CLEARWATER SPECIFIC PLAN
FINDINGS OF FACT AND STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS
CITY OF PARAMOUNT
DRAFT
FEBRUARY 19, 2026

1.0 OVERVIEW AND INTRODUCTION

This statement of Findings of Fact (Findings) addresses the potential environmental effects associated with the City of Paramount Clearwater Specific Plan (project), as described in the Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) and the Final Program EIR (FEIR) for the project. These Findings are made pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (California Public Resources Code [PRC] Section 21000 et seq.), specifically PRC Sections 21081, and the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15000 et seq.), specifically Sections 15091 and 15093. The DEIR examines the full range of potential effects of construction and operation of the project and identifies mitigation measures that could be employed to reduce, minimize, or avoid those potential effects.

PRC Section 21081, and CEQA Guidelines Section 15091 require that the Lead Agency, in this case the City of Paramount (City), prepare written findings for identified significant effects, accompanied by a brief explanation of the rationale for each finding. Specifically, CEQA Guidelines Section 15091 states, in part, that:

a) No public agency shall approve or carry out a project for which an EIR has been certified which identifies one or more significant environmental effects of the project unless the public agency makes one or more written findings for each of those significant effects, accompanied by a brief explanation of the rationale for each finding. The possible findings are:

    1) Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.

    2) Such changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and not the agency making the finding. Such changes have been adopted by such other agency or can and should be adopted by such other agency.

    3) Specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other considerations, including provision of employment opportunities for highly trained workers, make infeasible the mitigation measures or project alternatives identified in the Final EIR.

In accordance with PRC Section 21081, and CEQA Guidelines Section 15093, whenever significant effects cannot be mitigated to below a level of significance, the decision-making agency is required to balance the benefits of the project against its unavoidable environmental risks when determining whether to approve the project. If the benefits of a project outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental effects, the adverse effects may be considered “acceptable.” In that case, the decision- making agency may prepare and adopt a Statement of Overriding Considerations, pursuant to the CEQA Guidelines.

Section 15093 of the CEQA Guidelines states the following:

a) CEQA requires the decision-making agency to balance, as applicable, the economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits of a proposed project against its unavoidable environmental risks when determining whether to approve the project. If the specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits of a proposed project outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental effects, the adverse environmental effects may be considered "acceptable."

b) When the lead agency approves a project which will result in the occurrence of significant effects which are identified in the Final EIR but are not avoided or substantially lessened, the agency shall state in writing the specific reasons to support its action based on the Final EIR and/or other information in the record. The statement of overriding considerations shall be supported by substantial evidence in the record.

c) If an agency makes a statement of overriding considerations, the statement should be included in the record of the project approval and should be mentioned in the notice of determination. This statement does not substitute for, and shall be in addition to, findings required pursuant to Section 15091.

The Final EIR for the Specific Plan identified potentially significant effects that could result from the project. The City finds that the inclusion of certain mitigation measures as part of the approval of the project would reduce most, but not all, of those effects to less-than-significant levels. Those impacts that are not reduced to less-than-significant levels are identified and overridden due to specific benefits of the Specific Plan (see Section 6, Statement of Overriding Considerations).

As required by CEQA, the City, in adopting these Findings, also adopts a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) for the project. The City finds that the MMRP, which is incorporated by reference and made part of these Findings, meets the requirements of PRC Section 21081.6 by providing for the implementation and monitoring of measures intended to mitigate potentially significant effects of the project.

In accordance with the CEQA Statutes and Guidelines, the City adopts these Findings for the Clearwater Specific Plan. Pursuant to PRC Section 21082.1(c)(3), these Findings reflect the City's independent judgment as the Lead Agency for the Specific Plan Final EIR.

2.0 SUMMARY PROJECT DESCRIPTION

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 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 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.

2.1 SPECIFIC PLAN DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

Based on growth projections provided by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), the 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 development zones, the City estimates that the Specific Plan 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

Table 1 (Existing and Projected Year 2045 Land Use Intensity) shows the anticipated growth within the Planning Area under the Specific Plan. 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, Specific Plan would result in a net increase in development within the Planning Area.

Table 1
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 Specific Plan. 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 2 (Existing and Projected Year 2045 Development Capacity Comparison) shows the anticipated net increases in development potential within the Planning Area under the Specific Plan. The 2045 planning horizon for the Planning Area is estimated to result in increases of approximately 1 million square feet of nonresidential space (excluding square footage for structured parking), 2,000 dwelling units, 4,643 residents, and 138 employees for the 2045 horizon year.

Table 2
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
Nonresidential 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

2.2 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The City's objectives for the Specific Plan 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.

