

# Notice of Intent to Adopt a Negative Declaration

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To:  X  Office of Planning and Research  
State Clearinghouse  
1400 Tenth Street, Room 121  
Sacramento, CA 95814

From: CITY OF LA MESA  
Community Development Department  
8130 Allison Avenue  
La Mesa, CA 91942  
619-667-1177

\_\_\_\_ Assessor/Recorder/County Clerk  
Attn: Fish and Wildlife Notices  
1600 Pacific Highway, Suite 260  
San Diego, CA 92101  
MS A-33

Filing of a Notice of Intent to Adopt a Negative Declaration is in compliance with Section 15072 of the California Code of Regulations Title 14, Chapter 3.

A Draft Negative Declaration has been prepared by the City of La Mesa Community Development Department for the following project:

**Project Title:** City of La Mesa Housing Element of the General Plan 6<sup>th</sup> Cycle Update

**Applicant's Name and Address:** City of La Mesa, contact: Allyson Kinnard (619-667-1196), 8130 Allison Avenue, La Mesa, CA 91942.

**Project Location:** Citywide, within the boundaries of the City of La Mesa, which encompasses approximately 9.2 square miles in central San Diego County, approximately 12 miles east of downtown San Diego.

**Project Description:** The City, in compliance with State housing law, has prepared an update to the Housing Element of the General Plan for the eight-year planning period from June 30, 2020, through April 15, 2029. The Housing Element identifies the City's housing conditions and needs, establishes the goals, objectives, and policies that are the foundation of the City's housing strategy, and provides an array of programs to create sustainable, mixed-income neighborhoods across the City. There are no major changes proposed to the goals and policies of the current Housing Element adopted in 2013, and the project proposes no changes to any particular parcel's zoning or General plan land use designation. The Housing Element assesses the existing and future needs of persons in all economic segments of the City and serves as a tool for decision-makers and the public for understanding and meeting housing needs in La Mesa. The City has prepared an initial study for the project in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). It has been determined that the project does not have the potential to create a significant adverse effect on the environment.

The public review period for the environmental assessment begins on June 25, 2021, and ends on July 25, 2021. The Draft Negative Declaration, Initial Study, and supporting documents may be reviewed, or purchased for the cost of reproduction, at City Hall, 8130 Allison Avenue, La Mesa, CA 91942. The documents are posted on the City's website, <https://www.cityoflamesa.us/1656/Housing-Element-Update>. Written comments should be directed to:

City of La Mesa  
Allyson Kinnard  
8130 Allison Avenue  
La Mesa, CA 91942

All interested citizens are invited to provide written comments during the public review period. If you have any questions regarding this notice, please contact Allyson Kinnard at 619-667-1196.

**Review Period:** Starts –  June 25, 2021  Ends –  July 25, 2021   
(20-day review period for all projects except those that are sent to the State Clearinghouse which have a 30-day review)

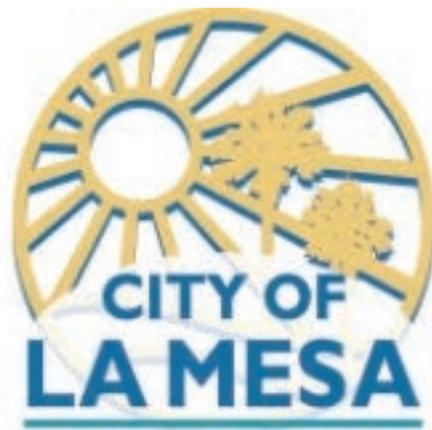


Signature (Public Agency)

June 22, 2021   
Date

Associate Planner   
Title

**CITY OF LA MESA**  
**HOUSING ELEMENT OF**  
**THE GENERAL PLAN**  
**6th Cycle Update**



**INITIAL STUDY/NEGATIVE DECLARATION**

**June 2021**

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# I. INTRODUCTION

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## A. INTRODUCTION AND REGULATORY GUIDANCE

An initial study is conducted by a lead agency to determine if a project may have a significant effect on the environment (CEQA Guidelines Section 15063[a]). If there is substantial evidence that a project may have a significant effect on the environment, an environmental impact report (EIR) must be prepared, in accordance with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15064(a). However, if the lead agency determines the impacts are, or can be reduced to, less than significant, a negative declaration or mitigated negative declaration may be prepared instead of an EIR (CEQA Guidelines Section 15070[b]). Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15070, a mitigated negative declaration is appropriate when the project's initial study identifies potentially significant effects, but:

- a. Revisions to the project plan were made that would avoid or reduce the effects to a point where clearly no significant effects would occur; and
- b. There is no substantial evidence that the project, as revised, may have a significant effect on the environment.

This Initial Study identifies potentially significant impacts on certain environmental resources. The Mitigated Negative Declaration proposes a range of mitigation measures to reduce all such effects to less than significant levels. Therefore, the City of La Mesa (City) has prepared this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) for the project because all impacts resulting from the project would be reduced to less than significant levels through the adoption and implementation of mitigation measures incorporated into the project. This IS/MND conforms to the content requirements of a negative declaration under CEQA Guidelines Section 15071.

## B. LEAD AGENCY

The lead agency is the public agency with primary responsibility over a proposed project. In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15051(b)(1), "the lead agency will normally be the agency with general governmental powers." The project would be approved and carried out by the City of La Mesa. Therefore, based on the criteria described above, the City of La Mesa, Planning and Zoning Division is the lead agency for the proposed project.

## C. PURPOSE AND DOCUMENT ORGANIZATION

The City is updating the Housing Element of the General Plan for the 2021-2029 planning period (project). The purpose of this IS/MND is to evaluate the potential environmental effects associated with implementation of the project and to provide mitigation where necessary to avoid, minimize, or lessen those effects. This document is divided into the following sections:

### I. INTRODUCTION

This section provides an introduction and describes the purpose and organization of this document.

II. INITIAL STUDY CHECKLIST

This section includes the project background and a detailed description of the project. This section describes the environmental setting for each of the environmental subject areas; evaluates a range of impacts classified as “no impact,” “less than significant impact,” “less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated,” or “potentially significant impact” in response to the environmental checklist, and includes mitigation measures, where appropriate, to mitigate potentially significant impacts to a less than significant level; and provides an environmental determination for the project.

III. REFERENCES

This section identifies resources used in the preparation of the IS/ND.

## II. INITIAL STUDY CHECKLIST

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### A. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

**1. Project Title:**

City of La Mesa Housing Element 2021-2029 Update

**2. Lead Agency Name and Address:**

City of La Mesa  
Community Development Department  
Planning Division  
8130 Allison Avenue  
La Mesa, CA 91942

**3. Lead Agency Contact Person and Phone Number:**

Kerry Kusiak, Director of Community Development, (619) 667-1187

**4. Project Location:**

La Mesa, California  
County of San Diego

The City of La Mesa Housing Element 2021-2029 Update would apply to the entire geographic area located within the boundaries of the City of La Mesa (City), which encompasses approximately 9.2 square-miles (5,876 acres) in central San Diego County, approximately 12 miles east of downtown San Diego. **Figure 1, Regional Location Map** shows the boundaries of the City within the San Diego region.

**5. Applicant's Name and Address:**

City of La Mesa

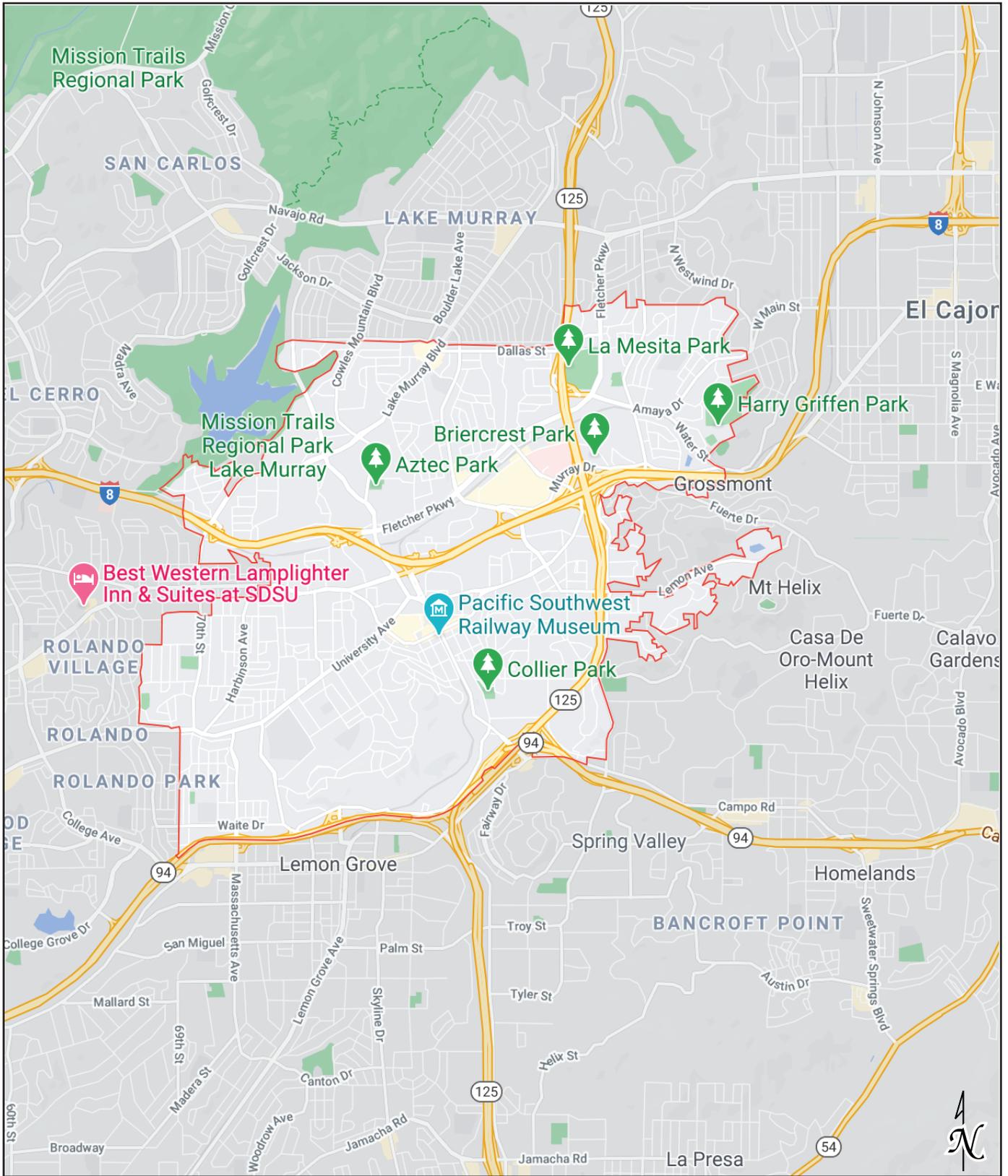
**6. General Plan Land Use Designation:**

Various, Citywide

Multiple residential and commercial General Plan land use designations within the City provide opportunities for development of housing projects at various densities, including: Rural, Semi-Rural, Suburban, Urban, Restricted Multiple Unit, Multiple Unit, and Mixed-Use Residential designations; and Local Serving, Downtown, and Regional Serving Commercial designations; as well as the Mixed-Use Urban and Light Industrial designations.<sup>1</sup> The Housing Element 2021-2029 Update does not propose to change any particular parcel's General Plan land use designation.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Open Space, Public Use, Recreation Uses, and Transportation Uses designations allow for residential uses under unique circumstances and/or with special design control.*



— = City of La Mesa Boundary

Source: GoogleEarth, February 2021.

Figure 1  
Regional Vicinity Map

**7. Zoning Designation:**

Various, Citywide

Multiple residential zoning designations within the City provide opportunities for development of housing projects at various densities, including: R1E (Semi-Rural Estate); R1R (Semi-Rural Residential); R1S (Suburban Residential); R1 (Urban Residential); R1A (Urban Residential-Alternative); R2 (Medium Low Density Residential); R3 (Multiple Unit Residential); and RB (Residential Business); as well as the Mixed Use Overlay (Mixed Use Urban) designation. The Housing Element 2021-2029 Update does not propose to change any particular parcel's zoning.

**8. Description of Project:**

The project is the adoption and implementation of the La Mesa Housing Element 2021-2029 Update (project).

**Background**

The Housing Element is one of the eight state-mandated elements of the General Plan. The Housing Element identifies the City's housing conditions and needs, establishes the goals, objectives, and policies that are the foundation of the City's housing strategy, and provides an array of programs to create sustainable, mixed-income neighborhoods across the City.

The current Housing Element was adopted in 2013 and set forth an action plan covering the planning period from 2013 to 2021. There are no major changes proposed to the goals and policies of the current Housing Element adopted in 2013, and the project proposes no changes to any particular parcel's zoning or General Plan land use designation. The Housing Element assesses the existing and future housing needs of persons in all economic segments of the City and serves as a tool for decision-makers and the public for understanding and meeting housing needs in La Mesa.

This Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) has been prepared to conform to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations 15000 et seq.), and the regulations and policies of the City of La Mesa. By state mandate, each city and county in California is required to plan for the housing needs for its share of the expected new households in the region through periodic updates to the Housing Element. While the law does not require local governments to actually construct housing to meet identified needs, it does require that the community address housing needs in its discretionary planning actions by creating opportunities for housing in the land use plan and facilitating housing development through policy.

**Housing Element Law**

The Housing Element Law, enacted in 1969, mandates that local governments adequately plan to meet the existing and projected housing needs of all economic segments of the community through the preparation of a Housing Element. The law requires local governments to adopt land use plans and regulatory systems that provide opportunities for, and do not unduly constrain, housing development. The law requires the update of the Housing Element every eight years to reflect the most recent trends in demographics and employment. Pursuant to these requirements, the City of La Mesa is required to update the Housing Element. The Housing Element Update would establish

policies, goals, and programs for the City to accommodate the City's required housing needs allocation as determined by the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) in the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA). The Housing Element Update is required to be adopted by April 15, 2021 and will be in effect through April 2029.

