

3.8 Land Use

This section describes the current land use in the SCAG region, identifies the potential impacts of the RTP on land use, includes mitigation measures for the impacts, and evaluates the residual impacts.

Environmental Setting

The SCAG region is comprised of six counties: Imperial, Orange, Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura, and totals approximately 38,000 square miles in area (almost 25 million acres). The region stretches from the state borders with Nevada and Arizona to the Pacific Ocean and from the southernmost edge of the Central Valley to the Mexican border. The region includes the county with the largest area in the nation, San Bernardino County, as well as the county with the highest population in the nation, Los Angeles County. This vast area includes millions of acres of open space and recreational land and a population of 19 million people¹.

Map 3.8-1 depicts the year 2005 land uses in the region.

Urban development in the SCAG region is in the form of clusters, linked by freeways and commercial corridors interspersed with identifiable activity centers. Most existing urban development is found along the coastal plains of Los Angeles, Orange, and Ventura counties, as well as in adjoining valleys that extend inland from the coastal areas. Urban development also has moved into the inland valleys such as the Antelope, San Bernardino, Yucca, Moreno, Hemet–San Jacinto, Coachella, and Imperial Valleys. A map depicting city and county boundaries is provided as **Map 3.8-2**.

Downtown Los Angeles is the largest urbanized center within the SCAG region. Other urbanized areas in Los Angeles County include Long Beach, Burbank, Glendale, Pasadena and Pomona. Office-core centers have emerged in Woodland Hills, Universal City, Westwood, around Los Angeles International Airport, and Century City. In the other five counties within the SCAG region, urban centers exist in the cities of Riverside, San Bernardino, Santa Ana, Anaheim, Irvine, Oxnard and Ventura. Development centers in desert areas include the Lancaster-Palmdale corridor in the Antelope Valley (Los Angeles County); the Hesperia-Victorville corridor in Yucca Valley (San Bernardino County); and the Palm Springs - Palm Desert - Indio corridor in the Coachella Valley (Riverside County). El Centro is the county seat and focal point of activity in Imperial County. There is also substantial activity occurring in Imperial County at the three ports of entry along the border with Mexico.

Much of the development in San Bernardino and Riverside Counties has been on unincorporated county land. Areas that were rural twenty years ago are quickly becoming suburban. Riverside County has undertaken the Riverside County Integrated Project “to create a high quality, balanced, and sustainable environment for the citizens of Riverside County and to make

¹ SCAG projections for 2008 indicate a population total of 18,909,603

Riverside County's communities great places to live, work, and play."² The County of Ventura and cities within the county have enacted SOAR (Save Open-Space and Agricultural Resources) initiatives that, in effect, draw urban growth boundaries as a way to channel future development.³ These plans and initiatives affect how land is used in the future.

Within the older central cities, communities are being revitalized as buildings are converted into artist lofts and apartments. As the population ages, as land becomes scarce, and as the ethnic make up of the region continues to change, developers have been turning to different types of housing and commercial developments, including townhouses, condominiums, apartments, and mixed-use developments that combine commercial and office uses. Residential units are appearing in traditionally commercial areas in Los Angeles, Long Beach, Santa Ana, and Pasadena. Senior housing located near amenities is gaining popularity. At the same time buildings are being recycled into new uses, there are also movements across the region to preserve historic structures and places. Increasingly, communities across the region are recognizing the value of different styles of architecture and the different features that make a place unique.

The following sections describe in detail six overarching land uses across the region: residential, commercial/office, industrial, institutional, agricultural, and open space land uses.

Residential

The residential pattern of the SCAG region is largely shaped by topography. Most residents live in southern parts of Ventura, Los Angeles, and San Bernardino Counties with the urban form limited by national forests and mountains. In Orange County, residents live near the coast and west of the Cleveland National Forest. Residents also have moved inland to the high desert in northern Los Angeles and San Bernardino Counties and the low desert in the Coachella and Imperial Valleys.

