36	45
		SB	7:22 AM – 8:06 PM	45	45
LA Metro 125	El Segundo – Norwalk Station	EB	6:09 AM – 9:32 PM	20	20
		WB	4:29 AM – 8:31 PM	20	23
LA Metro 127	Harbor Freeway Station – Downey	EB/NB	6:23 AM – 7:04 PM	36	36
		WB/SB	4:49 AM – 2:46 AM	36	36
LA Metro 265	Pico Rivera – Lakewood Center Mall	NB	5:21 AM – 8:21 PM	60	60
		SB	6:13 AM – 9:13 PM	60	60

Source: Ganddini, 2025; see Appendix G.
Notes:
(1) NB = Northbound; SB = Southbound; EB = Eastbound; WB = Westbound
(2) Based on nearest timepoint shown on route schedule.
(3) Based on number of stops within the 3-hour peak period (7-10 AM and 3-6 PM) at the nearest timepoint shown on the route schedule.



Legend
- Sidewalk
- Cross Walk
- Bus Stop

Source: Ganddini Group, Inc

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Exhibit 4.17-1 Existing Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

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Paramount, California

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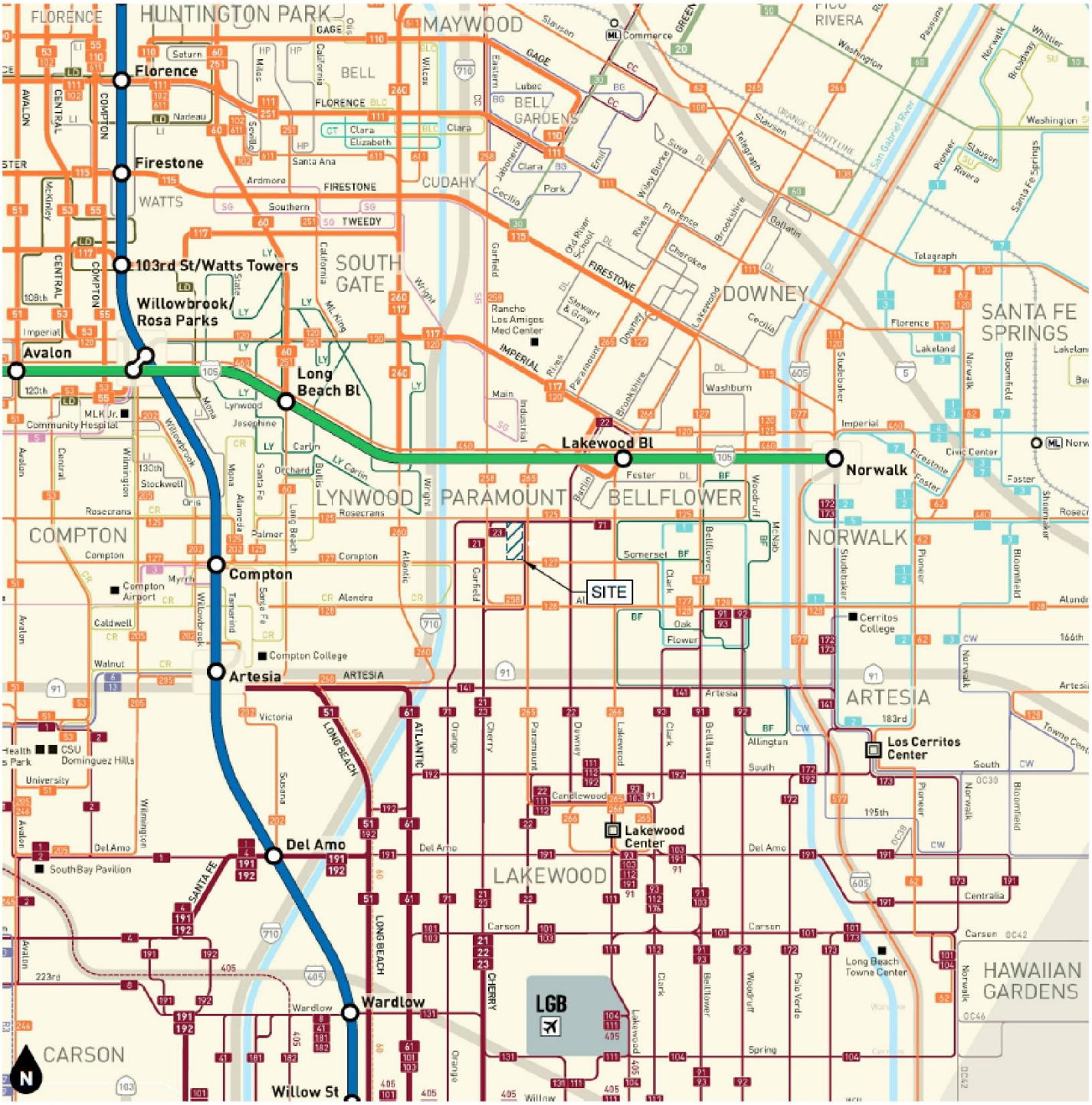

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Exhibit 4.17-2 Existing Transit Service

Clearwater Specific Plan
Paramount, California

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General Plan Context

Table 4.17-2 shows the roadway classification standards per the City of Paramount General Plan.

Table 4.17-2
General Plan Roadway Classification Standards

Attribute	Classification			
	Major Arterial	Secondary Arterial	Collector	Local
Travel Lanes	4	4	2	2
Parking Lanes	0-2	0-2	0-2	0-2
Volume (ADT)	≥20,000	10,000-20,000	2,000-10,000	0-2,000
ROW Width	100 feet	80 feet	60 feet	40-50 feet
Pavement Width	84 feet	64 feet	40 feet	24-30 feet

Source: Ganddini Group, Inc; see Appendix G
Notes:
ADT = Average Daily Traffic
ROW = Right-of-Way

Proposed Specific Plan Public Realm Strategies

The proposed Specific Plan includes public realm improvement strategies which establish street standards and guidelines to ensure long-term provision of pedestrian-oriented sidewalks, landscape amenities, and active transportation infrastructure that encourages walking and biking, and maximization of curbside parking resources throughout Clearwater. Addressing the lack of adequate sidewalks and basic streetscape facilities is a key Specific Plan objective.

Arterial Roadways

Improvements to the three arterial streets surrounding the project area to the north, east, and south, respectively, are likely to occur along with private redevelopment. Minimal changes to these boulevards are proposed while existing land use conditions remain in place. Based upon private redevelopment a range of improvements would be proposed:

- Update pedestrian facilities at intersections to increase safety such as new crosswalk legs, high-visibility crosswalks, and new alignment for crosswalk geometries
- Potential widening of sidewalks on private parcel areas through setbacks and/or dedications
- Updated signal timing
- New signalized intersections and/or mid-block crossings
- Dedicated bicycle crossings across Rosecrans
- New right-in, right-out vehicle entrances into the Planning Area

Internal Access and Mobility Plan

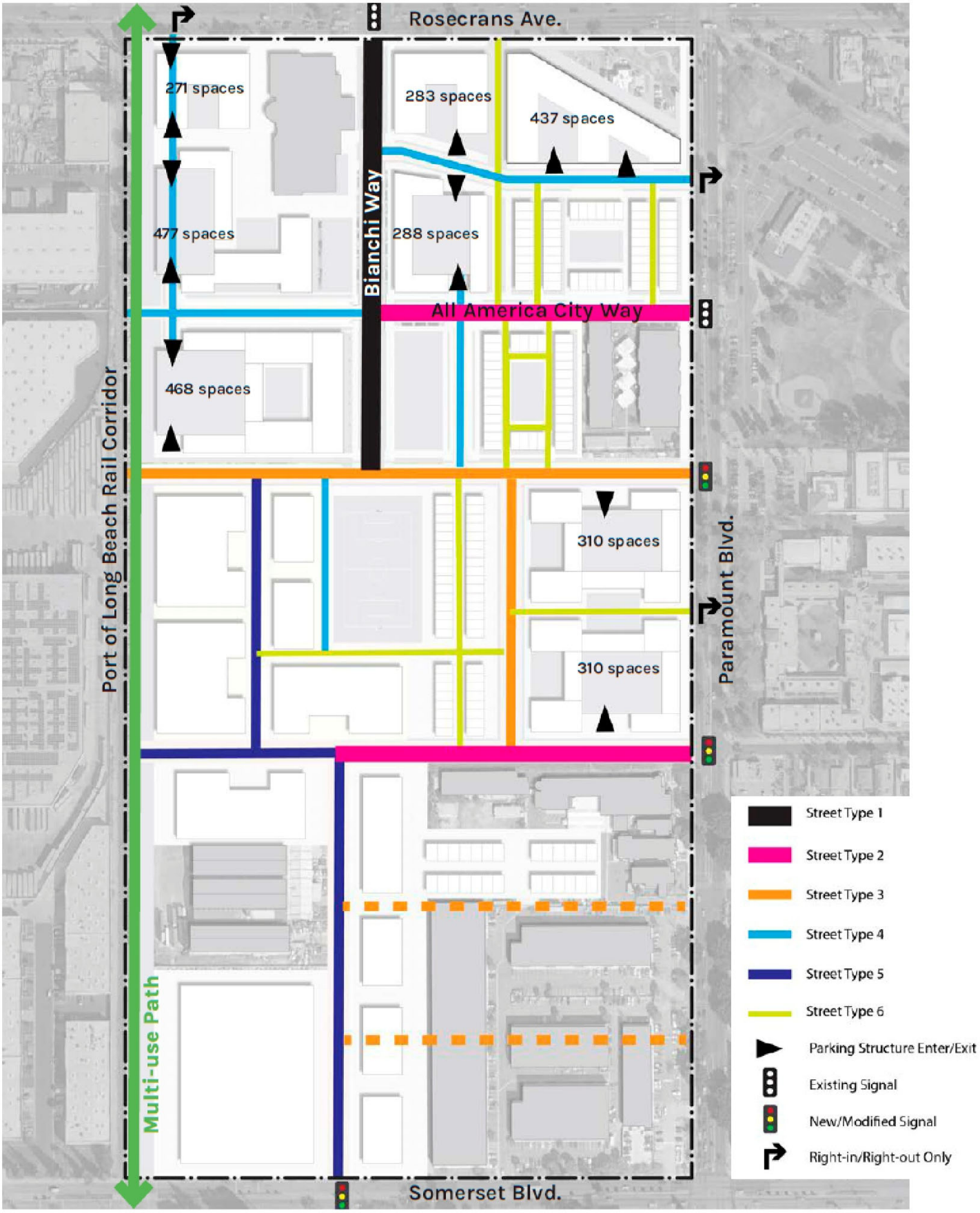
Upon redevelopment, new circulation patterns within the Specific Plan area would be established to connect new developments to the local street network, which will replace current surface parking lot circulation routes (see Exhibit 3-6, Specific Plan Mobility Concept). The intent of the new circulation patterns would be a traditional urban block structure defined by pedestrian-oriented streets. These streets are envisioned as a creative space that merges the boundary

between sidewalk and street to provide a common public space shared by pedestrians, cyclists, and low-speed vehicles. Such streets, sometimes called “woonerfs”, or living streets, are pedestrian-oriented travel ways. New streets would range in facility types including with or without bike lanes, sidewalk width, parkway width, center medians, curbside management, and number of travel lanes. All streets are proposed to include curb extensions and mid-block crossings and intersections, a minimum of eight-foot-wide sidewalks (excluding parkway) and planted parkways that are bioswales or flow-through planters. The maximum number of lanes would be three lanes (one travel lane in each direction and a center turn lane). Additionally, the streets would be designed to encourage slow speeds with features such as raised intersections and curbless street design. As shown in Exhibit 3-6, the proposed Specific Plan includes the following six different street types for the internal roadways within the Planning Area:

- Street Type 1 includes an approximately 90-foot right-of-way with a raised center median, travel lane, parking lane, bike lane, and sidewalk in both directions.
- Street Type 2 includes an approximately 80-foot right-of-way with a travel lane, parking lane, and sidewalk in both directions with a two-way left turn median.
- Street Type 3 includes an approximately 70-foot right-of-way with a painted median, travel lane, parking lane, bike lane, and sidewalk in both directions.
- Street Type 4 includes an approximately 60- to 65-foot right-of-way with a painted median, travel lane, parking lane, and sidewalk in both directions.
- Street Type 5 includes an approximately 50-foot right-of-way with two concepts. One concept has a painted median with a travel lane in both directions and a sidewalk on one side of the roadway. The other concept has a travel lane and a sidewalk in each direction with off-street parking on one side of the roadway.
- Street Type 6 includes a varied right-of-way with a travel lane in both directions and an optional center open space between travel lanes.

Bikeways

The proposed Specific Plan includes a multi-use path with a designated bikeway along the western edge of the Planning Area from Somerset Boulevard to Rosecrans Avenue adjacent to the Union Pacific railway line. This multi-use path would provide direct connections to the future Southeast Gateway Station at Paramount/Rosecrans via the planned bike path along the Southern California Edison corridor north of Rosecrans Avenue.



Source: Ganddini Group, Inc

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Exhibit 4.17-3 Specific Plan Mobility Concept

Clearwater Specific Plan
Paramount, California

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4.17.2 – REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Federal

No federal agencies or regulations directly apply to the Specific Plan's transportation impacts.

State

State of California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)

The State of California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) implements State planning priorities in all plans, programs, and activities. Caltrans has the responsibility to coordinate and consult with local jurisdictions when proposed local land use planning and development may impact State highway facilities. Pursuant to Public Resources Code § 21092.4, for projects of statewide, regional, or area-wide significance, the lead agency must consult with transportation planning agencies and public agencies that have transportation facilities which could be affected by a project.

Senate Bill (SB) 743

On September 27, 2013, Governor Brown signed SB 743, which became effective on January 1, 2014. The purpose of SB 743 is to streamline the review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process for several categories of development projects including the development of infill projects in transit priority areas and to balance the needs of congestion management with statewide goals related to infill development, promotion of public health through active transportation, and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. SB 743 adds Chapter 2.7: Modernization of Transportation Analysis for Transit Oriented Infill Projects to the CEQA Statute (Section 21099). Among other things, SB 743 mandates that alternative metric(s) for determining impacts relative to transportation shall be developed to replace the use of Level of Service (LOS) in CEQA documents. Formerly, environmental review of transportation impacts focused on the delay that vehicles experience at intersections and on roadway segments, which is often measured using LOS. Pursuant to SB 743, the focus of transportation analysis changes from vehicle delay to vehicle miles traveled (VMT). The Office of Planning and Research (OPR) released two rounds of draft proposals for updating the CEQA Guidelines related to evaluating transportation impacts and, after further study and consideration of public comment, submitted a final set of revisions to the Natural Resources Agency in November 2017. This was followed by a rulemaking process that would implement the requirements of the legislation. The updates to the CEQA Guidelines required under SB 743 were approved on December 28, 2018. OPR's regulatory text indicates that the new transportation impact guidelines emphasizing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) instead of Level of Service (LOS) had to be implemented statewide by July 1, 2020.

Regional

Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) responsible for development of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), which presents the vision for transportation throughout most of Southern California, including Los Angeles County. Senate Bill 375 (SB 375) was passed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from both automobiles and light trucks through integrated transportation, land use,

housing, and environmental planning. Under SB 375, SCAG is tasked with developing a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS). The SCS, as a component of the RTP, provides a plan for meeting emissions reduction targets set forth by the California Air Resources Board.

Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

The Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), prepared by Metro, is the long range plan that responds to emerging environmental challenges through the provision of new initiatives and recommendations that include driving alternatives, mobility improvements, enhanced public transit, expanded rail, and the development of major corridor projects in Los Angeles County.

Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS)

The Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS), prepared by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), has numerous goals to increase mobility for the region's residents and visitors, and an emphasis on sustainability and integrated planning to collectively improve the region's mobility, economy, and sustainability. The RTP/SCS must be approved by Federal agencies in order to receive Federal transportation funds. Only projects and programs included in the RTP are eligible for Federal funding. SCAG adopted the 2025-2050 RTP/SCS in April 2024. It should be noted this program is now referred to as "Connect SoCal."

SCAG Regional Comprehensive Plan

The Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) is part of an overall regional planning process that is linked directly to SCAG's Growth Management Plan, the Housing Allocation Process, and the South Coast Air Quality Management District's Air Quality Management Plan. The last RCP was adopted by SCAG in 2008 and includes elements on Land Use and Housing, Open Space and Habitat, Water, Energy, Air Quality, Solid Waste, Transportation, and Security and Emergency Preparedness.

Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS)

The Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS) is a Federally mandated inventory system and planning tool designed to assess the nation's highway system. HPMS is used as a management tool by the Federal and State governments and local agencies to analyze the system's condition and performance. The HPMS data are used for allocation of Federal funds, identification of travel trends and future forecasts, Environmental Protection Agency air quality conformity tracking, and biennial reports to the United States Congress on the state of the nation's highways. The HPMS is administered by Caltrans, with technical data provided by local agencies.

Access Services

Access Services is a State-mandated local governmental agency created by Los Angeles County's public transit agencies to administer and manage the delivery of regional Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) paratransit service. Access Services was established by 44 public fixed route transit operators in Los Angeles County. It is governed by a nine-member board appointed by the Los Angeles County municipal fixed route operators, the City of Los Angeles, the County of Los Angeles, the Transportation Corridor Representatives of the Los Angeles branch of the League of Cities, the Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities, and the Coalition of Independent Living Centers.

County of Los Angeles Vehicle Miles Traveled Guidelines

The City of Paramount uses the County of Los Angeles *Transportation Impact Analysis Guidelines* (July 2020) ["County Guidelines"] to estimate VMT impacts. The County Guidelines establish criteria for determining the significance of a project's VMT impact, including the following screening criteria for projects that may be presumed to have less than significant impacts based on the OPR Technical Advisory guidance: 1) Non-Retail Project Trip Generation Screening; 2) Retail Project Site Plan Screening; 3) Proximity to Transit Based Screening; and 4) Residential Land Use Based Screening. Projects that do not meet one or more of these screening criteria must perform a more detailed evaluation of the VMT produced by the project. As established in the County Guidelines, a project has a potentially significant VMT impact if it meets one or more of the following thresholds:

- Residential Projects: The project's residential VMT per capita[i] exceeds 16.8%[ii] below the existing residential VMT per capita for the Baseline Area in which the project is located.
- Office Projects: The project's employment VMT per employee[iii] exceeds 16.8% below the existing employment VMT per employee for the Baseline Area in which the project is located.
- Regional Serving Retail Projects: The project would result in a net increase in existing total VMT.
- Land Use Plans: The plan total VMT per service population[iv] exceeds 16.8% below the existing VMT per service population for the Baseline Area in which the plan is located.

Based on the thresholds described above, the County Guidelines establish the following VMT impact criteria:

Baseline Area	Residential VMT per Capita	Employment VMT per Employee	Total VMT per Service Population
North County	18.6	15.8	35.9
South County	10.6	15.3	25.9
Source: County of Los Angeles Transportation Impact Analysis Guidelines (July 2020), Table 3.13-2.			

Since the proposed Specific Plan update consists of a land use plan located in South County, the applicable threshold of significance is 25.9 total VMT per service population.

Local

City of Paramount General Plan

The City of Paramount 2007 General Plan includes the following goals and policies related to transportation:

[i] Residential VMT is the VMT generated by Home-Based Work and Home-Based Other trip productions.
[ii] As referenced by the VMT reduction goals discussed in the California Air Resources Board, 2017 Scoping Plan-Identified VMT Reductions and Relationship to State Goals, January 2019, Figure 3.
[iii] Employment VMT is the VMT generated by Home-Based Work trip attractions.
[iv] Service population is the sum of the number residents and the number of employees.

Environmental Justice Element

Policy EJ-5.1: Prioritize pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements along major corridors, focusing on the following roadways: Rosecrans Avenue, Paramount Boulevard, Downey Avenue, Somerset Boulevard, and Alondra Boulevard.

Housing Element

Policy HE-2.4: Encourage transit-oriented development within walking distance of planned light rail stations and high-frequency bus stops, including higher residential densities, public gathering places, urban parks, streetscape amenities, and commercial and entertainment uses.

Land Use Element

Policy LU-9: The City of Paramount will promote development that capitalizes on its location near the I-105 Freeway, the 710 Freeway, and the 91 Freeway.

Policy LU-13: The City of Paramount will continue to provide safe, convenient pedestrian linkages across and along streets containing commercial centers and uses.

Transportation Element

Policy Tran-1: The City of Paramount will increase the efficiency of the local street system by reducing the conflicts associated with through traffic.

Policy Tran-2: The City of Paramount will close selected local streets along major arterials to improve through circulation and to eliminate through traffic impacts on local streets.

Policy Tran-3: The City of Paramount will continue to develop and enhance the existing streets and intersections in the City.

Policy Tran-4: The City of Paramount will continue to develop and implement a designated system of truck routes as a means to keep industrial traffic out of residential neighborhoods.

Policy Tran-5: The City of Paramount will strive to ensure that new development implements its “fair-share” of improvements to offset the potential adverse impacts associated with the additional traffic that will be generated by the new development.

Policy Tran-6: The City of Paramount will continue to support the development and expansion of the region’s public and mass transit system.

Policy Tran-7: The City of Paramount will design and locate increased off-street parking in commercial areas to reduce conflicts with arterial traffic and improve viability of commercial districts.

Policy Tran-9: The City of Paramount will continue to support the maintenance and expansion of the existing public transit system.

Policy Tran-10: The City of Paramount will encourage new and existing businesses to include those improvements that will promote the use of alternative forms of transit.

Policy Tran-11: The City of Paramount will continue to support the local public transit system and ongoing efforts to improve connections with other regional transit facilities and services (Metro bus service, Long Beach Transit, Green Line, etc.)

Resource Management Element

Policy RM-4: The City of Paramount will require new larger residential developments to provide sufficient open space (including pedestrian and bicycle linkages) to meet the local need.

Policy RM-14: The City of Paramount will negotiate agreements with the Southern California Edison Company, the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, the Port of Los Angeles, the Union Pacific Railroad, Metro, and the Los Angeles County Flood Control District for the establishment of trails, recreational use, and appropriate landscaping within their respective rights-of-way.

Policy RM-15: The City of Paramount will seek to establish a comprehensive bikeway and pedestrian trail system for the City.

4.17.3 – SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLDS

As identified in Appendix G of the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the General Plan Update could result in a significant impact if it would:

A. Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

B. Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3[v] subdivision (b).

C. Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment).