The Housing Element Law also requires that the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) review local housing elements for compliance with state law and report written findings to the local government. The City submitted the draft Housing Element to HCD on February 17, 2021. Following release of the draft Housing Element, HCD will provide comments to the City during its 60-day review, which will be incorporated in a revised Housing Element before adoption. Adoption of the Housing Element is anticipated to occur in April or May 2021, within the 120-day grace period of the statutory deadline.

This study analyzes the programs and policies contained in the draft Housing Element that have the potential to result in physical environmental effects and the inventory of opportunity sites needed to demonstrate zoned capacity needed to accommodate the City's RHNA allocation, in addition to the construction and operation of 3,797 housing units, which is intended to provide a conservative analysis of the "worst-case" scenario of environmental impacts from future implementation of the 2021-2029 Housing Element.

Since the adoption of the 2013-2021 Housing Element, the California State Legislature adopted several key bills that imposed additional requirements on the Housing Element Update. These recent changes are summarized as follows:

**Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AB 686)**

Pursuant to Assembly Bill (AB) 686 (2018), the Housing Element must include an analysis and determination of consistency with Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) requirements. AFFH means "taking meaningful actions, in addition to combating discrimination, that overcome patterns of segregation and foster inclusive communities free from barriers that restrict access to opportunity based on protected characteristics. These actions must, when taken together, address significant disparities in housing needs and in access to opportunity, replace segregated living patterns with truly integrated and balanced living patterns, transform racially and ethnically concentrated areas of poverty into areas of opportunity, and foster and maintain compliance with civil rights and fair housing laws.

To comply with these requirements, the implementation programs of the Housing Element must affirmatively further fair housing and must include an assessment of fair housing. Additionally, the list of opportunity sites suitable for housing development must be identified throughout the City in a manner that affirmatively furthers fair housing opportunities. For purposes of the housing element site inventory, this means that sites identified to accommodate the lower-income portion of the RHNA are not concentrated in low-resourced areas (lack of access to high performing schools, proximity to jobs, location disproportionately exposed to pollution or other health impacts) or areas of segregation and concentrations of poverty. Sites identified to accommodate the lower income RHNA must be distributed throughout the community in a manner that affirmatively furthers fair housing.

To conduct this analysis, the City utilized the California Tax Credit Allocation Committee (TCAC)/California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) Opportunity which can

be accessed at <https://www.treasurer.ca.gov/ctcac/opportunity.asp>. Analysis of the fair housing issues was also from the 2020 San Diego Regional Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice, in which the City of La Mesa participated.

**Additional Requirements Related to the Opportunity Sites List (AB 1397 and SB 166)**

Since the 5<sup>th</sup> cycle Housing Element was adopted in 2013, the State Legislature has adopted several bills which strengthen requirements related to the opportunity sites list. Among these, the most significant are AB 1397 (2017) and SB 166 (2017), which imposed several key new requirements. These new requirements are summarized as follows:

***Enhanced Requirements: Realistic Development Potential (AB 1397)***

Assembly Bill 1397 requires that, for each site included in the inventory, the City identify the realistic development potential for the site within the eight-year planning period. For non-vacant sites, the methodology used to identify realistic development potential must consider factors such as existing uses, past development trends, market conditions, and the availability of regulatory and/or other development incentives.

***No Net Loss (SB 166)***

Senate Bill 166 amended the existing No Net Loss Law to require sufficient adequate sites to be available at all times throughout the Housing Element planning period to meet a jurisdiction's remaining unmet RHNA goals for each income category. To comply with the No Net Loss Law, as jurisdictions make decisions regarding zoning and land use, or development occurs, jurisdictions must assess their ability to accommodate new housing in each income category on the remaining sites in their housing element site inventories. A jurisdiction must add additional sites to its inventory if land use decisions or development results in a shortfall of sufficient sites to accommodate its remaining housing need for each income category. In particular, a jurisdiction may be required to identify additional sites according to the No Net Loss Law if a jurisdiction rezones a site or if the jurisdiction approves a project at a different income level or lower density than shown in the opportunity sites list. Lower density means fewer units than the capacity assumed in the site inventory.

To ensure that sufficient capacity exists in the housing element to accommodate the RHNA throughout the planning period, HCD recommends that jurisdiction create a buffer in the housing element inventory of at least 15 to 30 percent more capacity than required, especially for capacity to accommodate the lower income RHNA. Jurisdictions can also create a buffer by projecting site capacity at less than the maximum density to allow for some reductions in density at a project level.

***Rezoning for Re-Use of Sites to Accommodate Lower Income RHNA (20 percent inclusionary, By-right)***

Sites identified to accommodate the lower-income RHNA are subject to additional requirements if they were identified in a previous planning period. Generally, these requirements would apply to the use of non-vacant site that was identified in the prior planning period's housing element (i.e., 5<sup>th</sup> cycle Housing Element), or to the use of a vacant site that was identified in two or more consecutive planning periods (i.e., 5<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> cycle Housing Elements).

When sites meeting these conditions are used to accommodate the lower-income RHNA, the jurisdiction's Housing Element must include a program to be completed within three years of the beginning of the planning period to allow residential use by-right at specified densities for housing developments in which at least 20 percent of the units are affordable to lower income households. Sites where zoning already permits residential "use by-right" as set forth in Government Code Section 65583.2 (i) at the beginning of the planning period would be considered to meet this requirement.

***Replacement Requirements***

Government Code Section 65583.2(g)(3) now requires that the Housing Element include a program to impose housing replacement requirements on certain sites identified in the Sites Inventory. These replacement requirements would require the replacement of units affordable to the same or lower income level as a condition of any development on a non-vacant site consistent with those requirements set forth in State Density Bonus Law (Government Code Section 65915(c)(3).)

The housing replacement requirements would be required for sites identified in the opportunity sites list that currently have residential uses, or within the past five years have had residential uses that have been vacated or demolished, and:

- Were subject to a recorded covenant, ordinance, or law that restricts rents to levels affordable to persons and families of low or very low-income; or
- Subject to any other form of rent or price control through a public entity's valid exercise of its police power; or
- Occupied by low or very low-income households.

***Required Rezoning to Accommodate Shortfall***

If, after completing the Inventory of Sites, the City concludes that there is a shortfall of sites to accommodate the RHNA allocation, then the Housing Element must include a program to identify sites that can be rezoned during the planning period. For any shortfall of sites to accommodate the lower-income RHNA, the Housing Element is required to include an inventory of potential sites for rezoning, and those sites must meet the adequate sites requirements in terms of suitability and availability.

Sites identified to meet the rezoning need for a lower-income shortfall must comply with a set of specific parameters, including the requirement that the site:

- Permit owner-occupied and rental multi-family uses by-right for developments in which 20 percent or more of the units are affordable to lower income households.
- Permit the development of at least 16 units per site.
- Permit a minimum of 20 dwelling units per acre.
- Ensure a) at least 50 percent of the shortfall of low- and very low-income regional housing need can be accommodated on sites designated for exclusively residential uses, or b) if accommodating more than 50 percent of the low- and very low-income regional housing need on sites designated for mixed-uses, all sites designated for mixed-uses must allow 100 percent residential use and require residential use to occupy at least 50 percent of the floor area in a mixed-use project.

The requirements to identify an inventory of sites for rezoning within the Housing Element Programs do not apply to rezoning that may be required to accommodate a Moderate Income or Above Moderate Income RHNA shortfall. Following the adoption of the Housing Element, jurisdictions have three years to adopt the rezoning, with some ability for extensions based on specific criteria. No rezoning is required or proposed by the 2021-2029 La Mesa Housing Element Update.

***Additional Requirements Related to the General Plan – AB 162 (2007), SB 1241 (2012), SB 99 (2019), AB 747 (2019), SB 1035 (2018), SB 379 (2015), and SB 1000 (2016)***

Several recent state laws require the City to make updates to other sections of the General Plan alongside the update to the Housing Element. These laws place a particular emphasis on the Safety Element, with an expanded focus on planning for flooding, wildfires, and climate change impacts. Through the City’s annual General Plan implementation review process, the City will ensure internal consistency among the various elements of the General Plan. Additionally, SB 1000 expands requirements surrounding Environmental Justice.

**RHNA Allocation**

The RHNA is mandated by state law as part of the periodic process of updating local housing elements of the General Plan. The RHNA allocation process begins with a regional determination figure (the total number of housing units needed to meet housing needs in the SANDAG region) issued by HCD, followed by an allocation to each jurisdiction within the region (specific number of units allocated to each jurisdiction). In prior Housing Element cycles, the regional determination figure was based solely on projected housing need during an eight-year planning period. Recent changes to state law added a requirement that existing housing need must be incorporated in the regional determination by considering housing need indicators such as vacancy rates, jobs/housing balance, cost burden, and overcrowding.

SANDAG is mandated to allocate the regional housing need set by HCD to city and county jurisdictions in the region. In allocating the region’s future housing needs to jurisdictions, SANDAG is required to take the following factors into consideration pursuant to Section 65584 of the State Government Code:

- Market demand for housing;
- Employment opportunities;
- Availability of suitable sites and public facilities;
- Commuting patterns;
- Type and tenure of housing;
- Loss of units in assisted housing developments;
- Over-concentration of lower income households; and
- Geological and topographical constraints.

The Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) for the SANDAG region was adopted in August 2020. This RHNA covers a planning period from June 30, 2020 through April 15, 2029. The major goal of the RHNA is to assure a fair distribution of housing among cities and counties within the San Diego region, so that every community provides an opportunity for a mix of housing for all economic segments. The housing allocation targets are not building requirements, but goals for each community to accommodate through appropriate planning policies and land use regulations. Allocation targets are

intended to assure that adequate sites and zoning are made available to address anticipated housing demand during the planning period.

The City of La Mesa’s share of regional future housing needs is a total of 3,797 new units for the 2021-2029 Housing Element. This allocation is distributed into various income categories, as shown in **Table 1, La Mesa Housing Needs for 2021-2029 Housing Element**. The RHNA includes a fair share adjustment which allocates future (construction) need by each income category in a way that meets the State mandate to reduce the over-concentration of lower income households in one community.

**Table 1  
La Mesa Housing Needs for 2021-2029 Housing Element**

Income Category (% of County AMI)	Number of Units	Percent
Extremely Los (30% or less) <sup>1</sup>	429	11.3%
Very Los (31 to 50%) <sup>1</sup>	430	11.3%
Low (51 to 80%)	487	12.8%
Moderate (81 to 120%)	577	15.2%
Above Moderate (Over 120%)	1,874	49.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,797</b>	<b>100%</b>

AMI = Area Median Income

<sup>1</sup> The City has a RHNA allocation of 859 very low income units (inclusive of extremely low income units. Pursuant to State law (AB 2634), the City must project the number of extremely low income housing needs based on Census income distribution or assume 50 percent of the very low income units as extremely low. Assuming an even split, the City’s RHNA allocation of 859 very low income units may be divided into 430 very low and 429 extremely low income units. However, for purposes of identifying adequate sites for the RHNA allocation, State law does not mandate the separate accounting for the extremely low income category.

Source: Final Regional Housing Needs Allocation, SANDAG, August 2020.

Under the RHNA allocation, the City is required to provide the zoned capacity to accommodate the development of at least 3,797 residential units using various land use planning strategies. The City provides capacity for housing through local zoning regulations. The City, however, is not required to physically construct 3,797 units as a result of the RHNA allocation.

**Credits toward RHNA**

Since the RHNA uses June 30, 2020 as the baseline for growth projections for the Housing Element planning period of 2021-2029, jurisdictions may count toward the RHNA any new units built or issued certificates of occupancy since June 30, 2020. This section describes the applicability of new construction credits, while latter sections discuss the availability of land to address the remaining RHNA. **Table 2, RHNA Credits and Remaining Need**, summarizes the units that can be credited against the City’s RHNA.

**Table 2**  
**RHNA Credits and Remaining Need**

Income (% of AMI)	RHNA	Permitted	Potential ADU	Entitled	Under Review	Pipeline Projects	Remaining Need
Extremely Low/ Very Low/Low 0-80% AMI	1,346	0	0	4	32	135	1,175
Moderate 81-120% AMI	577	24	800	3	69	30	-349
Above Moderate >120% AMI	1,874	1	0	146	530	64	1,133
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,797</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>631</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>1,959</b>

*Source: City of La Mesa, 2020*

**Potential ADU:** New State laws passed since 2017 have substantially relaxed the development standards and procedures for the construction of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs). La Mesa has seen a steady growth of ADUs in the community with 24 units permitted in 2018 and 42 permitted in 2019. In April 2020, the City amended the ADU ordinance to comply with new State law, including allowing for Junior ADUs. As of November 2020, the City has permitted 80 ADUs in 2020, but expects to have 100 by the end of the year. Given the accelerated rate of ADU development in 2020, the City anticipates permitting at least 100 ADUs per year for a total of at least 800 ADUs in the eight-year planning period between 2021 and 2029. With the lack of affordability data available, the City expects that all new ADUs to be affordable to moderate income households based on the City’s rental housing market conditions. ADUs in the City have primarily been smaller units, averaging only 660 square feet in size and similar in size to small one-bedroom or studio units.

**Permitted:** The City also has issued building permits for 25 units since July 1, 2020. One single family detached home and 24 ADUs have been issued permits and count toward the City’s RHNA.

**Units Entitled:** As of July 1, 2020, the City has four projects entitled -- three mixed-use developments and a multi-family residential development. The four projects are providing 153 units, including four affordable to low income, three affordable to moderate income and 146 affordable to above moderate income. The affordable units will be deed restricted pursuant to development agreements.

**Under Review:** As of July 1, 2020, a total of 601 units were at various stages of review and approval. There are currently 22 projects, 16 in plan review and 6 in discretionary review, in the City. Ten of the projects are single-family residences which are considered to be affordable to above moderate income households. Eleven projects are multi-family apartments or condominiums comprising of 561 units which will provide 36 extremely low/very low income units and six moderate income units according to the proposed development agreements. One project is a planned residential development that will provide 30 single-family homes affordable to above moderate income households.

**Pipeline Projects:** Two pipeline projects are currently at different stages in the development process:

- **Sprouts Site:** The Sprouts site is an under-utilized, multi-parcel site in the Downtown Village that is currently used as excess surface parking. Also under common ownership are adjacent sites

developed with low-density housing. The owner has expressed interest in building multi-family housing to the south, east, and north of the existing store. With two acres available, the site provides an opportunity for up to 82 housing units that could be developed under existing zoning at a 40-unit per acre density consistent with the surrounding area.

