Appendix A

Initial Study/Notice of Preparation

Appendices

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California Environmental Quality Act – Notice of Preparation

Date: November 8, 2012
To: Responsible Agencies and Interested Parties
Subject: Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report and Public Scoping Meeting for the Town of Yucca Valley General Plan Update

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NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Town of Yucca Valley has prepared an Initial Study for the Town of Yucca Valley General Plan Update and has determined that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is necessary. Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21165 and the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines (CEQA Guidelines) Section 15050, the Town of Yucca Valley is the Lead Agency for the project. The purpose of this notice is (1) to serve as a Notice of Preparation (NOP) of an EIR pursuant to the CEQA Guidelines Section 15082, (2) to advise and solicit comments and suggestions regarding the scope and content of the EIR to be prepared for the proposed project, and (3) to notice the public scoping meeting. Copies of the Initial Study are available for review at the following locations:

Town of Yucca Valley, Planning Division,
58928 Monterey Business Center Drive
Yucca Valley, CA 92284

Yucca Valley Branch Library
57098 29 Palms Highway
Yucca Valley, CA 92284

The document can also be accessed online at http://www.yucca-valley.org.

Notice of Availability: Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.4 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15082, the Initial Study will be available for a 30-day public review beginning on Thursday, November 8, 2012, through December 10, 2012. The Town, as Lead Agency, requests that responsible and trustee agencies respond in a manner consistent with Section 15082(b) of the CEQA Guidelines. All comments and responses to this Notice of Preparation should be submitted in writing to Shane Stueckle at the Town address above by **Monday, December 10, 2012**.

Scoping Meeting: The Town will conduct a public scoping meeting in conjunction with this NOP in order to present the project and the EIR process and to receive public comments and suggestions regarding the scope and content of the EIR. The meeting will be held:

Wednesday, December 5, 2012, at 5:00 p.m.
Yucca Valley Community Center
57090 29 Palms Highway
Yucca Valley, CA 92284

CLERK OF SUPERVISORS
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Inspections
(760) 365-1339
FAX (760) 228-0084

The Town of
Yucca Valley
COMMUNMITY DEVELOPMENT/PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
58928 Business Center Drive
Yucca Valley, CA 92284

Project Title: Yucca Valley General Plan Update

Project Location: The Town of Yucca Valley is near the southern boundary of the central portion of San Bernardino County, approximately 20 miles north of downtown Palm Springs in neighboring Riverside County. The Town is also near the City of Twentynine Palms, Joshua Tree National Park, and the unincorporated communities of Joshua Tree, Pioneertown, and Morongo Valley. State Route 62 traverses the Town from east to west while State Route 247 crosses the northern half of the Town from north to south.

Project Description: The project is an update to the Town of Yucca Valley General Plan. The Yucca Valley General Plan Update is intended to shape development within the Town for at least the next 20 years and involves reorganization of the current General Plan into the following elements: Land Use, Circulation, Safety, Noise, Open Space and Conservation, and Housing. The General Plan Update will also revise the General Plan land use map. Buildout of the Yucca Valley General Plan Update would result in a population of 64,543, 27,276 residential units, 20,964,487 square feet of nonresidential development, and 34,927 employees in the Town.

Environmental Issues: Based on the Initial Study prepared for the proposed project, the Town anticipates several potential impacts that will need to be addressed in the EIR:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Geology & Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards & Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology & Water Quality
- Land Use & Planning
- Noise
- Population & Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation &Traffic
- Utilities & Service Systems

The Draft EIR will address the short- and long-term effects of the General Plan Update on the environment. Mitigation measures will be proposed for impacts that are determined to be significant.

Project Sponsor: Town of Yucca Valley
Consulting Firm: The Planning Center|DC&E

Date: November 8, 2012

Signature:

Shane Stueckle
Deputy Town Manager

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Building and Safety
Inspections
(760) 365-1339
FAX (760) 228 [illegible] 84

The Town of
Yucca Valley
COMMUNMITY DEVELOPMENT/PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
58928 Business Center Drive
Yucca Valley, CA 92284

INITIAL STUDY FOR:

YUCCA VALLEY

GENERAL PLAN

UPDATE

prepared for:

TOWN OF YUCCA VALLEY

Contact:
Shane Stueckle
Deputy Town Manager

prepared by:

THE PLANNING CENTER|DC&E

Contact:
Nicole Vermilion
Associate Principal

NOVEMBER 2012

INITIAL STUDY FOR:

YUCCA VALLEY GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

prepared for:

TOWN OF YUCCA VALLEY

57090 29 Palms Highway
Yucca Valley, CA 92284
Tel: 760.369.6575

Contact:
Shane Stueckle
Deputy Town Manager

prepared by:

THE PLANNING CENTER|DC&E

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Contact:
Nicole Vermilion
Associate Principal

TYV-01.0L

NOVEMBER 2012

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1. Introduction

The Town of Yucca Valley is circulating for public review and comment this Notice of Preparation (NOP) and Initial Study (IS) for the Town of Yucca Valley General Plan Update (proposed project). This Initial Study has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), as amended, to determine if approval of the discretionary actions requested and subsequent development would have a significant impact on the environment.

As defined by Section 15063 of the CEQA Guidelines, an Initial Study is prepared primarily to provide the lead agency with information to use as the basis for determining whether a Negative Declaration, Mitigated Negative Declaration, or Environmental Impact Report (EIR) would be appropriate for providing the necessary environmental documentation and clearance for the proposed project.

1.1 PROJECT LOCATION

The Town of Yucca Valley is near the southern boundary of the central portion of San Bernardino County, approximately 30 miles (driving distance) north of downtown Palm Springs in neighboring Riverside County (see Figure 1, *Regional Location*). As shown in Figure 1, the Town is surrounded by portions of unincorporated San Bernardino County and is near the City of Twentynine Palms and the unincorporated communities of Morongo Valley and Joshua Tree. The southern boundary of Yucca Valley is adjacent to Joshua Tree National Park. State Route 62 (SR-62) traverses the Town from east to west, and State Route 247 (SR-247) crosses the northern half of the Town from north to south. The Town's sphere of influence (SOI) has the same boundaries as the Town (see Figure 2, *Townwide Aerial*). These boundaries are generally the same as those established in the current General Plan, adopted in 1995, except for a one square mile area on the northern edge of the Town that was annexed in 1996.

1.2 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

1.2.1 Existing Land Use

The Town of Yucca Valley encompasses 25,492 acres (or 39.8 square miles). As shown in Table 1, *Existing Land Use Summary*, and Figure 3, *Existing Land Uses*, the vast majority of Town land is either single-family land uses (24.0 percent) or vacant (65.4 percent). This is due to the Town's low density residential character and isolated, high desert location. With a few exceptions, existing commercial and industrial uses are generally within ½ mile of the SR-62 corridor and concentrated in the Old Town and Mid-Town areas. Yucca Valley does not contain any major water bodies. The Town's abundant vacant land generally consists of undeveloped desert saltbrush scrub, Joshua tree woodland, and pinyon-juniper woodland. The majority of roadways in the less developed portions of the Town are unimproved (i.e., dirt roads).

1. Introduction

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Table 1
Existing Land Use Summary

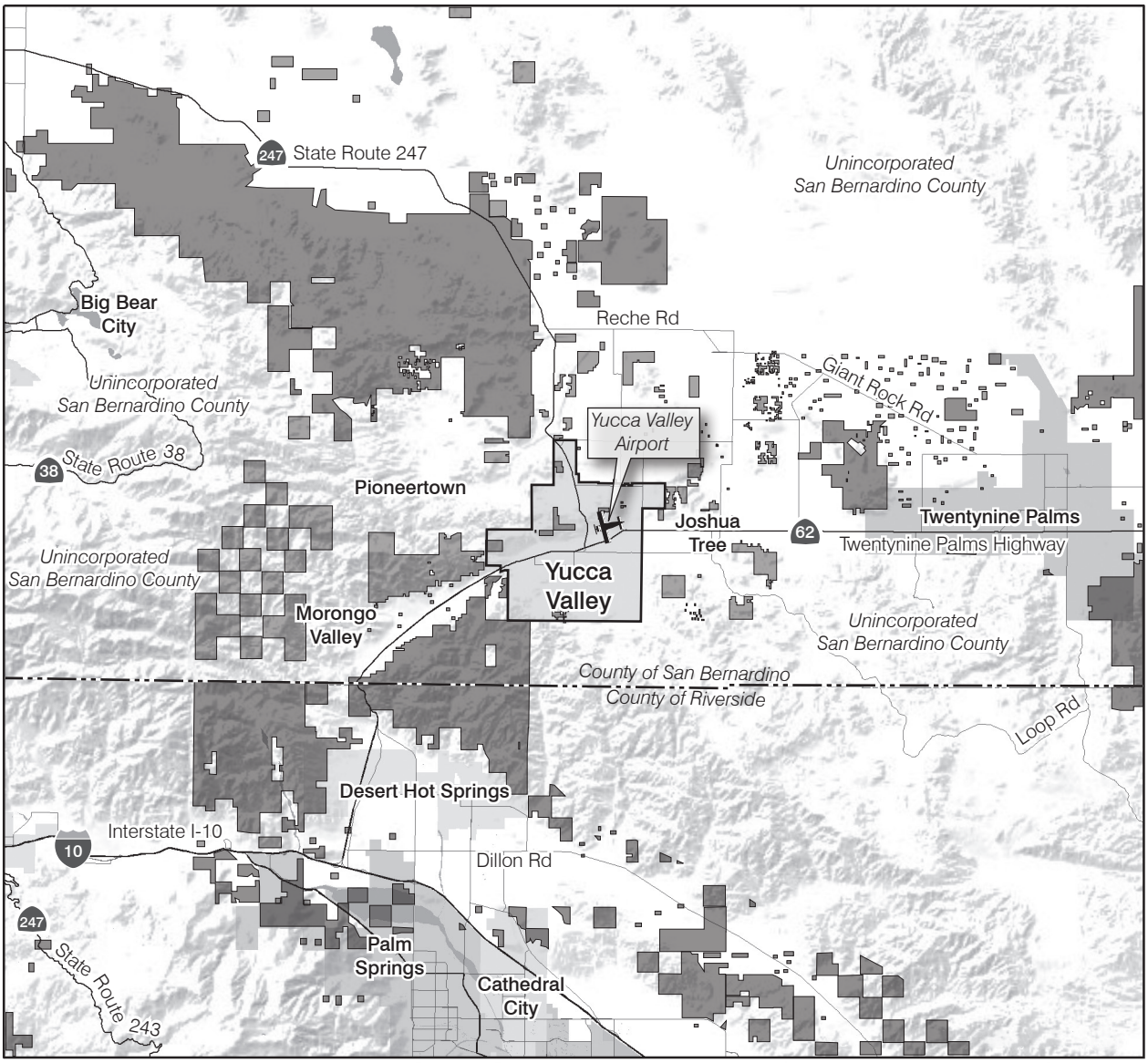
Land Use	Acres	% of Total	Dwelling Units	Population	Total Square Feet[1, 2,3,4]	Employment[5]
Residential						
Single-Family[6]	6,113	24.0%	7,754	18,417	-	-
Mobile Homes[7]	115	0.5%	772	1,834	-	-
Multifamily[8]	93	0.4%	932	2,214	-	-
Subtotal	**6,321**	**24.8%**	**9,458**	**22,464**	**-**	**-**
Commercial, Mixed Use, and Industrial						
Other Commercial	22	0.1%	-	-	188,892	540
General Office	51	0.2%	-	-	556,350	1,590
Government Office	30	0.1%	-	-	259,643	865
Heavy Industrial	25	0.1%	-	-	109,658	110
Hotels and Motels	11	0.0%	-	-	95,957	192
Light Industrial	6	0.0%	-	-	26,778	38
Major Medical Facility	5	0.0%	-	-	45,277	91
Manufacturing	62	0.2%	-	-	271,008	271
Open Storage	2	0.0%	-	-	-	36
Retail Stores and Commercial Services	225	0.9%	-	-	1,961,692	3,269
Special Care Facilities	1	0.0%	-	-	11,896	30
Wholesaling and Warehousing	8	0.0%	-	-	33,167	28
Subtotal	**449**	**1.8%**	**-**	**-**	**3,560,317**	**7,001**
Miscellaneous						
Agriculture	27	0.1%	-	-	-	-
Airport	62	0.2%	-	-	-	-
Communication Facilities	9	0.0%	-	-	-	-
Educational Institutions	150	0.6%	-	-	-	310
Electrical Power Facilities	3	0.0%	-	-	-	-
Fire Station	2	0.0%	-	-	-	10
Improved Water Floodways	56	0.2%	-	-	-	-
Maintenance Yard	2	0.0%	-	-	-	-
Open Space and Recreation	106	0.4%	-	-	-	-