D. Result in inadequate emergency access.

E. Cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to transportation and traffic.

4.17.4 – IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Conflicts with Plans or Programs

Impact TRAN-1 – Would the Specific Plan conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

This section evaluates if the proposed Specific Plan is generally consistent with the goals and policies of the Circulation Element related to vehicular and non-vehicular circulation. A discussion

[v] CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3(c) provides that a lead agency "may elect to be governed by the provisions" of the section immediately; otherwise, the section's provisions apply July 1, 2020. Here, the City has not elected to be governed by Section 15064.3. Accordingly, an analysis of vehicles miles traveled (VMT) is not necessary to determine whether the Specific Plan would have a significant transportation impact.

of Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) impacts is presented in Section 4.17 Impact TRAN-2 following this section.

Analysis of Impacts

Roadway Network. The Planning Area is currently developed with commercial, industrial, and entertainment uses, including the Paramount Entertainment Center, Drive-In Theater, and Swap Meet. The proposed Specific Plan includes transit-oriented, mixed-use development with medium to high density multifamily residential located directly above or adjacent to commercial, neo industrial, and quasi-public uses. Regional access to the Planning Area is primarily provided by Interstate 105 approximately one mile to the north, Interstate 710 approximately 1.5 miles to the west, and State Route 91 approximately 1.5 to the south. Local circulation is provided by Rosecrans Avenue to the north, Paramount Boulevard to the east, and Somerset Boulevard to the south. Table 4.17-3 shows estimates of the existing and project trip generation based on the rates obtained from the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) *Trip Generation Manual* (11th Edition, 2021).

Table 4.17-3
Project Trip Generation

Land Use	Source[1]	Quantity[2]	AM Peak Hour			PM Peak Hour			Daily
			In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total	
Existing Uses To Be Displaced									
Shopping Plaza (40-150k without Supermarket)	ITE 821	116.555 TSF	125	77	202	296	309	605	7,870
General Light Industrial	ITE110	86.714 TSF	56	8	64	8	48	56	422
Subtotal – Existing Trips (Gross)			181	85	266	304	357	661	8,292
Internal Capture (3%AM/4%PM/4%Daily)[3]			*-5*	*-3*	*-8*	*-12*	*-14*	*-26*	*-332*
Total – Existing Trips			176	82	258	292	343	635	7,960
Proposed New Development Capacity									
Single-Family Attached Housing	ITE 215	200 DU	24	72	96	67	47	114	1,440
Multifamily Housing (Mid-Rise, Close to Rail Transit)	ITE 221	1,800 DU	207	369	576	339	183	522	8,550
Shopping Center (>150k)	ITE 820	230.000 TSF	120	73	193	375	407	782	8,512
Neo Industrial	ITE 130	800.000 TSF	220	52	272	60	212	272	2,696
Subtotal – Proposed Trips (Gross)			571	566	1,137	841	849	1,690	21,198
Internal Capture (7%AM/23%PM/10%Daily)[3]			*-40*	*-40*	*-80*	*-193*	*-195*	*-388*	*-2,120*
Total – Proposed Trips			531	526	1,057	648	654	1,302	19,078
NET TRIPS GENERATED			**+355**	**+444**	**+799**	**+356**	**+311**	**+667**	**+11,118**

Source: Ganddini Group, Inc, 2025; see Appendix G
1 ITE = Institute of Transportation Engineers *Trip Generation Manual* (11th Edition, 2021); ### = Land Use Code. All rates are based on General Urban/Suburban setting unless otherwise noted.
2 TSF = Thousand Square Feet; DU = Dwelling Units
3 Internal Capture per NCHRP Report 684 as incorporated into the ITE *Trip Generation Handbook* (3rd Edition).

The trip generation shown in Table 4.17-3 excludes trips associated with existing/future public facilities, quasi-public uses, business park, and utilities since the Specific Plan update does not propose changes to these land uses. Additionally, the project trip generation estimate does not

account for trip reductions associated with the reduction in Swap Meet stalls (approximately 386,547 square feet); thus, resulting in a conservative estimate of the net future trips generated. The proposed Specific Plan Mobility Plan includes an internal roadway network consisting of six street types, including minimum/maximum design requirements and guidelines to facilitate a multi-modal roadway network that will provide low-speed vehicular travel lanes, sidewalks, bicycle lanes, curb extensions, and enhanced parkway/amenity zones. As documented in the *Clearwater Specific Plan Transportation Impact Analysis*, the roadway segments within the Planning Area are projected to operate within acceptable Levels of Service (LOS B or better) upon buildout of the proposed Specific Plan (see Appendix G). All future development within the Planning Area would be required to construct adjacent circulation improvements in accordance with the proposed Specific Plan's Mobility Plan. Such improvements would be required adhere to Americans with Disability Act (ADA) requirements and applicable engineering design standards. Future projects would also be required to participate in the City's Development Impact Fee (DIF) program. Implementation of the proposed Specific Plan and internal roadway network as proposed by the Mobility Plan would not conflict with any program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing roadway facilities.

Further, the existing 2007 Paramount General Plan Transportation Element includes policies intended to enhance the roadway network in the vicinity of the Planning Area. Policy Tran-1 seeks to increase the efficiency of the local street system by reducing the conflicts associated with through traffic. Policy Tran-2 directs the City to close selected local streets along major arterials to improve through circulation and to eliminate through traffic impacts on local streets. Policy Tran-3 aims to continue to develop and enhance the existing streets and intersections in the City. Policy Tran-4 directs the City to develop and implement a designated system of truck routes as a means to keep industrial traffic out of residential neighborhoods. Policy Tran-5 ensures that new development implements its "fair-share" of improvements to offset the potential adverse impacts associated with the additional traffic that will be generated by the new development. Policy Tran-6 supports the development and expansion of the region's public and mass transit system. Policy Tran-7 directs the City to design and locate increased off-street parking in commercial areas to reduce conflicts with arterial traffic and improve viability of commercial districts. Policy Tran-9 supports the maintenance and expansion of the existing public transit system. Policy Tran-10 encourages new and existing businesses to include those improvements that will promote the use of alternative forms of transit. Finally, Policy Tran-11 seeks to support the local public transit system and ongoing efforts to improve connections with other regional transit facilities and services (Metro bus service, Long Beach Transit, Green Line, etc.). Adherence to existing General Plan policies would ensure that roadway network impacts would be less than significant.

Bicycle Facilities. Exhibit 4.17-4 shows bicycle circulation upon buildout of the proposed Specific Plan. As shown in Exhibit 4.17-4, buildout of the proposed Specific Plan would provide bicycle circulation throughout the Planning Area via dedicated bicycle lanes on Street Types 1 and 3 and shared bicycle routes on Street Type 6. Connectivity to the surrounding bicycle network is proposed at Rosecrans Avenue and Paramount Boulevard. A shared use path is planned along Los Angeles Metro's Southeast Gateway Line alignment through the West Santa Ana Branch right-of-way. Implementation of the proposed Specific Plan and internal bicycle network would not conflict with any program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the bicycle facilities; therefore, bicycle facility impacts would be less than significant.

Further, the existing 2007 Paramount General Plan Environmental Justice, Housing, Land Use, and Resource Management Elements include policies intended to improve and expand bicycle facilities in the City. Policy EJ-5.1 prioritizes pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements along major corridors, focusing on the following roadways: Rosecrans Avenue, Paramount Boulevard,

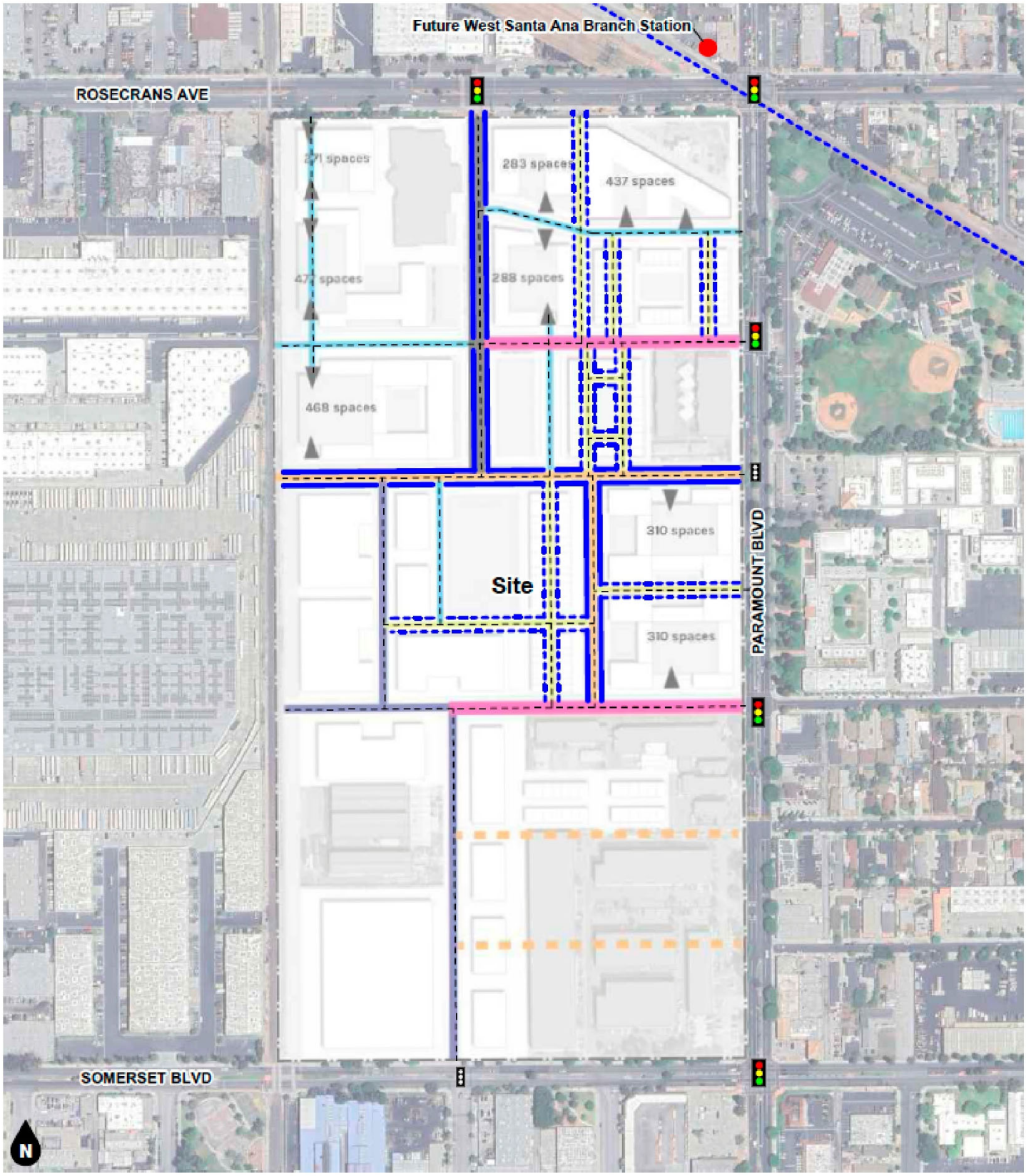
Downey Avenue, Somerset Boulevard, and Alondra Boulevard. Policy RM-4 requires new larger residential developments to provide sufficient open space (including pedestrian and bicycle linkages) to meet the local need. Policy RM-14 directs the City to negotiate agreements with the Southern California Edison Company, the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, the Port of Los Angeles, the Union Pacific Railroad, Metro, and the Los Angeles County Flood Control District for the establishment of trails, recreational use, and appropriate landscaping within their respective rights-of-way. Finally, Policy RM-15 seeks to establish a comprehensive bikeway and pedestrian trail system for the City. Adherence to existing General Plan policies would ensure that impacts to bicycle facilities would be less than significant.

Pedestrian Facilities. Exhibit 4.17-5 shows the proposed pedestrian circulation for the Planning Area and adjacent roadways. As shown in Exhibit 4.17-5, pedestrian circulation is currently provided on adjacent street frontage of Rosecrans Avenue, Paramount Boulevard, and Somerset Boulevard and would be provided on all street types throughout the Planning Area with connectivity to the surrounding pedestrian network proposed at the following key access points:

- Bianchi Way/Rosecrans Avenue: Existing signal-controlled crossing on west leg.
- Paramount Boulevard/All America City Way: Existing signal-controlled crossing on south leg.
- Paramount Boulevard/3rd Street: Existing signal-controlled crossing on north leg.
- Paramount Boulevard/2nd Street: Existing unsignalized crossing on north leg.

Pedestrian access between the Planning Area and the future Southeast Gateway Line Paramount/Rosecrans Station is currently provided via existing pedestrian crosswalks on all four legs of the signalized intersection of Paramount Boulevard and Rosecrans Avenue and the west leg of the signalized intersection of Bianchi way and Rosecrans Avenue. All future development would be required to construct adjacent circulation improvements in accordance with the proposed Specific Plan Mobility Plan, including sidewalks, crosswalks, curb extensions, and parkway improvements. Such improvements shall adhere to Americans with Disability Act (ADA) requirements and applicable engineering design standards. Buildout of the proposed Specific Plan and internal pedestrian network would not conflict with any program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing pedestrian injuries or facilities.

Also, the current 2007 Paramount General Plan Environmental Justice, Housing, Land Use, and Resource Management Elements include policies intended to improve and expand bicycle facilities in the City. Policy EJ-5.1 prioritizes pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements along major corridors, focusing on the following roadways: Rosecrans Avenue, Paramount Boulevard, Downey Avenue, Somerset Boulevard, and Alondra Boulevard. Policy HE-2.4 encourages transit-oriented development within walking distance of planned light rail stations and high-frequency bus stops, including higher residential densities, public gathering places, urban parks, streetscape amenities, and commercial and entertainment uses. Policy LU-13 seeks to provide safe, convenient pedestrian linkages across and along streets containing commercial centers and uses. Policy RM-4 requires new larger residential developments to provide sufficient open space (including pedestrian and bicycle linkages) to meet the local need. Policy RM-14 directs the City to negotiate agreements with the Southern California Edison Company, the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, the Port of Los Angeles, the Union Pacific Railroad, Metro, and the Los Angeles County Flood Control District for the establishment of trails, recreational use, and appropriate landscaping within their respective rights-of-way. Adherence to existing General Plan policies would ensure that impacts to pedestrian facilities would be less than significant.



Legend
- Future Bike Lanes
- Future Shared Bike Lanes
- Existing Signalized Intersection
- Future Signalized Intersection

Source: Ganddini Group, Inc

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Exhibit 4.17-4 Proposed Bicycle Circulation

Clearwater Specific Plan
Paramount, California

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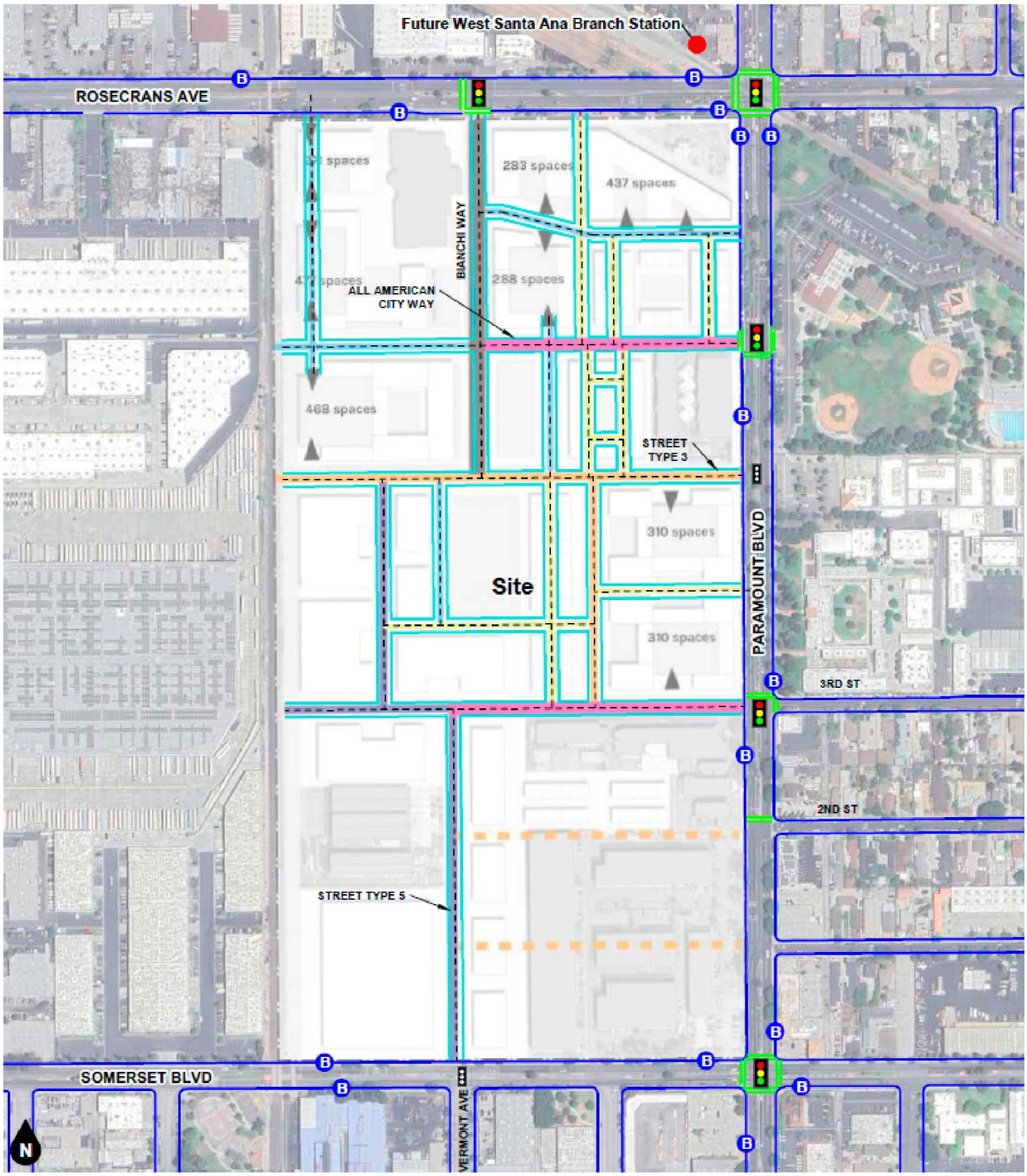

Legend

- Existing Sidewalk
- Future Sidewalk
- Existing Cross Walk
- Bus Stop
- Existing Signalized Intersection
- Future Signalized Intersection

Source: Ganddini Group, Inc

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Exhibit 4.17-5 Proposed Pedestrian Circulation

Clearwater Specific Plan
Paramount, California

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Transit Facilities. As previously summarized in Table 4.17-1, the Planning Area is served by Los Angeles Metro Bus Line 125 along Rosecrans Avenue, Line 265 along Paramount Boulevard, and Line 127 along Somerset Boulevard; Long Beach Transit Route 71 runs along Rosecrans Avenue. Furthermore, the Southeast Gateway Line (formerly West Santa Ana Branch Transit Corridor) is an approximately 19-mile planned light rail transit (LRT) line that will connect from Union Station in Downtown Los Angeles to the City of Artesia and the future Paramount/Rosecrans at the northwest corner of the intersection of Paramount Boulevard and Rosecrans Avenue. A half-mile radius from the future Paramount/Rosecrans station would encompass nearly the entire Planning Area with two signalized pedestrian crossings across Rosecrans Avenue at Bianchi Way and Paramount Boulevard, facilitating pedestrian and bicycle access from the project site to the station. The LRT project has received CEQA certification and is estimated to be completed by 2035.

The proposed Specific Plan features several transit-oriented design characteristics, including residential and employment proximity to transit and a robust internal bicycle and pedestrian network with two existing signalized crosswalks providing access to the future transit station. Further, the existing 6th Cycle (2021-2029) Paramount General Plan Housing Element includes Policy HE-2.4 which encourages transit-oriented development within walking distance of planned light rail stations and high-frequency bus stops, including higher residential densities, public gathering places, urban parks, streetscape amenities, and commercial and entertainment uses. The project is consistent with this policy, and buildout of the proposed Specific Plan and internal roadway and pedestrian network would not conflict with any program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing transit facilities.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Conflicts with New VMT Thresholds

Impact TRAN-2 – Would the Specific Plan conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?

Analysis of Impacts

CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b) establishes VMT as the most appropriate metric for determining the significance of transportation impacts. The potential for the proposed Specific Plan to result in VMT impacts was evaluated based on screening criteria established in the County Guidelines as follows.

Non-Retail Project Trip Generation Screening

If the answer is no to the question below, further analysis is not required, and a less than significant determination can be made.

- Does the project generate a net increase of 110 or more daily vehicle trips? [vi, vii]

As previously shown in Table 4.17-3, the proposed Specific Plan is forecast to generate a total of approximately 11,118 net new daily vehicle trips. While the trip generation estimate shown in Table 4.17-3 does not include trip credits for existing development to be displaced, such credits are not expected to result in fewer than 110 net daily trips generated.

Assessment: This screening criteria is not met.

Retail Project Site Plan Screening

A project that contains a local-serving retail use is assumed to have less than significant VMT impacts for the retail portion of the project. If the answer to the following question is no, a less than significant determination can be made for the portion of the project that contains retail uses.

- Does the project contain retail uses that exceed 50,000 square feet of gross floor area?

Overall, the proposed Specific Plan includes a total of 182,200 square feet of commercial/retail uses; therefore, this screening criteria is not met. Individual development proposals may reassess this screening criteria for any proposed retail components, in particular for ground-floor mixed-use proposals which are anticipated to include small local coffee shops, dry cleaners, etc.

Assessment: This screening criteria is not met.

Residential Land Use Based Screening

Independent of the screening criteria for non-retail and retail projects, certain projects that further the State's affordable housing goals have been identified as having the presumption of a less than significant impact. If the project requires a discretionary action and the answer is yes to the question below, further analysis is not required, and a less than significant determination can be made.

- Are 100% of the units, excluding manager's units, designated as lower income units?

100% of the residential components of the proposed Specific Plan are not proposed to be set aside for lower income households.

Assessment: This screening criteria is not met.

Proximity to Transit Based Screening

If a project is located near a major transit stop or high-quality transit corridor, the following question should be considered:

[vi] The term vehicle refers to on-road passenger vehicles, specifically cars and light trucks. Heavy-duty trucks should only be included in a traffic impacts analysis for modeling convenience and ease of calculation (e.g., where models or data provide combine auto and heavy-freight VMT) but should not contribute to a finding of significant traffic impact under any circumstances.

[vii] As referenced in the OPR Technical Advisory.

- Is the project located within a one-half mile radius[viii] of a major transit stop[ix] or an existing stop along a high-quality transit corridor[x]?

If the answer to the question above is yes, then the following subsequent questions should be considered:

- Does the project have a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) less than 0.75?
- Does the project provide more parking than required by the Code?[xi]
- Is the project inconsistent with the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS)?
- Does the project replace residential units set aside for lower income households with a smaller number of market-rate residential units?

If the answer to all four questions is no, further analysis is not required, and a less than significant determination can be made.