- **Old Police Station Site:** A 147-unit affordable housing project is in the planning stages on a 1.2-acre former redevelopment site that was previously home to the La Mesa Police Station. The City has entered into an Exclusive Negotiation Agreement with a private developer to construct the project. Nearly all of the housing units will be affordable and construction is expected to be underway in 2022.

**Remaining RHNA:** Accounting for units permitted, potential ADUs, active entitlements, projects under review and pipeline projects, the City has a remaining RHNA of 1,959 units. Specifically, 1,175 very low income units and 1,133 above moderate income units. The excess units at moderate income level (349 units) can be credited toward the above moderate income RHNA, leaving a remaining RHNA of 784 units at this income level.

### ***Residential Sites Inventory***

State law requires that jurisdictions demonstrate in the Housing Element that the land inventory is adequate to accommodate that jurisdiction's share of the region's projected growth. This is accomplished through an evaluation of vacant and underutilized residential and mixed-use properties with potential for residential development within the timeframe of the Housing Element.

### ***Realistic Capacity***

Consistent with HCD Guidelines, methodology for determining realistic capacity on each identified site must account for land use controls and site improvements and reflect current trend of development. The La Mesa Sites Inventory utilizes an estimate of 95 percent of maximum development to demonstrate realistic capacity for development in residential zones. This estimate is based on existing patterns of development in residential areas and the expected projects in the City that are going to be developed on average at 95 percent of the density allowed.

Recent mixed-use developments and expected projects have and will achieve densities very near actual maximum densities, and many have exceeded maximums due to the use of density bonuses in exchange for the provision of affordable housing. The Mixed-Use Urban land use designation allows for densities up to 40 units per acre. To encourage lot consolidation, development projects on sites smaller than 10,000 square feet are only allowed a density of 30 units per acre. The Mixed-Use Urban land designation permits stand-alone residential developments. Mixed-use developments in Commercial designations require a commercial component. Based on the mixed-use development history in La Mesa, the assumption that new mixed-use development may occur at densities of 38 units per acre represents a realistic and reasonable assumption.

### ***Zoning Appropriate to Accommodate Housing Affordable to Lower Income Households***

The City recognizes that higher-density developments provide the potential for lower construction costs because of economies of scale created and are therefore most suitable for development of housing affordable to lower income households. Mixed use sites included in the sites inventory have

the greatest potential to accommodate housing affordable to lower income households, as they allow densities of at least 30 units per acre (up to 40 units per acre). Per Government Code Section 65583.2(c)(3)(B), the City’s zoning is consistent with the 30 units per acre standard for metropolitan jurisdictions such as La Mesa and therefore considered appropriate to accommodate housing for lower income households (up to 80% AMI).

**Lot Consolidation Potential**

Many of the sites chosen for the sites inventory are comprised of contiguous parcels and provide excellent opportunities for lot consolidation. The sites inventory tables (Appendix B) also identify lot consolidation potential (contiguous parcels). The City offers several policies to encourage lot consolidation and reuse of existing properties in the mixed-use areas. The Mixed-Use Urban land use designation allows for densities up to 40 units per acre. To encourage lot consolidation, development projects on sites smaller than 10,000 square feet are only allowed a density of 30 units per acre.

**Opportunity Sites**

There are 10 opportunity sites in La Mesa that will account for a majority of the City’s remaining RHNA, as shown in **Figure 2, Opportunity Sites Location Map**. These 10 sites provide near-term development potential based on current status and/or property or developer interests. City staff review the status of each of these 10 opportunity sites and the potential affordability of the units to be constructed is presented in **Table 3, Opportunity Sites**. The 10 opportunity sites can facilitate the development of a total of 3,115 units based on density, feasible for facilitating 1,891 above moderate income units and 1,224 low income units.

**Table 3  
Opportunity Sites**

Project	Total Units	Lower Income	Moderate	Above Moderate
Alvarado SP	900	0	0	900
Bank/Randall Lamb Sites	76	22	0	54
Kitzman Site	100	30	0	70
7255-87 University	28	7	0	21
Civic Center	30	10	0	20
La Mesa Springs	112	33	0	79
Allison Avenue	30	7	0	23
Grossmont Center	1,668	1,081	0	587
Depot Springs	71	24	0	47
Toys R Us	100	20	0	80
Total	3,115	1,224	0	1,891

*Source: City of La Mesa, 2020*

**Scattered Vacant Sites**

The City’s remaining share of the regional housing need will be addressed through scattered vacant and nonvacant sites that are suitable and appropriately zoned for development of more intense residential uses. The inventory of scattered vacant land designated for residential or mixed-use development totals about 50 acres as shown in Table 4, Summary of Potential Residential Capacity on Scattered Vacant Sites. The most significant potential for new residential development occurs in areas

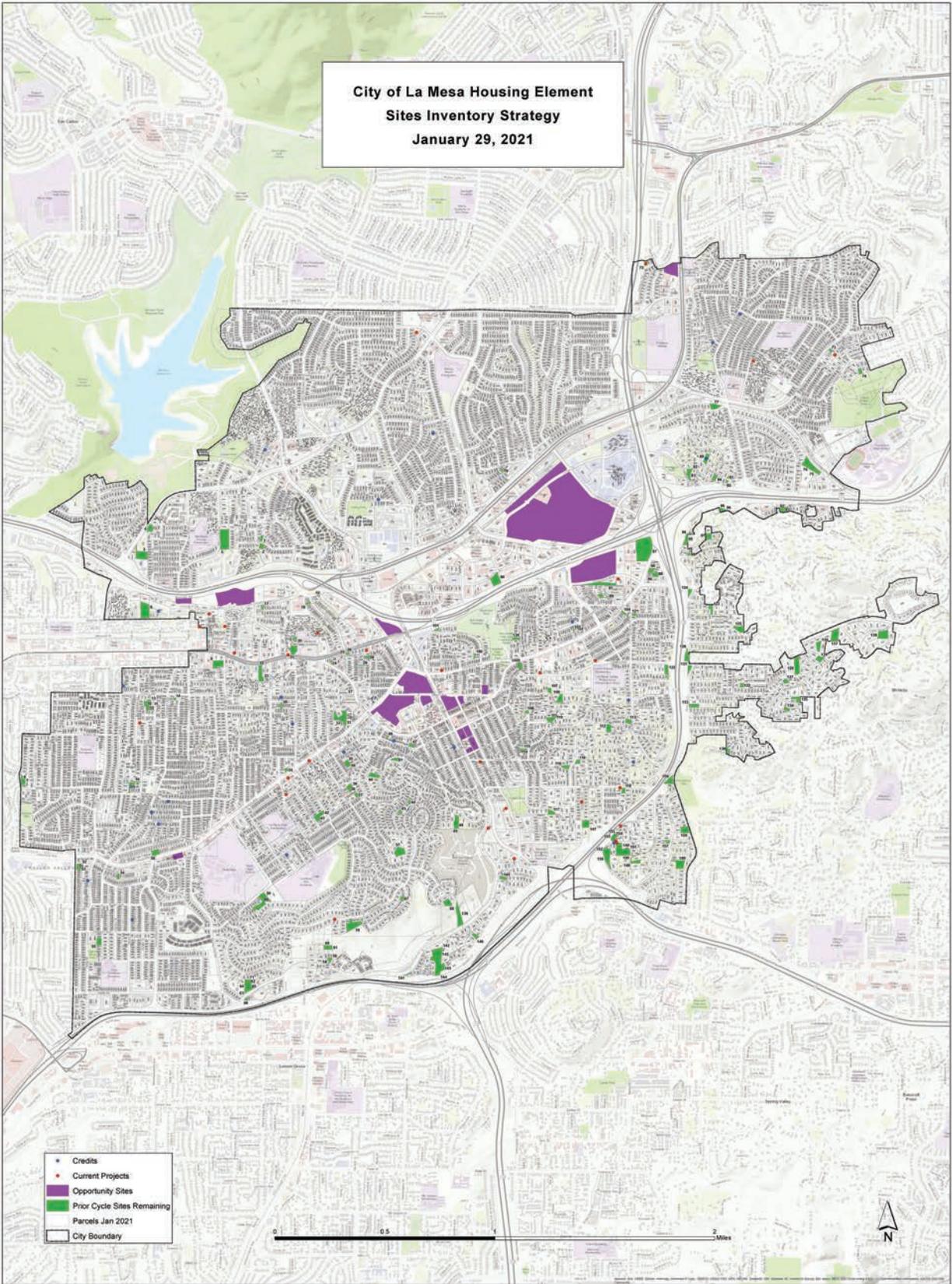


Figure 2  
Opportunity Sites Location Map

designated in the General Plan Mixed Use Urban, Urban Residential, and Suburban Residential. Given the size and density of these sites, potential units on these sites are assumed to be above moderate income units.

**Table 4**  
**Summary of Potential Residential Capacity on Scattered Vacant Sites**

General Plan	Zoning	Maximum Density	Acres	Realistic Potential Housing Units	Affordability Level
Rural Residential	R1E	2 du/ac	3.4	7	Above Moderate
Semi-Rural Residential	R1R	3 du/ac	6.2	18	Above Moderate
Suburban Residential	R1S	4 du/ac	20.2	81	Above Moderate
Urban Residential	R1	10 du/ac	15.0	150	Above Moderate
Restricted Multiple Unit Residential	R2	14 du/ac	0.9	13	Above Moderate
Multiple Unit Residential	R3	23 du/ac	2.4	56	Above Moderate
Mixed Use Urban	various	40 du/ac	1.9	78	Above Moderate
<b>Total</b>			<b>50</b>	<b>403</b>	
<p><i>Note: Realistic Potential Housing Units for residential sites were calculated at 95 percent of maximum allowed development. This estimate is based on existing patterns of development in residential areas and was derived through analysis of those sites as well as expected projects in the City. Realistic Potential Housing Units for mixed use sites (35 du/ac) are based on the mixed-use development history in the City of La Mesa.</i></p> <p><i>In several instances, parcels are included in the Sites Inventory Table (Appendix B) that yield no units based on the size of the site. These are included in the inventory only if they are adjacent to a parcel or parcels that yield at least one unit. This allows for a larger site development area.</i></p> <p><i>Source: City of La Mesa, 2020.</i></p>					

**9. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:**

The City is surrounded by the city of San Diego to the west and north; the city of El Cajon and the unincorporated communities of Mount Helix, Cas Del Oro, and Spring Valley to the east; and Lemon Grove to the south.

**Regional Setting**

The City of La Mesa is located in central San Diego County, approximately 12 miles east of downtown San Diego. Regional motor vehicle access is provided by Interstate 8 and State Routes 94 and 125. Regional transit access is provided by the Metropolitan Transit System light rail Orange and Green lines and five bus routes. There are no public or private airports located within the City; however, La Mesa does fall within the Airport Influence Area for two airports that serve small aircraft: Gillespie Field, located six miles outside the City limits to the northeast; and Montgomery Field, located ten miles outside the City limits to the northwest.

**Planning Area**

The planning area for the City encompasses the corporate city limits, approximately 9 square-miles (5876 acres). The City’s Sphere of Influence is coterminous with the City limits.

**10. Other Public Agencies Whose Approval Is Required:**

The California Department of Housing and Community Development reviews and determines whether the Housing Element Update complies with State of California law. No other approvals by outside public agencies are required.

**11. Have California Native American Tribes Traditionally and Culturally Affiliated with the Project Area Requested Consultation Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080.3.1:**

In accordance with Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52), the City of La Mesa sent correspondence to, Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians, the Mesa Grande Band of Mission Indians and the Barona Band of Mission Indians and no consultation was requested. In accordance with Senate Bill 18, sixteen Native American Tribes were sent correspondence for consultation. One tribe responded, San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians, which determined that the project is not within the boundaries of the recognized San Pasqual Indian Reservation. No further consultation was conducted.

**B. ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED**

The environmental factors that would be potentially affected by this project and are mitigated to a less than significant impact are indicated below.

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics                | <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture and Forestry Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources      | <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Energy                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Geology/Soils             | <input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Gas Emissions           | <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards & Hazardous Materials      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hydrology/Water Quality   | <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use/Planning                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Noise                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Population/Housing                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation                | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation/Traffic             | <input type="checkbox"/> Tribal Cultural Resources          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities/Service Systems | <input type="checkbox"/> Wildfire                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance |

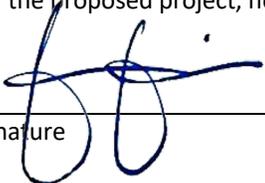
**C. DETERMINATION**

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 of the incorporated mitigation measures and 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  
**Kerry Kusiak**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

**June 21, 2021**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date  
**Director of Community Development**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

**D. 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 cited. 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.
- 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, and construction as well as operational impacts.
- 3) A “Less Than Significant Impact” applies when the proposed project would not result in a substantial and adverse change in the environment. This impact level does not require mitigation measures.
- 4) “Potentially Significant Impact” is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect is significant. If there are one or more “Potentially Significant Impact” entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.
- 5) “Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated” applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from “Potentially Significant Impact” to a “Less Than Significant Impact.” The initial study must describe the mitigation measures and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>1. AESTHETICS.</b> Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099 would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcrops, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Environmental Setting**

**Scenic Vistas and Scenic Resources**

The City of La Mesa is 9.2 square-miles and is located 14 miles inland from the Pacific Ocean within an ecological transition zone between the coast and foothills. This part of western San Diego County is dominated by a series of geologic features known as marine terraces. Canyons such as those containing Alvarado Creek and Chollas Creek cut through these terraces and define the community’s subregions. The terraced topography results in significant topographical variation and provides panoramic views of much of the City from a variety of locations. Major transportation corridors and natural scenic resources, such as Mt. Helix and Mt. Nebo further define the geography of the City and surrounding areas.

There is one scenic highway corridor in La Mesa, a 2-mile-long section of State Route (SR) 125 from SR 94 to Interstate (I) 8 that passes through residential and commercial areas, with Mt. Helix as the focal point. This area is included within the Scenic Preservation Overlay Zone. The Scenic Preservation Overlay Zone contains regulations for the recognized scenic areas in the City.