Table 1
Existing Land Use Summary

Land Use	Acres	% of Total	Dwelling Units	Population	Total Square Feet[1, 2,3,4]	Employment[5]
Parks and Open Space	26	0.1%	-	-	-	-
Park and Ride Lots	6	0.0%	-	-	-	-
Public Facilities	78	0.3%	-	-	-	130
Religious Facilities	57	0.2%	-	-	-	113
ROW	1,442	5.7%	-	-	-	-
Water Storage Facilities	37	0.1%	-	-	-	-
Vacant	16,661	65.4%	-	-	-	-
Subtotal	**18,723**	**73.4%**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**563**
TOTAL	**25,492**	**100%**	**9,458**	**-**	**3,560,317**	**7,565**

[1] Commercial building square footage was generated using a FAR of 0.20 that was based on the average from a sample of retailers along Highway 62.
[2] Office building square footage was generated using a FAR of 0.25 that was based on the average from a sample of offices along Highway 62.
[3] Government office building square footage was generated using a FAR of 0.20 to reflect open space on the Town Hall site.
[4] Industrial building square footage was generated using a FAR of 0.10 that was based on an average from a sample of industrial and manufacturing uses across the community.
[5] Employment generation rates are in employees per building square footage and were developed by The Planning Center | DC&E.
[6] Low density residential parcels were built out at the maximum density except for R-S-5, which was built out at 3 DU/AC instead of 5 DU/AC. Medium density residential parcels were built out slightly lower than the maximum densities (6 DU/AC in R-M-8 and 8 DU/AC in R-M-10).
[7] The number of mobile home units was provided by the California Department of Housing and Community Development online database in September 2012 (https://ssw1.hcd.ca.gov/ParksListing/faces/parkslist/mp.jsp).
[8] Multifamily residential parcels were built out at a density of 10 DU/AC.

Regional Location



Yucca Valley Town Boundary

County Boundary

Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

0 8
Scale (Miles)

Source: ESRI 2012

1. Introduction

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Townwide Aerial

0 0.5 1
Miles

1. Introduction

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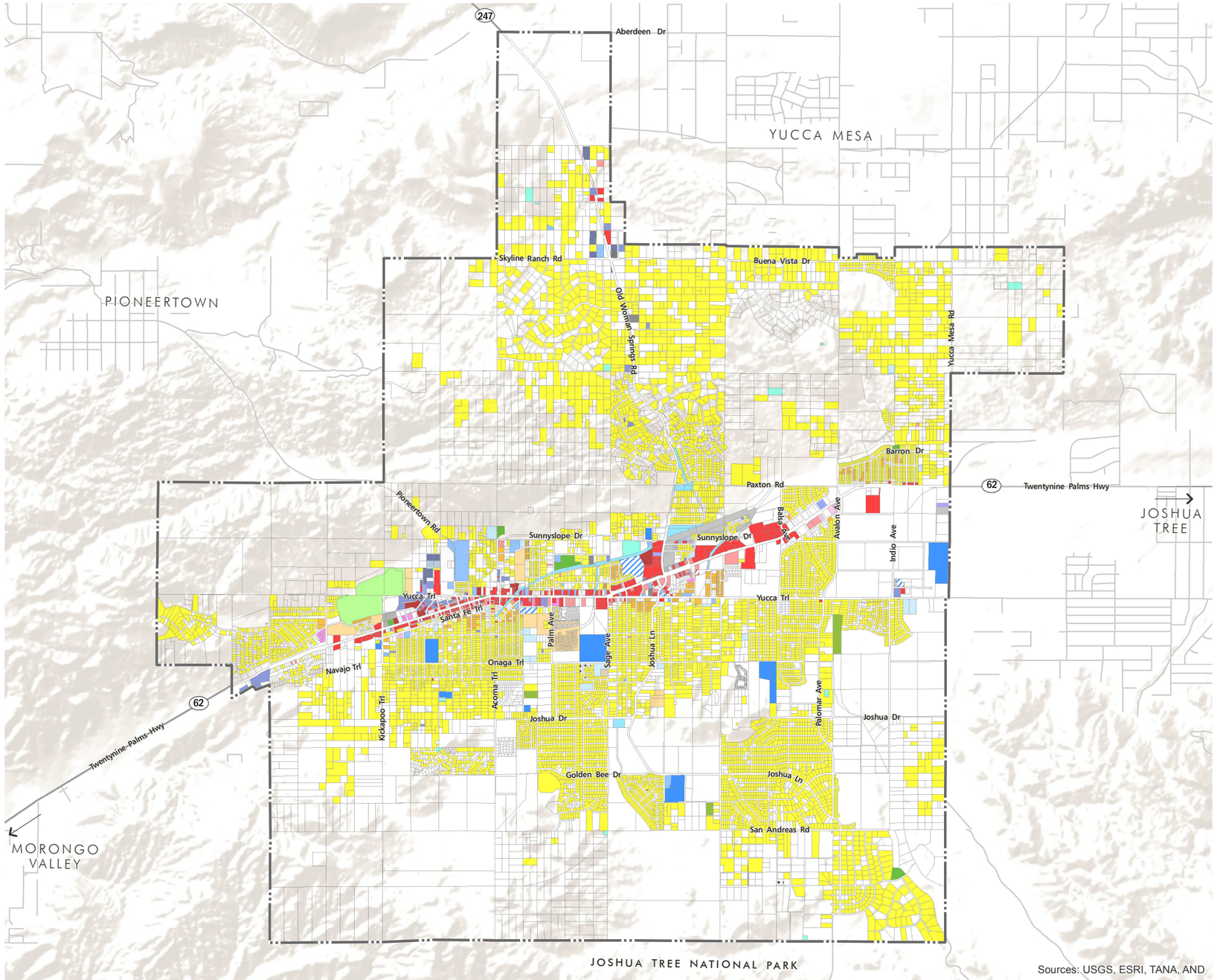
Existing Land Uses



EXISTING LAND USE

- Town Limits
- 1110, Single Family Residential
- 1120, Multi Family Residential
- 1130, Mobile Homes and Trailer Parks
- 1210, General Office Use
- 1220, Retail Stores and Commercial Services
- 1230, Other Commercial
- 1233, Hotels and Motels
- 1240, Public Facilities
- 1252, Special Care Facilities
- 1241, Government Offices
- 1323, Open Storage
- 1414, Park and Ride
- 1440, Maintenace Yards
- 1243, Fire Station
- 1244, Major Medical Health Care Facility
- 1245, Religious Facility
- 1260, Educational Institutions
- 1310, Light Industrial
- 1311, Manufacturing, Assesmbly and Industrial Services
- 1320, Heavy Industrial
- 1321, Manufacturing
- 1340, Wholesaling and Warehousing
- 1411, Airports
- 1420, Communication Facilities
- 1431, Electrical Power Facilities
- 1434, Water Storage Facilities
- 1437, Improved Flood Waterways
- 1700, Under Construction
- 1810, Open Space and Recreation
- 1820, Local Parks and Recreation
- 1880, Other Open Space and Recreation
- 2000, Agriculture
- 3000, Vacant

0 0.5 1
Miles

1. Introduction

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1.2.2 Surrounding Land Use

The Town of Yucca Valley is largely surrounded by undeveloped areas of the Mojave Desert. As shown in Figure 2, *Townwide Aerial*, the Town is bordered by a mixture of undeveloped and low density residential areas to the north and east, including the unincorporated communities of Pioneer Town and Joshua Tree; Joshua Tree National Park to the south; and undeveloped areas to the west.

1.2.3 Current General Plan

The current Yucca Valley General Plan was adopted on December 14, 1995, and contains 22 elements, organized into four broad issue areas:

Community Development

- Land Use Element
- Circulation Element
- Housing Element
- Parks, Recreation and Trails Element
- Community Design Element
- Scenic Highways Element
- Economic Development Element

Environmental Resources

- Biological Resources Element
- Archaeological and Historic Resources Element
- Water Resources Element
- Air Quality Element
- Open Space, Mineral, Energy and Conservation Element

Environmental Hazards

- Seismic Safety Element
- Slopes, Sediment Control and Soil Conservation Element
- Flooding and Hydrology Element
- Noise Element
- Hazardous and Toxic Materials Element

Public Services and Facilities

- Fire and Police Protection Element
- Schools and Libraries Element
- Emergency Preparedness and Health Services Element
- Public Buildings, Facilities and Utilities Element
- Arts, Culture, and Humanities Element

1. Introduction

Table 2, *Current General Plan Land Use Designations*, presents a breakdown of current General Plan land use designations in Yucca Valley. As shown in Table 2 and Figure 4, *Current Land Use Plan*, 20 land use designations currently regulate development in the Town. The three largest land use designations within the Town boundaries are Rural Residential 2.5 (RR-2.5), Rural Living 5 (RL-5), and Hillside Residential (HR), which together make up approximately 59 percent of the land area in the Town. Residential land use designations, in general, represent 89 percent of the Town. Commercial, public, and other nonresidential land use designations represent a small percentage of the Town's land area.