The majority of medium and high density housing in the region is found in the urban core of the region, in downtown Los Angeles, East Los Angeles, and the "West Side" of Los Angeles. Large cities such as Long Beach, Santa Ana, Glendale, Oxnard, and Pasadena also have concentrations of high-density development in their downtown areas. Several beach communities, such as the Cities of Santa Monica, Manhattan Beach, Hermosa Beach, Redondo Beach, Huntington Beach, and Newport Beach, have high density close to the ocean.

Surrounding suburbs are predominantly low density housing tracts. Low density expands west into Ventura County, east through southeast Los Angeles County, throughout much of Orange County, and through the western Inland Empire. The resort communities and cities of the Coachella Valley in Riverside County also are built primarily on a low-density scale.

² Riverside County Integrated Project. (n.d.). *Why RCIP?* Retrieved December 5, 2007, from <http://www.rcip.org/whycip.htm>.

³ Save Our Open Space and Agricultural Resources. (n.d.). *SOAR FAQ*. Retrieved December 5, 2007, from <http://www.soarusa.org/FAQs.html>.

The developing land on the urban fringe, such as the Antelope Valley of Los Angeles County and the Victorville-Hesperia area, Lucerne Valley, and Yucca Valley of San Bernardino County, also are primarily low density.

The Imperial Valley in Imperial County is primarily an agricultural region with a growing, yet still regionally small, population that lives in primarily low-density developments.

Map 3.8-3 displays the household density across the region. This map illustrates that the urban core is the densest part of the region and that suburban household densities also are prevalent through the region.

Commercial/Office

Across the region commercial development typically follows transportation corridors. Office development generally locates at the terminals of major transportation features, particularly airports and train stations, or at the intersection of major freeways. Downtown Los Angeles is the historical center of jobs in the region. Los Angeles International Airport and John Wayne Airport have considerable office clusters around them. Office buildings tend to cluster around major intersections, including areas such as the “El Toro Y” (intersection of I-5 and I-405) and the “Orange Crush” (intersection of Interstate 5 (I-5), State Route 22 (SR-22), and State Route 57 (SR-57)) in Orange County. Office developments also cluster around two large universities in the region, the Westwood area around the University of California-Los Angeles and the Irvine Spectrum near the University of California-Irvine.

Map 3.8-4 depicts the employment density across the region. This map illustrates jobs located at major transportation intersections and along transportation corridors.

Industrial

The focal points of industrial activity in the region are the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach. Put together, these adjacent ports handle approximately 40 percent of the volume imported into the country and approximately 24 percent of the nation’s exports. . The industrial activity spreads north from the ports along the Alameda Corridor to downtown Los Angeles and extends east through the City of Industry and the City of Commerce toward San Bernardino County.

Many manufacturing industries, distribution centers, and warehouses have established businesses in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties. This activity has made the Inland Empire a distribution center for the region, state, and nation. Adding to the goods coming by highway and rail through San Bernardino County are goods coming to the county by air through several airports that cater to air cargo, primarily Ontario International Airport. Industrial uses tend to cluster around cargo-handling airports to take advantage of transportation options.

Significant air cargo and associated industrial land uses also are located around Los Angeles International Airport. A third port in the region, Port Hueneme in Ventura County, is also

surrounded with industrial activity. Along the Mexican border, the three ports of entry in Imperial County see large amounts of commerce going back and forth between the two countries.

Extraction activities in the region focus on oil and minerals. Ventura County has extensive extraction activities in the far southwestern part of the county and along Route 126. These activities extend into Los Angeles County to the area around the City of Santa Clarita. Across southern Los Angeles County, oil wells and oil refineries remain. Oil drilling and refining also takes place in Orange County near Huntington Beach and Newport Beach. Significant mining operations take place in the eastern portion of Imperial County. Wind energy generation facilities are located in the San Gorgonio Pass between Banning and Palm Springs. Industrial land uses are identified on **Map 3.8-1**.