The City’s Urban Design Program identifies specific vistas and panoramic views that contribute to the community’s image. These scenic resources include a vista of Lake Murray from Jackson Drive in the northwest portion of the City, views along La Mesa Boulevard in the downtown village, and views along Fletcher Parkway. Panoramic views from SR 125 near Fletcher Parkway and from Mt. Helix provide an overall scenic image of a large portion of the City; this area is identified and designated as a Scenic Preservation Overlay Zone. In addition, the City has identified five visually sensitive areas where all new development is required to be compatible with the site’s physical characteristics and the surrounding environment.

### **Visual Character**

Much of La Mesa is urbanized, with residential neighborhoods, commercial shopping centers, a pedestrian-oriented downtown village, mixed-use commercial corridors, and a regional medical campus. A wide variety of built and natural features contribute to the character of La Mesa. Parks and open space areas are located throughout the community, including Harry Griffin Park and MacArthur Park. The southern and eastern portions of the City are characterized by suburban residential development on larger lots, while the northern and western portions of the City are characterized by a denser pattern of urban single-family and multiple-family housing. The City is divided by SR 125 (north/south) and I 8 (east/west). La Mesa is known as the “Jewel of the Hills” with its tree-lined neighborhoods, downtown village, and walkable streets.

### **Light and Glare**

Much of the planning area is urbanized, with existing sources of light and glare, such as street lights and parking lights, walkway lights, lighted recreational facilities, and light emitted from residential and nonresidential buildings. While the City’s single-family residential neighborhoods are generally not subject to substantial night lighting, most commercial areas, such as Grossmont Specific Plan area do experience greater lighting effects.

### **Regulatory Setting**

Regulations exist at state and local levels that guide development and influence the physical form and aesthetic character of the City and include:

- California Scenic Highway Program
- La Mesa Municipal Code and Zoning ordinance
- La Mesa Scenic Preservation Overlay Zone
- La Mesa Sign Ordinance
- Urban Design Program
- Specific Plans:
  - Downtown Village Specific Plan
  - Grossmont Specific Plan Overlay Zone
- Parks Master Plan

### **Checklist Discussion**

#### **a) *No Impact.***

As discussed above, panoramic views from SR 125 near Fletcher Parkway and from Mt. Helix provide an overall scenic image of a large portion of the City; this area is identified and designated as a Scenic Preservation Overlay Zone. In addition, the City has identified five visually sensitive areas where all new development is required to be compatible with the site’s physical characteristics and the surrounding environment. The potential housing sites all lie within fully urbanized areas of La Mesa. Several opportunity sites are specifically identified for development opportunities, including Alvarado Specific Plan area, Grossmont Center, and various sites in Commercial zoning districts that allow for residential development. The remaining share of the residential housing need would be addressed through scattered vacant and nonvacant sites that are suitable and appropriately zoned for development of more intense residential uses. Most of the identified development sites are located along major transportation corridors and none are located within visually sensitive areas. Also, the project does not propose any changes to the General Plan Land Use Element. Therefore, the Housing Element 2021-2029 Update would have **no impact** on scenic vistas.

**b) No Impact.**

As identified above, there is one scenic highway corridor in La Mesa, a 2-mile-long section of State Route (SR) 125 from SR 94 to Interstate (I) 8 that passes through residential and commercial areas, with Mt. Helix as the focal point. This area is included within the Scenic Preservation Overlay Zone. The Scenic Preservation Overlay Zone contains regulations for the recognized scenic areas in the City. There are no opportunity sites identified along this 2-mile section of SR-125. Therefore, the Housing Element Update would have **no impact** on scenic resources within a state scenic highway.

**c) Less Than Significant Impact.**

The potential housing sites all lie within fully urbanized areas of La Mesa. Several opportunity sites are specifically identified for development opportunities, including Alvarado Specific Plan area, Grossmont Center, and various sites in Commercial zoning districts that allow for residential development. The remaining share of the residential housing need would be addressed through scattered vacant and nonvacant sites that are suitable and appropriately zoned for development of more intense residential uses. Most of the identified development sites are located along major transportation corridors and none are located within visually sensitive areas. Inasmuch as the Housing Element Update could indirectly result in residential development and improvement, the project could result in increased density in residential and mixed-use areas of the City; however, given that the City is largely built-out and future development would be subject to the City's development standards, such increased density is anticipated to be consistent with existing development patterns. In addition, the City's Urban Design Program will improve the visual character and quality of many future residential developments when actual projects are proposed. Therefore, the Housing Element 2021-2029 Update would have **no impact** on non-urbanized areas and urbanized areas of the City.

**d) Less Than Significant Impact.**

Development would occur in areas that are currently urbanized and commonly experience the impacts of existing light. Light and glare impacts of future development would increase daytime glare or nighttime illumination in the City. Future development in the City would be required to be designed and constructed in accordance with Section 24.06.030 of the La Mesa Zoning Code, which requires that lighting be designed, installed, and maintained to project light primarily on the owner's property, impacts related to light and glare from new development as a result of the Housing Element Update would be avoided. Therefore, the Housing Element 2021-2029 Update would result in a **less than significant impact** on light and glare.

**Mitigation Measures**

None required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>2. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES.</b> 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 nonagricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forestland (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))?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in the loss of forestland or conversion of forestland to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to nonagricultural use or conversion of forestland to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Environmental Setting**

While the City has no agricultural zones, agricultural uses are permitted as accessory uses in R1E, R1R, R1S, and R1 zones. The City of La Mesa consists of urbanized and suburban neighborhoods designated primarily for residential and commercial uses. There are no designated farmland areas, Williamson act lands, or sites designated for agricultural use nor are there nearby agricultural sites that would be affected by development within La Mesa. There are no forest land or timber resources within the City. Furthermore, according to the 2014-2028 American Community Survey, only 0.5 percent (131 residents) of La Mesa’s residents were employed in agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, or mining occupations.

**Checklist Discussion**

**a), b), c), d), e) No Impact.**

As identified, the City has no agricultural zones and there are no designated farmland areas, Williamson act lands or sites designated for agricultural use. The project is the adoption of the City of La Mesa Housing Element 2021-2029 Update. The project will not result in the approval of any physical improvements and does not propose any changes to the General Plan Land Use Element, to a base designation, or to any physical development standards. The Housing Element Update includes an inventory of sites that are adequate to accommodate the City’s assigned share of regional housing need, but it does not propose development projects. Inasmuch as the Housing Element Update could indirectly result in residential development and improvement, the project could result in increased density in residential and mixed-use

areas of the City. Such areas do not contain agricultural resources and as previously stated, there are no designated farmland areas, Williamson act lands, or sites designated for agricultural use within or proximate to the City. Therefore, the project will have **no impact** on agricultural resources.

**Mitigation Measures**

None required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>3. AIR QUALITY.</b> Would the project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Environmental Setting**

Both the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and the California Air Resources Board (CARB) have established ambient air quality standards for common pollutants. Ambient air quality standards are set to protect public health and are levels of pollutants which represent safe levels that avoid specific adverse health effects. The ambient air quality standards cover what are called “criteria” pollutants because the health and other effects of each pollutant are described in criteria documents. The major criteria pollutants are ozone, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, and particulate matter. Both federal and state ambient air quality standards apply, as established by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and state air quality agencies (CALEPA for California). California air quality standards are generally more stringent than federal standards.

The City of La Mesa is located in the San Diego Air Basin (SDAB). In San Diego County, the San Diego Air Pollution Control District (SDAPCD) is the agency responsible for protecting the public health and welfare through the administration of federal and state air quality laws and policies. This regional agency regulates air quality through its permit authority over most types of stationary emission sources and through its planning and review process.

**Attainment Designations**

Specific geographic areas that do not meet federal air quality standards (National Ambient Air Quality Standards [NAASQS]) or state air quality standards (California Ambient Air Quality Standards [CAAQS]) for a particular air quality pollutant are considered to be “nonattainment” areas for the pollutant. The current federal and state attainment status for the SDAB is provided in **Table 5, Federal and State Air Quality Designations in the San Diego Air Basin.**

**Table 5  
Federal and State Air Quality Designations in the San Diego Air Basin**

Criteria Pollutant	Federal Designation	State Designation
Ozone (O <sub>3</sub> ) (8-hour)	Nonattainment	Nonattainment
Ozone (O <sub>3</sub> ) (1-hour)	Attainment <sup>1</sup>	Nonattainment
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	Attainment	Attainment
Respirable Particulate Matter (PM <sub>10</sub> )	Unclassifiable <sup>2</sup>	Nonattainment
Fine Particulate Matter (PM <sub>2.5</sub> )	Attainment	Nonattainment

**Table 5  
Federal and State Air Quality Designations in the San Diego Air Basin**

Criteria Pollutant	Federal Designation	State Designation
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO <sub>2</sub> )	Attainment	Attainment
Sulfur Dioxide (SO <sub>2</sub> )	Attainment	Attainment
Lead	Attainment	Attainment
Sulfates	No Standard	Attainment
Hydrogen Sulfide	No Standard	Unclassified
Visibility	No Standard	Unclassified
<p>1 The federal 1-hour standard was in effect from 1979 through June 15, 2005. The revoked standard is referenced here because it was employed for such a long period and because this benchmark is addressed in State Implementation Plans.</p> <p>2 At the time of designation, if the available data does not support a designation of attainment or nonattainment, the area is designated as unclassifiable.</p> <p>Source: San Diego Air Pollution Control District, Attainment Status Website <a href="https://www.sdapcd.org/content/sdc/apcd/en/air-quality-planning/attainment-status.html">https://www.sdapcd.org/content/sdc/apcd/en/air-quality-planning/attainment-status.html</a>, accessed January 25, 2021.</p>		

**Monitored Air Quality**

Included in the SDAPCD’s tasks are the monitoring of air pollution, which it does through operation of a network of ambient air monitoring stations throughout the San Diego region. The purpose of the monitoring stations is to measure ambient concentrations of criteria air pollutants and determine whether the ambient air quality meets state and federal standards, pursuant to the CAAQS and the NAAQS. The nearest ambient monitoring station to the project site is the El Cajon-Lexington Elementary School monitoring station, located at 533 First Street in El Cajon. Air quality data collected at the El Cajon-Lexington Elementary School monitoring station for the years 2017 through 2019 (the most recent year available) are shown in **Table 6, Air Quality Monitoring Data**.

**Table 6  
Air Quality Monitoring Data**

Pollutant Standards	2017	2018	2019
<b>Ozone (O<sub>3</sub>)</b>			
Maximum concentration 1-hour period (ppm)	0.96	0.087	0.094
Maximum concentration 8-hour period (ppm)	0.081	0.079	0.074
Days above 1-hour state standard (>0.09 ppm)	1	0	0
Days above 8-hour state/federal standard (>0.070 ppm)	9	2	2
<b>Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>)</b>			
Maximum concentration 1-hour period (ppm)	45.0	45.0	39.0
Days above state 1-hour standard (0.18 ppm)	0	0	0
Days above federal 1-hour standard (0.100 ppm)	0	0	0
Annual average (ppm)	10	8	8
Exceed annual federal standard (0.053 ppm)	No	No	No
Exceed annual state standard (0.030 ppm)	No	No	No
<b>Suspended Particulates (PM<sub>10</sub>)</b>			
Maximum 24-hour concentration (µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	50.0	43.0	38.7
Measured Days above 24-hour state standard (>50 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	0	0	0
Measured Days above 24-hour federal standard (>150 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	0	0	0
Annual average (µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	23.0	23.0	*
Exceed State annual standard (20 µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	Yes	Yes	*
<b>Suspended Particulates (PM<sub>2.5</sub>)</b>			

**Table 6**  
**Air Quality Monitoring Data**

<b>Pollutant Standards</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>
Maximum 24-hour concentration ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ )	31.8	36.2	23.8
Days above 24-hour federal standard ( $>35 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ )	0	1	0
Annual average ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ )	9.5	9.6	8.5
Exceed state and federal annual standard ( $12 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ )	No	No	No
ppm = parts per million; $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ = micrograms per cubic meter; * = insufficient data. Source: California Air Resources Board, iADAM: Air Quality Data Statistics Website, 2020.			

The SDAPCD and San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) are responsible for developing and implementing the clean air plan for the attainment and maintenance of the CAAQS and the NAAQS in the SDAB. The SDAPCD prepared the San Diego County Regional Air Quality Strategy (RAQS), which was initially adopted in 1991, and is updated on an approximate triennial basis. The most recent version of the RAQS was adopted by the SDAPCD in December 2016 (SDAPCD 2016). The RAQS relies on information from the California Air Resources Board (CARB) and San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), including mobile and area source emissions, as well as information regarding projected growth in San Diego County. This information is used to project future emissions and then determine the strategies necessary for the reduction of emissions through regulatory controls. The CARB mobile source emissions projections and the SANDAG growth projections are based on population and vehicle use trends and land use plans developed by the cities and the county as part of the development of the county's and cities' general plans. As such, projects that propose development consistent with the growth anticipated by a general plan would be consistent with the RAQS.

### **Sensitive Receptors**

CARB and the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) have identified the following groups of individuals as the most likely to be affected by air pollution: the elderly over 65, children under 14, infants (including in utero in the third trimester of pregnancy), and persons with cardiovascular and chronic respiratory diseases such as asthma, emphysema, and bronchitis. Some land uses are considered more sensitive to air pollution than others due to the types of population groups or activities involved and are referred to as sensitive receptors. Examples of these sensitive receptors are residences, schools, hospitals, and daycare centers.

### **Regulatory Setting**

Regulations exist at federal, state, and local levels with regard to air quality and include:

- Federal Clean Air Act
- California Clean Air Act
- State Implementation Plan
- California Energy Code
- Regional Air Quality Strategy
- San Diego Air Pollution Control District Rules and Regulations:
  - a) Rule 50 (Visible Emissions)
  - b) Rule 51 (Nuisance)
  - c) Rule 55 (Fugitive Dust Control)
  - d) Rule 67.0.1 (Architectural Coatings)

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**Checklist Discussion****a) *No Impact.***

If a project is inconsistent with the growth assumptions of the regional air quality attainment plans, then it would conflict with, or obstruct the implementation of such plans. Projects that result in an increase in population growth, as identified in local general plans and/or community plans, would be considered inconsistent with the air quality attainment plan (AQAP). The General Plan Housing Element is a policy document that addresses the housing need in the City; no actual development or rezoning/redesignation of land is proposed as part of the Housing Element Update. Because the Housing Element Update does not change the land use designation or development assumptions of the General Plan, the proposed project remains consistent with growth projects used by the SDAPCD for its air quality attainment plan. Therefore, the project would be consistent at a sub-regional level with the RAQS and would not obstruct implementation of the RAQS. Therefore, the project will have **no impact** on implementation of the applicable air quality plan.