Exhibit 4.17-6 shows a transit proximity map for the Planning Area vicinity. As shown in Exhibit 4.17-6, with the exception of two parcels (APN 6241-016-023 and -907), all parcels within the Planning Area have no more than 25 percent of their area farther than one-half mile from the planned Southeast Gateway Line (formerly West Santa Ana Branch Transit Corridor) station located at the intersection of Paramount Boulevard and Rosecrans Avenue. The Southeast Gateway Line is an approximately 19-mile planned light rail transit (LRT) line that will connect from Union Station in Downtown Los Angeles to the City of Artesia. The half-mile radius from the Paramount/Rosecrans station will encompass nearly the entire Planning Area and will include two signalized pedestrian crossings across Rosecrans Avenue at Bianchi Way and Paramount Boulevard.

The LRT project has received CEQA certification and is estimated to be completed by 2035. The Planning Area is located within a transit priority area (TPA), which includes areas within one-half mile of major transit stops that are scheduled to be completed within the planning horizon of a Transportation Improvement Program or applicable regional transportation plan (i.e. SCAG's RTP/SCS).[xii] Proposed Specific Plan development zones include maximum floor area ratios ranging from 1.5 to 3.0; thus, encouraging development well above the minimum 0.75 FAR criteria. As shown below, the proposed project does not include more parking than required by the City of Paramount Municipal Code:

[viii] A project shall be considered to be within one-half mile of a major transit stop or high-quality transit corridor if all parcels within the project have no more than 25 percent of their area farther than one-half mile from the stop or corridor and if not more than 10 percent of the residential units or 100 units, whichever is less, in the project are farther than one-half mile from the stop or corridor. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21155)

[ix] A major transit stop is defined as an existing rail or bus rapid transit station, ferry terminal served by either a bus or rail transit service or the intersection of two or more major bus routes with a frequency of service interval of 20 minutes or less during the morning and afternoon peak commute periods. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21064.3.)

[x] A high-quality transit corridor is defined as a corridor with fixed route bus service with service intervals no longer than 15 minutes during peak commute hours. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21155)

[xi] The County Guidelines refer to County Code; however, this analysis substitutes the City of Paramount Municipal Code as the applicable code for the Lead Agency.

[xii] "Transit priority area" means an area within one-half mile of a major transit stop that is existing or planned, if the planned stop is scheduled to be completed within the planning horizon included in a Transportation Improvement Program or applicable regional transportation plan. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21099)

Land Use	Proposed Specific Plan	Municipal Code[(A)]
Residential	2 stalls per unit	2.25 stalls per unit
Office	3 stalls per 1,000 SF	3.33 stalls per 1,000 SF
Commercial/Retail	3 stalls per 1,000 SF	4 stalls per 1,000 SF
Neo Light Industrial	1 stall per 1,000 SF	2 stalls per 500 SF

Source: City of Paramount Municipal Code § 17.44.460.
Notes:
[(A)] Office requirements based on general & professional office uses; commercial/retail requirements based on C-3 zone; industrial requirements based on C-M zone & M-1/M-2 zones for properties containing more than 15,000 SF.

The SCAG RTP/SCS Data/Map Book for the City of Paramount identifies the Planning Area as a specific plan area consisting of mixed residential, commercial, and industrial land uses and its majority location within a transit priority area. Lastly, the proposed Specific Plan would not displace any residential units set aside for lower income households. Further, Mitigation Measure TRAN-1 has been incorporated to ensure implementation of the proposed Specific Plan does not result in significant VMT impacts.

Assessment: The proposed Specific Plan is located within a transit priority area and does not conflict with additional considerations that may contradict transit-oriented development. Therefore, the proposed project satisfies the "Proximity to Transit Based Screening Criteria" based on County Guidelines used by the City of Paramount and can be determined to have a less than significant VMT impact with implementation of Mitigation Measure TRAN-1.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

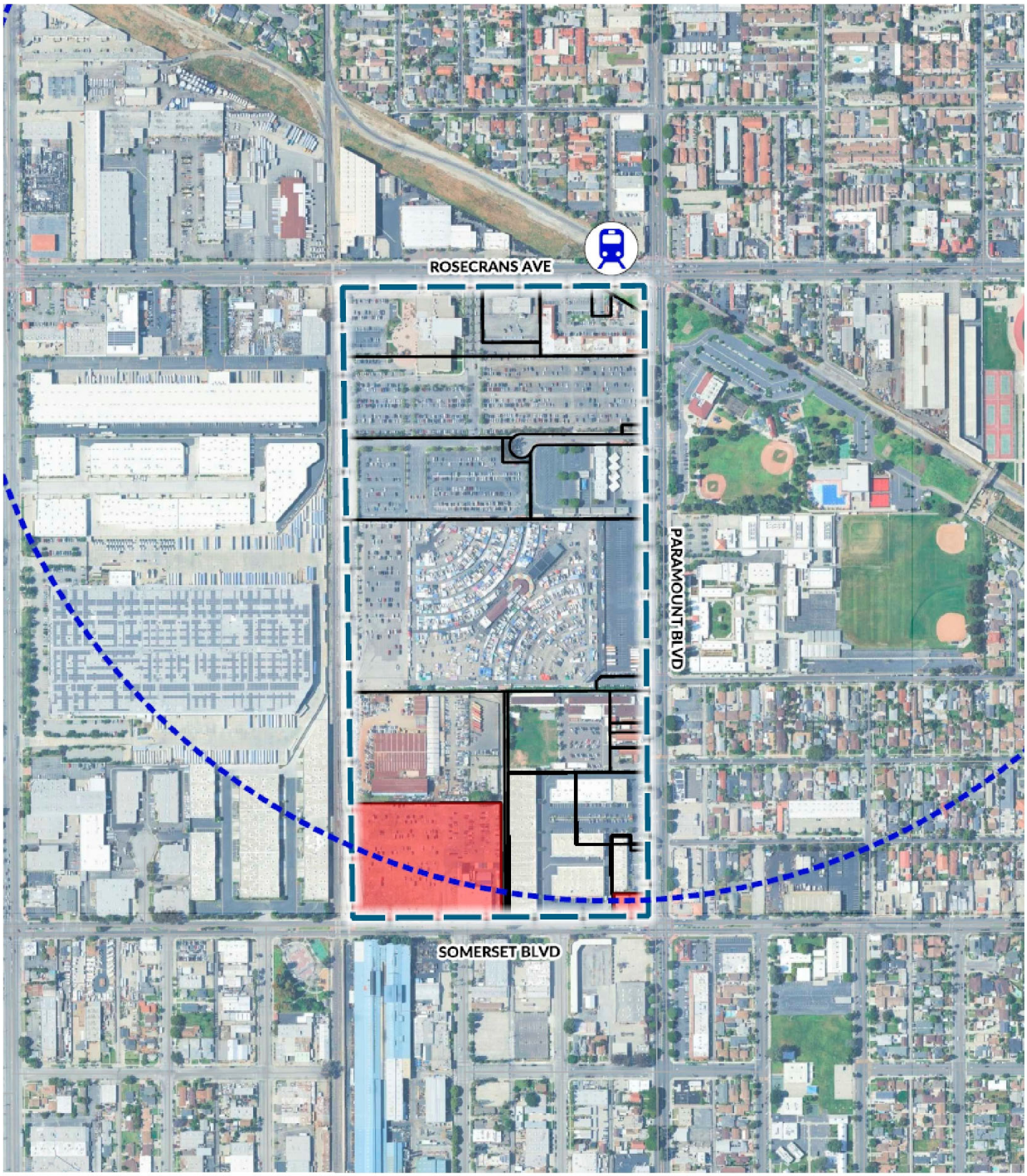
Potentially significant impact.

Mitigation Measures

TRAN-1: Prior to completion of the planned Southeast Gateway Line Paramount/Rosecrans station, all development proposals within the Clearwater Specific Plan Planning Area shall be required to prepare a project-specific VMT screening/analysis, in accordance with the County of Los Angeles Vehicle Miles Traveled Guidelines. If the development proposal does not screen out from further VMT review, a more detailed VMT analysis would be required in accordance with the requirements of the County VMT Guideline, including, if necessary, additional measures to reduce VMT to meet County VMT thresholds. After completion of the planned Southeast Gateway Line Paramount/Rosecrans station, only development proposals involving APN 6241-016-023 or 6241-016-907 shall be required to prepare a project-specific VMT screening/analysis.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Less than significant impact.



Legend

Half-Mile Radius from Major Transit Stop

Parcels >25% Outside Half-Mile Radius

Source: Ganddini Group, Inc

http://www.migcom.com • 951-787-9222

Exhibit 4.17-6 Transit Proximity Map

Clearwater Specific Plan

Paramount, California

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Design Feature Hazards

Impact TRAN-3 – Would the Specific Plan substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?

Analysis of Impacts

Implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would not substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses with incorporation of Mitigation Measure TRAN-2. The Specific Plan proposes a framework for future redevelopment of parcels with new transit-oriented, mixed-use development including medium-to-high density multifamily residential located directly above or adjacent to commercial, neo industrial, and quasi-public uses. The proposed Specific Plan does not include any incompatible uses such as farm equipment.

The proposed Specific Plan includes a Mobility Plan consisting of six street types, including minimum/maximum design requirements and guidelines to facilitate a multi-modal roadway network that will provide low-speed vehicular travel lanes, sidewalks, bicycle lanes, curb extensions, and enhanced parkway/amenity zones. The proposed roadway alignments do not include sharp curves or dangerous intersections.

All future development would be required to construct adjacent circulation improvements in accordance with the proposed Specific Plan Mobility Plan, at which time such improvements would be subject to further engineering review for compliance with all applicable engineering guidelines and standards, including but not limited to Americans with Disability Act (ADA) requirements, the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CA MUTCD), Caltrans Highway Design Manual (HDM), and the City of Paramount Municipal Code. Although the City's standard permitting process already includes development review by the City of Paramount Public Works Department for compliance with applicable engineering standards, implementation of Mitigation Measure TRAN-2 would explicitly require preparation of a traffic analysis to ensure any critical site access needs are adequately addressed.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Potentially significant impact.

Mitigation Measures

TRAN-2: Future development proposals forecast to generate more than 50 peak hour trips within the Planning Area shall be required to prepare a traffic study that evaluates and addresses any deficiencies related to the following items:

- The need for installation of a traffic signal or turning restrictions at unsignalized access points.
- Left turn lane storage lengths.
- Any additional site access or safety concerns deemed necessary by the City of Paramount Director of Public Works.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Less than significant.

Emergency Access

Impact TRAN-4 – Would the Specific Plan result in inadequate emergency access?

Analysis of Impacts

As shown on Exhibit 4.17-3, the proposed Specific Plan Mobility Plan includes an internal roadway network that would provide circulation for emergency vehicles throughout the Planning Area and multiple points of access from the surrounding street network. With the exception of Street Type 1 and Street Type 6, all proposed street typologies provide a minimum of 20 feet of all-weather, hard-surfaced right-of-way required for fire access roads. Excluding Street Types 1 and 6, the remaining street types are expected to provide adequate onsite emergency vehicle circulation. Furthermore, future development proposals under the proposed Specific Plan would be subject to the City's standard development review and approval process requiring compliance with the City's Municipal Code and fire code compliance review to meet California Fire Code (CCR Title 24 Part 9), Section 503. Therefore, the City's standard permitting process would ensure that construction of future developments within the Planning Area would adhere to applicable regulations and that impacts to emergency access are less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Cumulative Impacts

Impact TRAN-5 – Would the Specific Plan cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to transportation and traffic?

Analysis of Impacts

Future development under the proposed Specific Plan would add housing in a jobs rich area but may nonetheless contribute additional traffic on local and regional networks and hinder compliance with the State and regional VMT reduction goals outlined in SCAG's RTP/SCS ("Connect SoCal") and as detailed in Impact TRAN-2 above. Future regional transportation network improvements and transportation demand management (TDM) factors that SCAG has assumed for 2045 will incrementally help reduce regional VMT in the coming years as the SCAG RTP/SCS are implemented at the local level, including the City of Paramount. For example, increased Metro transit opportunities will help support a mode shift from autos to transit. In addition, SCAG's RTP/SCS assumes that several TDM factors, such as increased auto ownership costs, shifts to telecommuting, and further implementation of regional trip reduction strategies, will help contribute to this mode shift as well. In addition, through implementation of Mitigation Measures TRAN-1 and TRAN-2, VMT mitigation measures as appropriate will be applied to specific development projects in the future. With this future site-specific mitigation, the proposed

Specific Plan would not make a significant contribution to any cumulatively considerable transportation impacts.

Level of Significance

Less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation Measures TRAN-1 and TRAN-2.

4.17.5 – REFERENCES

City of Paramount. 2007. *Final Paramount General Plan*. Adopted August 7, 2007. Revisions: Health and Safety Element Update and Environmental Justice Element; Adopted February 8, 2022.

Ganddini Group, Inc. *Clearwater East Specific Plan Update Transportation Impact Analysis: City of Paramount*. March 24, 2025.

4.18 – TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

This section addresses potential impacts to Tribal Cultural Resources (TCR) associated with the proposed Specific Plan. Issues of interest are impacts to Native American sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to Native American tribes that are identified within CEQA Guidelines: whether the Specific Plan will cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resources, or objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe and that is listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources or in a local register of historical resources, or a resources determined by the Lead Agency to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1.

4.18.1 – ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Tribal Cultural Resources are the physical artifacts associated with the spiritual and religious lives of Native people that ties them together with their environment, each other, and their place in the universe. As described below, Tribal Cultural Resources include resources that are listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k) and/or resources determined by the lead agency to be significant to a California Native American tribe pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code section 5024.1.

Historical Resources

CEQA Guidelines state the term “historical resources” applies to resources that meet any of the criteria for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources.

(1) Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California’s history and cultural heritage.

(2) Is associated with the lives of persons important in our past.

(3) Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values.

(4) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history. (PRC Section 5024.1(c)).

The Planning Area does not contain any historical resources, historic buildings, or historic points of interest (California State Parks, 2021; National Parks Service, 2021). While the Swap Meet and Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Church are culturally significant to the local population, they do not meet any of the criteria for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources, including: 1) being associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California’s history and cultural heritage; 2) being associated with the lives of persons important in our past; 3) embodying the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values; or 4) having yielded, or be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history. The City’s General Plan Resources Management Element also does not identify any historical resources within the Planning Area.

Archaeological Resources

Before the arrival of Spanish settlers in the 1700s, the Los Angeles Basin, including the area that would later become Paramount, was inhabited by the indigenous people of the Los Angeles Basin, San Fernando Valley, and Southern Channel Islands today referred to as the Tongva, Kizh, and/or Gabrielino/Gabrieliño/Gabrieleno/Gabrieleño. The area was seized from the native population by Spanish soldiers and missionaries. The Spanish enslaved the Tongva and/or Kizh, using them as a slave labor force to build the Misión de San Gabriel Arcángel, giving them the name of Gabrieleño (NAHC, 2024) or Gabrielino/Gabrieliño/Gabrieleno. While there are no archaeological resources known to exist in or around the Planning Area, given the long history of Native American settlement in the region, followed by Spanish and Mexican rule, there is a moderate probability of finding prehistoric (archaeological) resources in the Planning Area. While the City of Paramount today is almost entirely urbanized and developed, given the history of the area there is a probability of finding archaeological resources in the Planning Area.

4.18.2 – REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Federal

National Historic Preservation Act of 1966

Enacted in 1966, the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (16 U.S.C §§ 470 et seq.) declared a national policy of historic preservation and instituted a multifaceted program, administered by the Secretary of the Interior, to encourage the achievement of preservation goals at the federal, State, and local levels. The NHPA authorized the expansion and maintenance of the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), established the position of State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), provided for the designation of State Review Boards, set up a mechanism to certify local governments to carry out the purposes of the NHPA, assist Native American tribes in preserving their cultural heritage, and created the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP).

NHPA establishes the nation's policy for historic preservation and sets in place a program for the preservation of historic properties by requiring federal agencies to consider effects to significant cultural resources (i.e. historic properties) prior to undertakings**.**

Section 106 of the Federal Guidelines

Section 106 of the NHPA states that federal agencies with direct or indirect jurisdiction over federally funded, assisted, or licensed undertakings must take into account the effect of the undertaking on any historic property that is included in, or eligible for inclusion in, the NRHP and that the ACHP and SHPO must be afforded an opportunity to comment, through a process outlined in the ACHP regulations at 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 800, on such undertakings. The Section 106 process also gives Federally recognized Native American Tribes the chance to consult and comment on the project before it can be finalized.

Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990

The NAGPRA of 1990 sets provisions for the intentional removal and inadvertent discovery of human remains and other cultural items from federal and tribal lands. It clarifies the ownership of human remains and sets forth a process for repatriation of human remains and associated funerary objects and sacred religious objects to the Native American groups claiming to be lineal

descendants or culturally affiliated with the remains or objects. It requires any federally funded institution housing Native American remains or artifacts to compile an inventory of all cultural items within the museum or with its agency and to provide a summary to any Native American tribe claiming affiliation.

State

Native American Heritage Commission, Public Resources Code Sections 5097.9–5097.991

Section 5097.91 of the Public Resources Code (PRC) established the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), whose duties include the inventory of places of religious or social significance to Native Americans and the identification of known graves and cemeteries of Native Americans on private lands. Under Section 5097.9 of the PRC, a State policy of noninterference with the free expression or exercise of Native American religion was articulated along with a prohibition of severe or irreparable damage to Native American sanctified cemeteries, places of worship, religious or ceremonial sites, or sacred shrines located on public property. Section 5097.98 of the PRC specifies a protocol to be followed when the NAHC receives notification of a discovery of Native American human remains from a county coroner. Section 5097.5 defines as a misdemeanor the unauthorized disturbance or removal of archaeological, historic, or paleontological resources located on public lands.

California Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 2001

Codified in the California Health and Safety Code Sections 8010–8030, the California Native American Graves Protection Act (NAGPRA) is consistent with the federal NAGPRA. Intended to "provide a seamless and consistent state policy to ensure that all California Indian human remains, and cultural items be treated with dignity and respect," the California NAGPRA also encourages and provides a mechanism for the return of remains and cultural items to lineal descendants. Section 8025 established a Repatriation Oversight Commission to oversee this process. The act also provides a process for non-federally recognized tribes to file claims with agencies and museums for repatriation of human remains and cultural items.

California Assembly Bill 52

AB 52 specifies that a project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, as defined, is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment. AB 52 requires a lead agency to begin consultation with a California Native American tribe that is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the proposed project, if the tribe requested to the lead agency, in writing, to be informed by the lead agency of proposed projects in that geographic area and the tribe requests consultation, prior to determining whether a negative declaration, mitigated negative declaration, or environmental impact report is required for a project. AB 52 specifies examples of mitigation measures that may be considered to avoid or minimize impacts on tribal cultural resources. The bill makes the above provisions applicable to projects that have a notice of preparation or a notice of negative declaration filed or mitigated negative declaration on or after July 1, 2015. AB 52 amends Sections 5097.94 and adds Sections 21073, 21074, 2108.3.1., 21080.3.2, 21082.3, 21083.09, 21084.2, and 21084.3 to the California Public Resources Code (PRC), relating to Native Americans.

Senate Bill (SB) 18

California Government Code, Section 65352.3 incorporates the protection of California traditional tribal cultural places into land use planning for cities, counties, and agencies by establishing responsibilities for local governments to contact, refer plans to, and consult with California Native American tribes as part of the adoption or amendment of any general or specific plan proposed on or after March 1, 2005. SB 18 requires public notice to be sent to tribes listed on the Native American Heritage Commission's SB 18 Tribal Consultation list within the geographical areas affected by the proposed changes. Tribes must respond to a local government notice within 90 days (unless a shorter timeframe has been agreed upon by the tribe), indicating whether or not they want to consult with the local government. Consultations are for the purpose of preserving or mitigating impacts to places, features, and objects described in Sections 5097.9 and 5097.993 of the Public Resources Code that may be affected by the proposed adoption or amendment to a general or specific plan.

Local

City of Paramount General Plan

The City of Paramount 2007 General Plan includes the following goals and policies related to tribal cultural resources:

Resource Management Element

Policy RM-17: The City of Paramount will initiate a cultural arts and facilities program to enhance the City image.

Policy RM-19: The City of Paramount will identify and preserve those sites/buildings that are important to the community for the benefit of the future generations that will reside or work in the City.

4.18.3 – SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLDS

The methodology used to evaluate potential environmental impacts is described in Section 4.0. As identified in Appendix G of the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Specific Plan could result in a significant impact if it:

A. Causes a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:

   i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or
   ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

B. Would the project cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to tribal cultural resources.

4.18.4 – IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Impact TRC-1 – Would the Specific Plan cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is: (i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k),

Analysis of Impacts

According to the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) and the National Register of Historic Places, the Planning Area does not contain any historical resources, historic buildings, or historic points of interest. The definition for a Tribal Cultural Resource (TCR) is described in Section 4.18.3, above. This includes all cultural resources with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that meets the criteria for inclusion on the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR). This definition excludes cultural resources that ordinarily would be ineligible for inclusion on the CRHR. There are no known TCRs in the Planning Area. This means that there are no landscapes, places that are not archaeological sites, or other non-archaeological features that could be a TCR within the Planning Area. This analysis, therefore, will consider impacts to TCRs in a similar way as to prehistoric archaeological resources.

Archaeological resources are the physical remains of past human activities and can be of either prehistoric or historic origin. Archaeological sites are locations that contain evidence of human activity. Generally, a site is defined by a significant accumulation or presence of one or more of the following: food remains, waste from the manufacturing of tools, concentrations of alignments of stones, modification of rock surfaces, unusual discoloration or accumulation of soil, or human skeletal remains. Prior to European contact, the Planning Area was inhabited for many thousands of years by the Kizh or Tongva People that inhabited a village called Sejatnga near the current city of Whittier and the San Gabriel River. Development began in the Paramount area in the first half of the 19th century, but the surrounding area is known to contain archaeological resources that pre-date Spanish and Mexican land grants. Areas that could have the potential for discovery include undeveloped land or when replacing buildings that have shallow foundations. The entire Planning Area is heavily developed, greatly reducing the potential for the discovery of previously uncovered archaeological resources.