Institutional

Institutional land uses, which include large government and private operations, such as military bases, airports, and universities, encompass a considerable footprint in the region. Military operations consume a substantial quantity of land. The ten active duty military facilities in the SCAG region are listed below.⁴

- El Centro Naval Air Facility
- Los Angeles Air Force Base
- Joint Forces Training Base, Los Alamitos
- Naval Weapons Station, Seal Beach
- Naval Warfare Assessment Station, Corona
- March Air Reserve Base
- Barstow Marine Corps Logistics Base
- Fort Irwin
- Twentynine Palms Marine Corps Combat Center
- Naval Base Ventura County

In addition, land controlled by Edwards Air Force Base, based in Kern County, extends into Los Angeles and San Bernardino Counties. The Chocolate Mountains Aerial Gunnery Range in Imperial and Riverside Counties is also an institutional use that is off limits to the public.

A substantial quantity of land is dedicated to airports in Los Angeles County. In the Antelope Valley, a large portion of land is dedicated to airport uses at Palmdale Airport. LAX is another major institutional land use. Bob Hope Airport and Long Beach Airport are the other commercial airports in Los Angeles County. Airports in other parts of the region include Ontario International Airport, Southern California Logistics Airport, and San Bernardino International Airport in

⁴ California military bases: Bases by county. Retrieved May 22, 2007, from U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer Web site: <http://boxer.senate.gov/CAbases/county.cfm>.

San Bernardino County, Palm Springs International Airport and March Inland Port in Riverside County, John Wayne Airport in Orange County, and numerous general aviation airports scattered across the SCAG region.

University and college campuses are located in every county of the SCAG region. The largest are universities in the University of California system (Irvine, Los Angeles, and Riverside) and the California State University system (Channel Islands, Dominguez Hills, Fullerton, Long Beach, Los Angeles, Northridge, San Bernardino, and San Diego-Imperial Valley Campus). California Polytechnic University at Pomona and the University of Southern California are the other large universities in the region. There are numerous smaller universities and colleges in the region, both public and private, as well as an extensive community college system that spans the region.

Regulatory Setting

The regulatory setting describes the federal, state, and local agencies that have jurisdiction over land use. The regulations pertinent to land use that each of these agencies enforce are also described. Other agencies and regulations are described in each topical issue section.

Federal Agencies and Regulations

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

EPA implements NEPA. NEPA provides information on expected environmental effects of federally funded projects. Impacts on land uses and conflicts with state, regional, or local plans and policies are among the considerations included in the regulations. The regulations also require that projects requiring NEPA review seek to avoid or minimize adverse effects of proposed actions and restore and enhance environmental quality as much as possible.

Department of Interior

United States Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

The BLM manages approximately 10 million acres of the total SCAG region, primarily in the eastern portion of the region. The California Desert Conservation Area Plan is used to manage BLM controlled areas. The BLM also implements biological resource management policies through its designation of Areas of Critical Environmental Concern.

National Park Service (NPS)

The NPS manages national parks and wilderness areas. Two national parks and one wilderness area are located in the SCAG region: Joshua Tree National Park, a portion of Death Valley National Park, and the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area.

United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

The USFWS administers the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) and designates critical habitat for endangered species. The USFWS also manages the National Wildlife Refuges in the

SCAG region. These include the Salton Sea National Wildlife Refuge (in Imperial County) and Hopper Mountain National Wildlife Refuge (in Ventura County).

United States Forest Service (USFS)

The USFS manages approximately 2.3 million acres of national forests in the SCAG region. The four national forests in the region are the Angeles National Forest, San Bernardino National Forest, Los Padres National Forest, and the Cleveland National Forest.

United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)

Among its responsibilities, the USACE administers Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA), which governs specified activities in waters of the United States, including wetlands. In this role, the USACE requires that a permit be obtained if a project would place structures, including dredged or filled materials, within navigable waters or wetlands, or result in alteration of such areas.

National Park Service (NPS)

The NPS manages national parks and wilderness areas. Two national parks and one wilderness area are located in the SCAG region: Joshua Tree National Park, a portion of Death Valley National Park, and the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area.

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

The NRCS maps soils and farmland uses to provide comprehensive information necessary for understanding, managing, conserving and sustaining the nation's limited soil resources. The NRCS manages the Farmland Protection Program, which provides funds to help purchase development rights to keep productive farmland in agricultural uses.