3.0 FINDINGS OF FACT

Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21081 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15091, no public agency shall approve or carry out a project where an Environmental Impact Report (**"EIR"**) has been certified that identifies one or more significant impacts on the environment that would occur if the project is approved or carried out unless the public agency makes one or more findings for each of those significant impacts, accompanied by a brief explanation of the rationale of each finding. The possible findings, which must be supported by substantial evidence in the record, are:

(1) Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental as identified in the Final EIR.

(2) Such changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and not the agency making the finding. Such changes have been adopted by such other agency or can and should be adopted by such other agency.

(3) Specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other considerations, including provision of employment opportunities for highly trained workers, make infeasible the mitigation measures or project alternatives identified in the Final EIR.

With respect to significant effects which were subject to finding (3) above, the public agency must find that specific overriding economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits of the project outweigh the significant effects on the environment. The City of Paramount (City) has exercised independent judgment in accordance with the provisions of CEQA Section 21082.1(c) in retaining its own environmental consultant in the preparation of the EIR, as well as reviewing, analyzing, and revising material prepared by the consultant. Having received, reviewed, and considered the information in the EIR, as well as any and all other information in the record, the City hereby makes findings pursuant to and in accordance with CEQA Sections 21081, 21081.5, and 21081.6. References for discussion of environmental impacts within the Final EIR are noted with each finding. Impact numbers refer to the section number and the threshold letter referenced in the Draft EIR where the full discussion of impacts is included. The Findings of Fact are presented on the following pages.

3.1 EFFECTS DETERMINED TO HAVE NO IMPACT OR LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The evaluation prepared in the Specific Plan FEIR found and provided substantial evidence that certain impacts of the Specific Plan would have no impact or have impacts that are less than significant. The City Council agrees with the characterization of the FEIR with respect to all of the Specific Plan impacts identified as "resulting in no impact" or "less than significant" impacts and finds that those impacts have been described and analyzed accurately and are supported by substantial evidence as described in the FEIR, including the Draft EIR. Reference should be made to the DEIR and FEIR for a more complete description of the substantiation of the findings regarding these impacts. This finding applies to the evaluation of the potential impacts for the following items as further described in the DEIR, that the project will have no impact or a less than significant impact for the impact statements listed below.

Aesthetics

- AES-1: Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista.

- AES-2: Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock

outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway.

- AES-3: Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site/planning area or its surroundings.

- AES-4: Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime.

- AES-5: Cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to aesthetics.

Agricultural Resources

- AG-1: 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.

- AG-2: Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract.

- AG-3: Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest (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)).

- AG-4: Result in loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

- AG-5: 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.

- AG-6: Cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to Agriculture and Forestry Resources.

Air Quality

- AIR-4: Result in other emissions such as those leading to odors adversely affecting a substantial number of people.

Biological Resources

- BIO-1: 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.

- BIO-2: Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

- BIO-3: 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.

- BIO-4: 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.

- BIO-5: Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance.

- BIO-6: Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.

- BIO-7: Cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to biological resources.

Cultural Resources

- CUL-1: Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historic resource as defined by CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5.

- CUL-3: Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries.

- CUL-4: Cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to cultural resources.

Energy

- ENG-1: Significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation.

- ENG-2: Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

- ENG-3: Cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to energy.

Geology and Soils

- GEO-1: Expose people or structures to 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. (Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42).
    - Strong seismic ground shaking.
    - Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction.
    - Landslides.

- GEO-2: Result in substantial soil erosion of the loss of topsoil.

- GEO-3: Be located on a geological unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project and potentially result in an on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse.

- GEO-4: Be located on expansive soil, as defined by Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property.

- GEO-5: 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 wastewater.

- GEO-6: Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geological feature.

- GEO-7: Cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to geology and soils, including paleontological resources.

Greenhouse Gases

- GHG-2: Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emission of GHGs.

Hazardous and Hazardous Materials

- HAZMAT-1: Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials.

- HAZMAT-2: 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.

- HAZMAT-3: Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school.

- HAZMAT-4: 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.

- HAZMAT-5: 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, result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the Project area.

- HAZMAT-6: Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.

- HAZMAT-7: Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires.

- HAZMAT-8: Cause substantial cumulative impacts with respect to hazards and hazardous materials.

Hydrology and Water Quality

- HYD-1: Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality.

- HYD-3: 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:

    - Result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site.

    - Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site.

    - 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.

    - Impede or redirect flood flows.

- HYD-4: In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation.

- HYD-5: Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan.

- HYD-6: Cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to hydrology and water quality.

Land Use and Planning

- LAND-1: Physically divide an established community;

- LAND-2: 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.

- LAND-3: Cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to land use and planning.

Mineral Resources

- MIN-1: 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.

- MIN-2: 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.

- MIN-3: Cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to mineral resources.

Noise

- NOISE-4: Expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels as a result of being located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or within two miles of a public airport.

Population and Housing

- POP-1: Induce substantial unplanned population growth either directly (e.g., by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (e.g., through extension of roads or other infrastructure).