Native American Consultation

On March 10, 2025, the City sent notices to the following nine (9) Native American Tribes/Tribal Representatives to determine if they wished to consult with the City regarding the proposed Specific Plan (see Appendix H):

Native American Tribal Group	**Tribal Representative**
Gabrieleno Band of Mission Indians - Kizh Nation	Andrew Salas, Chairperson
Gabrieleno/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians	Anthony Morales, Chairperson
Gabrielino /Tongva Nation	Sandonne Goad, Chairperson

Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council	Robert Dorame, Chairperson
Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council	Christina Conley, Tribal Consultant
Gabrielino-Tongva Tribe	Charles Alvarez
Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians	Lovina Redner, Tribal Chair
Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians	Isaiah Vivanco, Chairperson
Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians	Joe Ontiveros

As of publication of this Draft EIR, the 30-day AB 52 and the 90-day SB 18 consultation periods had expired and only two of the tribes indicated a desire to consult with the City on the proposed Specific Plan. Christina Conley, Tribal Consultant and Administrator for the Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council, initially inquired if a cultural resources report was available for the project. However, upon being informed that project is programmatic and the tribe would be notified of all future development projects within the Specific Plan Planning Area no further consultation was requested. Andrew Salas, Chairperson of the Gabrieleno Band of Mission Indians – Kizh Nation, also requested formal consultation from the City. Upon consultation with the City, Mr. Salas requested that mitigation measures be incorporated into the EIR requiring retention of a Native American monitor prior to commencement and during all ground disturbing activities. These measures have been incorporated herein by reference. All relevant correspondence for the project from the NAHC and consulting tribal representatives is included in Appendix H. This information is also included in Section 4.18 (Tribal Cultural Resources). The Planning Area is completely developed and has been previously disturbed by modern human activities that would have displaced surface and subsurface archaeological resources. However, if previously undiscovered archaeological resources are uncovered during ground-disturbing activities, and not properly treated, potentially significant impacts to archaeological resources could occur. As such, Mitigation Measures CUL-1 through CUL-3 have been incorporated requiring both archaeological and Native American monitoring during project ground-disturbing activities to ensure that inadvertent discoveries, if encountered, are properly treated and managed during project construction. With implementation of these measures during future development of the Specific Plan, the project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource.

In addition, Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code (CHSC) requires that, if human remains (or remains that may be human) are discovered on a project site during grading or earthmoving, the construction contractors, project archaeologist, and/or designated Native American Monitor shall immediately stop all activities within 100 feet of the find. The project proponent must then immediately inform the County Coroner and the City of the find. The coroner is permitted to examine the remains under CHSC Section 7050.5(b) to determine if the remains are those of a Native American. If human remains are determined as those of Native American origin, the applicant must comply with the State relating to the disposition of Native American burials that fall within the jurisdiction of the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) as outlined in Public Resources Code Section (PRC) 5097. The coroner then contacts the NAHC to determine the Most Likely Descendant (MLD) who will conduct an inspection and make recommendations or preferences for treatment within 48 hours of being granted access to the site. The disposition of the remains is to be overseen by the MLD to determine the most appropriate means of treating the human remains and any associated grave artifacts, in consultation with the property owner and the lead agency (in this case the City of Paramount). If the MLD is Native American, tribal representatives will be contacted to consult on the appropriate disposition of the remains. Therefore, compliance with existing State regulations with respect to disturbing human remains, including those interred outside of a formal cemetery, would result in less than significant impacts from development under the proposed Specific Plan.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None Required.

Change TCR Significance

Impact TRC-2 – Would the Specific Plan cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is: (ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

Analysis of Impacts

The definition for a Tribal Cultural Resource (TCR) is described in Section 4.18.3, above. This impact considers TCRs that are not eligible for inclusion on the CRHR (i.e., if there is not a demonstrable public interest in that information, it does not possess a special and particular quality such as being the oldest of its type or the best available example of its type, and it is not directly associated with a scientifically recognized important prehistoric event or person).

The City's existing General Plan includes policies related to preserving and improving access to historic and cultural resources within the Planning Area. The Resources Management Element of the General Plan includes Policy RM-17, which aims to initiate a cultural arts and facilities program to enhance the City image. Further, Policy RM-18 seeks to continue with the development of the community art program. Finally, Policy RM-19 aims to identify and preserve those sites/buildings that are important to the community for the benefit of the future generations that will reside or work in the City. Further, incorporation of Mitigation Measures CUL-1 through CUL-3 will assure that any new development addresses the potential for subsurface archeological deposits (which may or may not be tribal cultural resources) by ensuring proper historic and archaeological measures are taken during the development review process when appropriate.

In addition, Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code requires that, if human remains are discovered during grading or earthmoving, work must be halted and the coroner contacted to determine the MLD. If the MLD is Native American, tribal representatives will be contacted to consult on the appropriate disposition of the remains. CEQA requires the City and any project developer, including the City if it is a public works project, to comply with State law if human remains are found during excavation. Native American consultation, as prescribed by SB 18 and AB 52 helps prevent impacts to cultural resources that are ordinarily not eligible for protection under CEQA. Additionally, Public Resources Code Section 5024.1 ensures that the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe. By implementing the policies outlined in the General Plan, incorporating Mitigation Measures CUL-1 through CUL-3, and complying with existing regulations in Public Resources Code Section

5024.1, potential impacts to tribal cultural resources within the Planning Area would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Cumulative Impacts

Impact TCR-3 - Would the Specific Plan cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to tribal cultural resources?

Analysis of Impacts

There is a potential for archaeological/TCRs to exist within the Planning Area, particularly where existing older foundations are shallow, and where archaeological resources, including human remains, could remain below the prior level of disturbance. Therefore, it is possible that earthwork within the Planning Area or surrounding jurisdictions may disturb Native American tribal cultural or archaeological resources. State law requires local jurisdictions, including the City of Paramount, to consult with local Native American tribal representatives when development or public works projects may affect tribal cultural resources (i.e., SB 18 and AB 52). This government-to-government consultation process is critical to identifying actions that could have significant impacts on tribal cultural resources before any ground-disturbance occurs in the surrounding region.

On a cumulative level, impacts to tribal cultural resources from both within the Planning Area and Paramount, and the surrounding jurisdictions (i.e. the cities of Bellflower, Compton, Downey, Lakewood, Norwalk, Lynwood, South Gate and unincorporated Los Angeles County) should be considered. These jurisdictions contain TCRs which, as with all cultural resources, are non-renewable. Damaging, disturbing, or destroying TCRs results in a permanent loss of resources that can never be replaced, and future projects with impacts to cultural resources from all surrounding jurisdictions contribute to the cumulative impact to TCRs.

The City's existing General Plan includes policies related to preserving and improving access to historic and cultural resources within the Planning Area. The Resources Management Element of the General Plan includes Policy RM-17, which aims to initiate a cultural arts and facilities program to enhance the City image. Further, Policy RM-18 seeks to continue with the development of the community art program. Finally, Policy RM-19 aims to identify and preserve those sites/buildings that are important to the community for the benefit of the future generations that will reside or work in the City. Further, incorporation of Mitigation Measures CUL-1 through CUL-3 will assure that any new development addresses the potential for subsurface archeological deposits (which may or may not be tribal cultural resources) by ensuring proper historic and archaeological measures are taken during the development review process when appropriate.

Existing regulations ensure that the City considers the significance of all cultural resources which have cultural value to a Native American tribe. Incorporating this regulation into the development process helps ensure that TCRs are protected where they would otherwise not be by CEQA.

Consistent with federal and State laws, the General Plans of the surrounding jurisdictions have similar goals and policies to protect cultural resources within their boundaries as well. Finally, State law requires the City and surrounding jurisdictions to notify Native American representatives if tribal human remains are found.

With adherence to the existing General Plan policies, incorporation of Mitigation Measures CUL-1 through CUL-3, following required laws and regulations, and continuation of the City's required CEQA review of all development projects, the potential cumulative impacts to TCRs would be minimized, and future development in Planning Area under the Specific Plan would not make a significant contribution to any cumulative regional impacts on TCRs.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.18.5 – REFERENCES

California Health and Safety Code, Section 7050.5.

California Public Resources Code Section 5097.

California State Parks, 2021. *California Register of Historical Resources*. Web: https://ohp.parks.ca.gov/ListedResources/ [Accessed April 2024].

City of Paramount. 2007. *Final Paramount General Plan*. Adopted August 7, 2007. Revisions: Health and Safety Element Update and Environmental Justice Element; Adopted February 8, 2022.

National Park Service, 2021. *National Register of Historic Places*. Web: https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/database-research.htm [Accessed April 2024].

State of California Native American Heritage Commission. *Gabrielino/Tongva Nation of the Greater Los Angeles Basin*. https://nahc.ca.gov/cp/tribal-atlas-pages/gabrielino-tongva-nation/. [Accessed June, 2024].

4.19 – UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

This EIR chapter addresses utilities and service systems impacts associated with the proposed Specific Plan. Issues of interest are utilities and service systems impacts identified by the CEQA Guidelines: whether the Specific Plan will require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment, or other facilities; will have sufficient water supplies; will result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's demand in addition to existing commitments; will generate solid waste in excess of standards; and will comply with regulations related to solid waste.

4.19.1 – ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Water Services

The City of Paramount Water Division of the Public Works Department provides potable water within the Specific Plan area. Other residents outside the Specific Plan area are serviced by the Golden State Water Company. The City and Planning Area overlay the Central Groundwater Basin (Central Basin). The City has three water sources: groundwater from the Central Basin, imported surface water, and recycled water (Paramount, 2020). The City also has emergency mutual-aid domestic water connections with the City of Long Beach, the City of Downey, and Golden State Water Company. The City's current water system includes three wells; two imported water connections; approximately 130 miles of water transmission and distribution mains; and appurtenant valves, hydrants, and equipment.

Currently, the City does not have any storage reservoirs, although the groundwater basin acts as ground storage for the City. Upon the Central Basin's adjudication in 1965, the City was allocated an annual pumping right, which currently stands at 5,883 acre-feet per year plus 20% carryover rights. The City utilizes groundwater wells No. 13, 14, and 16. The three wells have a total operating capacity of 10,368,000 gallons per day. In addition to groundwater, the City, and by extension the Planning Area, receive water from imported water and recycled water supplies (UWMP, 2020). According to the UWMP, the City's Water Department Division is estimated to provide water to a service population of approximately 57,404 in 2025, and is projected to have a service population of approximately 61,266 by 2040, which represents an anticipated population increase of 3,862. According to the UWMP, the City is estimated to have a water demand of 6,267 acre-feet in 2025, and is projected to have a demand of 6,446 acre-feet by the year 2045. However, the UMWP projects the City will have a water supply of 7,902 acre-feet per year by 2040. Therefore, the UWMP projects that water supplies are adequate to meet normal domestic needs in the City of Paramount under the normal, dry, and multiple dry water years.

Wastewater Services

The City of Paramount contracts with the Los Angeles County Public Works Sewer Maintenance Division for maintenance of its sewer system. Paramount is among 37 cities and unincorporated communities that belong to the Consolidated Sewer Maintenance District (CSMD). The collection system consists of over 4,600 miles of gravity sewer lines and a total of 159 pump stations. The City of Paramount does not have a sewer maintenance agreement with the CSMD, and is responsible for the upkeep of sewer lines within the City. The Paramount Public Works Department is responsible for the city's sewer collection system, which transports domestic

sewage to a treatment plant. Domestic sewage includes wastewater from household and commercial plumbing, such as toilets, showers, and sinks. In Paramount, sewage travels from private plumbing pipes into the City's sanitary sewer system, which eventually carries it to the Joint Water Pollution Control Plant in the City of Carson. There, contaminants are removed from the sewage through a multi-stage process, which includes settling, filtering, and biological and chemical treatment. The treated water is then discharged into local waterways or used as reclaimed water. There are existing sewer connections that connect the Planning Area to the main lines along Rosecrans Avenue and 3rd Street. Additionally, there are existing sewer facilities that service the existing uses within the Planning Area.

Stormwater Services

The storm drain system in Paramount is maintained by the Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD) which conveys stormwater through a network of mains and catch basins until it is eventually discharged in the Pacific Ocean via the Los Angeles River and its tributaries, including the Los Cerritos Channel. The City is covered by the Los Angeles County National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). In 2012, Los Angeles County adopted the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Permit (MS4 Permit), which allows permittees within the county to develop Watershed Management Programs (WMPs). This permit is administered by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (LARWQCB). WMPs implement requirements of the MS4 permit on a local scale through various strategies, measures, and best management practices (BMPs). Participation in the MS4 Permit serves as an NPDES Permit, and fulfills waste discharge requirements under State law. As required by the NPDES permit, the City of Paramount has developed a Storm Water Quality Management Plan (SQMP) to improve and protect the quality of storm water runoff within the City. The SQMP is implemented by ordinances, requirements, and policies that govern public and private construction projects, site management, and operations. Existing developments within the Planning Area include stormwater systems that direct runoff into the local storm drainage system.

Solid Waste and Recycling Services

Solid waste collection, disposal, and recycling services in Paramount are provided by both and Athens Services (which acquired CalMet Services Inc. in 2022). According to the City's General Plan, solid waste collected in the City is taken to the Savage Canyon Landfill located in Whittier. This landfill has a disposal acreage of 102 acres, a maximum permitted capacity of 19,337,450 cubic yards (CY), and a maximum daily throughput of 3,350 tons per day (CalRecycle 2024). Additionally, the City has a Material Recycling Facility (MRF) and transfer station within its boundaries (Paramount Resource Recycling, operated by Athens Services) located at 7230 Petterson Lane.

Electricity Services

The Southern California Edison (SCE) Company is the electrical purveyor for the City of Paramount and the Planning Area. Edison's existing electrical facilities are mostly overhead and underground conductors. The overhead conductors share poles with telecommunications and cable TV facilities. Along Arthur Avenue there are high voltage overhead conductors from Denver Street to Rose Street. Along Laredo Avenue there are high and low voltage overhead conductors from Howe Street to Rose Street. Along McClure Avenue there are high voltage overhead conductors from Denver Street to end of the street. Along Pearle Street there are high and low voltage overhead conductors from Paramount Boulevard to Arthur Avenue. Along Howe Street there are high and low voltage overhead conductors between Orizaba Avenue to Arthur Avenue.

East and west of Paramount Boulevard there are high voltage underground conductors. Along Rose Street there are high and low voltage overhead conductors from Orizaba Avenue to Arthur Avenue. Along Paramount Boulevard there are high voltage underground conductors running from above Century Boulevard through to Rose Street. Along Rosecrans Avenue there are high and low voltage overhead conductors from Orizaba Avenue through past the Union Pacific Railroad. Also, there are high voltage underground conductors on the south side of Rosecrans Avenue east and west of Paramount Boulevard. Along Anderson Street there are high voltage overhead conductors between Howe Street to Rosecrans Avenue. There are also existing Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) transmission lines running along the Metro right-of-way (future Southeast Gateway Line corridor) near Rosecrans Ave and Paramount Blvd.

Natural Gas Services

Natural gas services within the Planning Area are provided by the Southern California Gas Company (SCGC).

Telecommunications Services

Telecommunication services within the Planning Area are provided by AT&T and Spectrum.

4.19.2 – REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Federal

Clean Water Act (CWA)

The CWA is the cornerstone of surface water quality protection in the United States. The statute employs a variety of regulatory and non-regulatory tools to sharply reduce direct pollutant discharges into waterways, finance municipal wastewater treatment facilities, and manage polluted runoff. The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) are responsible for ensuring implementation and compliance with the provisions of the Federal CWA.

National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)

The NPDES permit program addresses water pollution by regulating point sources that discharge pollutants to waters of the United States. Created in 1972 by the federal Clean Water Act, the NPDES permit program authorizes state governments to perform many permitting, administrative, and enforcement aspects of the program. The Act prohibits discharging “pollutants” through a “point source” into a “water of the United States” unless they have an NPDES permit. The permit contains limits on what can be discharged, creates monitoring and reporting requirements, and other provisions to ensure the discharge does not diminish water quality and/or people’s health.

State

<u>California Safe Drinking Water Act</u>

The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA), administered by United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in coordination with the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), is the main Federal law that ensures the quality of drinking water. Under SDWA, EPA sets standards for

drinking water quality and oversees the states, localities, and water suppliers who implement those standards.

California Department of Resources, Recycling, and Recovery (CalRecycle)

CalRecycle oversees, manages, and monitors waste generated in California. It provides limited grants and loans to help California cities, counties, businesses, and organizations meet the State waste reduction, reuse, and recycling goals. It also provides funds to clean up solid waste disposal sites and co-disposal sites, including facilities that accept hazardous waste substances and non-hazardous waste. CalRecycle develops, manages, and enforces waste disposal and recycling regulations, including AB 939 and SB 1016 (see below).

California Public Utilities Commission Rule 20

Under California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) Rule 20, undergrounding projects are financed by utility rate money, combined rate funds and local tax proceeds, or private funds, depending on whether Rule 20A, Rule 20B, or Rule 20C provisions apply.

Rule 20A. Rule 20A projects are paid for by all SCE customers and ratepayers, not just those who live in locations where facilities will be undergrounded. To qualify for full funding through utility rate proceeds, projects must produce a benefit to the general public, not just customers in the affected area, by satisfying one or more of these criteria:

a. The location has an unusually heavy concentration of overhead facilities.
b. The location is heavily traveled.
c. The location qualifies as an arterial or major collector road in a local government's general plan.
d. The overhead equipment must be located within or pass through a civic, recreational or scenic area.

Using CPUC formulas, SCE allocates rate funds to communities for undergrounding based on previous allocations, the ratio of customers served by overhead facilities to all the customers in the community, and the fraction that customers in the community represent of all SCE customers. Local governments use these formulas to project allocations, which allow them to prioritize projects and develop project schedules. Because funds are limited, local governments sometimes must wait and accumulate their allocations before starting an undergrounding project.

Rule 20B. If an area is not eligible for Rule 20A, or if local government cannot or chooses not to rely on the Rule 20A allocation process, Rule 20B allows rate funds to subsidize an undergrounding project. The subsidy includes an amount equal to about 5-20% of the total cost. The remaining cost is funded by local governments or through neighborhood special assessment districts.

Rule 20C. Rule 20C enables property owners to pay for undergrounding electric lines and equipment if neither Rule 20A nor 20B applies.

Assembly Bill 939 (AB 939) (Public Resources Code 41780)

The California Integrated Waste Management Act Requires cities and counties to prepare integrated waste management plans (IWMPs) and to divert 50 percent of solid waste from landfills beginning in calendar year 2000 and each year thereafter. AB 939 also requires cities and

counties to prepare Source Reduction and Recycling Elements (SRRE) as part of the IWMP. These elements are designed to develop recycling services to achieve diversion goals, stimulate local recycling in manufacturing, and stimulate the purchase of recycled products.

Senate Bill (SB) 1016

This requires that the 50 percent solid waste diversion requirement established by AB 939 be expressed in pounds per person per day. SB 1016 changed the CalRecycle review process for each municipality's IWMP. The CalRecycle Board reviews a jurisdiction's diversion rate compliance in accordance with a specified schedule. As of 2018, the Board is required to review a jurisdiction's source reduction and recycling element and hazardous waste element every two years.

Senate Bills 610 and 221, Water Supply Assessment and Verification

Senate Bills (SB) 610 and 221 amended State law to improve the link between the information on water supply availability and certain land use decisions made by cities and counties. Both statutes require detailed information regarding water availability (water supply assessment or WSA) to be provided to city and county decisionmakers prior to approval of specified large development projects (projects greater than 500 dwelling units, or an equivalent water demand). Both statutes require this detailed information to be included in the administrative record. Under SB 610, WSAs must be furnished to local governments for inclusion in the environmental document for certain projects, as defined in Water Code 10912, subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Under SB 221, approval by a city or county of certain residential subdivisions requires an affirmative written verification of sufficient water supply.

Statewide Water Conservation Act of 2009 (Senate Bill X7-7)

In November 2009, the California State legislature passed, and the Governor approved, a comprehensive package of water legislation, including Senate Bill (SB) X7-7 addressing water conservation. In general SB X7-7 requires a 20 percent reduction in per capita urban water use by 2020, with an interim 10 percent target in 2015. The legislation requires urban water users to develop consistent water use targets and to use those targets in their Urban Water Management Plans (UWMPs). SB X7-7 also requires certain agricultural water supplies to implement a variety of water conservation and management practices and to submit Agricultural Water Management Plans.

State Water Resources Control Board

The SWRCB, in coordination with nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards, performs functions related to water quality, including issuance and oversight of wastewater discharge permits (e.g., NPDES), other programs regulating stormwater runoff, and underground and above-ground storage tanks. The SWRCB has also issued statewide waste discharge requirements for sanitary sewer systems, which include requirements for development of a sewer system management plan (SSMP).

Title 22 of California Code of Regulations

Title 22 regulates the use of reclaimed wastewater. In most cases, only disinfected tertiary water may be used on food crops where the recycled water would come into contact with the edible portion of the crop. Standards are also prescribed for the use of treated wastewater for irrigation

of parks, playgrounds, landscaping, and other non-agricultural irrigation. Regulation of reclaimed water is governed by the nine RWQCBs and the California Department of Public Health (CDPH).

Urban Water Management Planning Act

In 1983, the California Legislature enacted the Urban Water Management Planning Act (Water Code Sections 10610–10656). The Act states that every urban water supplier that provides water to 3,000 or more customers, or that provides over 3,000 acre-feet (AF) annually, should make every effort to ensure the appropriate level of reliability in its water service sufficient to meet the needs of its various categories of customers during normal, dry, and multiple dry years. The Act requires that urban water suppliers adopt an urban water management plan at least once every five years and submit it to the Department of Water Resources. Noncompliant urban water suppliers are ineligible to receive funding pursuant to Division 24 or Division 26 of the California Water Code, or receive drought assistance from the State, until the urban water management plan (UWMP) is submitted and deemed complete pursuant to the Urban Water Management Planning Act.

Regional

Los Angeles Basin MS4 Permit

Municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4) are issued permits based on the size of the municipality. MS4 permit requirements include reduction of pollutant discharges to the “maximum extent practicable” and protection of water quality. Requirements also include identification of major outfalls and pollutant loads and control of discharges from new development and redevelopment. To address these objectives, municipalities are required to prepare stormwater management plans. Although the NPDES program does not regulate nonpoint sources of pollution, the Los Angeles Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) has other programs in place to address nonpoint sources. The MS4 Permit also contains requirements that are necessary to improve efforts to reduce the discharge of pollutants in stormwater runoff to the maximum extent practicable and achieve water quality standards. The MS4 permit requires developments and redevelopments to implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) to control pollution in runoff from permitted sites. The BMPs that are required include the following programs:

- Litter, debris, and trash control
- Incident response investigation and reporting
- New development and redevelopment
- Private construction activities
- Permittee activities (for sewage, streets and roads, and MS4 facilities)
- Public education and outreach
- Implementation of Total Maximum Daily Loads
- Reporting Requirements and Notifications

Los Angeles Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan

Pursuant to AB939, the County prepared the 1996 Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan (CIWMP) in collaboration with its cities to ensure a coordinated effort at solid waste reduction and landfilling. The CIWMP, is comprised of five key elements, the Countywide Summary Plan, the Countywide Siting Element, the Source Reduction and Recycling Element (SRRE), the Household Hazardous Waste Element (HHWE) and the Non-Disposal Facility Element (NDFE).