State Agencies and Regulations

California Department of Conservation

In 1982, the State of California created the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program within the California Department of Conservation to carry on the mapping activity from the NRCS on a continuing basis. The California Department of Conservation administers the California Land Conservation Act of 1965, also known as the Williamson Act, for the conservation of farmland and other resource-oriented laws.

California Coastal Commission

The California Coastal Commission plans for and regulates development in the coastal zone consistent with the policies of the California Coastal Act. The Commission also administers the

federal Coastal Zone Management Act in California.⁵ As part of the Coastal Act, cities and counties are required to prepare a local coastal program (LCP) for the portion of its jurisdiction within the coastal zone. With an approved LCP, cities and counties control coastal development that accords with the local coastal plan. If no local coastal plan has been approved, the Coastal Commission controls coastal development.⁶

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)

The Caltrans jurisdiction includes right-of-ways of state and interstate routes within California. Any work within the right-of-way of a federal or state transportation corridor is subject to Caltrans regulations governing allowable actions and modifications to the right-of-way.

Caltrans includes the Division of Aeronautics, which is responsible for airport permitting and establishing a county Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) for each county with one or more public airports. ALUCs are responsible for the preparation of land use plans for areas near aviation facilities.

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF)

The CDF reviews and approves plans for timber harvesting on private lands. In addition, through its responsibility for fighting wildland fires, the CDF plays a role in planning development in forested areas.

California Department of Parks and Recreation (CDPR)

The CDPR manages and provides sites for a variety of recreational and outdoor activities. The CDPR is a trustee agency that owns and operates all state parks and participates in land use planning that affects state parkland.

California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG)

The land use mandate of the CDFG is to protect rare, threatened, and endangered species by managing habitat in legally designated ecological reserves or wildlife areas. CDFG reserves located in the SCAG region include the Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve (Orange County) and Imperial State Wildlife Area (Imperial County).

Local Agencies and Regulations

Public Agencies

Public agencies are entrusted with compliance with CEQA and its provisions are enforced, as necessary, through litigation and the threat thereof. CEQA defines a significant effect on the environment as a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in the physical conditions

⁵ The other federally designated agency is the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) which operates outside of the SCAG region.

⁶ Fulton, W. 1999. *Guide to California planning*. Point Arena, CA: Solano Press Books.

within the area affected by the project. Land use is a required impact assessment category under CEQA.

Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)

As related to land use, SCAG is authorized to undertake intergovernmental review for federal assistance and direct federal development pursuant to Presidential Executive Order 12,372. Pursuant to CEQA (Public Resource Code Sections 21083 and 21087 and *CEQA Guidelines* Sections (15206 and 15125(b)), SCAG reviews projects of regional significance for consistency with regional plans. SCAG is also responsible for preparation of the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA), pursuant to California Government Code Section 65584(a). SCAG's RHNA provides a tool for providing local affordable housing development strategies.

SCAG's current *Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide (RCPG) 1996* is intended to provide a permissive framework for decision making by local governments regarding growth and development. The RCPG proposes strategies for local governments to use on a voluntary basis to reconcile local needs with state and federal planning requirements. The Regional Comprehensive Plan is currently undergoing significant revisions.

Local Agency Formation Commissions

The local agency formation commission (LAFCO) is the agency in each county that has the responsibility to create orderly local government boundaries, with the goal of encouraging "planned, well-ordered, efficient urban development patterns," the preservation of open-space lands, and the discouragement of urban sprawl.⁷ While LAFCOs have no direct land use authority, their actions determine which local government will be responsible for planning new areas. LAFCOs address a wide range of boundary actions, including creation of spheres of influence for cities, adjustments to boundaries of special districts, annexations, incorporations, detachments of areas from cities, and dissolution of cities.

General Plans

The most comprehensive land use planning for the SCAG region is provided by city and county general plans, which local governments are required by state law to prepare as a guide for future development. General plans contain goals and policies concerning topics that are mandated by state law or which the jurisdiction has chosen to include. Required topics are land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise, and safety. Other topics that local governments frequently choose to address include public facilities, parks and recreation, community design, and growth management, among others. City and county general plans must be consistent with each other. County general plans must cover areas not included by city general plans (i.e., unincorporated areas).