Table 2
Current General Plan Land Use Designations

Land Use Designation	*Acres*[1]	*% of Total*
Residential		
Hillside Residential (HR)	4,349	18.0%
Rural Living 10 (RL-10)	132	0.5%
Rural Living 5 (RL-5)	4,653	19.3%
Rural Residential 2.5 (RR-2.5)	5,153	21.4%
Rural Residential 1 (RR-1)	2,113	8.8%
Rural Residential 0.5 (RR-0.5)	3,295	13.7%
Low Density Residential (LDR)	1,251	5.2%
Medium Density Residential (MDR)	52	0.2%
Medium High Density Residential (MHDR)	368	1.5%
Subtotal	**21,366**	**88.6%**
Commercial, Mixed Use, and Industrial		
Commercial (C)	605	2.5%
Mixed Use (MU-TC)	195	0.8%
Mixed Use (MU-CC)	-	-
Industrial (I)	897	3.7%
Subtotal	**1,697**	**7.0%**
Westside Special Policy Area (WSPA)		
Residential	-	-
Commercial	-	-
Industrial	-	-
Open Space Recreation	-	-
Public/Quasi-Public	-	-
ROW	-	-
Subtotal	**0%**	**0%**
Old Town Specific Plan		
Old Town Commercial/Residential (OTCR)	57	0.2%
Old Town Highway Commercial (OTHC)	56	0.2%
Old Town Industrial/Commercial (OTIC)	39	0.2%
Old Town Mixed Use (OTMU)	29	0.1%
Subtotal	**181**	**0.8%**

Table 2
Current General Plan Land Use Designations

Land Use Designation	*Acres*[1]	*% of Total*
Miscellaneous		
Open Space – Conservation (OSC)	363	1.5%
Open Space – Recreation (OSR)	141	0.6%
Public/Quasi-Public (P/QP)	238	1.0%
Airport (AP)	50	0.2%
ROW	75	0.3%
Subtotal	**867**	**3.6%**
TOTAL	**24,111**	**100%**
Population[2]	62,223	NA
Employment[3]	27,370	NA

[1] Acres are given as adjusted gross acreages, which do not include the rights-of-way for major roadways, flood control facilities, or railroads.
[2] A vacancy rate of 5% was assumed for population projections, adjusted down from the 13% vacancy rate identified by the California Department of Finance (2012) to account for housing market improvements.
[3] Employment generation rates are in employees per building square footage and were developed by The Planning Center | DC&E. Employment estimates in the Public/Quasi-Public land use designation are customized to each use. For example, drainage areas do not generate employment, but schools do. For facilities like schools, employment estimates were created through Internet searches for each facility. The Town of Yucca Valley provided employment estimates for Town facilities.

1.3 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project is an update to the Town of Yucca Valley General Plan. The Yucca Valley General Plan Update is intended to shape development in the Town for at least the next 20 years. The update is guided by a set of community values that were developed by the Yucca Valley Town Council with input from the community and adopted by the Town Council on March 20, 2012. These values are:

- Small town atmosphere
- Balanced growth
- Safe and established neighborhoods
- Fiscal sustainability
- Diverse range of community services
- Efficient infrastructure
- Strong economy
- Desert environment and natural resources
- Arts and culture
- Community pride and participation

1.3.1 Proposed General Plan Elements

The General Plan Update involves reorganization of the current General Plan into the following elements:

The **Land Use Element** describes objectives, policies, and programs for areas within Yucca Valley's boundaries in both narrative and graphic terms and establishes development criteria and standards, including building intensity and population density.

The **Circulation Element** addresses the identification, location, and extent of existing and proposed major thoroughfares, transportation routes, trails, multimodal transportation options, and local public utilities and facilities. It serves as an infrastructure plan and is correlated with the land use element.

The **Safety Element** identifies seismic, geologic, flood, and wildfire hazards, and establishes policies to protect the community.

The **Noise Element** provides guidance related to noise conditions and identifies goals and policies aimed at mitigating and adapting to nuisance noise in Yucca Valley.

The **Open Space and Conservation Element** focuses on natural resources. It provides a plan for the long-term preservation of open space and addresses the use of resources, including water, forests, hillsides and natural landforms, soils, waterways, wildlife, and mineral deposits. It specifies plans and measures for preserving open space for natural resources, managing the production of resources, outdoor recreation, and public health and safety.

The **Housing Element** analyzes housing needs for all income groups and demonstrates how to meet those needs. State law requires that this element be revised, at a minimum, every eight years.

1.3.2 Proposed Land Use Designations

Table 3 outlines the proposed land use designations and summarizes the acreage and total percentage of each land use designation. Proposed land uses are also shown in Figure 5, *Proposed Land Use Plan*.

Table 3
Proposed General Plan Land Use Designations

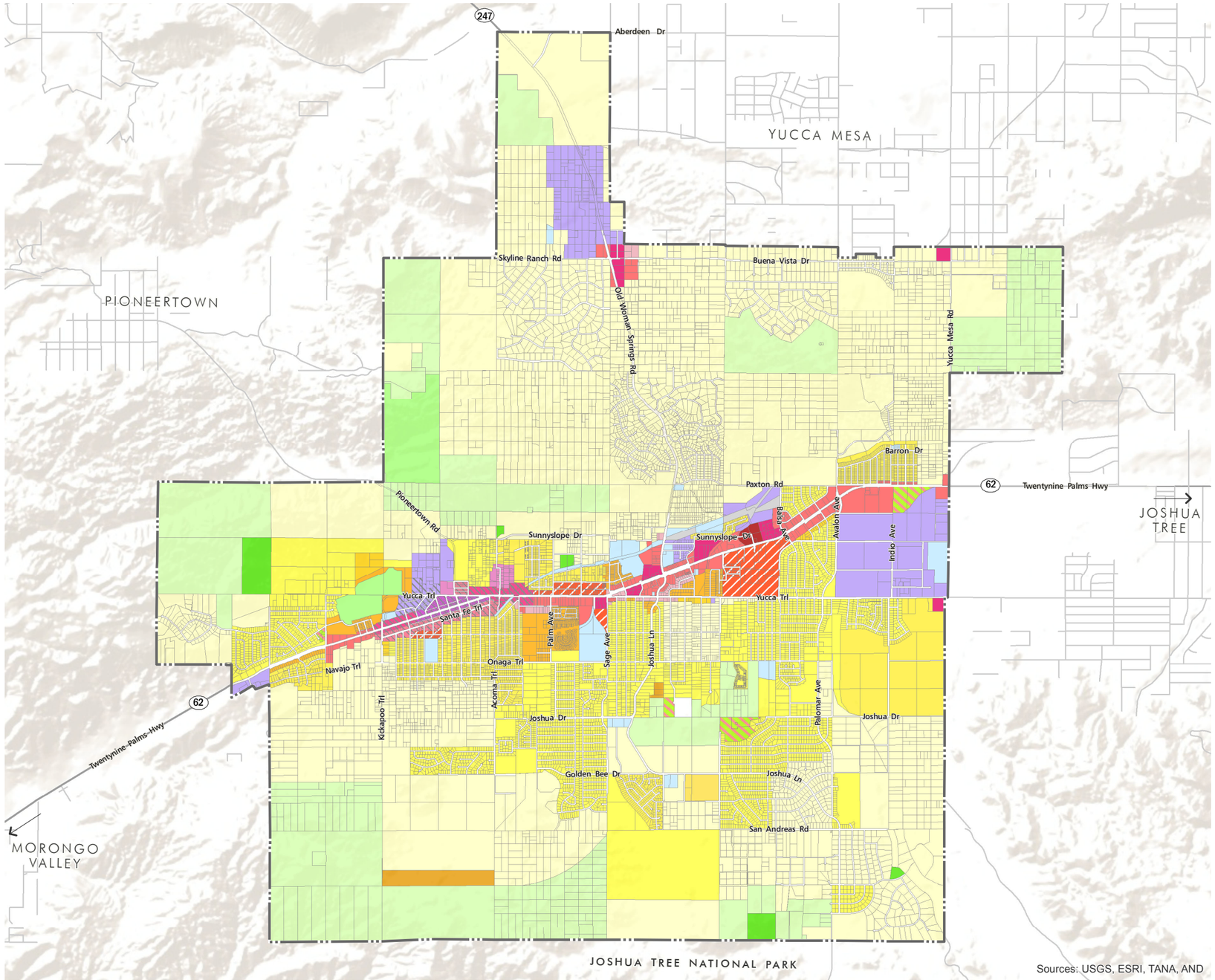
Land Use Designation	Acres[1]	% of Total	Units[2]	Population[3]	Total Square Feet[2]	Employment[4]
Residential						
Hillside Residential (HR)	4,008	15.7%	200	476	-	-
Rural Living 10 (RL-10)	79	0.3%	8	19	-	-
Rural Living 5 (RL-5)	4,842	19.0%	968	2,300	-	-
Rural Residential 2.5 (RR-2.5)	4,917	19.3%	1,815	4,311	-	-
Rural Residential 1 (RR-1)	1,801	7.1%	1,789	4,248	-	-
Rural Residential 0.5 (RR-0.5)	3,331	13.1%	6,657	15,811	-	-
Low Density Residential (LDR)	1,453	5.7%	5,087	12,082	-	-
Medium Density Residential (MDR)	248	1.0%	1,478	3,510	-	-
Medium High Density Residential (MHDR)	326	1.3%	3,260	7,743	-	-
Subtotal	**21,006**	**82.4%**	**21,263**	**50,499**	**-**	**-**
Commercial, Mixed Use, and Industrial						
Commercial (C)[5]	491	1.9%	1,679	3,987	6,011,947	10,889
Mixed Use (MU-TC)[6]	142	0.6%	510	1,210	2,466,629	4,111
Mixed Use (MU-CC)[7]	96	0.4%	412	876	1,632,884	3,207
Industrial (I)[8]	752	3.0%	10	23	7,099,897	10,143
Subtotal	**1,481**	**5.8%**	**2,611**	**6,098**	**17,211,357**	**28,350**
Westside Special Policy Area (WSPA)[9]						
Residential	625	2.5%	2,153	5,113	-	-
Commercial	42	0.2%	77	183	346,141	636
Industrial	47	0.2%	-	-	506,385	723
Open Space Recreation	99	0.4%	-	-	-	-
Public/Quasi-Public	4	0.0%	-	-	-	-
ROW	160	0.6%	-	-	-	-
Subtotal	**976**	**3.8%**	**2,230**	**5,296**	**852,526**	**1,359**

Table 3
Proposed General Plan Land Use Designations

Land Use Designation	Acres[1]	% of Total	Units[2]	Population[3]	Total Square Feet[2]	Employment[4]
Old Town Specific Plan[2]						
Old Town Commercial/Residential (OTCR)	57	0.2%	413	981	699,769	1,166
Old Town Highway Commercial (OTHC)	56	0.2%	-	-	889,684	1,483
Old Town Industrial/Commercial (OTIC)	39	0.2%	238	565	551,834	854
Old Town Mixed Use (OTMU)	29	0.1%	465	1,104	759,317	1,266
Subtotal	**181**	**0.7%**	**1,116**	**2,651**	**2,900,604**	**4,769**
Miscellaneous						
Open Space – Conservation (OSC)	386	1.5%	-	-	-	-
Open Space – Recreation (OSR)	19	0.1%	-	-	-	-
Public/Quasi-Public (P/QP)	330	1.3%	-	-	-	449
Airport (AP)	52	0.2%	-	-	-	-
ROW	1,063	4.2%	-	-	-	-
Subtotal	**1,849**	**7.3%**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**449**
TOTAL	**25,492**	**100%**	**27,219**	**64,543**	**20,964,487**	**34,927**
Current GP Total	24,111	-	24,401	62,223	17,633,100	27,370
Difference	1,381	-	2,818	2,320	3,331,387	7,557

1 Acres are given as adjusted gross acreages, which do not include the rights-of-way for major roadways, flood control facilities, or railroads.
2 The total number of units and square footage of retail and nonretail uses for Specific Plans were taken directly from the approved land use plans associated with each Specific Plan document.
3 A vacancy rate of 5% was assumed for population projections, adjusted down from the 13% vacancy rate identified by the California Department of Finance (2012) to account for housing market improvements.
4 Employment generation rates are in employees per building square footage and were developed by The Planning Center | DC&E.
5 The Commercial properties are assumed to be 80% retail and 20% office, except in the Corridor Residential Overlay where 60% retail and 40% residential uses were assumed.
6 The Mixed Use Town Center Mall properties are assumed to be 60% retail, 20% office, and 20% residential.
7 The Mixed Use Civic Center properties are assumed to be 80% retail and 20% residential.
8 The buildout for Industrial properties assumed a 90% industrial and10% office mix of uses except in the Rural Mixed Use Special Policy areas north of Skyline Ranch Road, where 10% office, 80% industrial, and 10% residential was assumed to accommodate home-based businesses.
9 The Westside Special Policy Area is listed separately to reflect an assumed development opportunity above the capacity provided by underlying land uses. The WSPA allows for additional development potential (units, hotel rooms, and retail and non-retail building square footage) above the maximums that can be developed with the underlying land use designations. Properties in this area can be developed according to the underlying land uses depicted on the General Plan Land Use Map, or, at the discretion of the property owner, can be developed with different or more intense uses if the additional criteria identified in the General Plan for the WSPA can be met and the maximum buildout thresholds identified in this table are not exceeded. A detailed breakdown of buildout assumptions for the WSPA is provided in the Land Use Element.