- POP-2: Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

- POP-3: Cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to population and housing.

Public Services

- PS-1: 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 would cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the following public services:
    - Fire protection
    - Police protection
    - Schools
    - Parks
    - Other public facilities.
- PS-2: Cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to public services.

Recreation

- REC-1: 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.

- REC-2: Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

- REC-3: Cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to parks and recreation facilities.

Transportation

- TRAN-1: Conflict with program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

- TRAN-4: Result in inadequate emergency access.

Tribal Cultural Resources

- TCR-1: 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 Cultural 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 as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(k).

- TCR-2: 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 Cultural Native American tribe, and that is 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 Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

- TCR-3: Cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to tribal cultural resources.

Utilities and Service Systems

- UTIL-2: Be sufficient water supplies available to serve reasonably foreseeable future development in the Planning Area during normal, dry and multiple dry years.

- UTIL-3: Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments.

- UTIL-4: 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.

- UTIL-5: Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

- UTIL-6: Cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to Utilities and Service Systems.

Wildfire

- WIL-1: Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuated plan.

- WIL-2: Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire.

- WIL-3: 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.

- WIL-4: 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 Sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.

- WIL-5: Cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to wildfire.

3.2 IMPACTS DETERMINED TO BE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION INCORPORATED

The Final EIR (including the Draft EIR) identifies the following significant environmental impacts associated with the project. Based on the environmental analysis of the project and the identification of feasible mitigation measures, potentially significant impacts have been determined by the City to be reduced to a level of less than significant, and the City has found in accordance with Public Resources Code Section 21081(a)(1) and State CEQA Guidelines Section 15091(a)(1) that *"changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant effects on the environment."* The descriptions of the impacts in these findings are summary statements. Mitigation Measures are numbered to correspond to listings in the Draft EIR and Final EIR. Reference should be made to the Draft EIR and Final EIR for a more complete description. Based on substantial evidence, the City finds that adoption of the mitigation measures set forth in this section would reduce the identified significant impacts to less than significant.

Hydrology and Water Quality

Section 4.10 (Hydrology and Water Quality) of the EIR identifies potential significant impacts pertaining to groundwater supply but concludes that impacts can be mitigated to less than significant levels.

Impact HYD-2: ***Would the project substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management for the basin?***

Substantial Evidence:

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.

Table 3-3 in Section 3, Project Description, of the DEIR 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 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 Specific Plan exceeds that upon which the UWMP was developed. Therefore, long-term local groundwater supply is a potentially significant impact that requires mitigation. Further, 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 of the DEIR, 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 goals and policies 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 and would not impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin. By helping remediate existing groundwater contamination, the City will help secure its groundwater supply in the future.

Future development under the 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. Additionally, 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 Specific Plan would result in less than significant groundwater supply impacts.

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.

Findings:

With incorporation of Mitigation Measure HYD-1, implementation of General Plan goals and policies aimed at reducing water consumption, and continued regulatory compliance with State and regional water quality standards, development within the Planning Area under the Specific Plan would not substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin.

Noise

Section 4.13 (Noise) of the EIR identifies potential significant impacts pertaining to construction noise and onsite operational noise but concludes that impacts can be mitigated to less than significant levels.

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?***

Substantial Evidence:

The DEIR determined that 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 a

doubling or quadrupling of loudness, respectively. Additionally, as shown in Table 4.13-10 of the DEIR, typical construction equipment activities could exceed the Federal Transit Authority (FTA) 80 dBA L_{eq} significance thresholds at onsite institutional uses (e.g., Our Lady of the Rosary School and Parish, Paramount Adult School) and at future residential receptors that could be developed under the Specific Plan within approximately 100 feet of work areas. Exceeding this threshold is considered to have a potentially significant impact. However, the DEIR found that 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.

Mitigation Measures:

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) Const*ruction 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. Existing electrical service shall connect 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 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).

Findings:

With implementation of Mitigation Measure NOI-1, development within the Planning Area under the Specific Plan would result in less than significant impacts related to temporary increases in ambient noise levels in excess of local standards.

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?***

Substantial Evidence:

Increases in Traffic and Rail Noise Levels. The City conducted a transportation analysis for the proposed Specific Plan land use changes (see Chapter 4.17, Transportation, and Appendix G of the DEIR), which was used to evaluate the potential future increases in traffic-related noise levels associated with projected growth. It was determined that because the Specific Plan does not include plans for the expansion of freight or light rail, the Specific Plan is not anticipated to increase noise levels at these sources. In terms of motor vehicle noise, Caltrans considers a doubling of total traffic volume to result in a three (3) dBA increase in traffic-related noise levels. 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. It was determined that this increase could result in a doubling of trips, and therefore an approximate 3 dBA increase, along Rosecrans Avenue, Paramount Boulevard, and Somerset Boulevard. As such, it was determined that the increase in offsite traffic noise would be potentially significant and requires mitigation.