- Countywide Summary Plan: The Countywide Summary Plan contains goals and policies, and a summary of issues faced by the County and its cities. The Summary Plan provides steps needed for all cities to meet the 50% diversion mandate.
- Countywide Siting Element: The Siting Element provides evidence that there is at least 15 years of remaining capacity to hold waste for the County and its cities. If there is not adequate capacity, the Siting Element contains discussion of alternative disposal sites and additional diversion programs.
- Source Reduction and Recycling Element (SRRE): The SRRE provides analysis of the local waste stream to determine where to focus diversion efforts.
- Household Hazardous Waste Element (HHWE): The HHWE details programs that assist in recycling, treatment and disposal practices for Household Hazardous Waste programs.
- Non-Disposal Facility Element (NDFE): The NDFE goal is to identify existing and proposed waste management facilities that would require a solid waste permit to be operationally compliant.

Local

City of Paramount General Plan

The City of Paramount 2007 General Plan includes the following policies related to utilities and service systems:

Health and Safety Element

Policy HS-4: The City of Paramount will maintain an inventory of alternative emergency resources in the City (potable water, water delivery systems, communication, security, waste collection, and emergency power for critical facilities).

Policy HS-44: Maximize the resiliency of essential public facilities to risks and hazards of flooding.

Policy HS-45: Evaluate the need to expand the capacity of flood control facilities to minimize flood hazards resulting from extreme weather events.

Policy HS-46: Monitor the work of the Army Corps of Engineers' and other federal agencies' response plan to repair the Whittier Narrows Dam.

Policy HS-47: Encourage natural flood control infrastructure and techniques to capture storm water, recharge aquifers, and prevent flooding near established drainage systems and channels.

Policy HS-54: Consult with Central Basin Water District to implement Drought Response Plan.

Public Facilities Element

Policy PF-2: The City of Paramount will provide water storage and delivery capacity to meet normal usage and fire requirements.

Policy PF-4: The City of Paramount will protect, conserve, and enhance water resources through implementation of the Water Master Plan.

Policy PF-5: The City of Paramount will maintain economical and responsive solid waste collection and disposal services for its residents.

Policy PF-7: The City of Paramount will continue to implement its recycling and waste reduction programs as a means to comply with the AB 939 requirements.

Policy PF-8: The City of Paramount will provide adequate sewage service to ensure that waste disposal practices are in accordance with policies and procedures of the Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County.

Policy PF-9: The City of Paramount will work to eliminate problems of ponding on local streets.

City of Paramount Municipal Code

Chapters 6.08 (Garbage and Rubbish Disposal), 6.09 (Collection of Recyclable Materials), 6.10 (Diversion of Construction and Demolition Waste), 6.12 (Sewage Disposal), 6.13 (Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems), 6.14 (Solid Waste Disposal), and 6.15 (Stormwater and Urban Runoff Pollution Control) all regulate and provide guidance on power, water, and waste utility operation within the City. This includes guidance on the permitted disposal of waste materials and the maintenance of stormwater facilities within the city.

4.19.3 – SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLDS

As identified in Appendix G of the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the proposed Specific Plan could result in a significant impact if it would:

A. Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects.

B. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years.

C. Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments.

D. Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals.

E. Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

F. Would the project cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to utilities and service systems.

4.19.4 – IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

This section describes potential impacts related to utilities and service systems which could result from the implementation of the proposed Specific Plan and recommends mitigation measures as needed to reduce significant impacts.

New or Expanded Facilities

Impact UTIL-1 – Would the Specific Plan require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?

Analysis of Impacts

Implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would include the gradual development of future residential and non-residential developments within Planning Area that would increase demand for utilities and service systems. For this reason, the proposed Specific Plan includes Chapter 6 (Infrastructure Plan) which provides an overview of existing and planned infrastructure facilities, and outlines recommended infrastructure upgrades for the Planning Area. In anticipation of future development in the Planning Area, it is expected that existing infrastructure will require expanded or additional facilities considering the changes in land use which would favor the need to increase existing utilities and service systems capacity. Below are summaries of the Specific Plan's potential impacts to water, wastewater treatment, stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, and telecommunications facilities and the recommendations provided in Chapter 6 of the Specific Plan.

Water Supply. According to the City's 2020 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP), the City was projected to have a service population of approximately 57,404 in 2025, and is projected to have a service population of approximately 61,266 by 2040. This represents an estimated increase in population of approximately 3,862. The estimated future population for the City's service area was based on projections obtained from the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). The SCAG data incorporates demographic trends, existing land use, general plan land use policies, and input and projections from the Department of Finance (DOF) and the US Census Bureau at the time those documents were prepared (circa 2020). The UWMP indicated these population estimates were used to prepare its water consumption estimates (page 5-2). It should be noted that the City's population has been declining in recent years and is now estimated to be less than 53,000 residents (DOF, 2025). Table 3-3 in Section 3, Project Description, shows the anticipated growth in both the residential and nonresidential components beyond existing conditions within the Specific Plan area. As shown in Table 3-3, it is anticipated that buildout of the proposed Specific Plan would result in approximately 4,643 additional permanent residents within the Paramount water service area by 2045, which is in excess of that estimated in the UWMP to adequately supply future growth. Since most of the City's water supply comes from groundwater sources, the growth represented by the proposed Specific Plan exceeds that upon which the UWMP was developed. Therefore, long-term local groundwater supply is a potentially significant impact that requires mitigation.

The analysis provided in Chapter 6 (Infrastructure Plan) of the proposed Specific Plan determined that the City of Paramount has adequate water supply and pressure from the City's existing water wells to supply the Planning Area over the life of the Plan. However, it was also determined that water systems in the Planning Area need upgrading to be able to handle the increased capacity

generated by future development under the proposed Specific Plan. Further, because the existing City of Paramount water network provides water for both domestic consumption and fire flow in the same network, the existing water network must be capable of providing adequate peak water supply fire flow simultaneously throughout the City and the fire flow requirement would govern the overall demand that needs to be met. Proposed improvements to the system consist of upsizing pipe diameters and installing additional water lines, meters, valves, hydrants, fittings and appurtenances. Implementation of the proposed Specific Plan's recommendations contained in Chapter 6 (Infrastructure Plan) would ensure that the water system in the Planning Area can adequately service increased demands for water over the life of the Plan.

The City has also taken measures to require new developers to estimate and mitigate for landscape irrigation water use by utilizing drought-tolerant materials in new landscape designs and installing smart irrigation sprinkler systems to help conserve water when not needed. Also, if new construction is within 150 feet of a public reclaimed water distribution system, the contractor is required to connect to the reclaimed water system for irrigation water needs. According to the Central Basin Municipal Water District map there is an existing Central Basin recycled water system running alongside the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, Metro (Former Pacific Electric Railway Lines) tracks north of Rosecrans Avenue and Paramount Boulevard that future projects within the Planning Area can connect to for irrigation water needs.

Additionally, the Public Facilities Element of the existing Paramount General Plan includes Policy PF-2 which mandates the City to provide water storage and delivery capacity to meet normal usage and fire requirements, and Policy PF-4 which directs the City to protect, conserve, and enhance water resources through implementation of the Water Master Plan. Finally, Mitigation Measure HYD-1 would assure there would be adequate groundwater supplies for future City and Planning Area residents (refer to Section 4.10.4).

Future development under the proposed Specific Plan would comply with existing General Plan policies regarding water supply and quality; State and regional regulatory requirements; the City's development review process; and City Municipal Code requirements. However, even with this compliance, the potential population increase from the proposed Specific Plan means that long-term water supply impacts from the proposed project could potentially be significant. Therefore, Mitigation Measure HYD-1 is incorporated to help assure there would be adequate groundwater supplies for future City and Planning Area residents. With application of existing General Plan policies, implementation of the proposed Infrastructure Plan included in the Specific Plan, and incorporation of Mitigation Measure, HYD-1, development within the Planning Area as part of the proposed Specific Plan would not require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects.

<u>Level of Significance Before Mitigation</u>

Potentially significant.

<u>Mitigation Measures</u>

HYD-1 **Water Demand Management.** New developments under the Specific Plan that will be served by local water utility providers shall not be approved if they increase water use in excess of what is identified for supply in 2045 under the most recent Urban Water Management Plan for the involved local water providers.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Less than significant.

Wastewater Treatment. The City of Paramount contracts with the Los Angeles County Public Works Sewer Maintenance Division for maintenance of its sewer system. Paramount is among 37 cities and unincorporated communities that belong to the Consolidated Sewer Maintenance District (CSMD). The collection system consists of over 4,600 miles of gravity sewer lines and a total of 159 pump stations. The City of Paramount does not have a sewer maintenance agreement with the CSMD and is responsible for the upkeep of sewer lines within the City. The Paramount Public Works Department is responsible for the City's sewer collection system, which transports domestic sewage to a treatment plant. Domestic sewage includes wastewater from household and commercial plumbing, such as toilets, showers, and sinks. In Paramount, sewage travels from private plumbing pipes into the City's sanitary sewer system, which eventually carries it to the Joint Water Pollution Control Plant in the City of Carson. There, contaminants are removed from the sewage through a multi-stage process, which includes settling, filtering, and biological and chemical treatment. The treated water is then discharged into local waterways or used as reclaimed water. There are existing sewer connections that connect the Planning Area to the main lines along Rosecrans Avenue and 3rd Street. Additionally, there are existing sewer facilities that service the existing uses within the Planning Area.

Future development as part of the proposed Specific Plan would connect to existing wastewater facilities that already connect to the Planning Area. According to the Infrastructure Plan (Chapter 6) of the proposed Specific Plan, the projected total peak flow rate amount of sewage that will be generated at buildout of the proposed Specific Plan is estimated to be approximately 2.662 cubic-feet per second (cfs) in total. This estimated flow accounts for a maximum allowable buildout scenario for the Planning Area. The Infrastructure Plan includes a recommendation for a minimum sewer main pipe size of 12 inches in diameter to collect all 2.662 cfs cumulative sewage peak flows from the entire proposed project development plan area and divert them to existing sewer lines. A recommendation was also included to separate the entire sewer flows midway across the 67-acre Planning Area into two separate flows to allow the proposed sewer to reach the existing sewer point of connection and maintain adequate underground coverage and a minimum slope requirement for the sever line. This means that the total calculated sewage flow of 2.662 cfs flow will be separated to be 1.678 cfs and 0.984 cfs flows. The 1.678 cfs will flow in the north direction to connect to an existing Sewer Trunk line P-0136 located at Arthur Avenue. The remaining 0.984 cfs will flow in the south direction to connect to an existing Sewer Trunk line P-014 located at Garfield Avenue. Both existing trunk lines are estimated to have enough capacity to receive the estimated increased sewage flows from the proposed Specific Plan.

According to the Los Angeles Sanitation District (District) data received for the Arthur Avenue Trunk sewer line, the line has an existing flow rate capacity at the 24-inch pipe segment to be approximately 8.0 cfs. The existing peak flow wastewater elevation was last measured to be approximately 3.0 cfs on July 17, 2016. The addition of 1.678 cfs peak flows calculated from the Specific Plan area would increase the existing wastewater peak flow in the Arthur Trunk Sewer line to 4.678 cfs. This calculated estimate and the existing sewer data show enough capacity for the additional estimated peak flows. The Garfield Avenue Trunk sewer line has an existing flow rate capacity at the 42-inch pipe segment, approximately 45.0 cfs. The existing peak flow wastewater elevation was last measured to be approximately 16.0 cfs on June 6, 2020. The addition of approximately 0.984 cfs peak flows calculated from the proposed Specific Plan would increase the existing wastewater peak flow in the Garfield Ave Trunk Sewer line to approximately 16.984 cfs. Theoretically, this calculated estimate and the existing sewer data show enough

capacity for the additional estimated peak flows under buildout of the proposed Specific Plan. Details for any future developments within the Planning Area under the proposed Specific Plan will be submitted to the District for review to determine whether or not sufficient trunk sewer capacity exists to serve each project and if District facilities would be affected by the development. This is accomplished through the Districts' "Will Serve Program."

Finally, the Public Facilities Element of the existing Paramount General Plan includes Policy PF-8 which requires the City to provide adequate sewage service to ensure that waste disposal practices are in accordance with policies and procedures of the Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County.

With application of existing General Plan policies, implementation of the recommendations of the proposed Infrastructure Plan, and adherence to existing policies and regulations, anticipated population growth and expanded development within the Planning Area under the proposed Specific Plan is not anticipated to require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded wastewater treatment facilities or processes.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Stormwater Drainage. According to the Infrastructure Plan (Chapter 6) of the proposed Specific Plan, the Planning Area has existing storm drain systems owned and maintained by either Los Angeles County or the City of Paramount. The Planning Area currently has storm drain inlets along Rosecrans Avenue, Paramount Boulevard and Somerset Boulevard. These streets have several existing County storm drain lines and one City storm drain line that connects to the County's storm drain along part of Paramount Boulevard. The City's 1998 Drainage Master Plan report includes a drainage map illustrating existing storm drain and proposed drainage facilities. The drainage map shows the Planning Area and surrounding areas without future or proposed storm drains. The nearest proposed storm drain is shown in Garfield Avenue between Rosecrans Avenue and Somerset Boulevard. The entire City of Paramount is tributary to the Los Angeles River Watershed. The Los Angeles River runs north to south and is located adjacent to the I-710 Freeway to the west of the Planning Area. The watershed is 834 square miles in size and is one of the largest watersheds in Los Angeles County. Overall, existing land use, drainage patterns, and drainage areas tributary to the Planning Area are completely developed. The existing impervious area within the Planning Area is not expected to change much to affect existing and proposed hydraulic capacities of existing drainage facilities. However, significant changes from pre-development to new development that increase drainage runoff would require the calculation of treatment flows and retention volumes to be mitigated and must follow environmental regulations set forth by Federal, State and local government agencies having jurisdiction.

According to the analysis provided in Chapter 6 (Infrastructure Plan) of the proposed Specific Plan, all of the existing storm drain networks surrounding the Clearwater Specific Plan area are currently over capacity. The water elevations shown on the existing storm drain plans are several feet above the finished surface elevation, and these existing storm drain lines have no additional capacity available. For this reason, the proposed Infrastructure Plan includes recommendations to include detention basins within proposed open areas and biofiltration planters throughout the

Planning Area along proposed curb and gutter locations. The detention basins would be designed to detain runoff up to 72-hours and then release water after the peak hours of a rain intensity duration. Additionally, all pumps would be installed inside the detention chambers to release water once the water elevations reach a maximum allowable elevation. The drainage map shows flow capacities for a 10-year storm event. Based on the hydrology/hydraulics analysis provided in Chapter 6 (Infrastructure Plan) of the proposed Specific Plan, future development would require storm drain improvements as illustrated in Figure 3 – Storm Drain Conceptual Layouts. These would include upgraded storm drain pipe lines, storm drain fittings, parkway drains, storm drain manholes, storm drain pumps, and storm drain detention and retention basins. With these upgrades, impacts to area stormwater drainage facilities would be less than significant.

Further, because the Planning Area is completely built out (except for landscaped areas and common grassy areas), development under the proposed Specific Plan would not result in a significant increase in impermeable surfaces that could lead to the potential for increased stormwater runoff. The proposed Specific Plan does not include any specific development or project that would substantially alter existing drainage patterns in the Planning Area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces. In addition, future development would be assessed at a site-specific project-level when proposed. Any future projects within the Planning Area under the proposed Specific Plan would be required to comply with Specific Plan infrastructure requirements and, to local, State, and federal laws and policies (see Section 4.10.2) regulating impacts to streams, rivers, and drainage patterns through the area that may also lead to the increase in impervious surfaces. Any potential impacts would be required to be analyzed in subsequent project-level CEQA documentation.

There is no significant anticipated risk of future development creating downstream runoff by increasing impervious surfaces on specific sites because the Planning Area is almost completely built out and covered with impermeable surfaces. The Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) regulates the discharge of storm water from municipalities and activities within their jurisdiction including construction. The City is a signatory of the Los Angeles County Waste Discharge Requirements for Municipal Storm Water and Urban Runoff Discharge. In addition, the City's development review process examines potential increases in runoff from development sites and requires post-development runoff to not exceed pre-development levels through project design such as the use of detention basins.

Finally, the Health and Safety Element of the existing Paramount General Plan includes Policy HS-45 which requires the City to evaluate the need to expand the capacity of flood control facilities to minimize flood hazards resulting from extreme weather events. In addition, the Health and Safety Element includes Policy HS-47 which seeks to encourage natural flood control infrastructure and techniques to capture storm water, recharge aquifers, and prevent flooding near established drainage systems and channels. Finally, the Public Facilities Element of the existing Paramount General Plan includes Policy PF-9 which requires the City of Paramount to work to eliminate problems of ponding on local streets. Future development would under the proposed Specific Plan would be required to comply with these General Plan policies.

With implementation of the infrastructure requirements of the Specific Plan, continued regulatory compliance with State and regional water quality standards, incorporation of guidelines for runoff control in the Municipal Code, and implementation of existing General Plan policies, development within the Planning Area under the proposed Specific Plan would not result in significant impacts related to the local storm drain system.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Electric Power. The Southern California Edison (SCE) Company is the electrical purveyor for the City of Paramount. Most of the existing electrical distribution facilities in the Planning Area are aerial facilities with some underground conductors. The overhead conductors share poles with telecommunications and cable TV facilities. The decision and funding to upgrade the power supply facilities and the number of upgrades to meet the demand of future development would be determined by SCE in coordination with the City after developers have submitted their building plans. Demand for services and the ability to serve new developments are generally determined on a case-by-case basis.

The Infrastructure Plan (Chapter 6) of the proposed Specific Plan recommends that existing aerial electrical facilities be placed underground whenever funding is available. Underground electricity provides higher reliability, is safer in general and is also less unsightly. One of the potential funding mechanisms is CPUC Rule 20. As described in Section 4.19.2, CPUC Rule 20 is a set of policies and procedures established by the CPUC to regulate the conversion of overhead electric equipment to underground facilities, a process often referred to "undergrounding." Rule 20 determines the level of ratepayer funding for different undergrounding arrangements. Prior to any undergrounding process that results from development under the proposed Specific Plan, SCE would take the lead in contacting the other low voltage utilities that might be sharing the power poles with SCE aerial facilities, such as the telecommunication providers (AT&T and Spectrum) and cable TV provider (Spectrum) to coordinate and execute a joint trench. During this process, SCE would also reach out to the City's Building and Safety Division of the Planning and Building Department for their assistance in contacting and coordinating with the aforementioned utility providers. In addition, prior to approving any new development under the proposed Specific Plan, the City would contact SCE regional manager for the Paramount study area and set up an inspection at the new development site in order to determine whether the existing aerial SCE facilities in the area qualify for Rule 20A funding. For these reasons, implementation of the Specific Plan would not require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded electric power facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Natural Gas. The Southern California Gas Company (SoCal Gas) is the only natural gas purveyor for the residents and businesses in the City of Paramount. The entire Planning Area has an extensive natural gas network with sufficient and comprehensive coverage, and all the parcels within the Planning Area have access to natural gas. The existing pressurized gas lines within the Planning Area range from 1-inch to 4-inch lines, with lateral connections to residential and

commercial customers ranging from ½-inch to ¾-inch plastic lines. According to the Infrastructure Plan (Chapter 6) of the proposed Specific Plan, SoCal Gas's existing natural gas infrastructure within the Planning Area has no reported system deficiencies and can accommodate the potential new residential and commercial development under the proposed Specific Plan. Upon submittal of building plans for future developments under the proposed Specific Plan, an analysis on the capacity and capability to meet future demand would be conducted by the Southern California Gas Company (So Cal Gas) in coordination with the County. Improvements are assumed to be performed and paid for by SoCal Gas. Therefore, implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would not require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded natural gas facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Telecommunications. The Planning Area is within the service area of AT&T and Spectrum, both of which are private utility companies. The current local telecommunications network lacks the high-speed internet service that would be in demand by future businesses and residents in the Planning Area. Distance is a major factor that limits the availability of internet speeds on copper-based networks because they use electrical signals which weaken as they travel over a distance. The farther from a network node, the slower the maximum speed is available. Fiber technology uses light waves to transmit data at high speeds, regardless of their distance from a network node. AT&T has aerial, buried, underground, and conduit assets within the Planning Area. AT&T aerial lines are either cable or fiber optic and are attached to utility poles on the streets that service residential and commercial customers. Buried lines are copper cables that are straight-buried without conduit. Underground lines are copper cables inside conduit. Conduit lines are fiber optic cable inside conduit. The normal size of all these conduits are 4 inches and they are placed 30 to 36 inches underground. AT&T has conduit lines running along Paramount Boulevard from Denver Street to Rosecrans Avenue and along Rosecrans Avenue between Arthur Avenue to Anderson Street. There are also sparse conduit assets along Howe Street and Rose Street from Paramount Boulevard to Anderson Street. Spectrum offers internet, TV, home phone service, and mobile over its broadband network. Spectrum currently only offers cable internet within the City of Paramount. Plans and internet speeds vary greatly between areas; all cable service is provided through coaxial cable to deliver fast and reliable internet connections. Spectrum has underground facilities along Paramount Boulevard from Denver Street southbound to Rosecrans Avenue. There are also a few underground lateral connections on McClure Avenue between Denver Street to Rose Street and Orizaba Avenue between Howe Street to Rosecrans Avenue. The local telecommunication system providers would assess future demand for services and the ability to serve new developments on a case-by-case basis.

Upon submittal of building plans for future developments under the proposed Specific Plan, an analysis of the capacity and capability for meeting future demands within the Planning Area would be conducted. If undergrounding of existing aerial telecommunication facilities is required as a result of future development within the Planning Area, SCE would reach out to AT&T and/or Spectrum and coordinate a joint trench. SCE would dictate the layout of the trench, and the telecommunication lines would follow. An analysis on the capacity and capability to meet future demand would be conducted by telecom companies in the study area who would construct and

fund necessary improvements, as needed. For these reasons, implementation of the Specific Plan would not require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Water Supplies

Impact UTIL-2 – Would there be sufficient water supplies available to serve reasonably foreseeable future development in the Planning Area during normal, dry and multiple dry years?

Analysis of Impacts

Impacts to water supply facilities is discussed in Impact UTIL-1 above. The Specific Plan proposes the development of approximately 2,000 new residential units spread out among multistory residential buildings, as well as approximately 926,731 square feet of additional nonresidential building area. This increase in residential and nonresidential building area would result in an additional 4,643 residents and 138 employees within the Planning Area by the 2045 horizon year. According to the UWMP, the City's Water Division of the Public Works Department is estimated to provide water to a service population of approximately 57,404 in 2025 and is projected to have a service population of approximately 61,266 by 2040. According to the UWMP, the City is estimated to have a water demand of 6,267 acre-feet in 2025 and is projected to have a demand of 6,446 acre-feet by the year 2045. The UMWP projects the City will have a water supply of 7,902 acre-feet per year by 2040. As such, the UWMP projects that water supplies are adequate to meet normal domestic needs in the City of Paramount under the normal, dry, and multiple dry water years.