Current Land Use Plan



CURRENT GENERAL PLAN

GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION

- R-HR, Hillside Reserve 0-1 du/ac
- R-L-10, Rural Living 1 du/10 ac
- R-L-5, Rural Living 1 du/ 5 ac
- R-L-2.5, Rural Living 1 du/ 2.5 ac
- R-L-1, Rural Living 1 du/1 ac
- R-S-2, Single Family Res. 0-2 du/ac
- R-S-3.5, Single Family Res. 3.5 du/ac
- R-S-5, Single Family Res. 5 du/ac
- R-S-5 Senoir, Single Family Res. Senior 0-5 du/ac
- R-M-4, Multi-Family Residential 0-4 du/ac
- R-M-8 Multi-Family Residential 0-8 du/ac
- R-M-10 Multi-Family Residential 0-10 du/ac
- R-M-14 Multi-Family Residential 0-14 du/ac
- C-MU Mixed Use Commercial
- C-S Service Commercial
- C-N Neighborhood Commercial
- C-G General Commercial
- C-C Community Commercial
- C-O Office Commercial
- C-RR Resort/Recreation Commercial
- I Industrial
- P/QP Public/Quasi-Public
- AP Airport
- OTMU, Old Town Mixed Use
- OTC/R, Old Town Commercial/Residential
- OTHC, Old Town Highway Commercial
- OTI/C, Old Town Industrial/Commercial
- O-S-P Public Parks
- O-S Open Space
- Town Limits

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Miles

1. Introduction

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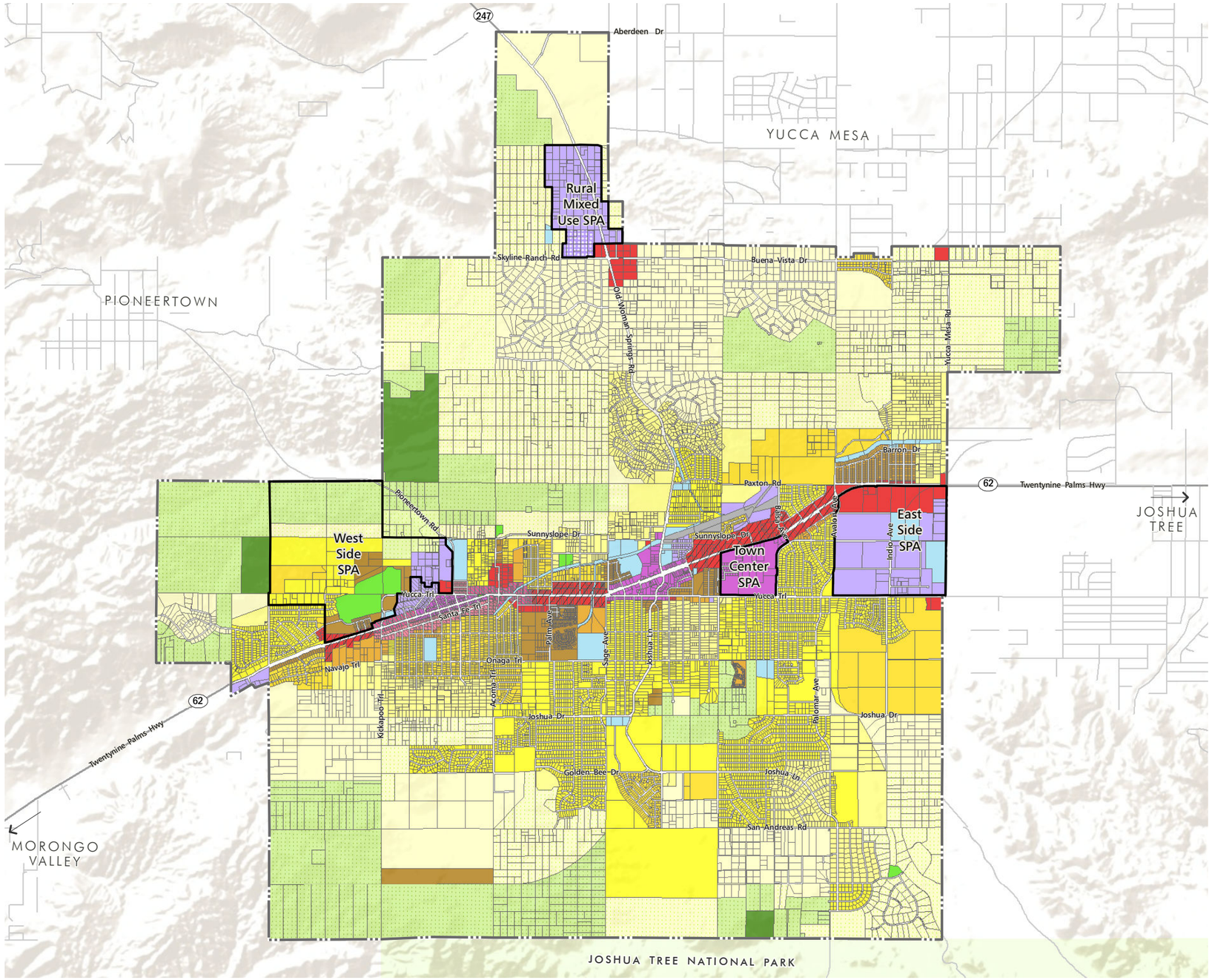
Proposed Land Use Plan



PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN

GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION

- Hillside Residential (HR) 20 ac min
- Rural Living (RL-10) 10 ac min
- Rural Living (RL-5) 5 ac min
- Rural Residential (RR-2.5) 2.5 ac min
- Rural Residential (RR-1) 1 ac min
- Rural Residential (RR-0.5) 0.5 ac min
- Low Density Residential (LDR) 2.1-5.0 du/ac
- Medium Density Residential (MDR) 5.1-8.0 du/ac
- Medium High Density Res. (MHDR) 8.1-14.0 du/ac
- Commercial (C)
- Mixed Use (MU)
- Industrial (I)
- Open Space - Conservation (OSC)
- Open Space - Recreation (OSR)
- Public/Quasi-Public (P/QP)
- Airport (A)

Old Town Specific Plan

- Old Town Industrial/Commercial (OTIC)
- Old Town Mixed Use (OTMU)
- Old Town Commercial/Residential (OTCR)
- Old Town Highway Commercial (OTHC)

General Plan Overlay

- Corridor Residential Overlay
- Rural Mixed Use SPA - Business Park
- SPA - Special Policy Area
- Town Limits

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Miles

1. Introduction

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1.4 TOWN ACTION REQUESTED

The Yucca Valley Town Council is the Town's legislative body and the approving authority for the Town of Yucca Valley General Plan. In order to implement the General Plan, the Town Council must take the following actions:

- Certification of the Town of Yucca Valley General Plan Update EIR
- Adoption of findings of fact (and Statement of Overriding Considerations, if required)
- Adoption of a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program
- Adoption of the Town of Yucca Valley General Plan Update

1.5 RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES

A public agency other than the lead agency that has discretionary approval power over a project is a responsible agency, as defined by CEQA Guidelines. Adoption of the Town of Yucca Valley General Plan does not require permits or approvals from any other agency, with the exception of the Housing Element. The Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) approves the Town's Housing Element; and therefore, is also a responsible agency for the proposed project.

1.6 REVIEWING AGENCIES

Reviewing agencies do not have discretionary powers to approve or deny the proposed project or actions needed to implement it, but may review the environmental document for adequacy and accuracy. Potential reviewing agencies include:

Federal

- US National Park Service, Joshua Tree National Park
- US Army Corps of Engineers (Corps)
- US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
- US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
- Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center (MCAGCC)

State

- California Highway Patrol (CHP)
- California Department of Transportation (CalTrans), District 8
- California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG)
- California Department of Conservation (CDC)
- California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)
- California Housing and Community Development (HCD)
- Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC)

Regional/Local

- Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District (MDAQMD)
- Mojave Water Agency
- Morongo Band of Mission Indians
- Morongo Basin Transit Authority
- San Bernardino County Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC)

- San Bernardino Association of Governments (SANBAG)
- San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors, 3rd District Office
- San Bernardino County Fire Department
- San Bernardino County Flood Control District
- San Bernardino County Planning Department
- San Bernardino Sheriff's Department
- San Bernardino County Transportation Department
- Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)
- City of Twentynine Palms
- Copper Mountain Community College
- Hi-Desert Memorial Health Care District/Hospital
- Hi-Desert Water District
- Morongo Unified School District

2. Environmental Checklist

2.1 BACKGROUND

1. **Project Title:** Yucca Valley General Plan Update

2. **Lead Agency Name and Address:**
   Town of Yucca Valley
   57090 29 Palms Highway
   Yucca Valley, CA 92284

3. **Contact Person and Phone Number:**
   Shane Stueckle, Deputy Town Manager
   (760) 369-6575, ext. 305

4. **Project Location:**
   The Town of Yucca Valley is in the Mojave Desert, in the Morongo Basin region of San Bernardino County, approximately 70 miles to the east of San Bernardino and approximately 30 miles to the north of Palm Springs (driving distance).

5. **Project Sponsor's Name and Address:**
   Town of Yucca Valley
   57090 29 Palms Highway
   Yucca Valley, CA 92284

6. **General Plan Designation:** Various General Plan designations throughout the Town. See Section 1.2.3.

7. **Zoning:** Various zoning designations throughout the Town.

8. **Description of Project:** A detailed description is included in Section 1.3.

9. **Surrounding Land Uses and Setting**
   The Town of Yucca Valley is bordered by low density residential uses to the north and east, and undeveloped desert to the south and west, including Joshua Tree National Park, which spans the majority of Yucca Valley's southern boundary.

10. **Other Public Agencies Whose Approval Is Required** (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement): None.

2. Environmental Checklist

2.2 ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact," as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

- ☒ Aesthetics
- ☒ Biological Resources
- ☒ Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- ☒ Land Use / Planning
- ☒ Population / Housing
- ☒ Transportation / Traffic
- ☐ Agricultural and Forest Resources
- ☒ Cultural Resources
- ☒ Hazards & Hazardous Materials
- ☐ Mineral Resources
- ☒ Public Services
- ☒ Utilities / Service Systems
- ☒ Air Quality
- ☒ Geology / Soils
- ☒ Hydrology / Water Quality
- ☒ Noise
- ☒ Recreation
- ☒ Mandatory Findings of Significance

2.3 DETERMINATION (TO BE COMPLETED BY THE LEAD AGENCY)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

☐ I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

☒ I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

☐ I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.

☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Signature	11-6-12 *Date*
Shane R. Stueckle *Printed Name*	Town of Yucca Valley *For*

2.4 EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

1) A brief explanation is required for all answers except "No Impact" answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors, as well as general standards (e.g., the project would not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).