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 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. 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 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 of the DEIR, 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. 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. Although unlikely to occur, the Specific Plan could result in the operation of noise generating equipment and activities in close proximity to building facades within the Planning Area that have the potential to exceed interior noise standards and requires mitigation.

Mitigation Measures:

See Mitigation Measure Tran-1.

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 certain equipment or activities from operating at certain times such as nighttime hours).

Findings:

The implementation of Mitigation Measures TRAN-1 and 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 Planning Area to identify and control onsite noise to comply with the City's exterior and interior noise standards. Implementation of Mitigation Measures TRAN-1 and NOI-2 would reduce onsite noise impacts to less than significant levels.

Impact NOISE-3: ***Would the project result in generation of excessive groundborne noise levels?***

Substantial Evidence:

Future potential construction vibration levels are dependent on the type of equipment used. As shown in Table 4.13-17 of the DEIR, a vibratory roller operating and typical construction equipment operating within 250 feet and 150 feet, respectively, from Category 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). However, while the project's construction activities would not result in physical damage to any existing structures, it could exceed FTA and Caltrans criteria for annoyance for potential onsite research and development uses and potential onsite residential receptors. As such, the DEIR determined that construction vibration would have a potentially significant impact.

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.

Findings:

The implementation of Mitigation Measure NOI-3 would require future development in the Planning Area to reduce the potential for construction equipment to generate substantially perceptible groundborne vibrations at noise-sensitive land uses. Implementation of Mitigation

Measure NOI-3 would reduce impacts related to groundborne vibration to less than significant levels.

Transportation

Section 4.17 (Transportation) of the EIR identifies potential significant impacts pertaining to vehicle miles traveled, increased hazards due to geometric design features, and cumulative impacts but concludes that these impacts can be mitigated to less than significant levels.

Impact TRAN-2: *Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)? [regarding VMT]?*

Substantial Evidence:

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. Further, the Specific Plan would not displace any residential units set aside for lower income households. Mitigation Measure TRAN-1 has been incorporated to ensure implementation of the Specific Plan does not result in significant VMT impacts.

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.

Findings:

The Specific Plan is located within a transit priority area and does not conflict with additional considerations that may contradict transit-oriented development. Therefore, the 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.

Impact TRAN-3: ***Would the project substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?***

Substantial Evidence:

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 Specific Plan does not include any incompatible uses such as farm equipment. The 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.

Mitigation Measures:

TRAN-2: Future development proposals within the Planning Area forecast to generate more than 50 peak hour trips shall prepare a traffic study that evaluates and addresses any deficiencies related to the following items, including potential cumulative impacts and, if necessary, additional mitigation:

- The need for installation of a traffic signal or turning restrictions at unsignalized access points.
- Left turn lane storage lengths.
- Potential impacts of increased pedestrian and vehicle activity, including vehicle queuing, on the following Union Pacific Railroad Crossings:
  - The intersection of Rosecrans Avenue and Paramount Boulevard
  - Rosecrans Avenue between Paramount Boulevard and Garfield Avenue
  - Somerset Boulevard between Paramount Boulevard and Garfield Avenue
- Any additional site access or safety concerns deemed necessary by the City of Paramount Director of Public Works.

Future development proposals within the Planning Area forecast to generate more than 50 peak hour trips at the following freeway ramps shall prepare a queuing analysis for each ramp in accordance with guidance from the California Department of Transportation Local Development Review Safety Review Practitioner's Guide (February 2024, or current equivalent): I-710 at Rosecrans

Avenue interchange, I-710 at Alondra Boulevard interchange, I-105 at Garfield Avenue interchange, and I-105 at Paramount Boulevard interchange.

Findings:

Incorporation of Mitigation Measure TRAN-2 would ensure that implementation of the Specific Plan would not substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature or incompatible uses and would not result in safety hazards at railroad crossings in the vicinity of the project. Impacts would be less than significant.

Impact TRAN-5: *Would the project cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to transportation and traffic?*

Substantial Evidence:

Future development under the 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.

Mitigation Measures:

Mitigation Measures TRAN-1 and TRAN-2.

Findings:

With future site-specific mitigation, implementation of the Specific Plan would not make a significant contribution to any cumulatively considerable transportation impacts and impacts would be less than significant.

Utilities and Service Systems

Section 4.19 (Utilities and Service Systems) of the EIR identifies potential significant impacts pertaining to expanded water facilities, water supplies, and cumulative impacts but concludes that impacts can be mitigated to less than significant levels.

Impact UTIL-1: ***Would the project 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?***

Substantial Evidence:

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 3,862 persons. 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.

Table 3-3 in Section 3, Project Description, of the DEIR 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 of the DEIR).