The analysis provided in Chapter 6 (Infrastructure Plan) of the proposed Specific Plan determined that the City of Paramount has adequate water supply and pressure from the City's existing water wells to supply the Planning Area over the life of the Plan. However, it was also determined that water systems in the Planning Area need upgrading to be able to handle the increased capacity generated by future development under the proposed Specific Plan. Further, because the existing City of Paramount water network supplies both domestic and fire water in the same network, the existing water network must be capable of providing adequate peak water supply to both domestic water and fire water simultaneously throughout the City and the Fire flow requirement would govern the demand needed to supply. Therefore, the Infrastructure Plan of the proposed Specific Plan (Chapter 6) includes recommendations for improvements to the City's water supply system. Proposed improvements to the system consist of upsizing pipe diameters and installing additional water lines, meters, valves, hydrants, fittings and appurtenances. Implementation of the proposed Specific Plan's recommendations contained in Chapter 6 (Infrastructure Plan) would ensure that the water system in the Planning Area can adequately service increased demands for water over the life of the Plan.

The City has also taken measures to require new developers to estimate and mitigate for landscape irrigation water use by utilizing drought-tolerant materials in new landscape designs and installing smart irrigation sprinkler systems to help conserve water when not needed. Also, if new construction is within 150 feet of a public reclaimed water distribution system, the contractor is required to connect to the reclaimed water system for irrigation water needs. According to the Central Basin Municipal Water District map there is an existing Central Basin recycled water system running alongside the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, Metro (former Pacific Electric Railway Lines) tracks north of Rosecrans Avenue and Paramount Boulevard that future projects within the Planning Area can connect to for irrigation water needs.

Finally, the Public Facilities Element of the existing Paramount General Plan includes Policy PF-2 which mandates the City to provide water storage and delivery capacity to meet normal usage and fire requirements, and Policy PF-4 which directs the City to protect, conserve, and enhance water resources through implementation of the Water Master Plan.

Implementation of the Specific Plan would see the phased development of new residential and commercial uses over a period of 20 years. With application of existing General Plan policies, implementation of the recommendations of the proposed Infrastructure Plan, and continued regulatory compliance with State and regional water quality standards, development within Planning Area as part of the proposed Specific Plan would not result in insufficient water supplies necessary to serve reasonably foreseeable future development in the Planning Area during normal, dry and multiple dry years.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Wastewater Treatment

Impact UTIL-3 – Would the Specific Plan result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?

Analysis of Impacts

Impacts to wastewater treatment facilities are discussed in Impact UTIL-1 above. The City of Paramount contracts with the Los Angeles County Public Works Sewer Maintenance Division for maintenance of its sewer system. Paramount is among 37 cities and unincorporated communities that belong to the Consolidated Sewer Maintenance District (CSMD). The collection system consists of over 4,600 miles of gravity sewer lines and a total of 159 pump stations. Domestic sewage includes wastewater from household and commercial plumbing, such as toilets, showers, and sinks. In Paramount, sewage travels from private plumbing pipes into the City's sanitary sewer system, which eventually carries it to the Joint Water Pollution Control Plant in the City of Carson. There, contaminants are removed from the sewage through a multi-stage process, which includes settling, filtering, and biological and chemical treatment. The treated water is then discharged into local waterways or used as reclaimed water. There are existing sewer connections that connect the Planning Area to the main lines along Rosecrans Avenue and 3rd

Street. Additionally, there are existing sewer facilities that service the existing uses within the Planning Area.

According to the Infrastructure Plan (Chapter 6) of the proposed Specific Plan, the projected total peak flow rate amount of sewage that would be generated at buildout of the proposed Specific Plan is estimated to be approximately 2.662 cubic-feet per second (cfs) in total. This estimated flow accounts for a maximum allowable buildout scenario for the Planning Area. With application of existing General Plan policies, implementation of the recommendations of the proposed Infrastructure Plan, and adherence to existing regulations, anticipated population growth and expanded development within the Planning Area under the proposed Specific Plan would not induce undue demand on the provider's existing commitments and would continue to be adequately served by the existing wastewater treatment facilities.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Solid Waste

Impact UTIL-4 – Would the Specific Plan generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?

Analysis of Impacts

Solid waste collected in the City is taken to the Savage Canyon Landfill located in Whittier. This landfill has a maximum permitted capacity of 19,337,450 cubic yards (CY), a maximum daily throughput of 3,350 tons per day, and remaining capacity of 7,612,583 cubic yards (CalRecycle 2024). In order to estimate solid waste generation under the proposed GPU, default CalEEMod waste generation rates for the Planning Area were utilized (see Appendix D). Using CalEEMod default outputs for solid waste generation, it is estimated that the proposed GPU would result in the generation of an additional 4.6 tons of inorganic waste per day in 2045 when compared to existing conditions. This would amount to 1,679 additional tons of waste per year, which is approximately 1,284 cubic yards per year or 25,680 cubic yards over the 20-year life of the Plan. This additional amount of inorganic solid waste (25,680 cubic yards) is well within Savage Canyon Landfill's remaining capacity of 7,612,583 cubic yards.

Additionally, the City must comply with a variety of State and regional laws and regulations regarding solid waste recycling and must coordinate with Los Angeles County regarding solid waste disposal. Finally, the Public Facilities Element of the existing Paramount General Plan includes Policy PF-5 which requires the City of Paramount to maintain economical and responsive solid waste collection and disposal services for its residents and Policy PF-7 which requires the City to continue to implement its recycling and waste reduction programs as a means to comply with the AB 939 requirements. Compliance with existing laws and regulations and continued implementation of existing General Plan policies would ensure that future buildout of the proposed Specific Plan would not generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess

of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Impact UTIL-5 – Would the Specific Plan comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

Analysis of Impacts

Any future project completed under the proposed Specific Plan would be required to comply with all applicable Federal, State, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste management and reduction. Additionally, the City must comply with a variety of State and regional laws and regulations regarding solid waste recycling and must coordinate with Los Angeles County regarding solid waste disposal. The Public Facilities Element of the existing Paramount General Plan includes Policy PF-5 which requires the City of Paramount to maintain economical and responsive solid waste collection and disposal services for its residents and Policy PF-7 which requires the City to continue to implement its recycling and waste reduction programs as a means to comply with the AB 939 requirements. The City would continue to comply with established laws and regulations regarding solid waste minimization and recycling. Therefore, the proposed Specific Plan Update would not interfere with the City's compliance with federal, State, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation:

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Cumulative Impacts

Impact UTIL-6 – Would the Specific Plan cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to utilities and service systems?

Analysis of Impacts

Future development within Planning Area as part of the proposed Specific Plan would not require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects. Utilities could be potentially impacted by an anticipated increase in residential and nonresidential development within the Planning Area. The analysis provided in Chapter 6 (Infrastructure Plan) of the proposed Specific Plan determined that the City of Paramount has adequate water supply and pressure

from the City's existing water wells to supply the Planning Area over the life of the Plan. However, it was also determined that water systems in the Planning Area need upgrading to be able to handle the increased capacity generated by future development under the proposed Specific Plan. Further, because the existing City of Paramount water network provides water for both domestic consumption and fire flow in the same network, the existing water network must be capable of providing adequate peak water supply fire flow simultaneously throughout the City and the fire flow requirement would govern the overall demand that needs to be met. Proposed improvements to the system consist of upsizing pipe diameters and installing additional water lines, meters, valves, hydrants, fittings and appurtenances. Implementation of the proposed Specific Plan's recommendations contained in Chapter 6 (Infrastructure Plan) would ensure that the water system in the Planning Area can adequately service increased demands for water over the life of the Plan.

Additionally, new facilities would be subject to both the provisions of the Paramount General Plan and Municipal Code, as well as compliance with CEQA, when required. Environmental review would identify site-specific conditions and physical changes resulting from utility services expansion. Typical impacts associated with new facilities include short-term construction activities related to air quality pollutant emissions, temporary traffic detours, changes in traffic distribution, and noise. It was determined that the region's water supply would be able to accommodate future development within the Planning Area. Additionally, development as part of the proposed Specific Plan is not expected to have significant impacts on sewer/wastewater, storm drainage, electric power, natural gas, telecommunications, or solid waste infrastructure and service providers in the region. All of the local jurisdictions within the surrounding region have goals and policies in their General Plans similar to the City of Paramount regarding the maintenance and, when necessary, expansion of utility systems to accommodate growth. For these reasons, the proposed Specific Plan would not have cumulative impacts on regional utility services.

<u>Level of Significance Before Mitigation</u>

Less than significant.

<u>Mitigation Measures</u>

None required.

4.19.5 – REFERENCES

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4.20 – WILDFIRE

This section describes the potential for wildfire on lands located in or near State Responsibility Areas (SRA) or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE). In addition, it discusses potential impacts of the proposed Specific Plan on wildfire hazards, including: emergency response/evacuation, project exacerbation of wildfire risks, exposure to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire; exacerbation of fire risk from infrastructure improvements, to significant risks of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes.

4.20.1 – ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Climate

The project site is located in the City of Paramount in the southern portion of Los Angeles County, approximately 15 miles south of downtown Los Angeles and 14 miles north of the Port of Long Beach. The County and the broader Los Angeles Basin are defined by a semi-arid, Mediterranean climate with mild winters and warm summers. The northern Santa Monica and southeastern Santa Ana Mountain ranges that form the outer boundaries trap air and pollutants within the Basin. The greater Los Angeles region is classified as a Mediterranean climate, but specific weather conditions are dependent on local factors such as topography and proximity to the Pacific Ocean. The climate is determined by the North Pacific High-Pressure System, a subtropical anticyclone whose presence in the northeastern pacific results in hot, dry summers in the region and mild, wet winters. This pattern is generally interrupted by regional variances, such as the Santa Ana winds during the fall, and storms hailing from the Pacific Northwest during the winter. El Niño and La Niña patterns every two to seven years also have large effects on weather and rainfall received between November and March. Regional average temperatures range from a high of 85.2 degrees Fahrenheit (^{o}F) in August to a low of 44.3 ^{o}F in December and January (Climate Data). Annual precipitation is approximately 10 inches, falling mostly from December to March. The project site is entirely flat and is at sea level (Google Earth).

Wind Patterns

The North Pacific High-Pressure System drives the prevailing winds in the basin. High winds can cause property damage and pose health risks, especially during the fire season. In addition to the typical regional wind patterns in the region, Santa Ana winds represent a particularly strong, dry wind hazard. Santa Ana winds are katabatic, meaning they develop as winds descend through mountain passes where they accelerate, dry out, and heat up. These winds are felt throughout the Los Angeles County region, including the Planning Area, as it is located within the Basin, and to the west of the eastern mountain ranges where they originate. As these winds are typically strong, hot, and dry, these pose a unique and constant threat of igniting and spreading wildfires.

Fire Hazards Severity Zones

There are no Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones in the city, as identified by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE); therefore, there are no wildfire hazards in the City.

State Responsibility Areas

State Responsibility Areas (SRA) designate those areas where CAL FIRE has responsibility for wildland fire protection. SRAs do not include lands that are within city boundaries or within federally owned lands. The project site is considered a Local Responsibility Area (LRA), with the nearest SRAs being in the Puente Hills just north of the City of Whittier.

4.20.2 – REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

State

California Fire Code

The City has adopted the Los Angeles County Fire Code, a combination of the 2020 California Fire Code and the Los Angeles amendments. The California Fire Code is issued by the California Building Standards Commission with amendments to address specific local conditions and needs. These provisions include construction standards and fire hydrant requirements, road widths and configurations designed to accommodate the passage of fire trucks and engines, and requirements for minimum fire flow rates for water mains.

Local

City of Paramount General Plan

The City of Paramount 2007 General Plan includes the following goals and policies related to urban fire protection activities:

Health and Safety Element

Policy HS-15: The City of Paramount will strive to protect life and property from fire damage.

Policy HS-16: The City of Paramount will work to reduce fire danger.

Policy HS-17: The City of Paramount will continue to provide efficient fire protection services.

Policy HS-18: The City of Paramount will continue code enforcement efforts as a means to reduce fire hazards often associated with older buildings and unpermitted structures.

Policy HS-19: The City of Paramount will require contemporary fire protection for multi-story structures and larger industrial facilities.

Policy HS-20: The City of Paramount will require all development to comply with established fire safety standards.

Policy HS-21: The City of Paramount will require new development to install sprinkler systems and smoke detectors, as appropriate.

Policy HS-22: The City of Paramount will encourage improved fire insurance programs.

Policy HS-23: The City of Paramount will monitor, review, and improve, as needed, the City's emergency response capabilities.

Policy HS-24: The City of Paramount will strive to provide an atmosphere of security and safety for residents and businesses in the City.

Policy HS-30: The City of Paramount will incorporate defensible space design principles and other security measures into new development in the City.

Public Facilities Element

Policy PF-2: The City of Paramount will provide water storage and delivery capacity to meet normal usage and fire requirements.

City of Paramount Municipal Code

Chapter 8.08 (Fire Protection) of Title 8 (Health and Sanitation) of the Paramount Municipal Code includes the adoption of the Los Angeles County Fire Code, which includes construction standards that regulates standards dealing with the safeguarding of life and property from fire and explosion hazards. Title 8 includes other protections related to fire safety, with Chapters 8.12 and 8.16 including provisions and regulations toward fireworks and explosives respectively.

4.20.3 – SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLDS

The methodology used to evaluate potential environmental impacts is described in Section 4.0. As identified in Appendix G of the Guidelines for Implementation of CEQA, the Specific Plan Update has the potential to result in significant impacts if the following thresholds are exceeded.

If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the Specific Plan:

A. Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.
B. Due to slope, prevailing winds and other factors exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire.
C. Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment.
D. Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes.
E. Cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to wildfire.

4.20.4 – IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

This section describes potential impacts related to wildfires which could result from the implementation of the project and recommends mitigation measures as needed to reduce significant impacts.

Emergency Response Plans

Impact WIL-1 – Would the Specific Plan substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

Analysis of Impacts

The City of Paramount is fully urbanized and does not contain any Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZs) or State Responsibility Areas (SRAs). As such, there are no wildfire hazards within the City or Planning Area. The Los Angeles County Department of Public Works has developed Disaster Route Maps for cities in the County (Los Angeles County Public Works, 2023). There are no disaster routes that intersect the project site, with the nearest disaster route being Garfield Avenue, located adjacent to the Specific Plan area. Other evacuation routes within the City include both the Interstate 105 (I-105) and Interstate 710 (I-710) freeways. The 2022 Health and Safety Element Update for the City's General Plan includes Exhibit 5-1, which outlines evacuation routes located within the City. These include Garfield Avenue, as well as Paramount Boulevard, Rosecrans Avenue and Somerset Boulevard, with the latter three routes all abutting the project site. Implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would not interfere with the availability of these routes in the event of a wildfire or other disaster event. These routes are all well-maintained and capable of supporting an evacuation function. In any disaster warranting evacuation, the exact emergency routes used would depend on a number of variables, including the type, scope, and location of the incident. Construction related changes to the area as a result of implementation of the Specific Plan would be temporary, and would be of a nature that would still allow evacuation in the event of an emergency. Emergency access would be maintained to all properties during construction.

The existing Paramount General Plan Health and Safety and Public Facilities Elements also include multiple policies intended to support the City's emergency planning and response efforts. Policy HS-15 strives to protect life and property from fire damage and Policy HS-16 seeks to reduce fire danger. Policy HS-17 directs the City to provide efficient fire protection services. Policy HS-18 aims to continue code enforcement efforts as a means to reduce fire hazards often associated with older buildings and unpermitted structures. Policy HS-19 requires contemporary fire protection for multi-story structures and larger industrial facilities. Policy HS-20 requires all development to comply with established fire safety standards and Policy HS- 21 requires new development to install sprinkler systems and smoke detectors, as appropriate. Policy HS-22 aims to encourage improved fire insurance programs. Policy HS-23 requires the City to monitor, review, and improve, as needed, the City's emergency response capabilities. Policy HS-24 strives to provide an atmosphere of security and safety for residents and businesses in the City. Policy HS-30 requires incorporation of defensible space design principles and other security measures into new development in the City. Finally, Policy PF-2 requires the City to provide water storage and delivery capacity to meet normal usage and fire requirements.

Continued application of existing General Plan goals and policies related to fire protection and safety would ensure that development of the proposed Specific Plan would not impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant impact.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Prevailing winds

Impact WIL-2 – Would the Specific Plan result in impacts due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbating wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?

Analysis of Impacts

The Planning Area is fully urbanized, generally flat, and does not contain any VHFHSZs or SRAs. There are no significant slopes in the vicinity of the Planning Area. The Planning Area is not affected by strong prevailing winds or other factors that could cause or exacerbate wildfire risks. Additionally, as discussed in Impact WIL-1, the City's existing General Plan includes multiple policies related to mitigating the potential from urban fires. Development under the proposed Specific Plan would have no impacts relative to slope, prevailing winds, or other factors that would contribute to the uncontrolled spread of wildfire. Therefore, the Specific Plan would not expose the site to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

No impact.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Maintenance of Infrastructure

Impact WIL-3 – Would the Specific Plan require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water resources, powerlines, or other utilities that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?

Analysis of Impacts

The Planning Area is located in a developed area and does not contain any VHFHSZ or SRAs. New urban development in the project site as a result of the Specific Plan would include the installation of associated infrastructure such as roads, emergency water resources, powerlines, or other utilities. However, as discussed in Impact WIL-1, the City of Paramount does not contain any VHFHSZs or State Responsibility Areas SRAs, and there are no wildfire hazards within the City or the Planning Area. Therefore, implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would not exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant impact.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Expose People or Structures to Risk

Impact WIL-4 – Would the Specific Plan expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?

Analysis of Impacts

The Planning Area is located in an urbanized area, is not located in a VHFHSZ or SRA, and is not at risk of wildfire. There are no significant slopes in the vicinity of the Planning Area. According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Planning Area is located in an area designated “Zone X”, specifically an area of reduced flood risk to levee (FEMA, 2024). The Planning Area is, therefore, an area with no flood risk. For these reasons, development under the proposed Specific Plan would not expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

No impact.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

Cumulative Impacts

Impact WIL-5 - Would the Specific Plan cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to wildfires?

Analysis of Impacts

Based on the analysis in Impact WIL-1 through WIL-4, the proposed Specific Plan would not have a cumulative impact on the ability of local agencies to protect residents, workers, and structures from wildfires. Future development within the Planning Area under the proposed Specific Plan could increase the population and/or activities and ignition sources within the site, that in turn, may increase the number of people and structures exposed to risk of loss, injury, or death from fires. However, the project site is located in an urbanized area, and not considered at risk of wildfire impacts. Due to the location of the City of Paramount, the proposed Specific Plan would not make a significant contribution to any cumulatively considerable wildfire impacts in the surrounding region.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant.

Mitigation Measures

None required.

4.20.5 – REFERENCES

CalFIRE. *California Fire Hazard Severity Zone Viewer*. Web: https://calfire-forestry.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=988d431a42b242b29d89597ab693d008. [Accessed June 2024].

Climate Data. *Paramount, CA. Climate.* Web: https://en.climate-data.org/north-america/united-states-of-america/california/paramount-717834/. [Accessed June 2024].

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Federal Emergency Management Agency. *FEMA Flood Map Service Center.* https://msc.fema.gov/portal/search?AddressQuery=7900%20All%20America%20City%20Wy%2C%20Paramount%2C%20CA%2090723. [Accessed October 2024].

Los Angeles County Public Works. Disaster Route Maps. 2008. Web: https://pw.lacounty.gov/dsg/disasterroutes/city.cfm [Accessed March, 2024].

5.0 – ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED SPECIFIC PLAN

Section 15126.6 of the CEQA Guidelines requires an EIR to *"describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project, but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project, and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives."* The section also states that *"the discussion of alternatives shall focus on alternatives to the project or its location which are capable of avoiding or substantially lessening any significant effects of the project, even if those alternatives would impede to some degree the attainment of the project objectives, or would be more costly."*

Pursuant to Section 15126.6, this chapter describes three alternatives to the proposed Specific Plan (project), including the CEQA-mandated No Project Alternative, and compares the impacts of each alternative to the project. The ability of each alternative to meet the basic project objectives is also described, and the "environmentally superior" alternative among the three is identified, as required by the CEQA Guidelines.

5.1 – RATIONALE FOR ALTERNATIVE SELECTION

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(a), an EIR does not need to evaluate every conceivable alternative. A feasible range of alternatives has been evaluated that will allow decisionmakers to make a reasoned choice that meets most of the project objectives. The project objectives included in Chapter 3, Project Description, are:

1. Create a transit-oriented development (TOD) mixed-use town center that provides a range of housing, commercial, and open space uses.
2. Facilitate Plan Area as an artisanal manufacturing center and business incubator district for local residents with an appropriate mix of industrial, office, and employment-supporting uses that will reflect market conditions.
3. Encourage ridership for the future Southeast Gateway Light Rail station for residents of the City of Paramount and Specific Plan Area, as well as visitors to the City and Plan Area.
4. Promote development of a mix of land uses that support economic development growth and affordable housing.
5. Encourage physical development of buildings and open space that provides a transition between existing uses that represent past development patterns and future development that will follow best practices for TOD.
6. Orient new development and promote internal circulation design to create pedestrian-oriented streets that promote the use of active transportation as a mode for user trips.
7. Encourage community participation, architectural style, urban design, and placemaking to represent the history and culture of the City of Paramount and its existing residents.
8. Prioritize the implementation of green infrastructure approaches to new infrastructure and utilities that promotes resilience and adaptation to climate change.
9. Implement infrastructure development that prioritizes sustainability for both natural systems and long-term economic development, operations, and maintenance.

While selecting alternatives to be considered for analysis, the City focused on analyzing those alternatives which could potentially reduce the significant unavoidable effects related to the project and which would also achieve project objectives.

5.2 – ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The following alternatives have been evaluated in comparison to the proposed Specific Plan:

- Alternative 1: No Project/Existing Conditions
- Alternative 2: Reduced Nonresidential Alternative
- Alternative 3: Reduced Residential Alternative

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(d), the discussion of impacts associated with the alternatives is less detailed than the evaluation included in Chapters 4.1 through 4.20 of the impacts associated with implementation of the project. Table 5-1 shows the development assumptions of each alternative.