2) All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.

3) Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.

4) "Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level.

5) Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063(c)(3)(D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:

   a) **Earlier Analyses Used.** Identify and state where they are available for review.

   b) I**mpacts Adequately Addressed.** Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.

   c) **Mitigation Measures.** For effects that are "Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated," describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.

6) Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated. A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.

7) Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.

8) This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project's environmental effects in whatever format is selected.

9) The explanation of each issue should identify:

   a) the significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and

   b) the mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significant.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
I. **AESTHETICS**. Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	X			
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	X			
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	X			
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	X			
II. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES. In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?				X
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?				X
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?				X
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				X
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				X

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
III. AIR QUALITY. Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	X			
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	X			
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	X			
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	X			
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	X			
IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES. Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	X			
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	X			
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	X			
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	X			

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	X			
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	X			
V. CULTURAL RESOURCES. Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in § 15064.5?	X			
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?	X			
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	X			
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?			X	
VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS. Would the project:				
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:	X			
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map, issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	X			
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	X			
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	X			
iv) Landslides?	X			
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	X			
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	X			
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?	X			

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	X			
VII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS. Would the project:				
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	X			
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	X			
VIII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS. Would the project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	X			
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	X			
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	X			
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	X			
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	X			
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	X			
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	X			

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?	X			
IX. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY. Would the project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?	X			
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?	X			
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in a substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site	X			
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?	X			
e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?	X			
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?	X			
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?	X			
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?	X			
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?	X			

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?	X			
X. LAND USE AND PLANNING. Would the project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?	X			
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	X			
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?	X			
XI. MINERAL RESOURCES. Would the project:				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be a value to the region and the residents of the state?			X	
b) 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?			X	
XII. NOISE. Would the project result in:				
a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	X			
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	X			
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	X			
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	X			
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	X			
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	X			

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XIII. POPULATION AND HOUSING. Would the project:				
a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	X			
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	X			
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	X			
XIV. PUBLIC SERVICES. Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
a) Fire protection?	X			
b) Police protection?	X			
c) Schools?	X			
d) Parks?	X			
e) Other public facilities?	X			
XV. RECREATION.				
a) Would the project 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?	X			
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	X			
XVI. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC. Would the project:				
a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?	X			

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?	X			
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?				X
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	X			
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?	X			
f) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?	X			
XVII. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS. Would the project:				
a) Exceed waste water treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?	X			
b) Require or result in the construction of new water or waste water treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	X			
c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	X			
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources or are new or expanded entitlements needed?	X			
e) Result in a determination by the waste water treatment provider, which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	X			

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?	X			
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	X			
XVIII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE.				
a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	X			
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)	X			
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	X			

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3. Environmental Analysis

Section 2.4 provided a checklist of environmental impacts. This section provides an evaluation of the impact categories and questions contained in the checklist, and identifies mitigation measures, if applicable.

3.1 AESTHETICS

a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

Potentially Significant Impact. The Town's physical setting in the Morongo Basin region affords scenic views of the San Bernardino Mountains, Little San Bernardino Mountains, Sawtooth Mountains, Mojave Desert (including Joshua Tree National Park to the immediate south), and other undeveloped areas. Future development in accordance with the General Plan Update would allow for development of currently undeveloped parcels and intensification of other areas, which have the potential to impact scenic vistas in Yucca Valley. This issue will be addressed further in the EIR.

b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

Potentially Significant Impact. According to the California Scenic Highway Mapping System of the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), there are no state-designated scenic highways in or near Yucca Valley (Caltrans 2007). However, State Route 62 (SR-62), which bisects the Town north to south (see Figure 2, *Townwide Aerial*) is considered an "Eligible State Scenic Highway – Not Officially Designated" by Caltrans. State Route 247 (SR-247), which bisect the north half of the Town in an east to west direction, carries the same distinction. Impacts to scenic resources along these two eligible state scenic highways may occur and will be further analyzed in the EIR.

c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?

Potentially Significant Impact. Future development in accordance with the General Plan Update has the potential to impact the overall visual character of Yucca Valley and its surroundings. Impacts to the existing visual character are potentially significant, and additional analysis will be provided in the EIR.

d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

Potentially Significant Impact. Future development in accordance with the General Plan Update would allow for development of currently undeveloped parcels and alteration, intensification, and redistribution of existing land uses. Future development has the potential to introduce new sources of light and glare that could adversely affect day or nighttime views in Yucca Valley. In addition, the communities that surround Yucca Valley could be affected by light and glare generated by future development. The EIR will evaluate the potential light and glare impacts to the aesthetic environment of Yucca Valley as well as to sensitive receptors. The EIR will also address consistency between the General Plan Update and the Town's "Outdoor Lighting" ordinance.

3.2 AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:

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

No Impact. As shown in Figure 3, *Existing Land Uses*, agriculture uses represent less than 1 percent of existing land uses in Yucca Valley. Additionally, according to the California Resource Agency's Department of Conservation 2010 Important Farmland Maps (California Department of Conservation 2012), no portion of the Town is designated Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Local Importance. Therefore, no impacts to designated farmland would result from development in accordance with the General Plan Update and further analysis is not required. This topic will not be evaluated in the EIR.

b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?

No Impact. Williamson Act contracts restrict the use of privately owned land to agriculture and compatible opens space uses under contract with local governments. In exchange, the land is taxed based on actual use rather than potential market value. The Town of Yucca Valley does not designate any land within the Town for agricultural uses. Additionally, no areas in the Town are under Williamson Act contracts (DLRP 2007). Therefore, future development in accordance with the General Plan Update would not result in the conversion of areas zoned for agriculture uses to nonagricultural use, and further analysis is not required. This topic will not be evaluated in the EIR.

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

No Impact. Implementation of the General Plan Update would not cause the rezoning or conflict with the existing zoning of forest land or timberland as defined by Public Resources Code sections 12220(g) or 51104(g). Yucca Valley does not have any areas designated forest land or timberland for production or resource management, so the proposed General Plan Update would not cause any impacts to such areas. This topic will not be evaluated in the EIR.

d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

No Impact. State and county maps of wildlife habitats compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection identify that some of the undeveloped areas in Yucca Valley contains Joshua tree woodland, juniper woodland, and pinyon/juniper woodland. However, these areas are not heavily forested and do not

meet the definition of "forest land."[1] Implementation of the General Plan Update would not convert forest to nonforest use. Impacts to forest land will not be examined in the EIR.

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

No Impact. As discussed above, the Town of Yucca Valley does not have agricultural or significant forest resources. No impacts would occur and this issue will not be addressed in the EIR.

3.3 AIR QUALITY

Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:

a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?

Potentially Significant Impact. Yucca Valley is in the Mojave Desert Air Basin (MDAB), which is a nonattainment area for the federal and state air quality standards (AAQS) for ozone (O_3), fine inhalable particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$) (California AAQS only), and coarse inhalable particulate matter (PM_{10}). The federal and California clean air acts require areas designated nonattainment to reduce emissions until standards are met. Buildout of the Yucca Valley General Plan would result in short-term construction-related and long-term air pollutant emissions that have the potential to affect local and regional air quality. Further evaluation is necessary to determine whether the proposed project would conflict with the Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District's (MDAMQD) air quality management plans. The EIR will assess the General Plan Update's consistency with applicable air quality management plans and will recommend mitigation measures as appropriate.

b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?

Potentially Significant Impact. As noted above, Yucca Valley is in the MDAB, which is a nonattainment area for the federal and state ambient air quality standards for O_3, $PM_{2.5}$ (California AAQS only), and PM_{10}. The federal and California clean air acts require areas designated nonattainment to reduce emissions until standards are met. Air pollutant emissions generated by short-term construction activities and long-term operation associated with future development accommodated by the General Plan Update could generate emissions that exceed MDAMQD's significance thresholds and cumulatively contribute to the nonattainment designations of the MDAB. Impacts to air quality standards will be examined in the EIR.

c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is nonattainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?

Potentially Significant Impact. Yucca Valley is a nonattainment area for O_3, $PM_{2.5}$ (California AAQS only), and PM_{10}. Air pollutant emissions generated by short-term construction activities and long-term operation of future development accommodated by the General Plan Update could generate emissions that cumulatively

[1] Forest land is land that can support 10 percent native tree cover of any species, including hardwoods, under natural conditions, and that allows for management of one or more forest resources, including timber, aesthetics, fish and wildlife, biodiversity, water quality, recreation, and other public benefit. (California Public Resources Code, section 12220)

contribute to the nonattainment designations of the MDAB. Criteria air pollutant increases and associated impacts will be examined in the EIR.

d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?

Potentially Significant Impact. Localized concentrations refer to an amount of pollutant in a volume of air and can be correlated to potential health effects. Air pollutant emissions generated by short-term construction activities and long-term operation associated with future development accommodated by the General Plan Update could generate emissions that exceed MDAMQD's significance thresholds and cumulatively contribute to the nonattainment designations of the MDAB. The EIR will evaluate the proposed land use changes and the potential air quality impacts of these uses on sensitive receptors.

e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?

Potentially Significant Impact. Residential development and commercial uses do not typically generate objectionable odors that affect a substantial number of people. However, some industrial uses, including the future wastewater treatment plant, have the potential to generate objectionable odors. The EIR will evaluate potential sources of odor generated by future development accommodated by the General Plan Update and their potential to affect a substantial number of people.

3.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

Potentially Significant Impact. The majority of the area within Yucca Valley's boundaries is undeveloped. Natural communities in and around Yucca Valley include desert saltbush scrub, Joshua tree woodland, and pinyon-juniper woodland environments. Several species of special concern are found in or near Yucca Valley, including the northern red diamond rattlesnake, yellow warbler, Nelson's bighorn sheep, burrowing owl, triple-ribbed milk vetch, Parish's daisy, western yellow-billed cuckoo, willow flycatcher, red-tailed hawk, golden eagle, turkey buzzard, and several species of bat. The desert tortoise, a federally threatened species, is also found in and near Yucca Valley. Therefore, future development under the General Plan Update may impact sensitive species habitats. The EIR will evaluate sensitive species, current regulatory requirements, and potential impacts to sensitive species and habitat. As a part of the EIR, a biological resources technical report will be prepared.

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

Potentially Significant Impact. Riparian habitats occur along the banks of rivers and streams. Sensitive natural communities are natural communities that are: considered rare in the region by regulatory agencies; known to provide habitat for sensitive animal or plant species; or known to be important wildlife corridors. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS) National Wetlands Inventory, small areas of Yucca Valley are designated wetlands, including parts of the Water Canyon Wash, Yucca Wash, and several small retention ponds and basins. These areas potentially feature riparian habitat. The EIR will identify sensitive natural communities within Yucca Valley and current regulatory requirements and evaluate potential impacts of the General Plan Update. As a part of the EIR, a biological resources technical report will be prepared.

c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

Potentially Significant Impact. As noted above in Response 3.4(b), the USFWS National Wetlands Inventory has designated a number of small wetlands in Yucca Valley. Implementation of the General Plan Update would allow for development near areas that could contain wetland habitat. The EIR will assess impacts to wetlands within Yucca Valley. As a part of the EIR, a biological resources technical report will be prepared.

d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

Potentially Significant Impact. Undeveloped areas throughout the Town could provide areas for wildlife movement. Additionally, sensitive species may be found in Yucca Valley, as noted above. Future development in these areas under the General Plan Update may impact migratory or wildlife species or corridors. The EIR will evaluate these potential impacts. As a part of the EIR, a biological resources technical report will be prepared.

e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

Potentially Significant Impact. Certain native plants in Yucca Valley are protected by the Town's Native Plant Ordinance, which is currently under review. The current version of the ordinance requires that a Native Plant Permit be obtained before any identified native plant is moved, transplanted, trimmed, or destroyed. Protected plant species include mesquite, Joshua tree, California juniper, desert willow, pinyon pine, palo verde, manzanita, and plants protected by the California Desert Native Plants Act. As part of the EIR, a biological resources technical report will be prepared. The EIR will analyze impacts related to compliance with local policies protecting biological resources. Mitigation measures will be identified as necessary.

f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?