⁷ Governor's Office of Planning and Research. 1997. *LAFCOs, general plans, and city annexations*. Sacramento, CA.

Specific and Master Plans

A city or county may also provide land use planning by developing community or specific plans for smaller, more specific areas within their jurisdiction. These more localized plans provide for focused guidance for developing a specific area, with development standards tailored to the area, as well as systematic implementation of the general plan.

Zoning

City and county zoning codes are the set of detailed requirements that implement the general plan policies at the level of the individual parcel. The zoning code presents standards for different uses and identifies which uses are allowed in the various zoning districts of the jurisdiction. Since 1971, state law has required the city or county zoning code to be consistent with the jurisdiction's general plan.

Growth Control

Local growth control measures endeavor to manage community growth by various methods, including tying development to infrastructure capacity, limiting the number of new housing units, setting limits on the increase of commercial square footage, and the adoption of urban growth boundaries, among others.

Methodology

This section summarizes the methodology used to evaluate the expected impacts of implementation of the proposed Plan on existing land uses and existing land use plans and policies.

Comparison with the No Project

The analysis of land use includes a comparison of the expected future conditions with the proposed Plan to the expected future conditions if no Plan were adopted. This evaluation is not included in the determination of the significance of impacts (which is based on a comparison to existing conditions); however, it provides a meaningful perspective on the effects of the 2008 RTP.

Determination of Significance

This analysis evaluates land uses most likely to be affected by the construction and operation of the highway, freight rail, and transit projects in the proposed Plan and implementation of transportation and urban form policies and programs included in the Plan. GIS was used to overlay proposed Plan highway, freight rail, and transit alignments and the associated growth projection onto aerial photography of the existing land uses for the SCAG region. In addition to this GIS analysis, land use effects of arterial investments and undefined alignments were also considered. The significance criteria below were applied to determine if resulting changes in land use would be significant. The methodology for determining the significance of these impacts compares the future Plan conditions to the existing setting, as required in *CEQA Guidelines*

Section 15126.2(a). In addition, general plan maps submitted by SCAG member cities and counties were analyzed to evaluate potential conflicts with General Plan land uses.

Significance Criteria

A significant impact is defined as “a substantial or potentially substantial, adverse change in the environment” (Public Resource Code § 21068). The proposed Plan would have a significant impact if implementation would:

- Result in inconsistency with applicable adopted land use plans and policies.
- Divide an established community due to locating transportation facilities near or through an existing community.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Implementation of the 2008 RTP would affect land use. Expected significant impacts include inconsistencies with general plans, and cumulatively considerable changes to land use and the intensity of land use, impacts such as loss of prime farmlands, grazing lands, open space and recreation lands are examined in Chapter 3.10 Open Space.

Short-term construction related impacts and long-term or permanent displacement or offsite impacts from new facilities could occur as a result of implementation of the 2008 RTP. Below are descriptions of the types of direct impacts foreseeable from new transportation projects proposed in the 2008 RTP. Indirect impacts due to the changes in population distribution expected to occur due to the 2008 RTP’s transportation investments and transportation and land use policies are discussed under cumulative impacts.

All mitigation measures should be included in project-level analysis as appropriate. The project proponent or local jurisdiction shall be responsible for ensuring adherence to the mitigation measures prior to construction. For regionally significant projects SCAG shall be provided with documentation of compliance with mitigation measures through its Intergovernmental Review Process in which all regionally significant projects, plans, and programs must be consistent with regional plans and policies.

Impact 3.8-1: The proposed 2008 RTP contains transportation projects and strategies to distribute the future growth in the region. These projects and strategies could result in inconsistencies with currently applicable adopted local land use plans and policies.

The 2008 RTP contains transportation projects and strategies to help more efficiently distribute population, households, and employment growth in the region. Many of the transportation strategies were developed as a result of SCAG’s Compass Blueprint Growth/Vision process. This process involved extensive outreach to and input from local jurisdictions, including, counties, subregions and local city planners. As part of its Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) completed in June 2007, SCAG developed the integrated growth forecast which established population, employment, households and housing units forecast in the region for use in both the

RHNA and the RTP. This integrated forecast is the basis for developing the land use assumptions at the regional and small area level.