**b), c) *Less Than Significant Impact.*****Short-Term (Construction) Emissions**

Future development consistent with the General Plan could result in an increase in criteria pollutants during construction activities, such as excavation and grading, exhaust emissions of construction equipment, and the use of typical construction materials such as asphalt and other construction materials that tend to volatilize into the atmosphere. Due to the negligible amount and short duration of these activities, all are considered to be less than significant, except the potential impacts from construction activities generating dust. Construction activities such as excavation and grading operations and construction vehicles driving over and wind blowing over exposed earth generate fugitive dust that will affect local and regional air quality. The effects of these dust-generating activities will be increased dust fall and locally elevated levels of PM<sub>10</sub> downwind of construction activity. Construction dust also has the potential for creating a nuisance at nearby properties. However, any future project resulting from adoption and implementation of the Housing Element will be required to comply with SDAPCD's and La Mesa's regulations, which include implementation of dust control measures.

**Long-Term (Operational) Emissions**

Future residential development would potentially increase population in the City and add sensitive receptors that could be exposed to pollutant concentrations. The potential operational air quality impacts of future residential projects largely will be associated with motor vehicle trips generated by the proposed developments. Since most of the anticipated development sites will result in the replacement of existing development with new housing and mixed-use projects, the increase in the number of vehicle trips is not expected to be significant. The majority of the expected development sites are located along major transportation corridors with existing transit stops. This placement of development sites is intended to encourage transit use and reduce auto dependency. Any minor increase in vehicle trips generated will only marginally increase daily emissions of ozone precursors and particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>) and will likely be below SDAPCD established thresholds for consideration of a significant impact.

**Conclusion**

The project is the adoption of the City of La Mesa Housing Element 2021-2029 Update. Any individual development project will be subject to environmental review pursuant to CEQA and the City's local procedures to determine if any long-term air quality impacts will occur from the operation of a specific new development. As such, the project will not result in a cumulatively net increase of any criteria pollutant in which the project region is in nonattainment under the federal and state ambient air quality standard. Therefore, the project will have a **less than significant impact** in the region's nonattainment criteria pollutants and exposure to sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations.

**d) *Less Than Significant Impact.***

**Short-Term (Construction) Emissions**

Future residential development construction activities could result in minor amounts of odor compounds associated with diesel heavy equipment exhaust and architectural coatings. These compounds would be emitted in various amounts at various locations during construction and potentially effect nearby sensitive receptors. However, odors are highest near the source and would quickly dissipate away from the source. Such odors are temporary and generally occur at magnitudes that would not affect a substantial number of people. Therefore, impacts related to construction-generated odors would be **less than significant**.

**Long-Term (Operational) Emissions**

Typical long-term operational characteristics of residential development are not associated with the creation of odors nor anticipated to generate odors affecting a substantial number of people. Implementation of the Housing Element 2021-2029 Update would result in possible construction of additional residential units. The Housing Element 2021-2029 Update would not create uses that, in the long-term operation, would be typically associated with the creation of such odors, nor are they anticipated to generate odors affecting a substantial number of people. Therefore, impacts related to odors generated from residential operations as a result of the Housing Element 2021-2029 Update would be **less than significant**.

**Mitigation Measures**

None required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>4. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES.</b> 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 Wildlife or US Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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 Wildlife or US Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands a (including, but not limited to marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Environmental Setting**

The majority of land within the City is developed. Current and historic land use patterns within La Mesa have generally followed the topographic profile of the area. This development pattern has resulted in a built-up urban core concentrated in the lower-lying areas of the City, reserving steep slopes for post-World-War-II larger-lot suburban housing tracts and natural areas. La Mesa is similar to other areas of San Diego County, where urbanization has fragmented native habitats, compromising the ability to support viable populations of numerous species. Remaining native habitat is primarily limited to isolated vegetation communities in slope areas, and small riparian and wetland habitats along Alvarado Creek, Chollas Creek, and Spring Valley Creek.

Significant disturbance to existing biological resources has occurred due to encroachment, accumulation of litter, runoff, and exposure to human activity and domestic pets. Adverse spillover effects from surrounding developments also include nonnative and exotic ornamental plant species. Vehicular traffic, noise, and lighting from surrounding development disturb and degrade existing habitat areas and limit their use by most wildlife species. Due to the high degree of urbanization in the City limits, extensive high-quality habitat opportunities for wildlife species do not exist. Observed overall wildlife activity is low.

**Regulatory Setting**

Regulations exist at federal, state, and local levels with regard to biological resources and include:

- Federal Endangered Species Act
- Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act
- Federal Clean Water Act
- California Endangered Species Act
- California Fish and Game Code
- Natural Community Conservation Planning Act
- Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act
- La Mesa General Plan
- La Mesa Subarea Habitat Conservation Plan
- La Mesa Tree Policy Manual (Ordinance No. 97-2686)

**Checklist Discussion**

**a), b), c), d)    *No Impact.***

The project is the adoption of the City of La Mesa Housing Element 2021-2029 Update. The General Plan Housing Element is a policy document that addresses the housing need in the City; no actual development or rezoning/redesignation of land is proposed as part of the Housing Element Update. The project will not result in the approval of any physical improvements and does not propose any changes to the General Plan Land Use Element, to a base designation, or to any physical development standards. Therefore, no direct physical effects to biological resources will occur. Inasmuch as the Housing Element Update could indirectly result in residential development and improvement, the project could result in increased density in residential and mixed-use areas of the City. However, the City is largely built-out and the City's General Plan Land Use Element and zoning code focuses most of the residential growth into urbanized portions of the City. The project will not result in any changes in the land use pattern of the City.

The areas of the City identified for potential development sites are located within fully developed, urban settings surrounded by office, commercial, and residential land uses that have very little native plant or animal life and limited cover and foraging habitat. No riparian habitat, wetlands, wildlife corridors or nurseries exist at these sites. Because the areas identified as potential development sites have already been disturbed through urban development, no significant changes are anticipated in the diversity or number of species of plants or animals, or in the deterioration of existing wildlife habitat. In addition, the City's existing development review process requires review for potential impacts to biological resources in accordance with CEQA. If development activities would result in the loss of native vegetation, sensitive plant species, or sensitive wildlife species, project-level mitigation would be required. Accordingly, adoption of the Housing Element 2021-2029 Update would have **no impact** on biological resources, including candidate, sensitive, or special-status species; riparian habitat or other sensitive natural

community; federally protected wetlands a (including, but not limited to marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.); or native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species, corridors, or nurseries.

**e) *Less Than Significant Impact.***

The project is the adoption of the City of La Mesa Housing Element 2021-2029 Update. The General Plan Housing Element is a policy document that addresses the housing need in the City; no actual development or rezoning/redesignation of land is proposed as part of the Housing Element Update. The project will not result in the approval of any physical improvements. Any trees on potential development sites will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Any future project that will require removal will be subject to the removal and replacement requirements of the City's Tree Policy Manual (Ordinance No. 97-2686). Therefore, the project would not conflict with tree preservation policies or ordinances and impacts would be **less than significant**.

**f) *No Impact.***

The General Plan Housing Element is a policy document that addresses the housing need in the City; no actual development or rezoning/redesignation of land is proposed as part of the Housing Element Update. As discussed above, the project will not result in the approval of any physical improvements and does not propose any changes to the General Plan Land Use Element, to a base designation, or to any physical development standards and will not result in any changes in the land use pattern of the City. The areas of the City identified for potential development sites are located within fully developed, urban settings surrounded by office, commercial, and residential land uses that have very little native plant or animal life and limited cover and foraging habitat and the project would not significantly impact biological resources. Therefore, the project would not conflict with the provisions of an adopted habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan and **no impacts** would occur.

**Mitigation Measures**

None required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>5. CULTURAL RESOURCES.</b> Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Environmental Setting**

La Mesa is located within the traditional territory of the Kumeyaay, also known as Ipai, Tipai, or Diegueño, who occupied the southern region of San Diego County. The Kumeyaay lived in semi- sedentary, politically autonomous villages or rancherias. Their settlement system typically consisted of two or more seasonal villages surrounded by temporary camps. The most basic social and economic unit was the patrilocal extended family. The Kumeyaay were largely focused on hunting and gathering, specifically of resources such as small game, acorns, grass seeds, and other plant resources. Items typically associated with the Kumeyaay include a shoulder-height bow for hunting, mortars and pestles, and flaked stone tools such as scrapers, choppers, flake-based cutting tools, and biface knives. Additionally, the Kumeyaay made fine baskets using either coiled or twined construction, and both brown utility and decorated pottery using the paddle-and-anvil technique.

There are three general eras in California history: the Spanish, Mexican, and American periods. The Spanish Period lasted from 1769 to 1821 and was characterized by European exploration and settlement. As a result of the European settlement, Native American culture in the coastal strip of California rapidly deteriorated. The Spanish Period was followed by the Mexican Period, which began when Mexico declared its independence from Spain in 1821. The Mexican Period is noted for secularizing the previously religious mission system and allowing for the vast expansion of the rancho system, which caused the southern California economy to become largely based on cattle ranching. American governance began in 1848, when Mexico signed the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, ceding California to the United States at the conclusion of the Mexican–American War, which marked the start of the American Period. A great influx of settlers to California and the San Diego region occurred during the American Period, resulting from several factors, including the discovery of gold in California, the end of the Civil War, the availability of free land through passage of the Homestead Act, and later, the importance of San Diego County as an agricultural area supported by roads, irrigation systems, and connecting railways. The increase in American and European populations quickly overwhelmed many of the Spanish and Mexican cultural traditions, and greatly increased the rate of population decline among Native American communities.

La Mesa was originally part of the Rancho de la Mission San Diego de Alcalá, consisting of 58,875 acres and extending from the Pueblo of San Diego to El Cajon in the east, Clairemont Mesa in the north, and National City in the south. The discovery of gold in the eastern mountains (near what is now Julian), in

addition to the construction of a flume to bring water down from the Cuyamaca Mountains, helped to foster the growth of La Mesa and caused a large boost to development in the area. La Mesa incorporated in 1912, and in the early 1900s, the economy of La Mesa expanded to include agriculture and citrus orchards with packing warehouses, health resorts, and a film production company named the American Film Manufacturing Company. At this time, University Avenue was the main road for traveling east and west between San Diego and La Mesa, and development was concentrated adjacent to it. During World War I, El Cajon Boulevard was constructed, and development shifted north along the El Cajon Boulevard corridor. As with the entire San Diego region, development in La Mesa slowed during the Great Depression but resurged during World War II and continued into the 1950s. To support the growing population, residential tracts, schools, and shopping centers were constructed. Transportation expanded in the 1950s and 1960s as well, including the construction of SR 94, SR 125, Fletcher Parkway, and the expansion of US Highway 80. The Grossmont shopping center opened in 1961, which initially drew much business away from the downtown area, but this trend has reversed in subsequent years as new businesses have moved into the old downtown area.

The La Mesa Historic Resources Inventory was adopted in 1983 and is updated periodically. The inventory is an accounting of some of the historic-era properties within La Mesa's municipal boundaries, and includes information on the appearance, condition, ownership, and occupancy history for each documented property, and additionally includes significance and eligibility conclusions for the documented properties. More than 300 structures and more than 50 nonstructural sites and public facilities have been identified as historical resources, most of which are located within a core area of downtown La Mesa covered by the Downtown Historic District. In addition, the inventory identified four archaeological sites within the City's boundaries.

### **Regulatory Setting**

Regulations exist at federal, state, and local levels with regard to cultural resources and include:

- National Historic Preservation
- National Register of Historic Places
- Federal Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act
- California Register of Historic Resources
- CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5
- California Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act
- California Public Resources Code Section 5097
- Assembly Bill 52
- Senate Bill 18
- La Mesa General Plan
- La Mesa Historic Preservation Ordinance

### **Checklist Discussion**

The project is the adoption of the City of La Mesa Housing Element 2021-2029 Update. The project will not result in the approval of any physical improvements and does not propose any changes to the General Plan Land Use Element, to a base designation, or to any physical development standards. Therefore, no direct physical effects to cultural resources will occur. Potential indirect impacts are discussed below.

**a) *Less Than Significant Impact.***

The La Mesa Historic Resources Inventory includes more than 300 structures and more than 50 nonstructural sites and public facilities have been identified as historical resources, most of which are located with a core area of downtown La Mesa covered by the Downtown Historic District. The Housing Element is a general Plan policy document that addresses housing need in the City. The Housing Element Update will not result in the approval of any physical improvements and does not propose any changes to the General Plan Land Use Element, to a base designation, or to any physical development standards. The Housing Element does not propose changes to the City's adopted housing-related policies and programs including those set forth in the General Pan EIR. The Housing Element also provides for the continuation of the preexisting policies and programs that were adopted in the 2013-2021 Housing Element. Moreover, the new policies and programs that are proposed would not have any potential to affect the environment. Therefore, adopting the Housing Element of 20121-2029 would not create new impacts or increase the significance of the impacts identified in the General Plan EIR (pages 4.4-5 and 4.4-6).

Implementation of the programs contained in the Housing Element could result in new housing that addresses the City's RHNA allocation and the City's policies supporting a range of housing types including affordable housing. Inasmuch as the Housing Element Update could indirectly result in residential development and improvement, such development could result in changes that affect historic structures or the historic character of neighborhoods or districts. However, as analyzed in the General Plan EIR (pages 4.4-5 and 4.4-6), the Historic Preservation Element contains specific policies, programs, and incentives/benefits that encourage property owners to retain, preserve, rehabilitate, and reuse La Mesa's historic building stock. The General Plan EIR included mitigation (CR-1) to reduce impacts to historical resources to less than significant level by requiring feasible project-level mitigation measures prior to construction of specific development projects that would disturb a historic structure listed or eligible in the National Historic Register of Historic Places (NRHP), California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR) or the inventory of Historic Resources. New housing projects occurring in the City would be required to adhere to this General Plan EIR mitigation requirement addressing and protecting historic resources. Therefore, the Housing Element would result in a **less than significant impact** on historic resources.