Potentially Significant Impact. The entire Town of Yucca Valley is in the plan area for the proposed Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP) / Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) and the proposed West Mojave Plan HCP. The proposed Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan was established to conserve and manage rare, threatened, and endangered plant and wildlife species while streamlining the review and approval of renewable energy projects in California's desert areas (California Energy Commission 2012). The Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) West Mojave Plan is a proposed multiple-species HCP aimed at protecting nearly 100 federal- and state-listed plant and wildlife species and their habitats, including the desert tortoise, a federally threatened species residing in Yucca Valley. The Town is a participant in the West Mojave Plan. Assuming the Town becomes a signatory to the Plans, development projects approved pursuant to the proposed General Plan Update would be required to comply with habitat assessment and survey requirements proposed in West Mojave Plan HCP and the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan NCCP/HCP, where applicable. The EIR will evaluate any potential conflicts of the General Plan Update with applicable conservation plans.

3.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in § 15064.5?

Potentially Significant Impact. Section 15064.5 defines historic resources as resources listed or determined to be eligible for listing by the State Historical Resources Commission, a local register of historical resources, or the lead agency. Generally a resource is considered to be "historically significant" if it meets one of the following criteria:

i) Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage;

ii) Is associated with the lives of persons important in our past;

iii) Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values;

iv) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Known potential historical resources in Yucca Valley include but are not limited to Desert Christ Park, the Yucca Valley Elks Club, Warren's Well, and a historic school house at Wamego and Yucca Trail. Other historic resources could also exist within the Town. Changes to policies and land use designations in the General Plan Update may impact these and other historical resources. A historical records search will be conducted and analysis of potential impacts to historic resources will be included in the EIR.

b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?

Potentially Significant Impact. Yucca Valley was first inhabited by the Serrano and Chemehuevi Indians, who occupied the San Bernardino Mountains during summer and the warmer Coachella Valley in the winter. Artifacts and petroglyphs from these early inhabitants can still be found in and around Yucca Valley today. Nearby Joshua Tree National Park includes over 500 archaeological sites. Development in accordance with the proposed General Plan Update may cause the disturbance of archaeological resources, including those mentioned above. Building construction of undeveloped areas or redevelopment that requires excavation to depths greater than current foundations would potentially cause the destruction of unknown archaeological resources. The EIR will evaluate potential impacts of the General Plan Update on sensitive archeological resources. As a part of the EIR, a records search of archeological resources will be conducted.

c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?

Potentially Significant Impact. Unique paleontological resources may be present in Yucca Valley, especially in areas of undetermined significance where sedimentary formations are exposed. The EIR will evaluate potential impacts of the General Plan Update on unique paleontological resources and geologic features. As part of the EIR, a record search for paleontological resources will be conducted.

d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

Less Than Significant Impact. California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, CEQA Section 15064.5, and Public Resources Code Section 5097.98 mandate the process to be followed in the event of an accidental

discovery of any human remains in a location other than a dedicated cemetery. Specifically, California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 requires that in the event that human remains are discovered within the project site, disturbance of the site shall remain halted until the coroner has conducted an investigation into the circumstances, manner and cause of any death, and the recommendations concerning the treatment and disposition of the human remains have been made to the person responsible for the excavation, or to his or her authorized representative, in the manner provided in Section 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code. If the coroner determines that the remains are not subject to his or her authority and if the coroner recognizes or has reason to believe the human remains to be those of a Native American, he or she shall contact, by telephone within 24 hours, the Native American Heritage Commission. Although soil-disturbing activities associated with development in accordance with the General Plan Update could result in the discovery of human remains, compliance with existing law would ensure that significant impacts to human remains would not occur. This topic will not be evaluated in the EIR and no mitigation measures are required.

3.6 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:

i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning map, issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.

Potentially Significant Impact. The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act was passed in 1972 to mitigate the hazards of surface faulting and fault rupture to built structures. Active earthquake faults are faults where surface rupture has occurred within the last 11,000 years. Surface rupture of a fault generally occurs within 50 feet of an active fault line. There are numerous Alquist-Priolo fault zones in and near Yucca Valley, many of which were identified as active after three large earthquakes occurred in the region in 1992 (CGS 2007a). These fault zones include the Johnson Valley Fault, Homestead Valley Fault, Eureka Peak Fault, Burnt Mountain Fault, and the Pinto Mountain Fault which lies directly under central Yucca Valley (CGS 2007b). Several major faults are located in the region surrounding Yucca Valley, including the San Andreas Fault, which lies approximately 10 miles south and southwest of Yucca Valley in the Coachella Valley. Hazards from surface rupture of a known active fault would be potentially significant and will be evaluated in the EIR.

ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?

Potentially Significant Impact. Yucca Valley is subject to relatively high seismic hazards. The primary hazard is ground shaking produced by earthquakes generated from regional faults that are within or near Yucca Valley. The most probable sources of earthquakes that might have a potential for causing damage in Yucca Valley are the Pinto Mountain Fault that traverses the middle of Yucca Valley and the San Andreas Fault, approximately 10 miles to the south and southeast. Based on this proximity, the potential for ground shaking in Yucca Valley is very high. The state regulates development in California through a variety of tools that reduce hazards from earthquakes and other geologic hazards. The 2010 California Building Code (CBC; California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 2) contains provisions to safeguard against major structural failures or loss of life caused by earthquakes or other geologic hazards. Future development that would be accommodated by the General Plan Update would be required to adhere to the provisions of the CBC, which are imposed on project developments by the Town during the building plan check and development review process. Compliance with the requirements of the 2010 CBC for structural safety during a seismic event would reduce hazards from strong seismic ground shaking. Despite the required application of these

safety measures, impacts resulting from strong seismic ground shaking would remain potentially significant. Therefore, this topic will be further evaluated in the EIR.

iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?

Potentially Significant Impact. Certain areas of Yucca Valley may be susceptible to ground failure, including liquefaction. The potential for impacts from liquefaction will be addressed in the EIR.

iv) Landslides?

Potentially Significant Impact. Future development on or near hillside areas could be impacted by landslides. The EIR will evaluate the potential impacts from landslides.

b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

Potentially Significant Impact. Yucca Valley includes hilly areas that surround the central part of the Town in all directions. Hillside areas and areas consisting of sandy soils are susceptible to soil erosion, especially where there is limited vegetation to protect the topsoil when infrequent but intense storms create flood conditions. Soil erosion may also occur during construction-related ground disturbance from clearing, grading, and excavation. Future development in accordance with the General Plan Update may result in soil erosion and/or loss of topsoil. The EIR will evaluate these potential impacts.

c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?

Potentially Significant Impact. Future development accommodated by the General Plan Update may occur on soil that is unstable. Although the topography and soil types within the Town limits are not prone to landslides, a powerful earthquake could cause rockfall in the hilly terrain in the northern and western regions of the Town. Rockfall was observed in Yucca Valley following the 1992 Landers earthquake. The potential for impacts as a result of lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse will be addressed in the EIR.

d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?

Potentially Significant Impact. Expansive soils could be present within Yucca Valley. Future development accommodated by the General Plan Update may be proposed and/or located on expansive soils. The hazard of expansive soils is potentially significant and will be evaluated in the EIR.

e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?

Potentially Significant Impact. Although a sewer system and wastewater collection and treatment facility is being planned for the Town, residents of Yucca Valley currently rely on septic systems for wastewater disposal. For this reason, groundwater contamination is a major concern in the Town. Soils incapable of supporting septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems may be present within the Town. Future General Plan development may need to rely on septic tanks or other alternative wastewater disposal systems until the proposed sewer system and associated facilities are in place. This issue will be evaluated in the EIR.

3.7 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

Potentially Significant Impact. Implementation of future development projects pursuant to the General Plan Update would increase land use intensities, generating additional traffic volumes and new direct and indirect sources of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions throughout Yucca Valley. An analysis will be prepared as part of the EIR to determine the General Plan Update's potential GHG impacts.

b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

Potentially Significant Impact Assembly Bill 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32) requires the state to reduce GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. The California Air Resources Board (CARB) adopted the Scoping Plan to identify state regulations and programs that would be adopted by state agencies to achieve the 1990 target of AB 32. In addition, Senate Bill 375, the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008 (SB 375) was adopted by the legislature to reduce per capita vehicle miles traveled and associated GHG emissions from passenger vehicles. The Southern California Association of Government's (SCAG) 2012 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy identifies the per capita GHG reduction goals for the SCAG region. The EIR will evaluate consistency of the General Plan Update with the overall GHG reduction goals of AB 32 and SB 375.

3.8 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use or disposal of hazardous materials?

Potentially Significant Impact. Implementation of the General Plan Update would accommodate the development of commercial and industrial land uses, which may manufacture, transport, store, use, and dispose hazardous materials and waste. The transport of hazardous materials along the Town's highways and local roads creates potential risks for spills or leaks from nonstationary sources. The alteration, intensification, and redistribution of land uses may also contribute to public exposure and environmental hazards during transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. The EIR will evaluate impacts of the General Plan Update relative to hazardous materials.

b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?

Potentially Significant Impact. The General Plan Update would accommodate the development of commercial and industrial land uses. These land uses have the potential to manufacture, use, store, and/or transport hazardous materials; therefore, such new land uses in Yucca Valley could create some risk of accidental release of hazardous materials. This topic will be addressed in the EIR.

c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?

Potentially Significant Impact. There are five public schools within Yucca Valley and numerous small private schools. Future development in accordance with the General Plan Update would involve development of land

uses that involve the use of hazardous materials or generate hazardous emissions within on-quarter mile of a school. This impact is potentially significant and will be addressed in the EIR.

d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?

Potentially Significant Impact. The following databases of hazardous materials sites were searched for listings of hazardous materials within Yucca Valley: Geotracker, State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB 2011); EnviroStor, Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC 2007); and EnviroMapper, US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA 2011). These databases listed a number of hazardous material sites in Yucca Valley, including commercial land uses such as gas stations. Future development in accordance with the General Plan Update could lead to a significant hazard to the public or environment. This impact will be addressed in the EIR.

e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles or a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?

Potentially Significant Impact. As shown in Figure 2, *Townwide Aerial*, Yucca Valley Airport is in the Mid-Town area of Yucca Valley. Therefore, the airport's influence area and safety compatibility and noise contour zones fall within Town boundaries. Future development in accordance with the General Plan Update could potentially increase or intensify development near the airport. The EIR will evaluate potential airport-related hazards to people residing or working within Yucca Valley.

f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?

Potentially Significant Impact. There are no private airstrips within the Town boundaries of Yucca Valley. However, Southern California Edison's privately owned Yucca Valley Service Center Heliport is in Mid-Town Yucca Valley, approximately 500 feet south of the western end of the runway of Yucca Valley Airport. New development or redevelopment near this private heliport may put the public at risk. Impacts are potentially significant and this issue will be discussed in the EIR.

g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?