As a result of this comprehensive and integrated approach, the transportation projects and strategies included in the 2008 RTP are generally consistent with the county and regional level general plan data available to SCAG. However, general plans are updated on an inconsistent basis and not all cities have general plans. Some of the general plans that SCAG relied upon when creating the 2008 RTP are not current and may not reflect current planning policy or practice. In addition, the RTP's 2035 horizon year is beyond the timeline of even the most recent general plans. It is likely that over the period of the 2008 RTP, transportation projects and resulting growth will be inconsistent with currently adopted general plans. With these limitations, there will be inconsistencies with general plans and potentially significant effects. However, the 2008 RTP recognizes that inconsistencies may still exist and therefore includes the policy to continue public outreach efforts and incorporate local input through the integrated growth forecast process in an aim to develop a more accurate forecast in future RTPs.

Mitigation Measures

- MM-LU.1:** SCAG shall encourage cities and counties in the region to provide SCAG with electronic versions of their most recent general plan and any updates as they are produced.
- MM-LU.2:** SCAG shall encourage through regional policy comments that cities and counties update their general plans at least every ten years, as recommended by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research.
- MM-LU.3:** SCAG shall work with its member cities and counties to ensure that transportation projects and growth are consistent with the RTP and general plans.
- MM-LU.4:** Planning is an iterative process and SCAG is a consensus building organization. SCAG shall work with cities and counties to encourage that general plans reflect RTP policies. SCAG will work to build consensus on how to address inconsistencies between general plans and RTP policies.
- MM-LU.5:** SCAG shall provide technical assistance and regional leadership to implement the Compass Blueprint growth strategy and integrate growth and land use planning with the existing and planned transportation network.
- MM-LU.6:** SCAG shall provide planning services to local governments through Compass Blueprint Demonstration Projects. These projects will help local jurisdictions:
- Update General Plans to reflect Compass Blueprint principles and integrate land use and transportation planning.

- Develop specific plans, zoning overlays and other planning tools to enable and stimulate desired land use changes within 2% Strategy Opportunity Areas
- Complete the economic analysis and community involvement efforts that will ensure that the planned changes are market feasible and responsible to stakeholder concerns.
- Visualize potential changes, through innovative graphics and mapping technology to inform the dialogue about growth, development and transportation at the local and regional level.

MM-LU.7: SCAG shall continue with a targeted public relations strategy that emphasizes regional leadership, the benefits and implications of Compass Blueprint principles, and builds a sense of common interests among Southern Californians.

MM-LU.8: SCAG shall expand the role of the Compass Partnership,, a forum for convening representatives from government, civic leaders and members of the development community. SCAG shall encourage cooperative land use decision making and planning efforts between neighboring jurisdictions.

MM-LU.9: SCAG shall use its Intergovernmental Review Process to provide review and comment on large development projects regarding their consistency with the RTP and other regional planning efforts.

MM-LU.10: Local governments should provide for new housing consistent with state housing law to accommodate their share of the forecasted regional growth.

MM-LU.11: Local governments should adopt and implement General Plan Housing Elements that accommodate the housing need identified through the RHNA process. Affordable housing should be provided consistent with the RHNA income category distribution adopted for each jurisdiction.

MM-LU.12: Local governments should consider shared regional priorities, as outlined in the Compass Blueprint, RTP and other ongoing regional planning efforts, in determining their own development goals and drafting local plans.

MM-LU.13: Local governments and subregional organizations should develop ordinance and other programs which will enable and assist in the cleanup and redevelopment of brownfield sites.

MM-LU.14: Local governments and subregional organizations should develop adaptive reuse ordinances and other programs that will enable the conversion of vacant or aging commercial, office and some industrial properties to housing and mixed use housing.

Significance after Mitigation

It is likely that in some instances currently adopted general plans will be inconsistent with RTP policies. This impact would be **significant**.