Table 5-1
Land Use Alternatives Development Assumptions

		Estimated Net Change Over Existing Conditions			
			Alternative		
	Existing (2024) Conditions	Proposed Specific Plan	1. No Project/ Existing Conditions	2. Reduced (-25%) Nonresidential[(a)] Alternative	3. Reduced (-25%) Residential Alternative
Residential (units)	0	2,000	0	2,000	1,500
Population (persons)	0	4,643	0	4,643	3,482
Nonresidential Building (square feet) [(a)]	946,012	1,386,169	946,012	1,039,627	1,386,169
Employees	1,621	1,759	1,621	1,319	1,759

Source: Table 3-2, DEIR Project Description, MIG, 2025
[(a)] Includes commercial, hotel/motel, industrial, and public facilities/institutional land uses

Table 5-2 shows how impacts associated with the implementation of the alternatives compared to the impacts associated with implementation of the proposed project; the reader is advised to refer to the accompanying text for a fuller explanation.

Table 5-2
Alternatives' Impacts Compared to Project Impacts

Impact/Resource	Proposed Project	Alternative 1: No Project/ Existing Conditions	Alternative 2: Reduced (-25%) Nonresidential Alternative	Alternative 3: Reduced (-25%) Residential Alternative
Aesthetics	LTS	Similar LTS	Reduced LTS	Reduced LTS
Ag./Forest Resources	LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS
Air Quality	**SU**	**Reduced LTS**	**Reduced SU**	**Reduced SU**
Biological Resources	LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS
Cultural Resources	LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS
Energy	LTS	Reduced LTS	Reduced LTS	Reduced LTS
Geology and Soils	LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS
GHG Emissions	**SU**	**Reduced LTS**	**Reduced SU**	**Reduced SU**
Hazards/Haz. Materials	LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS
Hydrology/Water Quality	LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS
Land Use	LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS
Mineral Resources	LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS
Noise	**SU**	**Reduced LTS**	**Reduced SU**	**Reduced SU**
Population/Housing	LTS	Reduced LTS	Reduced LTS	Reduced LTS
Public Services	LTS	Reduced LTS	Reduced LTS	Similar LTS
Recreation	LTS	Reduced LTS	Similar LTS	Reduced LTS
Transportation (VMT)	LTS	Reduced LTS	Reduced LTS	Reduced LTS
Tribal Cultural Resources	LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS
Utilities/Service Systems	LTS	Reduced LTS	Reduced LTS	Reduced LTS
Wildfire	LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS	Similar LTS

Source: MIG, 2025.
LTS = Less Than Significant Impact
SU = Significant and Unavoidable Impact

5.3 – ALTERNATIVE 1: NO PROJECT/EXISTING CONDITIONS

5.3.1 – Principal Characteristics

The No Project/Existing Conditions Alternative (No Project Alternative) assumes that there would be no changes to the existing development or the existing land uses. For this alternative, there would be no residential land uses and less nonresidential development, employment and population, when compared to the proposed Specific Plan. Additionally, it was determined that the No Project Alternative would not fulfill any of the proposed Specific Plan objectives.

5.3.2 – Analysis of No Project/Existing Conditions Alternative

The potential impacts associated with the No Project Alternative are described below.

1. *Aesthetics.* The No Project Alternative would have no new development. As with the Specific Plan, aesthetic impacts are anticipated to be similarly less than significant under the No Project Alternative. The 2007 General Plan notes that the Puente Hills are visible to the northeast of the Planning Area, the Rancho Palos Verdes hills are visible to the southwest of the Planning Area, and the Santa Monica and San Gabriel Mountains are visible to the north and northwest of the Planning Area. These mountain ranges and hills are visible from many locations within the Planning Area, and would continue to be partially or fully obstructed by existing development, trees, and roadway features throughout the Planning Area. Although such obstructions are usually minimal in nature, they do exist, and they are typical of any type of built/urbanized environment. Development within the Planning Area would continue to be subject to the lighting and glare restrictions of the City of Paramount Municipal Code Section 17.44.490(C) (Required improvement and maintenance of Parking areas, etc.), which requires all C-and M-zone parking areas to be illuminated with artificial lighting to a degree equal to one and one-half foot-candles per square foot. This alternative would result in a similar less than significant impact when compared to the project.

2. *Agriculture and Forestry Resources.* The Planning Area does not contain any land identified as “important farmland” (Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, and Farmland of Local Importance). Additionally, the Planning Area does not have any land zoned or utilized primarily for agricultural or forestry purposes. Similar to the proposed project, this alternative would have a less than significant impact on agriculture or forestry resources.

3. *Air Quality.* As described in Section 4.3, the project would result in a significant unavoidable air quality impact. The No Project alternative would not involve any net new development and therefore air quality impacts for this alternative would be less when compared to the project. Also, since this alternative does not involve any new development, it would not exceed the SCAQMD thresholds for Criteria Air Pollutants. Air quality emissions associated with this alternative would be less compared to the project and would be less than significant.

4. *Biological Resources.* The Planning Area is completely urbanized and almost entirely built out. There are no vacant properties located within the Planning Area. As with the project, development, or redevelopment, under this alternative would occur within urban areas that currently have existing development. Similar to the project, this alternative would have a less than significant impact on biological resources.

5. *Cultural Resources.* As with the project, development under the No Project Alternative could uncover previously unknown cultural resources or destroy/change structures that could be considered historic. As with the project, under the No Project Alternative, the City's development requirements would include a CEQA evaluation to analyze potential impacts to historic resources, which may include mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts of future development within the Planning Area. Additionally, existing goals, policies, and implementation programs within the Resource Management Element of the existing 2007 General Plan would ensure that significant archaeological resources are preserved and protected. Similar to the project, this alternative would have a less than significant impact on cultural resources with adherence to existing regulations and implementation of site-specific mitigation.

6. *Energy.* As with the project, development associated with the No Project Alternative would require the consumption of electricity, natural gas, and vehicle fuel resources to accommodate growth. Development under this alternative would have reduced energy consumption compared to the project. Under this alternative new development and land use turnover would be required to comply with statewide mandatory energy requirements outlined in Title 24, Part 6, of the California Code of Regulations (the CALGreen Code), which would decrease estimated electricity and natural gas consumption in new and/or retrofitted structures. Given the reduced level of development, this alternative would have a reduced less than significant energy impact compared to the project.

7. *Geology and Soils.* The No Project Alternative would result in geology and soils impacts similar to those associated with the project as both this alternative and the project would be exposed to the same existing geologic conditions within the City. As with the project, existing building requirements would be applicable under this alternative. Additionally, all future projects would be required to be designed and constructed in compliance with all applicable City and State codes and requirements. Existing General Plan policies related to geology and seismic issues would be applicable to this alternative, as is the case with the project. The No Project Alternative would have a less than significant geology impact, and would be considered similar to the project.

8. *Greenhouse Gas Emissions.* The project would result in a significant unavoidable greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions impact. While overall GHG emissions associated with No Project Alternative would be reduced due to the decrease in development, it is likely that the mitigation measures identified for the project would also be required for this alternative. The No Project Alternative would not involve any net new development and therefore GHG impacts for this alternative would be less when compared to the project and less than significant, Also, since this alternative does not involve any new development it would not exceed GHG thresholds of significance, and GHG emissions associated with this alternative would be less compared to the project and would be less than significant.

9. *Hazards and Hazardous Materials.* Hazardous materials would be present during construction and operation of development associated with the No Project Alternative. Similar to the proposed project, the amount and use of these hazardous materials present during construction would be limited, would be in compliance with existing government regulations, and would not be considered a significant hazard. As with the project, any future development under this alternative would be subject to the City's standard environmental review, which would include identification of any contaminated sites not already identified and implementation of appropriate cleanup and disposal procedures. The No Project Alternative

would have a less than significant hazards and hazardous materials impact, and would be considered similar to the project.

10. *Hydrology and Water Quality.* Development associated with implementation of the No Project Alternative would, similar to the project, be subject to all existing water quality regulations and programs. This alternative would result in no net increase in development and no residential development. Since no net increase in development would occur under this alternative, impacts to groundwater supply would be minimal, would be less than the project, and Mitigation Measure HYD-1 would not be required. Additionally, while water quality impacts from the No Project existing conditions would likely be greater compared to the project, as redevelopment occurs over time under this alternative, the current, more strict, water quality regulations would be applied and redevelopment occurs which would result in water quality conditions similar to the proposed project. Therefore, the No Project Alternative would, overall, have less than significant impacts similar to the project.

11. *Land Use and Planning.* The proposed Specific Plan includes a Mobility Plan consisting of six street types, including minimum/maximum design requirements and guidelines to facilitate a multi-modal roadway network that will provide low-speed vehicular travel lanes, sidewalks, bicycle lanes, curb extensions, and enhanced parkway/amenity zones. Future development proposals under the proposed Specific Plan would be subject to the City's standard development review and approval process requiring compliance with the City's Municipal Code and fire code compliance review to meet California Fire Code (CCR Title 24 Part 9), Section 503. As with the project, the No Project Alternative would not physically divide an established community because the existing street grid pattern would remain in place and no physical alterations to the circulation of the area would occur. Development would be consistent with the adopted 2007 General Plan, and would not conflict with regulations adopted to avoid environmental effects. Similar to the project, this alternative would have a less than significant land use and planning impact.

12. *Mineral Resources.* Most of the Planning Area is designated as having little potential for development of mineral resources. There are no portions of the Planning Area that are designated MRZ-2. As such, there are no areas where adequate information indicates that significant mineral deposits are present or where it is judged that a high likelihood for their presence exists within the Planning Area. Similar to the project, this alternative would have a less than significant impact on mineral resources.

13. *Noise.* The project would result in potentially significant construction-related noise that would be reduced to less than significant with incorporation of mitigation measures. The project would result in significant and unavoidable operational noise impacts from increased automobile traffic from increased residential and nonresidential development, even with incorporation of mitigation measures. The No Project Alternative would result in less residential and nonresidential development than the project. Under this alternative, mitigation measures would still be required to ensure that construction noise is mitigated for projects located near sensitive receptors. Since this alternative would have no new net development traffic noise impact would be substantially less when compared to the project. Therefore, this alternative would have a reduced impact when compared to the project that would be less than significant.

14. *Population and Housing.* This alternative would result in no residential development or population growth. Therefore, this alternative would result in a reduced less than significant impact related to population and housing compared to the project.

15. *Public Services.* This alternative would result in no residential development and population growth, which would result in increases in demand for schools services and park facilities when compared to the project. The No Project Alternative would also have substantially less nonresidential uses, which would result in decreased demand for fire and police services compared to the project. Overall, the No Project Alternative would likely result in reduced less than significant public services impacts compared to the project.

16. *Recreation.* This alternative would result in a reduced amount of residential development and population growth, which would result in reduced demand for recreational facilities compared to the project. This alternative would result in a reduced less than significant recreation impact compared to the project.

17. *Transportation.* As described in Section 4.17.4, the roadway segments within the Planning Area are projected to operate within acceptable Levels of Service (LOS B or better) upon buildout of the proposed Specific Plan. In addition, with mitigation incorporated the project is anticipated to have a less than significant vehicle miles traveled (VMT) impact. The No Project Alternative would result in significantly less development than would occur with implementation of the project. Given the reduction in development associated with this alternative, the transportation impacts under this alternative would also be reduced. Therefore, this alternative would result in reduced less than significant transportation impacts when compared to the project.

18. *Tribal Cultural Resources.* As with the project, development under the No Project Alternative could uncover previously unknown Tribal Cultural Resources. Compliance with existing regulations regarding burial grounds and consultation with Native American tribes, in addition to existing General Plan policies, would ensure that potential impacts would be reduced. Similar to the project, this alternative would have a less than significant impact on tribal cultural resources with adherence to existing regulations.

19. *Utilities and Service Systems.* This alternative would result in no new net development and associated population and employment growth, which would result in less demand for utilities services compared to the project. This alternative would have a reduced less than significant utilities and service system impact when compared to the project.

20. *Wildfire.* There are no very high fire severity zones within or in close proximity (within 5 miles) of the Planning Area. The Planning Area is completely urbanized and not susceptible to risks from wildfire. Similar to the project, this alternative would result in a less than significant wildfire impact.

5.3.3 – Attainment of Project Objectives

The No Project Alternative assumes that development would occur within the Planning Area, but only development anticipated under the existing General Plan. This alternative would not include any of the Mobility Plan improvements or public and private realm strategies. The No Project Alternative would not meet any of the project objectives. For example, this alternative would not create a transit-oriented development (TOD) mixed-use town center that provides a range of housing, commercial, and open space uses. This alternative would not facilitate the Planning Area as an artisanal manufacturing center and business incubator district for local residents with an appropriate mix of industrial, office, and employment-supporting uses that will reflect market conditions. This alternative would not encourage ridership for the future Southeast Gateway Light Rail station for residents of the City of Paramount and Specific Plan Area, as well as visitors to

the City and Planning Area. This alternative would not promote development of a mix of land uses that support economic development growth and affordable housing. This alternative would not encourage physical development of buildings and open space that provides a transition between existing uses that represent past development patterns and future development that will follow best practices for TOD. This alternative would not orient new development and promote internal circulation design to create pedestrian-oriented streets that promote the use of active transportation as a mode for user trips. This alternative would not encourage community participation, architectural style, urban design, and placemaking to represent the history and culture of the City of Paramount and its existing residents. This alternative would not prioritize the implementation of green infrastructure approaches to new infrastructure and utilities that promote resilience and adaptation to climate change. Finally, this alternative would not implement infrastructure development that prioritizes sustainability for both natural systems and long-term economic development, operations, and maintenance.

5.4 – ALTERNATIVE 2: REDUCED (-25%) NONRESIDENTIAL ALTERNATIVE

5.4.1 – Principal Characteristics

The Reduced (-25%) Nonresidential Alternative reflects a reduced amount of nonresidential building area and a reduced number of employees (both approximately 25 percent less) within the Planning Area when compared to those expected under the proposed Specific Plan. Development assumptions for this alternative are shown in Table 5-1. This alternative assumes that goals and policies associated with the existing 2007 General Plan would apply, as would development standards associated with the proposed Specific Plan. This alternative would fulfill some but not all of the proposed Specific Plan objectives.

5.4.2 – Analysis of the Reduced Nonresidential Alternative

The potential impacts associated with the Reduced Nonresidential Alternative are described below.

1. *Aesthetics.* As with the proposed Specific Plan, aesthetic impacts are anticipated to be less than significant under this alternative. Scenic vistas within view of the Planning Area would continue to be partially or fully obstructed by existing development, trees, and roadway features throughout the Planning Area. In addition, the proposed Specific Plan includes Public Realm design standards and guidelines for public rights-of-way and Private Realm standards and guidelines for general building and site design. These design standards and guidelines would preserve and enhance the visual quality and character of the Planning Area. Further, the various policies of the City's 2007 General Plan outlined in section 4.1.2 emphasize preservation and enhancement of the City's corridors and land use districts. Therefore, these General Plan policies apply indirectly to the visual character of the Planning Area. Finally, future projects within the Planning Area would be subject to the lighting and glare restrictions of the City of Paramount Municipal Code Section 17.44.490(C) (Required improvement and maintenance of Parking areas, etc.), which requires all C- and M-zone parking areas to be illuminated with artificial lighting to a degree equal to one and one-half foot-candles per square foot. Any new development under the Reduced Nonresidential Alternative would be required to undergo design review, which would ensure compliance with regulations and review for potential light and glare. This alternative would result in a slightly reduced less than significant impact, when compared to the project, given the reduction in development associated with this alternative.

2. *Agriculture and Forestry Resources.* The Planning Area does not contain any land identified as some kind of "important farmland" (Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, and Farmland of Local Importance). Additionally, the Planning Area does not have any land zoned or utilized primarily for agricultural or forestry purposes. Similar to the proposed project, this alternative would have a less than significant impact on agriculture or forestry resources.

3. *Air Quality.* As described in Section 4.3, the project would result in a significant unavoidable air quality impact. While this alternative would result in a significant reduction in the amount of nonresidential development compared to the proposed project, the proposed increase in residential development and population under this alternative would likely not be consistent with SCAG forecasts for Paramount as population and housing growth exceeds the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS population and housing projections for the City (See Chapter 4.11). As such, this alternative will not be consistent with the SCAQMD 2022 Air Quality Management Plan

(2022 AQMP) and would also exceed SCAQMD regional pollutant thresholds and thereby obstruct implementation of the AQMP. The air quality mitigation measures needed for the proposed Specific Plan would also be required for this alternative. However, even with mitigation this alternative would still result in a reduced significant and unavoidable impact when compared to the project.

4. *Biological Resources.* The Planning Area is completely urbanized and almost entirely built out. There are no vacant properties located within the Planning Area. As with the project, development, or redevelopment, under this alternative would occur within urban areas that currently have existing development. Similar to the project, this alternative would have a less than significant impact on biological resources.

5. *Cultural Resources.* As with the project, development under the Reduced Nonresidential Alternative could uncover previously unknown cultural resources or destroy/change structures that could be considered historic. As with the project, under the Reduced Nonresidential Alternative, the City's development requirements would include a CEQA evaluation to analyze potential impacts to historic resources, which may include mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts of future development within the Planning Area. Additionally, existing goals, policies, and implementation programs within the Resource Management Element of the existing 2007 General Plan would ensure that significant archaeological resources are preserved and protected. Similar to the project, this alternative would have a less than significant impact on cultural resources.

6. *Energy.* As with the project, development associated with the Reduced Nonresidential Alternative would require the consumption of electricity, natural gas, and vehicle fuel resources to accommodate growth. Development under this alternative would have reduced energy consumption compared to the project. Similar to the project, under this alternative new development and associated land use changes would be required to comply with statewide mandatory energy requirements outlined in Title 24, Part 6, of the California Code of Regulations (the CALGreen Code), which would decrease estimated electricity and natural gas consumption in new and/or retrofitted structures compared to the older existing structures in the Planning Area. Given the reduced level of nonresidential development, this alternative would have a reduced less than significant energy impact compared to the project.

7. *Geology and Soils.* The Reduced Nonresidential Alternative would result in geology and soils impacts similar to those associated with the project as both this alternative and the project would be exposed to the same existing geologic conditions within the City. As with the project, existing building requirements for new development would be applicable under this alternative. Additionally, all future projects would be required to be designed and constructed in compliance with all applicable City and State codes and requirements. Existing General Plan policies related to geology and seismic issues would be applicable to this alternative, as is the case with the project. The Reduced Nonresidential Alternative would have a less than significant geology impact, and would be considered similar to the project.

8. *Greenhouse Gas Emissions.* The project would result in significant unavoidable greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions impacts. This alternative would result in a reduction in nonresidential development and associated reduction in GHG emissions, but the mitigation measures identified for the project would also be required for this alternative. However, even with the reduction in nonresidential development associated with this alternative, GHG emissions associated with this alternative would still exceed SCAQMD significance thresholds. Future

development within the Planning Area under this alternative would result in reduced but still significant and unavoidable GHG impacts when compared to the project.

9. *Hazards and Hazardous Materials.* Hazardous materials would be present during construction and operation of development associated with the Reduced Nonresidential Alternative. The amount and use of these hazardous materials present during construction would be limited, would be in compliance with existing government regulations, and would not be considered a significant hazard. As with the project, any future development under the Reduced Nonresidential Alternative would be subject to the City's standard environmental review process, which would include identification of any contaminated sites not already identified and implementation of appropriate cleanup and disposal procedures. Similar to the project this alternative would have a less than significant hazards and hazardous materials impact.

10. *Hydrology and Water Quality.* Development associated with implementation of the Reduced Nonresidential Alternative would be subject to all existing water quality regulations and programs. This alternative assumes a population and housing increase that would be similar to the proposed project and a significant reduction in nonresidential development. The mitigation measure regarding water supply (HYD-1) would still be required under this alternative. Similar to the proposed project the Reduced Nonresidential Alternative would have a less than significant hydrology and water quality impact.

11. *Land Use and Planning.* The proposed Specific Plan includes a Mobility Plan consisting of six street types, including minimum/maximum design requirements and guidelines to facilitate a multi-modal roadway network that will provide low-speed vehicular travel lanes, sidewalks, bicycle lanes, curb extensions, and enhanced parkway/amenity zones. Future development proposals under the proposed Specific Plan would be subject to the City's standard development review and approval process requiring compliance with the City's Municipal Code and fire code compliance review to meet California Fire Code (CCR Title 24 Part 9), Section 503. As with the project, the Reduced Nonresidential Alternative would not physically divide an established community because the existing street grid pattern would remain in place and no physical alterations to the circulation of the area would occur. Development would be consistent with the design guidelines of the adopted Specific Plan, and would not conflict with regulations adopted to avoid environmental effects. Similar to the project, this alternative would have a less than significant land use and planning impact.

12. *Mineral Resources.* Most of the Planning Area is designated as having little potential for development of mineral resources. There are no portions of the Planning Area that are designated MRZ-2. As such, there are no areas where adequate information indicates that significant mineral deposits are present or where it is judged that a high likelihood for their presence exists within the Planning Area. Similar to the project, this alternative would have a less than significant impact on mineral resources.

13. *Noise.* The project would result in potentially significant construction-related noise that would be reduced to less than significant with incorporation of mitigation measures. The project would result in significant and unavoidable operational noise impacts from increased automobile traffic from increased residential and nonresidential development, even with incorporation of mitigation measures. The Reduced Nonresidential Alternative would result in less nonresidential development than the project but a similar amount of residential development. Under this alternative, mitigation measures would still be required to ensure that construction noise is mitigated to less than significant for projects located near sensitive receptors. Due to the reduction in development under this alternative the traffic noise impact

would be reduced when compared to the project. However, without the transit-oriented development that would be developed as part of the proposed project that would result in increased transit ridership and bicycle and pedestrian use and reduced vehicular use, the Planning Area would remain dominated by automobile-oriented development that would have the effect of generating excessive noise. Therefore, this alternative would have a reduced significant and unavoidable impact when compared to the project.

14. *Population and Housing.* This alternative would result in a reduced amount of nonresidential development and employment growth compared to the Project. Given that this alternative would not reduce estimated population and housing growth, it would result in less than significant impacts related to population and housing similar to the project.

15. *Public Services.* This Alternative would result in a significant decrease in nonresidential uses, which would result in decreased demand for fire and police services compared to the project. This alternative would have the same amount of residential development and population growth as the project and, would have the same demand for schools services, park facilities, and other community when compared to the project. Due to the reduction in nonresidential square feet for this alternative, demand for police and fire protection services would be less. Therefore, the Reduced Nonresidential Alternative would likely result in reduced less than significant public services impacts compared to the proposed project.

16. *Recreation.* This alternative would result in a similar amount of residential development and population growth, which would result in a similar increase in demand for recreational facilities when compared to the project. Payment of impact fees would be sufficient to ensure impacts to recreation facilities would be less than significant. Similar to the project, this alternative would result in a less than significant recreation impact.