Future development under the 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. Mitigation Measure HYD-1 is also incorporated to help assure there would be adequate groundwater supplies for future City and Planning Area residents.

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.

Findings:

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.

3.3 IMPACTS DETERMINED TO BE SIGNIFICANT, ADVERSE, AND UNAVOIDABLE

As presented in the Specific Plan EIR, the City finds that impacts pertaining to air quality, GHG emissions, and noise cannot be mitigated to a less than significant level even with incorporation of mitigation measures.

Air Quality

Section 4.3 (Air Quality) of the EIR identifies potentially significant impacts pertaining to the emission of criteria pollutants and exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations and concludes that these impacts cannot be mitigated to less than significant levels.

IMPACT AQ-1: *Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of the South Coast Air Quality Management Districts' 2022 Air Quality Management Plan?*

Substantial Evidence:

As described in Section 4.3.1 of the DEIR, the Specific Plan is within the South Coast Air Basin (SCAB), 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 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 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 Specific Plan, are shown in Table 4.3-7 of the DEIR. As shown in Table 4.3-7, the anticipated growth under the 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 Specific Plan would be inconsistent with Criterion 1 of the AQMP.

Consistency Criterion 2 refers to the California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) and National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). As described in Section 4.3.1 of the DEIR, 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 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. Therefore, from an air quality violation standpoint, the Specific Plan would be inconsistent with Criterion 2 of the AQMP.

Implementation of the 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. 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 Specific Plan could result in construction and operational emissions that exceed SCAQMD regional CEQA thresholds, the 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.

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) including Localized Significance Thresholds (LSTs), 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 or Tier 5emissions 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.

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.

Findings:

The growth that could occur under the Specific Plan by 2045 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 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 Specific Plan would be inconsistent with the AQMP. This impact would remain significant and unavoidable even with implementation of mitigation and requires a Statement of Overriding Considerations.

IMPACT AQ-2: ***Would the project 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?***

Substantial Evidence:

Construction Emissions. Specific Plan implementation would generate short-term construction and long-term operational emissions of regulated air pollutants (i.e., criteria air pollutants and TACs). The 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). Many new projects would also 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 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 is a potentially significant impact.

Operational Emissions. 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. 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, and project-specific modifications. As explained in Section 4.3.1 of the DEIR, 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 Specific Plan land uses under 2045 growth conditions. The net change in long-term operational emissions that would be generated by Specific Plan growth is shown in Table 4.3-8. As shown in Table 4.3-8, maximum daily operational emissions associated with potential 2045 growth under the Specific Plan would exceed the SCAQMD's recommended regional pollutant thresholds for 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. The Basin is designated nonattainment for national and State ozone standards, and ROG is an ozone precursor pollutant. The exceedances of SCAQMD operational thresholds for ROG represent potentially significant impacts.

Mitigation Measures:

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

Findings:

Construction Emissions. There is uncertainty regarding the specific nature of construction activities that would be facilitated under implementation of the 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 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 and requires a Statement of Overriding Considerations.

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. Additionally, 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.Nonetheless, this impact would be significant and unavoidable even with incorporation of feasible mitigation and requires a Statement of Overriding Considerations.

IMPACT AIR-3: *Would the project expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?*

Substantial Evidence:

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. As discussed under Impact AQ-2 of the DEIR, future development activities facilitated under implementation of the 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 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 of the DEIR). This represents a potentially significant impact.

Mitigation Measures:

See Mitigation Measure AQ-1.

Findings:

There is uncertainty regarding the specific nature of construction activities that would be facilitated under implementation of the 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 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 and requires a Statement of Overriding Considerations.

IMPACT AIR-5: *Would the Specific Plan cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to Air Quality?*

Substantial Evidence:

As described in Section 4.3.1 of the DEIR, the Basin is designated nonattainment for national and State O_3 standards, national and State $PM_{2.5}$ standards, and national PM_{10} standards. 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. 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. 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 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 requiring mitigation.

Mitigation Measures:

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

Findings:

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 is considered a potentially significant adverse and unavoidable impact even with incorporation of mitigation measures and requires a Statement of Overriding Considerations.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Section 4.8 (Greenhouse Gases) of the EIR identifies potentially significant impacts pertaining to the emission of greenhouse gases and concludes that these impacts cannot be mitigated to less than significant levels.

IMPACT GHG-1: ***Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment.***

Substantial Evidence:

As shown in Table 4.8-4 of the DEIR, 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) 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. 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.

Mitigation Measures:

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.

Findings:

The Specific Plan would improve GHG efficiency through its transit-oriented development, mixed-use development, increasing development density within the Planning Area, and building 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. Mitigation Measures GHG-1 through GHG-4 would also reduce project GHG emissions through reductions in energy consumption, increased conservation, and increased renewable energy. In spite of this, the GHG emissions associated with the Specific Plan would still not meet the SCAQMD's efficiency metric and would not be in line with Statewide goals. Therefore, this is considered a potentially significant adverse and unavoidable impact even with incorporation of mitigation measures and requires a Statement of Overriding Considerations.