Impact 3.8-2: The 2008 RTP contains transportation projects that have the potential to disrupt or divide established communities.

Construction and implementation of new transportation facilities or expansion of existing facilities could disrupt or divide established communities. Short term construction impacts would include physical barriers that limit access to a community or restrict movement within a community. Additional short term construction related impacts could result from disturbances due to construction equipment; these impacts are discussed under other impact categories (e.g., Noise, Aesthetics, and Air Quality)

Long term impacts could result from the construction of new or expanded roadways or transit facilities in existing communities. For example, the widening of a roadway could be perceived as too great a distance to cross by a pedestrian thereby dividing a community. An elevated grade crossing may create a physical barrier in some locations. Impacts would most likely to occur in urbanized or urbanizing parts of the region, although urban areas would be unlikely to be impacted by new or expanded roadways (as these areas are already developed and have little available land to expand roadways) new transit facilities are often planned in areas that have existing communities. Although new transit facilities often create a community benefit by reducing congestion in the area and providing a new mode of travel or relieving overcrowding on an existing modes of travel, new transit track and expanded transit facilities for light rail, heavy rail or Metrolink all have the potential to disrupt or divide established communities.

The addition of new lanes to existing freeway routes has the potential to divide a community. As overcrossings and undercrossings associated with the freeway routes are widened, it can create a real or perceived barrier to pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists.

New freeway segments that occur in rural areas would have the least potential to divide established communities. Rural areas do not typically have the same degree of established communities as urban areas. However, the potential for impacts still exists.

SCAG's GIS was used to analyze where major freeway, rail, and transit projects in the 2008 RTP intersect residential areas. A 150-foot potential impact zone was drawn around the freeway, rail, and transit projects in the 2008 RTP to compute the number of acres potentially affected by the major projects in the 2008 RTP. The analysis shows that approximately 6,500 acres of residential land uses would be located within the 150-foot radius of the freeway, transit, and freight rail projects included in the 2008 RTP.

Additional communities would be affected by the growth associated with the 2008 RTP. The effect of growth and urban development on communities is addressed in the Cumulative Impacts section of this chapter.

The disruption or division of existing communities could be a **significant** impact.

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation measures **MM-LU.1 through MM-LU.14** would be applied to mitigate this impact in addition to the following measures.

MM-LU.15: As part of the second tier review performed on a project-by-project basis, a study shall be completed by the lead agency to determine whether an area is classified as a “cohesive community” as defined by Environmental Handbook Volume 4, Community Impact Assessment (Caltrans 1997). The study should include the method for determining the level of cohesiveness for a given community and identify mitigation measures to reduce or avoid significant effects. Specific mitigation measures could include, but are not limited to pedestrian overcrossings, “cut and covers” and development of parks or other social interaction centers.

MM-LU.16: Significant adverse impacts to community cohesion resulting from the displacement of residences or businesses shall be mitigated with specific relocation measures as dictated by local, state or federal requirements on a project-by project basis. Such measures include assistance in finding a new location, assistance with moving, or compensation for losses. Where it has been determined that displacement is necessary and displaced individuals are eligible, a relocation assistance program consistent with the State Uniform Location Assistance and Real Properties Acquisition Policies Act provides compensation and assistance in finding new residence for displaced individuals.

MM-LU.17: Project implementation agencies shall design new transportation facilities that consider access to existing community facilities, as feasible. During the design phase of the project, community amenities and facilities shall be identified and considered in the design of the project.

MM-LU.18: Project implementation agencies shall design roadway improvements that minimize barriers to pedestrians and bicyclists, as feasible. During the design phase, pedestrian and bicycle routes shall be determined that permit connections to nearby community facilities.

Significance after Mitigation

The 2008 RTP proposes projects that have the potential to disrupt or divide communities and, considering the scale and number of these projects, even with mitigation, it is likely that in some cases impacts will not be mitigated to a less than significant level. This impact would remain **significant**.