17. *Transportation.* As described in Section 4.17.4, the roadway segments within the Planning Area are projected to operate within acceptable Levels of Service (LOS B or better) upon buildout of the proposed Specific Plan. In addition, with mitigation incorporated the project is anticipated to have a less than significant vehicle miles traveled (VMT) impact. The Reduced Nonresidential Alternative would result in a similar amount of residential development but significantly less nonresidential development and, therefore, less VMT than would occur with implementation of the project. Therefore, this alternative would result in a reduced less than significant transportation impacts when compared to the project.

18. *Tribal Cultural Resources.* As with the project, development under the Reduced Nonresidential Alternative could uncover previously unknown Tribal Cultural Resources. Compliance with existing regulations regarding burial grounds and consultation with Native American tribes, in addition to existing General Plan policies, would ensure that potential impacts would be reduced. Similar to the project, this alternative would have a less than significant impact on tribal cultural resources.

19. *Utilities and Service Systems.* This alternative would result in a similar amount of residential development but a reduced amount of nonresidential development and associated employment growth, which would result in less demand for utilities services compared to the project. In addition, the mitigation measure regarding water supply (HYD-1) would also be required under this alternative. Therefore, this alternative would have a similar less than significant utilities and service system impact when compared to the project.

20. *Wildfire.* There are no very high fire severity zones within or in close proximity (within 5 miles) of the Planning Area. The Planning Area is completely urbanized and not susceptible to risks from wildfire. Similar to the project, this alternative would result in a less than significant wildfire impact.

5.4.3 – Attainment of Project Objectives

The Reduced Nonresidential Alternative assumes that the amount of residential development would be similar to the project while the amount of nonresidential development would be significantly decreased. This alternative would include all of the Mobility Plan improvements and all of the public and private realm strategies included in the proposed Specific Plan. Because of this the Reduced Nonresidential Alternative would partially meet the stated project objectives, but to a lesser extent than the proposed project for many of the objectives. For example, this alternative would create a transit-oriented development (TOD) mixed-use town center that provides a range of housing, but it would provide a lower level of commercial uses compared to the proposed project. This alternative would facilitate the Planning Area as an artisanal manufacturing center and business incubator district for local residents with an appropriate mix of industrial, office, and employment-supporting uses that will reflect market conditions but to a lesser degree because there will be fewer commercial and other employment generating uses. This alternative would encourage ridership for the future Southeast Gateway Light Rail station for residents of the City of Paramount and Specific Plan Area, as well as visitors to the City and Planning Area, but to a lesser degree than the project because there would be fewer commercial and other employment generated land use within proximity of the station. This alternative would promote development of a mix of land uses that support economic development growth to a lesser degree that the project, but would still support affordable housing at levels similar to the project. Similar to the project this alternative would encourage physical development of buildings and open space that provides a transition between existing uses that represent past development patterns and future development that will follow best practices for TOD. Similar to the project this alternative would orient new development and promote internal circulation design to create pedestrian-oriented streets that promote the use of active transportation as a popular mode for user trips. This alternative would encourage community participation, architectural style, urban design, and placemaking to represent the history and culture of the City of Paramount and its existing residents, although it would be less effective at placemaking than the project because of the limited nonindustrial uses. Similar to the project, this alternative would prioritize the implementation of green infrastructure approaches to new infrastructure and utilities that promotes resilience and adaptation to climate change. Finally, this alternative would implement infrastructure development that prioritizes sustainability for both natural systems and long-term economic development, operations, and maintenance to a lesser extent because the limited nonresidential uses under this alternative will create fewer opportunities for sustainability.

5.5 – ALTERNATIVE 3: REDUCED (-25%) RESIDENTIAL ALTERNATIVE

5.5.1 – Principal Characteristics

The Reduced (-25%) Residential Alternative reflects a reduced number of residential units and a reduced amount of residents (both approximately 25 percent less) within the Planning Area when compared to those expected under the proposed Specific Plan. Development assumptions for this alternative are shown in Table 5-1. This alternative assumes that goals and policies associated with the existing 2007 General Plan would apply, as would development standards associated with the proposed Specific Plan. This alternative would fulfill some but not all of the proposed Specific Plan objectives.

5.5.2 – Analysis of the Reduced Residential Alternative

The potential impacts associated with the Reduced Residential Alternative are described below.

1. *Aesthetics.* As with the proposed Specific Plan, aesthetic impacts are anticipated to be less than significant under this alternative. Scenic vistas within view of the Planning Area would continue to be partially or fully obstructed by existing development, trees, and roadway features throughout the Planning Area. In addition, the proposed Specific Plan includes Public Realm design standards and guidelines for public rights-of-way and Private Realm standards and guidelines for general building and site design. These design standards and guidelines would preserve and enhance the visual quality and character of the Planning Area. Further, the various policies of the City's 2007 General Plan outlined in section 4.1.2 emphasize preservation and enhancement of the City's corridors and land use districts. Therefore, these General Plan policies apply indirectly to the visual character the Planning Area. Most critical are those that help preserve historical structures, create public art, and seek to enhance views (and thus visual character). Finally, future projects within the Planning Area would be subject to the lighting and glare restrictions of the City of Paramount Municipal Code Section 17.44.490(C) (Required improvement and maintenance of Parking areas, etc.), which requires all C- and M-zone parking areas to be illuminated with artificial lighting to a degree equal to one and one-half foot-candles per square foot. Any new development under the Reduced Residential Alternative would be required to undergo design review, which would ensure compliance with regulations and review for potential light and glare. This alternative would result in a reduced less than significant impact, when compared to the project, given the reduction in development associated with this alternative.

2. *Agriculture and Forestry Resources.* The Planning Area does not contain any land identified as some kind of "important farmland" (Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, and Farmland of Local Importance). Additionally, the Planning Area does not have any land zoned or utilized primarily for agricultural or forestry purposes. Similar to the proposed project, this alternative would have a less than significant impact on agriculture or forestry resources.

3. *Air Quality.* As described in Section 4.3, the project would result in a significant unavoidable air quality impact. While this alternative would result in a significant reduction in the amount of residential development compared to the proposed project, the proposed increase in nonresidential development would likely exceed SCAQMD regional pollutant thresholds and thereby obstruct implementation of the AQMP. The air quality mitigation measures needed for the proposed Specific Plan would also be required for this alternative. However, even with

mitigation this alternative would still result in a reduced significant and unavoidable impact when compared to the project.

4. *Biological Resources.* The Planning Area is completely urbanized and almost entirely built out. There are no vacant properties located within the Planning Area. As with the project, development, or redevelopment, under this alternative would occur within urban areas that currently have existing development. Similar to the project, this alternative would have a less than significant impact on biological resources.

5. *Cultural Resources.* As with the project, development under the Reduced Residential Alternative could uncover previously unknown cultural resources or destroy/change structures that could be considered historic. As with the project, under the Reduced Residential Alternative, the City's development requirements would include a CEQA evaluation to analyze potential impacts to historic resources, which may include mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts of future development within the Planning Area. Additionally, existing goals, policies, and implementation programs within the Resource Management Element of the existing 2007 General Plan would ensure that significant archaeological resources are preserved and protected. Similar to the project, this alternative would have a less than significant impact on cultural resources with adherence to existing regulations and implementation of site-specific mitigation.

6. *Energy.* As with the project, development associated with the Reduced Residential Alternative would require the consumption of electricity, natural gas, and vehicle fuel resources to accommodate growth. Development under this alternative would have reduced energy consumption compared to the project. Under this alternative new development and land use turnover would be required to comply with statewide mandatory energy requirements outlined in Title 24, Part 6, of the California Code of Regulations (the CALGreen Code), which would decrease estimated electricity and natural gas consumption in new and/or retrofitted structures. Given the reduced level of residential development, this alternative would have a reduced less than significant energy impact compared to the project.

7. *Geology and Soils.* The Reduced Residential Alternative would result in geology and soils impacts similar to those associated with the project as both this alternative and the project would be exposed to the same existing geologic conditions within the City. As with the project, existing building requirements would be applicable under this alternative. Additionally, all future projects would be required to be designed and constructed in compliance with all applicable City and State codes and requirements. Existing General Plan policies related to geology and seismic issues would be applicable to this alternative, as is the case with the project. The Reduced Residential Alternative would have a less than significant geology impact, and would be considered similar to the project.

8. *Greenhouse Gas Emissions.* The project would result in significant unavoidable greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions impacts. This alternative would result in a reduction in residential development and associated reduction in GHG emissions, and the mitigation measures identified for the project would also be required for this alternative. However, even with the reduction in residential development associated with this alternative, GHG emissions associated with this alternative would likely still exceed SCAQMD significance thresholds. Future development within the Planning Area under this alternative would result in reduced significant and unavoidable GHG impacts when compared to the project.

9. *Hazards and Hazardous Materials.* Hazardous materials would be present during construction and operation of development associated with the Reduced Residential Alternative. The amount and use of these hazardous materials present during construction would be limited, would be in compliance with existing government regulations, and would not be considered a significant hazard. As with the project, any future development under the Reduced Residential Alternative would be subject to the City's standard environmental review process, which would include identification of any contaminated sites not already identified and implementation of appropriate cleanup and disposal procedures. Similar to the project this alternative would have a less than significant hazards and hazardous materials impact.

10. *Hydrology and Water Quality.* Development associated with implementation of the Reduced Residential Alternative would be subject to all existing water quality regulations and programs. This alternative assumes a population and housing decrease when compared to the proposed project but also includes a significant increase in nonresidential development. The mitigation measure regarding water supply (HYD-1) would still be required under this alternative. Similar to the proposed project the Reduced Residential Alternative would have a less than significant hydrology and water quality impact.

11. *Land Use and Planning.* The proposed Specific Plan includes a Mobility Plan consisting of six street types, including minimum/maximum design requirements and guidelines to facilitate a multi-modal roadway network that will provide low-speed vehicular travel lanes, sidewalks, bicycle lanes, curb extensions, and enhanced parkway/amenity zones. Future development proposals under the proposed Specific Plan would be subject to the City's standard development review and approval process requiring compliance with the City's Municipal Code and fire code compliance review to meet California Fire Code (CCR Title 24 Part 9), Section 503. As with the project, the Reduced Residential Alternative would not physically divide an established community because the existing street grid pattern would remain in place and no physical alterations to the circulation of the area would occur. Development would be consistent with the design guidelines of the adopted Specific Plan, and would not conflict with regulations adopted to avoid environmental effects. Similar to the project, this alternative would have a less than significant land use and planning impact.

12. *Mineral Resources.* Most of the Planning Area is designated as having little potential for development of mineral resources. There are no portions of the Planning Area that are designated MRZ-2. As such, there are no areas where adequate information indicates that significant mineral deposits are present or where it is judged that a high likelihood for their presence exists within the Planning Area. Similar to the project, this alternative would have a less than significant impact on mineral resources.

13. *Noise.* The project would result in potentially significant construction-related noise that would be reduced to less than significant with incorporation of mitigation measures. The project would result in significant and unavoidable operational noise impacts from increased automobile traffic from increased residential and nonresidential development, even with incorporation of mitigation measures. The Reduced Residential Alternative would result in less residential development than the project but a similar amount of nonresidential development. Under this alternative, mitigation measures would still be required to ensure that construction noise is mitigated to less than significant for projects located near sensitive receptors. Due to the reduction in development under this alternative the traffic noise impact would be reduced when compared to the project. However, without the transit-oriented development that would be developed as part of the proposed project that would result in increased transit ridership and bicycle and pedestrian use and reduced vehicular use, the Planning Area would remain

dominated by automobile-oriented development that would have the effect of generating excessive noise. Therefore, this alternative would have a reduced significant and unavoidable impact when compared to the project.

14. *Population and Housing.* This alternative would result in a reduced amount of residential development and population growth compared to the Project. Given the reduction in population and housing, this alternative would result in a reduced less than significant impact related to population and housing.

15. *Public Services.* This alternative would result in a significant decrease in the amount of residential development and population growth, which would result in decreased demand for public services when compared to the project. Therefore, the Reduced Residential Alternative would result in a reduced less than significant public services impacts as the proposed project.

16. *Recreation.* This alternative would result in a significantly reduced amount of residential development and population growth, which would result in a decrease in demand for recreational facilities when compared to the project. Therefore, this alternative would result in a reduced less than significant recreation impact compared to the project.

17. *Transportation.* As described in Section 4.17.4, the roadway segments within the Planning Area are projected to operate within acceptable Levels of Service (LOS B or better) upon buildout of the proposed Specific Plan. In addition, with mitigation incorporated the project is anticipated to have a less than significant vehicle miles traveled (VMT) impact. The Reduced Residential Alternative would result in a similar amount of nonresidential development but significantly less residential development than would occur with implementation of the project. Therefore, this alternative would result in similar less than significant transportation impacts when compared to the project.

18. *Tribal Cultural Resources.* As with the project, development under the Reduced Residential Alternative could uncover previously unknown Tribal Cultural Resources. Compliance with existing regulations regarding burial grounds and consultation with Native American tribes, in addition to existing General Plan policies, would ensure that potential impacts would be reduced. Similar to the project, this alternative would have a less than significant impact on tribal cultural resources with adherence to existing regulations.

19. *Utilities and Service Systems.* This alternative would result in a similar amount of nonresidential development but a reduced amount of residential development and associated population growth, which would result in less demand for utilities services compared to the project. In addition, the mitigation measure regarding water supply (HYD-1) would also be required under this alternative. Therefore, this alternative would have a similar less than significant utilities and service system impact when compared to the project.

20. *Wildfire.* There are no very high fire severity zones within or in close proximity (within 5 miles) of the Planning Area. The Planning Area is completely urbanized and not susceptible to risks from wildfire. Similar to the project, this alternative would result in a less than significant wildfire impact.

5.5.3 – Attainment of Project Objectives

The Reduced Residential Alternative assumes that the amount of nonresidential development would be similar to the project while the amount of residential development would be significantly decreased. This alternative would include all of the Mobility Plan improvements and all of the public and private realm strategies included in the proposed Specific Plan. Because of this the Reduced Nonresidential Alternative would meet the stated project objectives, but to a lesser degree for some objectives due to the reduction of residential uses. This alternative would create a transit-oriented development (TOD) mixed-use town center; however, it would not provide the range of housing that would be provided under the proposed project. This alternative would also facilitate the Planning Area as an artisanal manufacturing center and business incubator district for local residents with an appropriate mix of industrial, office, and employment-supporting uses that will reflect market conditions. This alternative would encourage ridership for the future Southeast Gateway Light Rail station for residents of the City of Paramount and Specific Plan Area, as well as visitors to the City and Planning Area, but it would not do so to the extent of the proposed project because there would be less residents in close proximity to the station. This alternative would promote development of a mix of land uses that support economic development growth, but would be more limited in the provisions of affordable housing, compared to the project. Similar to the project, this alternative would encourage physical development of buildings and open space that provides a transition between existing uses that represent past development patterns and future development that will follow best practices for TOD. This alternative would orient new development and promote internal circulation design to create pedestrian-oriented streets that promote the use of active transportation as a popular mode for user trips. This alternative would encourage community participation, architectural style, urban design, and placemaking to represent the history and culture of the City of Paramount and its existing residents. This alternative would prioritize the implementation of green infrastructure approaches to new infrastructure and utilities that promotes resilience and adaptation to climate change. Finally, this alternative would implement infrastructure development that prioritizes sustainability for both natural systems and long-term economic development, operations, and maintenance, but it would be less sustainable because there would be fewer residential uses in close proximity to the TOD.

5.6 - ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

The CEQA Guidelines (Section 15126[e][2]) stipulate, "If the environmentally superior alternative is the 'no project' alternative, the EIR shall also identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives. In this case the No Project alternative is environmentally superior although it does not meet any project objectives. Neither Alternative 2 nor Alternative 3 would eliminate or reduce any of the significant impacts of the proposed project to less than significant levels, even with mitigation. However, Alternative 3, the Reduced Residential Alternative would reduce potential impacts to the greatest degree and would therefore be the “environmentally superior alternative.” This conclusion is based on the comparative impact conclusions in Tables 5-1 and 5-2 and the analysis within this chapter. While both Alternative 2 and Alternative 3 would result in reduced or similar less than significant impacts as the project, Alternative 3 would result in an overall greater reduction in development potential than Alternative 2. Therefore, other than Alternative 1 (No Project/Existing Conditions), Alternative 3, Reduced (25%) Residential Development Capacity, would result in the least adverse environmental impacts and would therefore be the “environmentally superior alternative.” However, this alternative would not meet the objectives to nearly the same degree as the project.

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6.0 – CEQA-MANDATED SECTIONS

6.1 – CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Section 15130(a) of the CEQA Guidelines requires that the EIR "discuss cumulative impacts of a project when the project's incremental effect is cumulatively considerable...." The CEQA Guidelines (Section 15355) define "cumulative impacts" as "...two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts."

The analyses of quantitative cumulative impacts in this EIR are based on the “summary of projections” method, as authorized by Section 15130(b)(1)(B) of the CEQA Guidelines.

The proposed Specific Plan is itself a cumulative project because it would be implemented across the entire Planning Area incrementally and cumulatively over approximately 20 years (the horizon year is 2045 but the life of the plan could extend beyond 2045). This Program EIR evaluates the Specific Plan as one “project” in accordance with CEQA. All potentially significant cumulative impacts are addressed in each of the impact topical areas (Air Quality, Land Use and Planning, etc.) in Chapters 4.1 through 4.20 of this EIR.

6.2 – GROWTH-INDUCING EFFECTS

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(d) requires that an EIR discuss "...the ways in which the proposed Specific Plan could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment."

The proposed Specific Plan has a planning horizon year of 2045. It is estimated that growth under the proposed Specific Plan would result in up to 2,000 new dwelling units and an increase of approximately 440,000 square feet of nonresidential building space. An estimated increase of approximately 4,643 residents and 138 jobs are also projected by the 2045 horizon year. However, no unplanned, substantial, detrimental, growth-inducing effect is expected because the Specific Plan is the City’s overall guide to growth and development in the future for the Planning Area.

Existing goals, policies, and implementing actions contained in the City’s existing General Plan address the potentially negative aspects of growth that could occur from implementation of the proposed Specific Plan, and have been designed to facilitate development efficiently and effectively in an area where roads and infrastructure already exist. The more compact urban form envisioned by the Specific Plan is expected to improve the livability in the Planning Area by improving walking and bicycling opportunities, increasing economic vitality and job opportunities, and reducing vehicle-miles-traveled (VMT). The potential growth-related impacts associated with the Specific Plan have also been evaluated in the topical Chapters of this EIR (Air Quality, Biological Resources, etc.) and, as appropriate, mitigation measures have been applied to address such impacts. In addition, implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would not involve the extension of roads, major sewer or water lines, or the construction of other major infrastructure facilities that would induce growth in areas adjoining the Planning Area.

6.3 – SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(b) requires that the EIR discuss "significant environmental effects which cannot be avoided if the proposed project is implemented." The impacts listed below are identified as significant and unavoidable for one of four reasons: 1) no potentially feasible mitigation has been identified; 2) potential mitigation has been identified but may be found by the Lead Agency to be infeasible; 3) with implementation of feasible mitigation, the impact still would not, or might not, be reduced to a less-than-significant level; or 4) implementation of the mitigation measure would require approval of another jurisdictional agency, whose approval will be pursued by the Lead Agency but cannot be guaranteed as of the publication of this EIR. Because these significant unavoidable impacts “cannot be alleviated without imposing an alternative design” (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2[b]), Chapter 6 (Alternatives to the Proposed Specific Plan) of this EIR evaluates a range of feasible alternatives that could lessen the identified significant unavoidable impacts, and evaluates for each alternative the ability to meet the project objectives.

The following impacts have been identified in this EIR as significant and unavoidable:

Section 4.3 Air Quality

- Impact AIR-1: Conflict with or obstruct implementation of applicable air quality plans because it would exceed the growth assumption of the South Coast Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP), and exceed SCAQMD’s regional threshold for the criteria pollutant listed under Impact AIR-2 below, thereby impeding AQMP attainment.
- Impact AIR-2: Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of non-attainment criteria pollutants for which the project region is in non-attainment. The Specific Plan would exceed the SCAQMD regional operational thresholds for ROG’s, and construction thresholds for ROG, NOx and PM10.
- Impact AIR-3: Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.
- Impact AIR-5: Cause adverse substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to air quality (Cumulative Impact).

Section 4.8, Greenhouse Gas Emissions

- Impact GHG-1: Generate GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment.
- Impact GHG-3: Cause a substantial adverse cumulative impact with respect to greenhouse gas emissions (Cumulative Impact).

Section 4.13, Noise

- Impact NOISE-2: Result in generation of a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies.

The implications of each significant unavoidable impact identified above are described in the particular EIR chapter referenced with the impact. The Specific Plan is being proposed, notwithstanding these effects, to fully achieve the project objectives described in Chapter 3.0 of this EIR. If the City approves the proposed Specific Plan (or an alternative to the proposed Specific Plan) that would result in significant unavoidable impacts, the City must adopt a “Statement of Overriding Considerations” per CEQA Guidelines Section 15093 describing why the economic,

legal, social, technological, or other benefits, including regionwide or statewide environmental benefits, of the approved Plan outweigh its significant unavoidable impacts.

6.4 – SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2(c) requires that the EIR discuss "significant irreversible environmental changes which would be caused by the proposed Specific Plan should it be implemented." Since the Specific Plan includes a Mobility Plan that would establish new circulation patterns within the Planning Area in order to connect new developments to the local street network, which would replace current surface parking lot circulation routes, there would be a significant irreversible physical change caused by the proposed Specific Plan. The proposed Specific Plan would result in an irreversible commitment of energy resources, primarily in the form of fossil fuels, including fuel oil, natural gas, and gasoline or diesel fuel for construction equipment and vehicles, and the use of these same resources during long-term operation of individual projects facilitated by the Plan. Because development facilitated by the proposed Specific Plan would be required by law to comply with California Code of Regulations Title 24 (including updates over time) and adopted City energy conservation ordinances and regulations, Plan implementation would not be expected to use energy in a wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary manner.

The consumption or destruction of other non-renewable or slowly renewable resources would also result during construction, occupancy, and use of individual development sites under the proposed Specific Plan. These resources would include, but would not be limited to, lumber, concrete, sand, gravel, asphalt, masonry, metals, and water. Specific Plan implementation would also irreversibly use water and solid waste landfill resources. However, development under the proposed Specific Plan would not involve a large commitment of those resources relative to supply, nor would it consume any of those resources wastefully, inefficiently, or unnecessarily, especially considering ongoing City conservation and recycling programs.

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7.0 – PREPARATION TEAM

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