IMPACT GHG-3: ***Implementation of the Specific Plan would cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to greenhouse gases.***

Substantial Evidence:

As stated in Section 4.8.4 of the DEIR, global climate change is the result of GHG emissions worldwide; and 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 Impacts GHG-1 and GHG-2, the Specific Plan would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purposes of reducing GHG emissions; however, it would generate GHG emissions that exceed the project specific GHG efficiency threshold (1.0 $MTCO_2e$/yr/SP) used to provide context for the magnitude of potential GHG emissions levels with the Specific Plan. Accordingly, this impact was considered potentially significant and Mitigation Measures GHG-1 through GHG-4 were incorporated to reduce GHG emissions.

Mitigation Measures

See Mitigation Measures GHG-1 through GHG-4, above.

Findings:

Despite inclusion of Mitigation Measure GHG-1, the identified impacts related to cumulative greenhouse gas emissions would remain significant and unavoidable and require a Statement of Overriding Considerations.

Noise

Section 4.13 (Noise) of the EIR identifies potential significant impacts pertaining to offsite operational noise and concludes that these impacts cannot be mitigated to less than significant levels.

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?***

Substantial Evidence:

As described in Section 4.13.1 of the DEIR, 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. 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.

Additionally, the existing noise levels from offsite traffic noise may result in noise levels above 65 CNEL. Although unlikely to occur, the project could result in the operation of noise generating equipment and activities in close proximity to building facades within the Planning Area that have the potential to exceed interior noise standards. This is considered a potentially significant impact.

Mitigation Measures:

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.

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 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 certain equipment or activities from operating at certain times such as nighttime hours).

Findings:

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 even with incorporation of mitigation and requires a Statement of Overriding Considerations.

3.4 CONCLUSION WITH RESPECT TO IMPACTS THAT CANNOT BE MITIGATED

The City finds, based on the facts set forth in the administrative record, which include but are not limited to the facts as set forth below, those facts contained in the DEIR, and any other facts set forth in materials prepared by the City or the City's consultants, that there are no additional, feasible mitigation measures, changes, or alternatives available to reduce the significant and unavoidable impacts identified above, beyond those identified in the mitigation measures adopted for the project. Therefore, as outlined in Public Resource Code Section 21081(b) and State CEQA Guidelines Section 15093, adoption of the project will require a Statement of Overriding Considerations for impacts pertaining to conflicts with applicable air quality plans, emissions of criteria pollutants, emissions of greenhouse gases, and offsite noise, which is included with these Findings. As fully described in the Statement of Overriding Considerations (Section 6 herein), the City has concluded and hereby finds and declares that, based on substantial evidence, that the project's significant and unavoidable impacts are outweighed by the project's benefits, including but not limited to the project's significant benefits to the residents of the City of Paramount. Accordingly, based on substantial evidence in the DEIR and the administrative record, the City finds and declares, pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15091(a)(3), that specific economic legal, social, technical, or other considerations, including accomplishing the project objectives, make infeasible any additional mitigation measures or project alternatives identified in the DEIR.

4.0 FINDINGS OF PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

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." Under Section 15126.6(a) of the CEQA Guidelines, an EIR does not need to consider alternatives that are not feasible, nor need it address every conceivable alternative to the project. The range of alternatives "is governed by a 'rule of reason' that requires the EIR to set forth only those alternatives necessary to permit a reasoned choice." (CEQA Guidelines § 15126.6[f]). For alternative locations, "only locations that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project need be considered for inclusion in the EIR" (Section 15126.6(f)(2)(A)). The significant impacts of the proposed project (air quality, GHG emissions, and noise) are based on the type and size of the proposed use so this project on any other site would still result in significant impacts identified in the EIR. Below is a discussion of the following alternatives that have been evaluated in comparison to the project:

- Alternative 1: No Project/Existing Conditions
- Alternative 2: Reduced (-25%) Nonresidential Alternative
- Alternative 3: Reduced (-25%) Residential Alternative

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(d), the discussion of impacts associated with these alternatives is less detailed than the evaluation included in Chapters 4.1 through 4.20 of the impacts associated with implementation of the Specific Plan. Table 3 shows the development assumptions of each alternative. Table 4 shows how impacts associated with the implementation of the alternatives compare to the impacts associated with implementation of the Specific Plan (refer to accompanying text for full explanation).

Table 3
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 4
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**

4.1 SELECTION OF ALTERNATIVES

To provide a basis for further understanding of the environmental effects of a proposed project and possible approaches to reducing its identified significant impacts, the CEQA Guidelines require an EIR to also "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."