**b), c) *Less than Significant Impact.***

As previously stated, the General Plan Housing Element is a policy document that addresses housing need in the City; no actual development or rezoning/redesignation of land is proposed as part of the Housing Element. Therefore, its adoption would not, in itself, uncover archaeological resources or human remains.

Additionally, the Housing Element does not propose changes to the City's adopted housing-related policies and programs including those set forth in the General Pan EIR. The Housing Element also provides for the continuation of the preexisting policies and programs that were adopted in the 2013-2021 Housing Element. Moreover, the new policies and programs that are proposed would not have any potential to affect the environment. Therefore, adopting the Housing Element of 20121-2029 would not create new impacts or increase the significance of the impacts identified in the General Plan EIR (pages 4.4-6 and 4.4-7).

The Housing Element Update includes an inventory of sites that are adequate to accommodate the City's assigned share of regional housing need, but it does not propose development projects. As discussed in the General Plan EIR (page 4.4-6 and 4.4-7), there is the possibility that archaeological resources and human

remains could be found in the subsurface of the City and be discovered during earthwork activities. The extent and condition of such subsurface resources would be dependent upon the amount of intrusive ground disturbing activities required for the construction of existing buildings and associated infrastructure. However, new development projects would be subject to all applicable federal, state, regional and local policies and regulations related to the protection of important archaeological resources and buried human remains. The City and all development projects are required to comply with California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 related to the discovery of unknown human remains, which requires that, in the event of discovery or recognition of any human remains in any location other than a dedicated cemetery, there will be no further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlay adjacent remains until such time as the County Coroner has examined the remains. In addition, California Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 5097.98, as amended by Assembly Bill 2641, provides procedures in the event human remains of Native American origin are discovered during project implementation.

In addition, the General Plan EIR included two mitigation measures (CR-2 and CR-3) to reduce impacts associated with archaeological resources and human remains. These measures require monitoring of grading and ground disturbing operations on sites and recovery programs be prepared for discovered resources. Therefore, impacts associated with implementation of the Housing Element Update **would be less than significant** with adherence to the applicable federal, state, regional and local policies and the General Plan EIR mitigation measures.

**Mitigation Measures**

None required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>6. ENERGY.</b> Would the project:				
a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Environmental Setting**

**Electricity**

The Project Site is located within San Diego Gas and Electric’s (SDG&E) service area. SDG&E serves approximately 3.6 million people within a service area of approximately 4,100 square miles. SDG&E produces and purchases its energy from a mix of conventional and renewable generating sources. The current sources procured by SDG&E include biomass/biowaste, solar, and wind. This represents the available renewable sources of energy that would meet the Project’s energy demand. Approximately 43 percent of SDG&E’s 2018 electricity procurement was from renewable sources, which is greater than the 31 percent statewide percentage of electricity purchases from renewable sources during the same time period.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, this percentage exceeds the 33 percent renewable sources that SDG&E was required to achieve by 2020 under the Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS) Enforcement Program. In addition, SDG&E delivered approximately 45 percent renewable resources to its customers in 2019, putting them within reach of the goal of the RPS Enforcement Program to use at least 50 percent of the state’s energy from renewables by 2030.<sup>3</sup>

**Natural Gas**

Natural gas is provided to the Project Site by SDG&E. The purchasing and transmission of natural gas for SDG&E customers is managed by the Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas). SoCalGas is the principal distributor of natural gas in Southern California, serving residential, commercial, and industrial markets. SoCalGas serves approximately 21.6 million customers in more than 500 communities encompassing approximately 20,000 square miles throughout Central and Southern California, from the City of Visalia to the Mexican border.<sup>4</sup> SoCalGas receives gas supplies from several sedimentary basins in the western United States and Canada, including supply basins located in New Mexico (San Juan Basin), West Texas (Permian Basin), the Rocky Mountains, and Western Canada as well as local California

<sup>2</sup> California Energy Commission, *Utility Annual Power Content Labels for 2018, San Diego Gas & Electric*, [https://www.energy.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2020-01/2018\\_PCL\\_San\\_Diego\\_Gas\\_and\\_Electric.pdf](https://www.energy.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2020-01/2018_PCL_San_Diego_Gas_and_Electric.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> SDG&E, *Our Renewable Energy Goals Website*: <https://www.sdge.com/more-information/environment/about-our-initiatives/renewable-goals>.

<sup>4</sup> SoCalGas, *Company Profile*, [www.socalgas.com/about-us/company-info.shtml](http://www.socalgas.com/about-us/company-info.shtml).

supplies.<sup>5</sup> The traditional, southwestern United States sources of natural gas will continue to supply most of SoCalGas’ natural gas demand. The Rocky Mountain supply is available but is used as an alternative supplementary supply source, and the use of Canadian sources provide only a small share of SoCalGas supplies due to the high cost of transport.<sup>6</sup>

**Transportation**

According to the California Energy Commission (CEC), transportation accounted for nearly 41.1 percent of California’s total energy consumption in 2017.<sup>7</sup> Petroleum-based fuels currently account for 90 percent of California’s transportation energy sources.<sup>8</sup> However, the state is now working on developing flexible strategies to reduce petroleum use. Over the last decade, California has implemented several policies, rules, and regulations to improve vehicle efficiency, increase the development and use of alternative fuels, reduce air pollutants and GHGs from the transportation sector, and reduce VMT. Accordingly, gasoline consumption in California has declined.<sup>9</sup> The CEC predicts that the demand for gasoline will continue to decline over the next ten years, and there will be an increase in the use of alternative fuels.<sup>10</sup> Revisions to EPA fuel economy testing methods in 2006 as well as to manufacturing calculations in 2017 have also resulted in improved fuel efficiency of gasoline- and diesel-powered vehicles, resulting in a reduction of fuel consumption. According to fuel sales data from the California Energy Commission, fuel consumption in San Diego County was approximately 1.33 billion gallons of gasoline and 234 million gallons of diesel fuel in 2019.<sup>11</sup>

**Regulatory Setting**

Regulations exist at federal, state, and regional levels with regard to energy and include:

- Federal Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) Standards
- Federal Energy Independence and Security Act
- California Building Energy Efficiency Standards (Title 24, Part 6)
- California Green Building Standards (Title 24, Part 11)
- California’s Renewable Portfolio Standard
- Senate Bill 350
- Senate Bill 100
- Assembly Bill 32 (California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006) and Senate Bill 32
- Assembly Bill 1493 (Pavley I)
- Executive Order S-1-07 (California Low Carbon Fuel Standard)
- California Air Resources Board:

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<sup>5</sup> *California Gas and Electric Utilities, 2020 California Gas Report, page 111.*

<sup>6</sup> *California Gas and Electric Utilities, 2020 California Gas Report, pages 111 through 112.*

<sup>7</sup> *California Energy Commission, 2019 Integrated Energy Policy Report, adopted February 20, 2020.*

<sup>8</sup> *California Energy Commission, 2016-2017 Investment Plan Update for the Alternative and Renewable Fuel and Vehicle Technology Program, March 2016.*

<sup>9</sup> *State Board of Equalization, Economic Perspective, Discussion of Recent Economic Developments, Publication 329, Volume XIX, Number 1, February 2013.*

<sup>10</sup> *California Energy Commission, 2015 Integrated Energy Policy Report.*

<sup>11</sup> *California Energy Commission, California Retail Fuel Outlet Annual Reporting (CEC-A15) Results, 2019. Diesel is adjusted to account for retail (47%) and non-retail (53%) diesel sales.*

- Advanced Clean Car Regulation
- Airborne Toxic Control Measure to Limit Diesel-Fueled Commercial Motor Vehicle Idling
- Regulation to Reduce Emissions of Diesel Particulate Matter, Oxides of Nitrogen, and other Criteria Pollutants from In-Use Heavy-Duty Diesel-Fueled Vehicles
- Sustainable Communities Strategy (SB 375)
- Assembly Bill 758
- Senate Bill 1389
- California Environmental Quality Act
- San Diego Association of Governments Regional Transportation Plan

### Checklist Discussion

#### a), b) *Less Than Significant Impact.*

The project is the adoption of the City of La Mesa Housing Element 2021-2029 Update. The General Plan Housing Element is a policy document that addresses the housing need in the City; no actual development or rezoning/redesignation of land is proposed as part of the Housing Element Update. The project will not result in the approval of any physical improvements and does not propose any changes to the General Plan Land Use Element, to a base designation, or to any physical development standards. Therefore, no direct consumption of energy will occur. Inasmuch as Housing Element Update could indirectly result in residential development and improvement, such development would be infill development on sites that currently consume energy. In general, infill and redevelopment results in more efficient consumption of electrical and natural gas energy as new structures would be constructed in accordance with current energy regulations, such as Title 24 standards and applicable CALGreen requirements which are stricter than previous, earlier regulations.

The Housing Element does not propose changes to the City's adopted housing-related policies and programs including those set forth in the General Pan EIR. The Housing Element also provides for the continuation of the preexisting policies and programs that were adopted in the 2013-2021 Housing Element. Moreover, the new policies and programs that are proposed would not have any potential to affect the environment. Therefore, adopting the Housing Element of 20121-2029 would not create new impacts or increase the significance of the impacts identified in the General Plan EIR (page4.12-30).

Furthermore, in accordance with state, regional, and local plans and polices, identified development sites are located in close proximity to transit, which reduces vehicle miles traveled resulting in a reduction in the consumption of petroleum-based fuels. Therefore, future development would not be expected to consume energy in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary way. As such, adoption of the Housing Element 2021-2029 Update would not conflict with or obstruct plans for renewable energy or energy efficiency. Accordingly, impacts would be **less than significant**.

### Mitigation Measures

None required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>7. GEOLOGY AND SOILS.</b> Would the project:				
a) Directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning map, issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
iv) Landslides?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Environmental Setting**

**Faulting and Seismicity**

La Mesa is located in San Diego County, a seismically active region subject to moderate to severe ground shaking in the event of a major earthquake along any of the active faults in the region. Numerous major active faults pass through San Diego County, including the San Andreas, San Jacinto, Elsinore, Rose

Canyon, and several offshore faults. However, no fault rupture hazard zones as designated by the Alquist-Priolo Act are located within the City.<sup>12</sup>

### **Soil Conditions**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture soil survey for the San Diego area shows that soils within portions of the City are derived from sedimentary rock of the marine terraces, which are susceptible to erosion and low infiltration rate. Most soils are composed of the Redding Series, a sandy clay soil that is inherently susceptible to slope failure. These soils are characterized as gravelly loam at the surface with a subsoil layer of gravelly clay. Located approximately 2 to 3 feet below the surface is an impervious clay hardpan layer. Because the soils contain a large amount of clay, they expand when wet and contract when dry, making them unstable.

### **Paleontological Resources**

La Mesa is located in areas underlain by very old paralic (deposits laid down on the landward side of a coast in shallow freshwater subject to marine invasions resulting in marine and nonmarine sediment interbedding) deposits of Pleistocene-age (approximately 0.5 to 1 million years old) and three middle Eocene-age formations: the Stadium Conglomerate (approximately 44 million years old), Mission Valley Formation (43 million years old), and Pomerado Conglomerate (37 million years old). A paleontological records search conducted as part of the City's General Plan identified that 34 fossil localities exist within a 1-mile radius of the City. Of the 34, 2 localities occur within the boundaries of the City and consist of fossil impressions from the Mission Valley Formation.

### **Regulatory Setting**

Regulations exist at state and local levels with regard to geology and soils and include:

- California Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act
- California Seismic Hazards Mapping Act
- California Building Code
- La Mesa Building Code
- La Mesa General Plan Safety Element

### **Checklist Discussion**

**a) i), ii), iii), iv), c), d) *No Impact.***

The project is the adoption of the City of La Mesa Housing Element 2021-2029 Update. The General Plan Housing Element is a policy document that addresses the housing need in the City; no actual development or rezoning/redesignation of land is proposed as part of the Housing Element Update. The project will not result in the approval of any physical improvements and does not propose any changes to the General Plan Land Use Element, to a base designation, or to any physical development standards. The Housing Element also provides for the continuation of the preexisting policies and programs that were adopted in the 2013-

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<sup>12</sup> California Geological Survey, *EQ Zapp: California Earthquake Hazards Zone Application, Earthquake Zones of Required Investigation Interactive Map*, <https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/EQZApp/app/>.

2021 Housing Element. Moreover, the new policies and programs that are proposed would not have any potential to affect the environment.

The Housing Element Update includes an inventory of sites that are adequate to accommodate the City's assigned share of regional housing need, but it does not propose development projects. Construction of new housing could have the ability to increase people and structures to the exposure of seismic hazards, including rupture of a fault, strong seismic shaking and seismic-related ground failure. Similarly, future development could result in construction on expansive soil, or be proposed in areas subject to landslide or collapse. The General Plan addresses geology and soils as part of the Safety Element, and the City has adopted the California Building Code that includes provisions for construction in seismically active areas, and on different types of soils.

Inasmuch as Housing Element Update could indirectly result in residential development and improvement, the identified development sites in the Housing Element update are primarily areas which are on level land and have previously been developed with urban uses. In addition, any new construction will be required to meet current building code standards and, depending on location and scope, may be required to prepare geologic reports to address potential geologic impacts associated with the development of the site. The City ensures compliance with development requirements at the time of building permits are issued. The Housing Element 2021-2029 Update does not change the requirement that all existing and future development in the City must comply with the General Plan policies and the California Building Code. While compliance with these policies may alter design by requiring strengthening, over excavation of soil, or other project-specific design elements, the Housing Element 2021-2029 Update will not change these policies. Accordingly, impacts related to geology and soil, such as faulting, groundshaking, and soil instability would be **less than significant**.