Potentially Significant Impact. The General Plan Update calls for changes to land use designations within Yucca Valley that would affect its overall land use patterns. The street layout would not be altered except in areas of substantial redevelopment or new development. With the increase in development growth and the expansion or alteration of local roadways, the implementation of emergency management plans may be affected by the proposed project. Impacts are potentially significant and additional analysis is required in the EIR.

h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?

Potentially Significant Impact. In September of 2007, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) released its draft Fire Hazard Severity Zones maps for the Local Responsibility Areas of various counties and cities throughout the state for their review and comment. The Fire Hazard Severity Zones (Very High, High, Moderate, and Other) were developed by CAL FIRE based on an evaluation of fuels, topography,

dwelling density, weather, infrastructure, building materials, brush clearance, and fire history. Portions of Yucca Valley are within and adjacent to areas that are identified as wildfire hazard zones. Specifically, the central, west-central, and southern parts of Yucca Valley are designated areas of high and very high hazard (CAL FIRE 2007). Development in these areas as proposed under the General Plan Update could place structures and people at risk for wildland fires. Impacts are potentially significant and this issue will be addressed in the EIR.

3.9 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?

Potentially Significant Impact. The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) establishes national water quality standards. Pursuant to Section 402 of the Clean Water Act, the EPA has also established regulations under the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program to control direct stormwater discharges. In Yucca Valley, the Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board administers NPDES permitting programs and is responsible for developing waste discharge requirements. Construction and operation of planned development per the General Plan Update has the potential to discharge sediment and pollutants to storm drains and receiving waters. The EIR will discuss potential water quality impacts.

b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?

Potentially Significant Impact. The Hi-Desert Water District provides water supply to residents and businesses in Yucca Valley via multiple sources of water, including groundwater. The General Plan Update may result in the intensification of land uses and the development of vacant land throughout the Town, increasing the number of residents. Therefore, total domestic water demand for the Town could rise, and this could contribute to the overall demand for local and regional groundwater supplies. Additionally, development of vacant land could interfere with groundwater recharge. Impacts to groundwater supplies and recharge potential due to implementation of the General Plan Update will be evaluated in the EIR.

c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in a substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site.

Potentially Significant Impact. Although Yucca Valley has no perennial rivers or streams, the Town features broad desert washes and drainage channels that carry sediment-laden water and other materials during infrequent but violent storms common in the region. Implementation of the General Plan Update would alter the existing land use designations within Yucca Valley. Development in accordance with the General Plan Update may alter drainage patterns, increase erosion, and discharge sediment to watercourses. The EIR will evaluate impacts to drainage patterns within Yucca Valley.

d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?

Potentially Significant Impact. See response to Section 3.9(c), above. Future development in accordance with the General Plan Update would alter existing land uses in Yucca Valley. Increased urbanization may increase the amount of runoff from impervious surfaces and result in flooding on- or offsite. The EIR will evaluate potential impacts to drainage and surface runoff within the Town.

e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?

Potentially Significant Impact. Development in accordance with the General Plan Update would involve alteration, intensification, and redistribution of land uses. Increased urbanization may increase the amount of runoff and discharge sediments and pollutants to stormwater drainage systems. The EIR will evaluate potential impacts to stormwater systems.

f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?

Potentially Significant Impact. Development in accordance with the General Plan Update would involve the alteration and redistribution of land use designations and would include development in the undeveloped areas. Current and future uses may result in discharge of sediment and pollutants to existing stream courses, which in turn could affect water quality. The EIR will evaluate potential impacts to water quality.

g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?

Potentially Significant Impact. Parts of Yucca Valley are within 100-year flood zones designated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), including areas along Water Canyon, Yucca Wash and their tributaries extending to the south. Parts of the community are susceptible to flooding during heavy downpours, which are a common element of the region's unpredictable seasonal rainfall. Brief but intense storms can overwhelm these drainage channels, pushing water and sediment over low-lying areas and making dirt roads impassable. Development in accordance with the General Plan Update would include additional housing units in Yucca Valley, with some potentially located in or near flood hazard areas. Flood hazards will be discussed in the EIR.

h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?

Potentially Significant Impact. As noted above, parts of Yucca Valley are within 100-year flood zones designated by FEMA. Future development in accordance with the General Plan Update may place structures in or near flood hazard areas. Flood hazards will be discussed in the EIR.

i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?

Potentially Significant Impact. The Town of Yucca Valley is not within a dam inundation area. However, levees are present along the eastern portion of the Water Canyon Channel and Burnt Mountain Wash. There are also planned and existing detention/debris basins in the Town that contain stormwater on a temporary basis. Implementation of the proposed General Plan could expose additional population—generated by additional residential, commercial and industrial uses—to flood hazards. The EIR will address the potential impact to people and structures of flooding from levee failure.

j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?

Potentially Significant Impact. A seiche is a surface wave created when a body of water is shaken, usually by earthquakes. Seiches are of concern relative to water storage facilities because inundation from a seiche can occur if the wave overflows a containment wall, such as the wall of a reservoir, water storage tank, dam, or other artificial body of water. Seiches may occur within 15 aboveground water tanks maintained by the Hi-Desert Water District and located within Yucca Valley. A sixteenth aboveground water tank is in the Yucca Mesa area northeast of the Town. Many of these tanks were constructed 20 years ago or more, before the adoption of

newer earthquake design standards. Older tanks may not meet the new construction requirements for safety, lacking the flexible joints and other seismic upgrades that can help limit the damage that a failed water tank could cause to areas downstream.

Tsunamis are large ocean waves caused by underwater seismic activity. When tsunamis hit the coast, they can cause considerable damage to property and put the public at risk. Yucca Valley is approximately 80 miles from the Pacific Ocean and is well outside the tsunami hazard zone.

Mudflows are associated with landslides and heavy rainfall. Much of Yucca Valley is located on or near the base of hillsides and is downstream from canyons that have the potential to convey mudflows.

Overall, there would be no impacts related to tsunamis in Yucca Valley because it is not in a coastal area. Potentially significant impacts may occur, however, from mudflows and seiches with the implementation of the General Plan Update. Seiches and mudflows will be discussed in more detail in the EIR.

3.10 LAND USE AND PLANNING

a) Physically divide an established community?

Potentially Significant Impact. Implementation of the General Plan Update would involve development of vacant land and the intensification of redevelopment of other areas of Yucca Valley. These changes have the potential to physically divide established communities within the Town. The EIR will evaluate the impacts of the proposed project on existing land use patterns.

b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?

Potentially Significant Impact. The proposed project would replace the current Yucca Valley General Plan and would modify land use designations in Yucca Valley. The EIR will evaluate the consistency of the General Plan with other land use plans, policies, and/or regulations governing Yucca Valley.

c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?

Potentially Significant Impact. The entire Town of Yucca Valley is in the plan area for the proposed Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP) / Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) and the proposed West Mojave Plan HCP. The proposed Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan was established to conserve and manage rare, threatened, and endangered plant and wildlife species while streamlining the review and approval of renewable energy projects in California's desert areas (California Energy Commission 2012). The Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) West Mojave Plan is a proposed multiple-species HCP aimed at protecting nearly 100 federal- and state-listed plant and wildlife species and their habitats, including the desert tortoise, a federally threatened species residing in Yucca Valley. The Town is a participant in the West Mojave Plan. Assuming the Town becomes a signatory to the Plans, development projects approved pursuant to the proposed General Plan Update would be required to comply with habitat assessment and survey requirements proposed in West Mojave Plan HCP and the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan NCCP/HCP, where applicable. The EIR will evaluate any potential conflicts of the General Plan Update with applicable conservation plans.

3.11 MINERAL RESOURCES

a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be a value to the region and the residents of the state?

Less Than Significant Impact. Mineral deposits within San Bernardino County are not only important to the economic well-being of the County, but many industries outside the County depend on them as well. The nonrenewable characteristic of these mineral deposits necessitates careful and efficient management to prevent waste, careless exploitation, and uncontrolled urbanization. However, the Town of Yucca Valley likely does not contain mineral resources of statewide or regional importance. The Town lies outside of areas that have been mapped by the California Geologic Survey for mineral resource classification and the United States Geologic Survey does not identify any mines, processing plants, or locations of potential mining resources within Town (USGS 2012). Therefore, it is unlikely that development associated with buildout of the General Plan Update would result in the loss of important mineral resources. This topic will not be evaluated in the EIR and no mitigation measures are required.

b) 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?

Less Than Significant Impact. See response to Section 3.11(a), above. The current Yucca Valley General Plan states that sand and gravel deposits in the area represent an important economic resource, but acknowledges that Yucca Valley contains relatively few valuable or strategic mineral resources. Sand and gravel are prevalent in the Mojave Desert region, and development associated with buildout of the General Plan Update would not result in the loss of availability of locally important mineral resources. This topic will not be evaluated in the EIR and no mitigation measures are required.

3.12 NOISE

a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?

Potentially Significant Impact. The General Plan Update would involve the alteration, intensification, and redistribution of land uses, which may result in temporary, periodic, or permanent increases in ambient noise or in noise levels in excess of standards established in the Town's General Plan or Municipal Code. The General Plan includes an update to the Noise Element. A technical noise analysis will be conducted, and issues relating to noise will be further evaluated in the EIR. Emphasis will be placed on the major noise sources in Yucca Valley, including traffic on SR-62 and SR-247, traffic on major arterial streets, general aviation operations at Yucca Valley Airport, military aviation operations related to Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, and scattered stationary sources.

b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?

Potentially Significant Impact. The General Plan Update would involve the alteration, intensification, and redistribution of land uses. Implementation of these land use changes may result in excessive short- and/or long-term groundborne vibration or noise. An analysis will be conducted and issues relating to groundborne vibration and groundborne noise will be evaluated in the EIR. No specific sources of substantial vibration, such as heavy machinery and rail operations, are anticipated to be included as part of the implementation of the General Plan. As a part of this impact assessment, attention will focus on the construction phases of new development accommodated under the General Plan Update.

c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?

Potentially Significant Impact. Development pursuant to the General Plan Update may result in a permanent increase in ambient noise above existing levels from stationary and transportation-related noise sources, particularly in undeveloped areas. As discussed in response a), a noise analysis will be conducted and the EIR will evaluate the proposed project's potential increase in ambient noise levels.

d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?

Potentially Significant Impact. Development pursuant to the General Plan Update may result in a temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise above existing levels, particularly in undeveloped areas. A noise analysis will be conducted and the EIR will evaluate the proposed project's potential impact on ambient noise levels. Attention will focus on the construction phases of new development accommodated under the General Plan Update.

e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

Potentially Significant Impact. As shown in Figure 2, *Townwide Aerial*, Yucca Valley Airport is within the Town boundaries. Portions of the Town, including residential and commercial land uses, fall within the airport influence area of this airport, in which noise and safety issues related to the development of land uses and aircraft operations must be considered. Future development in accordance with the General Plan Update could potentially increase or intensify development near the airport and could, therefore, expose people residing or working in the area to excessive noise levels from airport activities. The EIR will evaluate potential airport-related noise impacts to people residing or working near the airport.

f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

Potentially Significant Impact. There are no private airstrips within the Town boundaries of Yucca Valley. However, Southern California Edison's privately owned Yucca Valley Service Center Heliport is in Mid-Town Yucca Valley, approximately 500 feet south of the western end of the runway of Yucca Valley Airport. New development or redevelopment near this private heliport may expose people residing or working near the heliport to excessive noise levels. This issue will be discussed in the EIR.