4.2 EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVES IMPACTS

Substantial Evidence:

No Project/Existing Conditions Alternative

DEIR Section 5.3 concluded that Alternative 1 would have the following less than significant impacts that are similar/equivalent to those of the project: Aesthetics; Agriculture and Forest Resources; Biological Resources; Cultural Resources; Geology and Soils; Hazards and Hazardous Materials; Hydrology and Water Quality; Land Use; Mineral Resources; Tribal Cultural Resources; and Wildfire.

DEIR Section 5.3 also concluded that Alternative 1 would have the following reduced and also less than significant impacts relative to those of the project: Air Quality; Energy; GHG Emissions; Noise; Population and Housing; Public Services; Recreation; Transportation; and Utilities and Service Systems.

Alternative 2: Reduced (-25%) Nonresidential Development

DEIR Section 5.4 concluded that Alternative 2 would have the following less than significant impacts that are similar/equivalent to those of the project: Agriculture and Forest Resources; Biological Resources; Cultural Resources; Geology and Soils; Hazards and Hazardous Materials; Hydrology and Water Quality; Land Use; Mineral Resources; Recreation; Tribal Cultural Resources; and Wildfire.

DEIR Section 5.4 also concluded that Alternative 2 would have the following reduced and less than significant impacts relative to those of the project: Aesthetics; Energy; Population and Housing; Public Services; Transportation; and Utilities and Service Systems.

Lastly, DEIR Section 5.4 concluded that Alternative 2 would have the following impacts that are less than those of the project but are still significant and unavoidable even with implementation of all recommended feasible mitigation measures: Air Quality; Greenhouse Gas Emissions; and Noise.

Alternative 3: Reduced (-25%) Residential Development

DEIR Section 5.5 concluded that Alternative 3 would have the following less than significant impacts that are similar/equivalent to those of the project: Agriculture and Forest Resources; Biological Resources; Cultural Resources; Geology and Soils; Hazards and Hazardous Materials; Hydrology and Water Quality; Land Use; Mineral Resources; Public Services; Tribal Cultural Resources; and Wildfire.

DEIR Section 5.5 also concluded that Alternative 3 would have the following reduced and less than significant impacts relative to those of the project: Aesthetics; Energy; Population and Housing; Recreation; Transportation; and Utilities and Service Systems.

Lastly, DEIR Section 5.5 concluded that Alternative 3 would have the following impacts that are less than those of the project but are still significant and unavoidable even with implementation of all recommended feasible mitigation measures: Air Quality; Greenhouse Gas Emissions; and Noise.

Meeting Project Objectives

DEIR Section 5.3 indicates the No Project Alternative would not fulfill any of the proposed Specific Plan objectives. DEIR Section 5.4 indicates the Reduced Nonresidential Development Alternative would fulfill some but not all of the proposed Specific Plan objectives. DEIR Section 5.5 indicates the Reduced Residential Development Alternative would fulfill some but not all of the proposed Specific Plan objectives.

4.4 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 3 and 4 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.

4.5 FINDINGS

DEIR Section 5.6 found that Alternative 1 (No Project/Existing Conditions) to be environmentally superior to the project. However, Alternative 1 does not meet any of the project objectives. DEIR Section 5.6 found that neither Alternative 2 (Reduced Nonresidential Development Capacity) nor Alternative 3 (Reduced Residential Development Capacity) would eliminate or reduce any of the significant impacts of the proposed project to less than significant levels, even with mitigation. Further, while both Alternative 2 and Alternative 3 would result in reduced or similar less than significant impacts as the project, neither alternative would meet the project objectives to nearly the same degree as the project. For these reasons, the City determines that Alternatives 1 through 3 are less desirable than the proposed project and therefore rejects all three alternatives per Public Resources Code § 21081(a)(3); CEQA Guidelines, §15091(a)(3).

5.0 STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS

Pursuant to PRC Section 21081(b) and CEQA Guidelines Section 15093(a) and (b), the decision-making agency is required to balance, as applicable, the economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits of a project against its unavoidable environmental effects when determining whether to approve a project. If the specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits of a project outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental effects, those effects may be considered “acceptable” (14 CCR 15093[a]). CEQA requires the Lead Agency to support, in writing, the specific reasons for considering a project acceptable when significant impacts are not avoided or substantially lessened. Those reasons must be based on substantial evidence in the Final EIR or elsewhere in the administrative record (14 CCR 15093[b]). The Lead Agency’s written reasons are referred to as a Statement of Overriding Considerations. For those significant impacts that cannot be mitigated to below a level of significance, the Lead Agency is required to find that the specific overriding economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits of the project outweigh the significant impacts on the environment.