**b) *Less than Significant Impact.***

As further detailed below in section 2.10, all future development will be required to implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) for construction activities as specified by the California Storm Water Best Management Practices Handbook and/or the City's Storm Water BMP Manual. The BMPs include measures guiding the management and operation of construction sites to control and minimize the volume of surface runoff. These measures address procedures for controlling erosion and sedimentation and managing all aspects of the construction process. All development projects must comply with all City, state, and federal standards pertaining to stormwater run-off and erosion. As such, impact related to erosion would be **less than significant**.

**e) *No Impact.***

The opportunity sites identified for potential future development supported by the Housing Element are all located within urban sites within the City. As detailed in Section 2.19 below, the City, including the opportunity sites are served by existing sewer infrastructure. No septic tanks would be required and **no impact** would occur.

**f) *Less than Significant Impact.***

The Mission Valley Formation and San Diego Formation in San Diego County are of high paleontological sensitivity. It is possible that any ground disturbance that extends to undisturbed deposits of the Mission Valley Formation and/or the San Diego Formation has the potential to cause significant and adverse

impacts to the paleontological resources preserved within these deposits. Additionally, the City is underlain with deposits of Pomerado Conglomerate and the Stadium Conglomerate, which are high in paleontological sensitivity. Any ground disturbance that extends deep enough to encounter these previously undisturbed deposits has a high potential to cause impacts to paleontological resources preserved in these deposits.

As previously stated, the General Plan Housing Element is a policy document that addresses housing need in the City; no actual development or rezoning/redesignation of land is proposed as part of the Housing Element. Therefore, its adoption would not, in itself, uncover paleontological resources.

Additionally, the Housing Element does not propose changes to the City's adopted housing-related policies and programs including those set forth in the General Pan EIR. The Housing Element also provides for the continuation of the preexisting policies and programs that were adopted in the 2013-2021 Housing Element. Moreover, the new policies and programs that are proposed would not have any potential to affect the environment. Therefore, adopting the Housing Element of 20121-2029 would not create new impacts or increase the significance of the impacts identified in the General Plan EIR (pages 4.10-7).

The Housing Element Update includes an inventory of sites that are adequate to accommodate the City's assigned share of regional housing need, but it does not propose development projects. As discussed in the General Plan EIR (page4.4-6 and 4.4-7), there is the possibility that archaeological resources and human remains could be found in the subsurface of the City and be discovered during earthwork activities. The extent and condition of such subsurface resources would be dependent upon the amount of intrusive ground disturbing activities required for the construction of existing buildings and associated infrastructure. However, new development projects would be subject to all applicable federal, state, regional and local policies and regulations related to the protection of important paleontological resources.

In addition, the General Plan EIR included a mitigation measure (PALEO-1) to reduce impacts associated with paleontological resources . This measure requires assessment monitoring of grading and ground disturbing operations on sites and recovery program be prepared for discovered resources. Therefore, impacts associated with implementation of the Housing Element Update **would be less than significant** with adherence to the applicable federal, state, regional and local policies and the General Plan EIR mitigation measure.

**Mitigation Measures**

None required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>8. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS.</b> Would the project:				
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Environmental Setting**

Global temperatures are moderated by naturally occurring atmospheric gases. These gases are commonly referred to as greenhouse gases (GHGs) because they function like a greenhouse, allowing solar radiation (sunlight) into the Earth’s atmosphere but prevent heat from escaping, thus warming the Earth’s atmosphere. GHGs, as defined under California’s Assembly Bill (AB) 32, include carbon dioxide (CO2), methane (CH4), nitrous oxide (N2O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), and sulfur hexafluoride (SF6). GHGs are emitted by natural processes and human (anthropogenic) activities. Anthropogenic GHG emissions are primarily associated with (1) the burning of fossil fuels during motorized transport, electricity generation, natural gas consumption, industrial activity, manufacturing, and other activities; (2) deforestation; (3) agricultural activity; and (4) solid waste decomposition. GHG emissions from human activities are the most significant driver of observed climate change since the mid-20th century.<sup>13</sup> Global climate change refers to changes in average climatic conditions over the entire Earth, including temperature, wind patterns, precipitation, and storms.

A San Diego regional emissions inventory that was prepared by the University of San Diego School of Law, Energy Policy Initiative Center (EPIC) accounted for the unique characteristics of the region. Its 2014 emissions inventory update for San Diego is presented in **Table 7, San Diego County GHG Emissions by Sector in 2014.**

**Table 7  
San Diego County GHG Emissions by Sector in 2014**

Sector	2014 Emissions MMT CO <sub>2e</sub> (% total) <sup>1</sup>
On-Road Transportation	1.45 (45%)
Electricity	0.76 (24%)
Solid Waste	0.34 (11%)
Natural Gas Consumption	0.29 (9%)
Agriculture	0.16 (5%)
Water	0.13 (4%)

<sup>13</sup> *United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Climate Change 2013: The Physical Science Basis, Working Group I Contribution to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2013.*

**Table 7  
San Diego County GHG Emissions by Sector in 2014**

Sector	2014 Emissions MMT CO <sub>2e</sub> (% total) <sup>1</sup>
Off-Road Transportation	0.04 (1%)
Wastewater	0.02 (1%)
Propane	0.01 (<0.5%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.21</b>
<p><sup>1</sup> Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.                      Source: University of San Diego School of Law, Energy Policy Initiative Center, County of San Diego 2014 Greenhouse Gas Inventory and Projections, 2017.</p>	

Regulatory Setting

Regulations exist at federal, state, regional, and local levels with regard to GHGs and include:

- Federal Clean Air Act
- Light Duty Vehicle Greenhouse Gas Emissions Standards and Corporate Average Fuel Economy Standards
- California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 6
- California Green Building Standards Code
- Executive Order S-3-05
- Assembly Bill 32 – Global Warming Solution Act of 2006
- Senate Bill 375
- Senate Bill 743
- Senate Bill 97
- Executive Order B-30-15
- Senate Bill 32 and Assembly Bill 197
- Assembly Bill 1493 – Vehicular Emissions of Greenhouse Gases
- Assembly Bill 341
- Executive Order S-01-07
- Senate Bill 350
- Senate Bill 100
- California Air Resources Board: Scoping Plan
- SANDAG’s San Diego Forward: The Regional Plan
- City of La Mesa Climate Action Plan

**Checklist Discussion**

**a), b) *Less Than Significant Impact.***

The project is the adoption of the City of La Mesa Housing Element 2021-2029 Update. The General Plan Housing Element is a policy document that addresses the housing need in the City; no actual development or rezoning/redesignation of land is proposed as part of the Housing Element Update. The project will not result in the approval of any physical improvements and does not propose any changes to the General Plan Land Use Element, to a base designation, or to any physical development standards. The Housing Element Update includes an inventory of sites that are adequate to accommodate the City’s assigned share of regional housing need, but it does not propose development projects. Inasmuch as Housing Element Update

could indirectly result in residential development and improvement, the project could result in GHG emissions from construction activities, increased vehicle use, energy consumption, natural gas combustion, water usage (i.e., water transport energy consumption), and other building sources. Such emissions would incrementally contribute to the global GHG levels.

However, the City's Climate Action Plan (CAP) identifies achievable, measurable strategies and actions for the City to implement to reduce emissions to 15 percent below 2010 levels by 2020 and 53 percent below 2010 levels by 2035. These CAP reduction goals were designed to enable the City to meet the 2020 GHG reduction mandates of AB 32, the 2030 GHG reduction mandates SB 32, and to be on-track to meet the 2050 of EO-S-3-05 goal of GHG emissions 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. The CAP contains reduction measures within the City's direct influence to achieve the City's 2020 and 2035 GHG reduction targets in five strategy areas: energy; transportation and land use; water; solid waste; and green infrastructure and are intended to reduce GHG emissions from the business as usual scenario. In accordance with the CAP and state and regional policies, future housing growth will be focused within transit opportunities areas. Thus, through implementation of the CAP, future growth in La Mesa is expected to result in lower emissions than existing residential uses in the City. In addition, adherence to California Green Building Code requirements will result in lower emissions from future residential buildings due to more stringent requirements for energy efficiency.

Additionally, the Housing Element in large measure does not proposed changes to the City's adopted housing-relate policies and programs including those set forth in the General Plan (2013) and the 2013-2021 Housing Element. The Housing Element also provides for the continuation of the preexisting policies and programs that were adopted in the 2013-2021 Housing Element. Moreover, the new policies and programs that are proposed would not have an y potential to affect the environment. Therefore, adopting the 2021-2029 Housing Element Update would not create new impacts or increase the significance of impacts identified in the General Plan EIR (pages 4.5-13 to 4.5-20).

Accordingly, future residential development supported by the Housing Element Update will be required to implement policies and programs that reduce GHG emissions through more energy efficient residential buildings sited proximate to transit opportunities. Therefore, the project will not generate significant greenhouse gas emissions or conflict with greenhouse gas plans and impacts would be **less than significant**.

### **Mitigation Measures**

None required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>9. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS.</b> Would the project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonable foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles or a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Environmental Setting**

**Hazardous Materials**

Hazardous materials encompass a wide range of substances, some of which are naturally occurring and some of which are man-made. Examples of hazardous materials include pesticides, herbicides, petroleum products, metals (e.g., lead, mercury, arsenic), asbestos, and chemical compounds used in manufacturing. Hazardous materials are used for a variety of purposes, including service industries, various small businesses, medical uses, schools, and households. Many chemicals used in household cleaning, construction, dry cleaning, film processing, landscaping, and automotive maintenance and repair are considered hazardous. Small-quantity hazardous waste generators include facilities such as automotive

repair, dry cleaners, and medical offices. Hazardous materials could pose a substantial present or future hazard to human health or the environment when improperly handled, disposed, or otherwise managed.

**Other Hazards**

There are no public or private airports located within the City; however, La Mesa does fall within the Airport Influence Area for two airports that serve small aircraft: Gillespie Field, located six miles outside the City limits to the northeast;<sup>14,15</sup> and Montgomery Field, located ten miles outside the City limits to the northwest.

According to the San Diego County Online Wildfire Hazard Map, the City of La Mesa is not located within a Fire Hazard Severity Zone. Furthermore, the City is a built-out, urban environment that does not contain wildlands and is not located adjacent to any undeveloped wildlands.

**Regulatory Setting**

Regulations exist at federal, state, and local levels with regard to hazards and hazardous materials and include:

- Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act
- Resources Conservation and Recovery Act
- Hazardous Materials Transportation Act
- Federal Aviation Regulations Part 77
- California Code of Regulations
- Hazardous Materials Release Response Plans and inventory Act
- Emergency Response to Hazardous Materials Incidents
- California Government Code Section 65962.5
- Emergency Response to Hazardous Materials Incidents
- San Diego County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan
- San Diego County Regional Airport Authority
- San Diego County Site Assessment and Mitigation Program
- City of La Mesa Fire Code

**Checklist Discussion**

**a), b), c), d)    *Less Than Significant Impact.***

The project is the adoption of the City of La Mesa Housing Element 2021-2029 Update. The Housing Element is a policy-level document that encourages the provision of a range of housing types and affordability levels and does not include specific development proposals or development entitlements. However, future development of residential units constructed consistent with the General Plan could create a significant hazard to future residents through the exposure to the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous

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<sup>14</sup> San Diego County, Airport Land Use Commission, Gillespie Field Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan, December 20, 2010, Exhibit III-5, Compatibility Map Policy: Airport Influence Area.

<sup>15</sup> San Diego County, Airport Land Use Commission, Montgomery Field Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan, December 20, 2010, Exhibit III-5, Compatibility Map Policy: Airport Influence Area.

materials into the environment; through the exposure to reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment; through the exposure of handling or emission of hazardous materials, or by locating residential development on a site included on a list pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5.

The project will not result in the approval of any physical improvements and does not propose any changes to the General Plan Land Use Element, to a base designation, or to any physical development standards. The Housing Element Update includes an inventory of sites that are adequate to accommodate the City's assigned share of regional housing need, but it does not propose development projects.

Additionally, the Housing Element in large measure does not proposed changes to the City's adopted housing-relate policies and programs including those set forth in the General Plan (2013) and the 2013-2021 Housing Element. The Housing Element also provides for the continuation of the preexisting policies and programs that were adopted in the 2013-2021 Housing Element. Moreover, the new policies and programs that are proposed would not have an y potential to affect the environment. Therefore, adopting the 2021-2029 Housing Element Update would not create new impacts or increase the significance of impacts identified in the General Plan EIR (for Hazardous Materials).

Inasmuch as Housing Element Update could indirectly result in residential development and improvement, each potential development site will be evaluated at the time of development proposal in accordance with the requirements of CEQA. Due to the fact that hazardous substances have properties that, above certain thresholds, are toxic to humans and/or the ecosystem, multiple regulatory programs in place are designed to minimize the chance for unintended releases and/or exposures to occur. The City of La Mesa and other state and local agencies, such as the Department of Toxic Substances Control and San Diego County Environmental Health and Quality Department (Hazardous Materials Division), regulate hazardous materials in coordination with one another. The County enforces Title 26, Division 6, *California Highway Patrol*, of the California Code of Regulations (CCR) to reduce impacts associated with accidental release from the transportation of hazardous materials on roads in the County, and the potential for an increased demand for incident emergency response. Moreover, the San Diego County Environmental Health and Quality Department enforces workplace regulations that are applicable to businesses and public facilities addressing the use, storage, and disposal of flammable and hazardous materials pursuant to Title 8, *California Occupational Safety and Health Regulations (Cal/OSHA)*, of the CCR. Additionally, the San Diego County Environmental Health and Quality Department also enforces leak prevention measures for underground storage tanks.

Other programs establish remediation requirements for sites where contamination has occurred. If development sites are determined to contain contaminants, proper remediation will be required in accordance with these regulatory programs. Furthermore, the types of hazardous materials used, stored, and generated by residential uses consist of typical household cleaners, solvents, and fuel waste oils, etc., which are well regulated by federal and state laws. Therefore, adoption of the Housing Element 2021-2029 Update would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment with regard to the handling, use, storage, release, or emissions of hazardous materials, including in proximity to schools. Accordingly, impacts related to hazardous materials would be **less than significant**.