Cumulative Impact 3.8-3: Urbanization in the SCAG region will increase substantially by 2035. The 2008 RTP, by increasing mobility and including land-use-transportation measures, influences the pattern of this urbanization. The 2008 RTP's influence on growth contributes to regional cumulatively considerable impacts to land use and would change the intensity of land use in some areas.

The construction and operation of the transportation projects in the 2008 RTP would affect a number of land uses. **Table 3.8-1**, shows the estimated acreage of different land use categories that occur within 150 feet of either side of the reasonably foreseeable transportation alignments included in the Plan and the No Project Alternative. Under both the Plan and the No Project impacts would occur. In addition to these direct impacts on land use, the total vacant land that is expected to be consumed under the 2008 RTP is estimated to be approximately 200,000 acres compared to approximately 655,000 under the No Project Alternative.

**TABLE 3.8-1
LAND USES AFFECTED BY MAJOR HIGHWAY, TRANSIT, AND
FREIGHT RAIL PROJECTS IN THE 2008 RTP**

Land Use	Plan Alternative Approximate Acres Affected	No Project Alternative (Baseline) Approximate Acres Affected
Commercial	4,600	4,700
Extraction	200	40
Grazing Land	7,000	2,000
Industrial	3,000	1,000
Low Density Residential	500	100
Medium to High Residential	5,700	2,400
Open Space and Recreation	800	300
Prime Farmland	853	400
Public Facilities and Institutions	1,100	1,000
Rural Density Residential	267	40
Transportation and Utilities	10,800	6,700
Vacant	11,700	3,200
Water and Floodways	60	10

SOURCE: SCAG GIS Analysis, 2007 SCAG Land Use, 2005.

The 2008 RTP includes policies that would influence the distribution of the growing population. The land use measures included in the 2008 RTP would encourage use of underutilized land, and in some cases would help increase the intensity of the use to achieve mobility and other benefits. However, stable single family neighborhoods would be protected, regardless of whether or not they were built at the maximum allowable density, as indicated by general plans.

Implementation of the innovative strategies the 2008 RTP could result in changes in land uses by changing concentrations of development throughout the six-county region. As such, the

contribution of the 2008 RTP to impacts on existing land use would be cumulatively considerable, as it would result in changes to existing land use, including prime farmlands, grazing lands, and open space and recreational lands.

Mitigation Measures

The mitigation measures listed above for Impacts 3.8-1 and 3.8-2 would be applied as mitigation for this impact. In addition, the following measure would apply.

MM LU-19: SCAG's on-going regional planning efforts will be used to build a consensus in the region to support changes in land use to accommodate future population growth while maintaining the quality of life in the region.

Significance after Mitigation

In order to accommodate the projected population totals assumed for 2035, the region will need to change land uses and increase the intensity of some existing land use. The cumulative impact would remain **significant**.

Comparison with the No Project Alternative

Under the No Project Alternative the population of the SCAG region would grow to 24 million people, however no regional transportation investments would be made above the existing programmed projects.

Direct Impacts

The No Project contains fewer transportation investments than the Plan Alternative. Consequently, there would be fewer places where businesses and homes would be displaced and fewer places where communities would be disrupted. The GIS analysis of existing land use data shows that the freeway, transit, and freight rail projects in the No Project Alternative would occur within 150 feet of 5,740 acres of business land uses (commercial, industrial and extraction land uses) and 2,540 acres of residential land uses (rural, low, and medium to high density housing land uses). For the Plan Alternative 7,800 acres of business land uses and about 6,500 acres of residential land uses would be affected by transportation projects.

The Plan impacts would be greater than the No Project impacts for Impact 3.8-1 and 3.8-2.

Cumulative Impacts

The No Project Alternative is expected to accommodate the same increase in total population as the proposed Plan, but more projects would be implemented under the 2008 RTP than the No Project. However, the Plan includes land use measures that would help reduce the displacement or disruption of existing communities. These mitigation measures are absent in the No Project Alternative. It is anticipated that the No Project Alternative would consume about 655,000 acres

of vacant, open space and agricultural lands, and that the Plan, despite facilitating increased access to these lands, would control land uses such that only about 200,000 acres of vacant, open space and agricultural lands would be consumed.

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