Regarding a Statement of Overriding Considerations, Section 15093 of the CEQA Guidelines provides the following:

1. CEQA requires the decision-making agency to balance, as applicable, the economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits including region-wide or statewide environmental benefits of a proposed project against its unavoidable environmental risks when determining whether to approve the project. If the specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits including region-wide or statewide environmental benefits or other benefits of a proposed project outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental effects, the adverse environmental effects may be considered "acceptable."

2. When the lead agency approves a project that will result in the occurrence of significant effects which are identified in the Final EIR but are not avoided or substantially lessened, the agency shall state in writing the specific reasons to support its action based on the Final EIR and/or other information in the record. The statement of overriding considerations shall be supported by substantial evidence in the record.

3. If an agency makes a statement of overriding considerations, the statement should be included in the record of the project approval and should be mentioned in the Notice of Determination. This statement does not substitute for, and shall be in addition to, findings required pursuant to Section 15091.

The City of Paramount will approve the project and has prepared a Final EIR that satisfies the requirements of CEQA. In accordance with the requirements of CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines, the City finds that the mitigation measures identified in the Draft EIR (DEIR), the Final EIR (FEIR), and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP), when implemented, would avoid or substantially lessen some of the significant effects identified in the EIR for the project. However, certain significant impacts of the project are unavoidable even after incorporation of all feasible mitigation measures. The following adverse impacts of the project are considered significant and unavoidable based on the analysis in the DEIR, FEIR, and the Findings of Fact.

- Impact AIR-1: Conflict with or Obstruct Implementation of Applicable Air Quality Plans because it would exceed the growth assumption of the 2022 South Coast Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP), and because emissions of NO_X, ROG, CO, $PM_{2.5}$, and PM_{10} would exceed SCAQMD’s regional threshold, thereby impeding AQMP attainment.

- Impact AIR-2: Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of non-attainment criteria pollutants in excess of SCAQMD significance thresholds for which the project region is in non-attainment (including ROG/VOC).

- Impact AIR-3: Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations during construction activities.

- Impact AIR-5: Cause adverse substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to air quality.

- 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).

- 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 (offsite noise).

- Impact NOISE-5: Cause substantial adverse cumulative impacts with respect to noise or vibration (cumulative impact).

The City of Paramount finds that all feasible mitigation measures identified in the DEIR, FEIR, and Findings that are within the purview of the City would be implemented by the project, and that those mitigation measures that may be within another agency's discretion have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency. The City finds that any one of the benefits set forth below is sufficient by itself to warrant approval of the project, and this determination is based on the Findings herein and the evidence in the record. The City further finds that the remaining significant unavoidable effects related to air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, and noise are outweighed and are found to be acceptable due to the following specific overriding economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits based on the facts set forth above, the Final EIR, and the record.

- The project would create a complete street system paved and improved for all mobility types and that includes accessible, safe sidewalks, and pedestrian crosswalks.

- The project would maintain the City's economic viability and productivity over the long term by encouraging efficient and sustainable use of the overall site, a large portion of which at present is underutilized surface parking associated with the swap meet and drive-in theater.

- The project would support the economic viability of Paramount by maintaining existing industrial and manufacturing uses and introducing a new neo-industrial use with ready access to Interstate 710, Interstate 605, Interstate 105, State Route 60, and other major transportation arterial roadways.

- The project would result in a number of new employment generating uses thereby increasing employment opportunities within Paramount.

- The project would extend the life of the Paramount Swap Meet into perpetuity as a small business incubator, major revenue-generating land use, and cultural hub for the City.

- The project would result in reliable water and sewer infrastructure systems sized and maintained to meet current and future demands and to minimize risks to public health and safety.

- The project provides significant new public open space and recreation opportunities that would not be possible without the project given the built out nature of Paramount; new open space and recreation opportunities within Paramount would have the added effect of benefiting public health and fostering community.

- The project would result in improved housing supply and expanded housing opportunities that result in high quality living environments, with access to employment, transit and services.

- The project promotes attractive and safe housing opportunities for a full range of housing types and affordability levels and with equal access and opportunity for all.

- The project promotes multimodal mobility that creates safe travel ways for motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists and encourages transit use.

- The project would be located within walking distance of the planned Southeast Gateway Light Rail station, providing residents and employees with easy access to the Metro rail network.

- The project promotes the use of transit within the City as a means of reducing local traffic congestion, achieving greenhouse gas reduction targets, and connecting the community physically and socially.

- The project includes energy efficiency and conservation measures, as well as vehicle miles traveled reduction measures, that would reduce air pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and congestion.

The City Council hereby finds that the foregoing benefits provided to the public through the approval of the project outweigh the identified significant adverse environmental impacts of the project that cannot be mitigated. The City Council finds that each of the project benefits separately and individually outweighs all of the unavoidable adverse environmental effects identified in the EIR and therefore finds those impacts to be acceptable. The City Council further finds that no feasible alternative exists that both would provide all of the foregoing benefits to the public and reduce environmental impacts when compared to the project.