3.13 POPULATION AND HOUSING

a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?

Potentially Significant Impact. The existing population of the Town of Yucca Valley is estimated to be approximately 22,464 (see Table 1, *Existing Land Use Summary*). The proposed General Plan Update would allow the construction of new housing in a variety of densities and employment-generating businesses throughout the Town. General Plan buildout is estimated to increase the population of the Town to 64,543, approximately triple the existing population. General Plan buildout would also increase the amount of nonresidential land uses in the Town and is estimated to generate approximately 34,927 total employees (see Table 3, *Proposed General*

Plan Land Use Designations). The EIR will evaluate population growth related to development allowed in the proposed General Plan Update.

b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

Potentially Significant Impact. The Town of Yucca Valley is estimated to contain approximately 9,458 dwelling units (see Table 1, *Existing Land Use Summary*). The proposed General Plan Update would allow a total of 27,219 residential units (see Table 3, *Proposed General Plan Land Use Designations*). The potential for development and redevelopment pursuant to the proposed General Plan Update to displace existing housing will be analyzed in the EIR.

c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

Potentially Significant Impact. The potential for development and redevelopment projects approved pursuant to the proposed General Plan Update to displace existing residents will be analyzed in the EIR.

3.14 PUBLIC SERVICES

Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

a) Fire protection?

Potentially Significant Impact. Fire protection services are provided in Yucca Valley by the San Bernardino County Fire Department, which currently has one fire station in the Town of Yucca Valley (Station 41) and two fire stations outside Yucca Valley that also provide service to the Town (Stations 38 and 42). The alteration of land uses and new development could potentially increase the demands on fire department personnel and equipment. The EIR will evaluate impacts of the General Plan Update on fire protection services.

b) Police protection?

Potentially Significant Impact. The San Bernardino County Sheriff's Office, through a contract with the Town, provides police protection in Yucca Valley. The county's Morongo Basin substation in the community of Joshua Tree serves as the area's regional headquarters for provision of police services. A satellite law enforcement facility is in the Yucca Valley Community Center. The alteration of land uses and new development could potentially increase the demands on police department personnel and facilities. The EIR will evaluate impacts of the General Plan Update on police protection services.

c) Schools?

Potentially Significant Impact. The Morongo Unified School District provides service to Yucca Valley. Public school facilities in the Town include Yucca Valley and Onaga Elementary Schools, La Contenta Junior High School, Sky Continuation High School, and Yucca Valley High School. The alteration of land uses and new development would likely increase the need for school services and facilities. The EIR will evaluate impacts of the General Plan Update on school services and facilities.

d) Parks?

Potentially Significant Impact. The General Plan Update would designate approximately 405 acres for parks and open space, more than triple the amount of acreage currently used for parks and open space (132 acres). However, population increase associated with the General Plan Update would increase overall demand on parks and on recreational services and facilities within Yucca Valley. The EIR will evaluate the provision of additional park space in Yucca Valley and impacts to parks services and facilities.

e) Other public facilities?

Potentially Significant Impact. Library services in Yucca Valley are provided by the Yucca Valley Branch Library, which is operated by the County of San Bernardino. The library has a collection of over 43,000 items. Population increases associated with the General Plan Update would increase demands on library facilities and services. The EIR will evaluate impacts on library services.

3.15 RECREATION

a) Would the project 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?

Potentially Significant Impact. The General Plan Update would accommodate the development of new housing at a variety of densities, which could increase the use of neighborhood and regional parks and recreational facilities. The EIR will address the potential impacts of the General Plan Update to parks and recreational facilities.

b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?

Potentially Significant Impact. The General Plan Update would include approximately 504 acres of parks and open space. However, population increase from future development associated with the General Plan Update would increase overall demand on parks and recreational services and facilities within Yucca Valley. The EIR will evaluate the provision of additional park space in Yucca Valley and impacts to parks services and facilities.

3.16 TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC

a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?

Potentially Significant Impact. The General Plan Update would allow for development of currently undeveloped parcels and for alteration, intensification, or redistribution of existing land uses. These changes could result in an increase and redistribution of vehicle trips, which may conflict with local plans, policies, or ordinances regarding vehicular traffic efficiency or mass transit, bicycle, and pedestrian routes within the circulation system. A traffic analysis will be conducted to assess the exiting conditions and future forecast traffic conditions. The traffic analysis will include a roadway operations analysis, a level of service analysis for study-area roadway segments and freeway locations, and an analysis of regional transportation performance measures, including total vehicle trips and vehicle miles traveled for daily conditions. Impacts related to compliance with

plans and policies that establish measures of effective performance of the circulation system would be potentially significant, and this issue will be discussed in more detail in the EIR.

b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?

Potentially Significant Impact. The Congestion Management Plan (CMP) in effect in San Bernardino County was approved by the San Bernardino Association of Governments (SANBAG) in 2007 and is currently being updated. All freeways and selected roadways in the County are designated elements of the CMP system of highways and roadways. This system includes two highways in Yucca Valley: SR-62 and SR-247. Traffic impacts to these roadways and their intersection that would result from implementation of the General Plan Update will be analyzed in the EIR.

c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?

No Impact. As shown in Figure 2, *Townwide Aerial*, the general aviation Yucca Valley Airport is located in Mid-Town Yucca Valley, directly east of SR-247. Seven other general aviation airports are within 30 miles of Yucca Valley—Banning Municipal, Hi-Desert, Johnson Valley, Bermuda Dunes, Big Bear City, Roy Williams, and Twentynine Palms Airports. Palm Springs International Airport, a public airport served by 11 commercial airlines, is approximately 30 miles (driving distance) south of Yucca Valley. Air space in the region is also used for military aviation operations related to Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms. Future development in accordance with the General Plan Update may place additional residential, commercial, and industrial uses near the Yucca Valley Airport. However, those land use changes would not result in a change in air traffic patterns at Yucca Valley Airport. This topic will not be evaluated in the EIR.

d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?

Potentially Significant Impact. A traffic analysis will be conducted for the EIR. The EIR will evaluate the potential hazards that may result from future planned circulation features or alteration of land uses.

e) Result in inadequate emergency access?

Potentially Significant Impact. Future development in accordance with the General Plan would involve alteration, intensification, and redistribution of land uses. These changes could result in changes to circulation patterns and emergency access routes. The EIR will evaluate the General Plan Update's impacts to emergency access.

f) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?

Potentially Significant Impact. Future development in accordance with the General Plan Update would increase traffic in Yucca Valley. Increased traffic may affect public transit facilities, including bus, pedestrian, and bicycle facilities, by worsening the safety of these facilities or by increasing their use. Impacts to public transit policies, plans, or programs for public transit facilities are potentially significant. General Plans of California cities and counties are required under the Complete Streets Act to include planning for complete streets: that is, streets that meet the needs of all users of the roadway, including pedestrians, bicyclists, users of public transit, motorists, children, the elderly, and the disabled. Additionally, SCAG's Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable

Communities Strategy calls for smart growth planning principles, including the creation of walkable communities and the provision of a variety of transportation choices. The EIR will consider the policies and programs of the General Plan Update and evaluate the consistency with adopted alternative transportation plans and programs.

3.17 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

a) Exceed waste water treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?

Potentially Significant Impact. All land uses in Yucca Valley currently rely on individual septic systems to treat wastewater. On November 1, 2011, the Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) amended its Basin Plan to prohibit discharge from septic systems in the Town of Yucca Valley. The prohibition will be phased, with areas of the Town prohibited from discharging beginning in 2016, 2019, and 2022. A wastewater treatment and water reclamation system that would collect, treat, and reclaim wastewater in a majority of Yucca Valley is currently being developed. The system, which is projected to begin construction in 2016, includes a sewer collection system, a wastewater treatment plant, and water reclamation recharge ponds (Hi-Desert 2012). Future development in accordance with the General Plan Update would increase residential and nonresidential development and associated wastewater flows into the proposed wastewater treatment and water reclamation system and may exceed wastewater treatment requirements set forth by the Colorado River Basin RWQCB. The EIR will evaluate impacts to wastewater treatment requirements.

b) Require or result in the construction of new water or waste water treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?

Potentially Significant Impact. See response to Section 3.17(a), above. Future growth in accordance with the General Plan Update may necessitate expanded water and wastewater collection and treatment facilities. The EIR will evaluate the impacts to water and wastewater facilities.

c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?

Potentially Significant Impact. The San Bernardino County Flood Control District is responsible for regional stormwater management in Yucca Valley. Yucca Valley and the surrounding area often experience brief but intense storms that can overwhelm drainage channels and improved gutters, pushing water and sediment over low-lying areas of the Town. Increased development in Yucca Valley under the General Plan Update would create additional impervious surfaces and stormwater runoff, which could require additional stormwater facilities and expansion of existing facilities. The EIR will evaluate impacts of the General Plan Update to stormwater drainage facilities.

d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?

Potentially Significant Impact. Yucca Valley's water supply consists primarily of groundwater from the Warren Valley and Ames Valley groundwater basins, but is supplemented by State Water Project water as needed. The Hi-Desert Water District (HDWD), which owns and operates 13 active wells, provides water supply to residential and nonresidential land uses in the Town. The Town's groundwater supply is supplemented by water from the Mojave Water Agency, the State Water contractor in the region and supplier of the HDWD's State Water Project water allocation. Future development and population growth in accordance with the General Plan Update would generate an increase in water demand within Yucca Valley. The EIR will address impacts to water supplies.

e) Result in a determination by the waste water treatment provider, which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?

Potentially Significant Impact. See response to Section 3.17(a), above. Buildout of the updated General Plan may require additional wastewater capacity from the HDWD to serve projected population demands. The EIR will evaluate the General Plan Update's impacts to wastewater treatment capacity.

f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?

Potentially Significant Impact. Solid waste collection and disposal services in Yucca Valley are provided by Burrtec Waste Industries. However, property owners and residents are not required to contract with the local waste management service and are allowed to dispose of refuse at local landfills or recycling centers themselves. Burrtec Waste Industries disposes solid waste at seven landfills in Southern California, including the Landers Landfill located approximately four miles north of Yucca Valley. Future development in accordance with the General Plan Update may increase the amount of solid waste generated in Yucca Valley and may require expansion of landfills or the adoption of alternative methods for solid waste disposal. The EIR will evaluate long-term regional landfill capacity.

g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

Potentially Significant Impact. Future development in accordance with the General Plan Update may increase the amount of solid waste generated in Yucca Valley and may require expansion of landfills or the adoption of alternative methods for solid waste disposal. The EIR will evaluate the General Plan Update's conformance with federal, state, and local regulations related to solid waste.

3.18 MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?

Potentially Significant Impact. Future development pursuant to the General Plan Update would involve alteration, intensification, and redistribution of land uses in Yucca Valley. These changes have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment and could cause potentially significant impacts to biological resources, including areas of native habitat, and to cultural resources, including archeological and paleontological resources. Impacts would be potentially significant and these issues will be discussed in more detail in the EIR.

b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)

Potentially Significant Impact. Implementation of the General Plan Update and its land use changes could result in cumulative impacts to aesthetics, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use and

planning, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation and traffic, and utilities and service systems. Impacts would be potentially significant and these issues will be discussed in the EIR.

c) Does the project have environmental effects, which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

Potentially Significant Impact. As discussed in this Initial Study, the General Plan Update and its associated land use changes would potentially have harmful effects on the environment, which would affect humans either directly or indirectly. These impacts include air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, and noise. Impacts would be potentially significant and these issues will be discussed in the EIR.

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4. References

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