**e) *Less Than Significant Impact.***

Most of La Mesa lies within Montgomery Field Airport Influence Review Area 2, which is an airport over-flight notification area applicable to new residential development. If any future home

development or redevelopment occurs within Airport Influence Review Area 2, a real estate professional is required to disclose, upon property transaction, the fact that airplane over-flights occur from Montgomery Field. The northeastern edge of La Mesa is within Gillespie Field Airport Influence Review Area 2. If new housing or housing redevelopment were to occur in this neighborhood, real estate professionals are required to disclose to buyers the fact that airplane over-flights occur from Gillespie Field. The Gillespie Field Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan requires the recordation of an overflight notification or, in some cases, an avigation easement to the County of San Diego. The recordation of an overflight notification applies only to new developments, whereas avigation easements apply to any new use of property. General Plan Policy LU-7.1.2 provides for City staff to review development proposals within the Airport Influence Areas to ensure consistency with the guidelines of the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans. This review process provides for compliance with land use safety considerations on a project-by-project basis. Accordingly, impacts related to airport safety hazards and excessive noise potentially resulting from future development supported by the Housing Element would be **less than significant**.

**f) *Less than Significant Impact.***

Potential future residential and/or mixed-use development supported by the Housing Element would not interfere with adopted emergency response or evacuation plan because such projects are not anticipated to alter street locations or access. All new development in the city is required to comply with existing fire codes and ordinances regarding emergency access, such as widths, surfaces, vertical clearance, brush clearance, and allowable grades. Furthermore, section 18.12.010 (Obstructions) and 18.16.030 (Encroachments) of the La Mesa Municipal Code prohibits roadway obstruction and requires City approval of street work. Adoption of the Housing Element 2021-2029 Update would not impede or conflict with any adopted emergency response or evacuation plans. Therefore, the project would have a **less than significant impact** on emergency response or evacuation plans.

**g) *Less than Significant Impact.***

According to the San Diego County Online Wildfire Hazard Map, the City of La Mesa is not located within a Fire Hazard Severity Zone. Furthermore, the City is a built-out, urban environment that does not contain wildlands and is not located adjacent to any undeveloped wildlands. As such, no portions of La Mesa are located near areas subject to wildfires and the identified potential development sites are all located within developed, urban areas that do not have an urban/wildland interface. Therefore, **no impacts** related to wildfire would occur as a result of future development supported by the Housing Element.

**Mitigation Measures**

None required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>10. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY.</b> Would the project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:				
i) result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii) create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv) impede or redirect flood flows?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Environmental Setting**

**Groundwater**

La Mesa does not lie within a groundwater basin, but is close to three: the San Diego River Valley Groundwater Basin and the El Cajon Groundwater Basin to the east and the Mission Valley Groundwater Basin to the west. Information on groundwater depth in the City is limited but the presence of subsurface springs indicate that water is close to the surface in localized areas. Groundwater is not naturally abundant throughout most of La Mesa.

Beneficial uses for groundwater in the City include municipal and domestic supply; agricultural; and industrial service supply. The water quality of groundwater in La Mesa is limited and is often of poor

quality because groundwater in the San Diego region is often impaired by nitrate, sulfate, total dissolved solids, inorganics, radiologicals, pesticides, and volatile organic compounds.

### Surface Water

There are no major water bodies within the City, however, Lake Murray is located just outside the northwestern City boundary. In addition, three creeks are located within the City: Alvarado Creek; a branch of Chollas Creek; and a branch of Spring Valley Creek.

Beneficial uses for Alvarado Creek include agricultural supply, industrial service supply, contact water recreation, noncontact water recreation, warm freshwater habitat, and wildlife habitat; beneficial uses for Chollas Creek include noncontact water recreation, warm freshwater habitat, wildlife habitat, and contact water recreation (potential); and no beneficial uses are established for Spring Valley Creek. Alvarado Creek is listed as impaired by nitrogen and selenium; Chollas Creek is listed as impaired by bifenthrin, chlorpyrifos, copper, cypermethrin, diazinon, indicator bacteria, lead, malathion, nitrogen, phosphorus, trash, and zinc; while Spring Valley Creek is not listed as impaired.

### Flooding

All watercourses in La Mesa are tributary to larger regional drainage systems. Although they are dry most of the year, they fill quickly with water during storm episodes and result in localized flooding conditions. Flood hazards in the City are primarily the result of inadequate storm drain facilities, particularly in older neighborhoods. One area within the City along Alvarado Creek is located within a 100-year floodplain and has a 1 percent chance of flooding up to 1 foot of depth. In addition, a dam inundation area runs the length of Alvarado Creek.

### Regulatory Setting

Regulations exist at federal, state, regional, and local levels with regard to hydrology and water quality and include:

- Clean Water Act/National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Requirements
- National Flood Insurance Program
- NPDES Construction General Permit
- NPDES Groundwater Permit
- NPDES Municipal Permit
- Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act
- Water Quality Control Plan for the San Diego Basin
- City of La Mesa Storm Water BMP Manual
- City of La Mesa Watercourse Protection, Storm Water Management, and Discharge Control Ordinance

### **Checklist Discussion**

#### **a) *Less Than Significant Impact.***

The General Plan Housing Element is a policy document that addresses the housing need in the City; no actual development or rezoning/redesignation of land is proposed as part of the Housing Element Update.

The Housing Element Update includes an inventory of sites that are adequate to accommodate the City's assigned share of regional housing need, but it does not propose development projects.

Additionally, the Housing Element in large measure does not proposed changes to the City's adopted housing-relate policies and programs including those set forth in the General Plan (2013) and the 2013-2021 Housing Element. The Housing Element also provides for the continuation of the preexisting policies and programs that were adopted in the 2013-2021 Housing Element. Moreover, the new policies and programs that are proposed would not have an y potential to affect the environment. Therefore, adopting the 2021-2029 Housing Element Update would not create new impacts or increase the significance of impacts identified in the General Plan EIR (pages 4.7-15 to 4.7-20).

Future residential development within the City could result in construction and operational impacts to water quality and discharge standards. Operational impacts may include the use of fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides, as well as motor vehicle operation and maintenance. The federal Clean Water Act and California's Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act are the primary laws related to water quality. Regulations set forth by the U.S. EPA and the State Water Resources Control Board have been developed to fulfill the requirements of this legislation. U.S. EPA's regulations include the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program, which controls sources that discharge pollutants into waters of the United States (e.g., streams, lakes, bays, etc.). These regulations are implemented at the regional level by water quality control boards, which for the La Mesa area is the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB).

Proposed projects are required to comply with the City's NPDES permit and local policies and ordinances regarding urban runoff and water quality. In practical terms, the requirements seek to reduce water pollution by both reducing the volume of stormwater runoff and the amount of pollutants that are contained within the runoff. The methods used to achieve these objectives vary from site to site, but can include measures such as a reduction in impervious surfaces, onsite detention facilities, biofiltration swales, settlement/debris basins, etc. Therefore, future development supported by the Housing Element would not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality. As such, impacts would be **less than significant**.

**b)      *Less Than Significant Impact.***

As discussed above, La Mesa does not lie within a groundwater basin. Therefore, surface area in the City does not contribute to infiltration of groundwater. Furthermore, given that the City is largely build-out, future residential development would not be expected to increase impervious surface area overall, and substantial changes to groundwater infiltration would not occur. Any future site plans would be reviewed by the City to include site-specific design measures that would allow for infiltration as part of erosion and runoff prevention. Future development projects would not contribute to the depletion of groundwater supplies and would not substantially interfere with groundwater recharge. Therefore, this impact would be **less than significant**.

**c)    i), ii), iii), iv) *Less Than Significant Impact.***

The General Plan Housing Element is a policy document that addresses the housing need in the City; no actual development or rezoning/redesignation of land is proposed as part of the Housing Element Update. The Housing Element Update includes an inventory of sites that are adequate to accommodate the City's assigned share of regional housing need, but it does not propose development projects. Potential impacts

during construction include grading and vegetation removal which could expose soil to erosion during construction activities.

Additionally, the Housing Element in large measure does not proposed changes to the City's adopted housing-relate policies and programs including those set forth in the General Plan (2013) and the 2013-2021 Housing Element. The Housing Element also provides for the continuation of the preexisting policies and programs that were adopted in the 2013-2021 Housing Element. Moreover, the new policies and programs that are proposed would not have an y potential to affect the environment. Therefore, adopting the 2021-2029 Housing Element Update would not create new impacts or increase the significance of impacts identified in the General Plan EIR (pages 4.7-15 to 4.7-20).

All future development will be required to comply with codes that address stormwater runoff control. New housing projects will be required to adhere to water quality and runoff regulations including those set forth by the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Construction General Permit and the City's Stormwater Management and Discharge Control Ordinance (Section 7.18 of the La Mesa Municipal Code). As such, development projects are required to implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) for construction activities as specified by the California Storm Water Best Management Practices Handbook, and/or the City's Minimum Best Management Practices (Section 7.18.140 of the La Mesa Municipal Code) and Storm Water BMP Manual. The BMPs include measures guiding the management and operation of construction sites to control and minimize the potential contribution of pollutants to storm runoff from these areas. These measures address procedures for controlling erosion and sedimentation and managing all aspects of the construction process to ensure control of potential water pollution sources. All development projects must comply with all City, state, and federal standards pertaining to stormwater run-off and erosion.

In addition, given that the City is largely build-out, future residential development would not be expected to result in increased in impervious surface area, substantial changes to drainage patterns, or changes to groundwater infiltration. Accordingly, impacts related to the alteration of drainage patterns would be **less than significant**.

**d) *Less than Significant Impact.***

The City identifies properties located within a flood hazard zone with a zoning overlay "F." Development of property within the "F" overlay zone must adhere to flood-control regulations. All new development will be required to be elevated above the level of the 100-year flood level. New development, or substantial improvement of existing structures, requires construction of flood protection improvements or bond to guarantee future construction. Policies included in the Safety Element of the City's General Plan further reduce the risk of flooding by providing adequate flood control facilities, including conducting storm drain master planning, upgrading drainage infrastructure, pursuing grant funding for flood control projects, and requiring all proposed development to minimize surface runoff and downstream effects. As such, impacts related to flooding would be **less than significant**.

**e) *Less Than Significant Impact.***

The project is the adoption of the City of La Mesa Housing Element 2021-2029 Update. The project will not result in the approval of any physical improvements and does not propose any changes to the General Plan Land Use Element, to a base designation, or to any physical development standards. The Housing Element Update includes an inventory of sites that are adequate to accommodate the City's assigned share of

regional housing need, but it does not propose development projects. Inasmuch as Housing Element Update could indirectly result in residential development and improvement, such development would be subject to regulations and policies specifically designed to prevent surface and groundwater water quality and hydrology effects as well as prevent flooding. Therefore, future development supported by the Housing Element would not conflict with water quality or groundwater management plans and impacts related to hydrology and water quality would be **less than significant**.

**Mitigation Measures**

None required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>11. LAND USE AND PLANNING.</b> Would the project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Environmental Setting**

The La Mesa General Plan designates certain portions of the City for residential use and commercial/residential mixed-use, and anticipates new residential growth within these areas. To meet the City’s share of regional future housing needs, the Housing Element Update identifies 10 opportunity sites in the City that will account for a majority of the City’s RHNA. The City’s remaining share of the regional housing need will be addressed through scattered vacant and nonvacant land designated for residential or mixed-use development. The most significant potential for new residential development occurs in areas designated in the General Plan as Mixed Use Urban, Urban Residential, and Suburban Residential.

Regulatory Setting

Regulations exist at state and local levels with regard to land use and include:

- California Planning and Zoning Law, Government Code Sections 65000 et seq.
- SANDAG’s Regional Comprehensive Plan
- SANDAG’s 2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy
- San Diego Regional Air Quality Strategy
- City of La Mesa General Plan
- City of La Mesa Zoning Ordinance
- City of La Mesa Subdivision Ordinance
- City of La Mesa urban Design Program

**Checklist Discussion**

**a) No Impact.**

The project is the adoption of the City of La Mesa Housing Element 2021-2029 Update. The project will not result in the approval of any physical improvements or development projects. The Housing Element policies guide housing, emphasizing provision of affordable housing and a range of housing types and locations. The Housing Element would not rezone or change the land use designations established by the Land Use Element of the General Plan. The Housing Element Update includes an inventory of sites that are adequate to accommodate the City’s assigned share of regional housing need, but it does not propose development projects. Inasmuch as Housing Element Update could indirectly result in residential development and

improvement, the project could result in increased density in residential and mixed-use areas of the City. Increased density would primarily occur near the City’s transit station and within mixed-use corridors consistent with the goals and policies of statewide, regional, and local plans. Furthermore, even with increased residential density, no changes to pedestrian or vehicle connectivity is anticipated. The Housing Element establishes goals, objectives and policies (such as Goal HE-1, Objective HE-1.1, Policies HE-1.1.1 – HE-1.1.7 and Objective HE-1.2, Policies HE-1.2.1 – HE-1.2.4) to maintain existing residential neighborhoods. Therefore, adoption of the Housing Element Update will not cause any physical divisions of an existing community. As such, adoption of the Housing Element 2021-2029 Update would not physically divide an established community and **no impact** would occur.

**b) *Less Than Significant Impact.***

The project is the adoption of the City of La Mesa Housing Element 2021-2029 Update. The project will not result in the approval of any physical improvements and does not propose any changes to the General Plan Land Use Element, to a base designation, or to any physical development standards. The Housing Element Update includes an inventory of sites that are adequate to accommodate the City’s assigned share of regional housing need, but it does not propose development projects. Inasmuch as Housing Element Update could indirectly result in residential development and improvement, the project could result in increased density in residential and mixed-use areas of the City. The zoning established for these areas provides development standards intended to provide for new development to have similar characteristics (such as mass, bulk, height, and density) as the surrounding areas. Future development will occur on sites already zoned for housing and will follow the City’s standard procedures for review, including public notice, environmental review, and consideration of design and neighborhood context. The identified opportunity sites could be developed in the future with or without the Housing Element Update. New residential development would be required to comply with all applicable plans and regulations including the General Plan and the City’s Municipal Code. All development projects are subject to environmental review as appropriate in compliance with CEQA prior to approval. Project and site-specific concerns will be evaluated and addressed as development projects for specific sites are proposed. As such, impacts related to conflicts with land use plans, policies, and regulations would be **less than significant**.

**Mitigation Measures**

None required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>12. MINERAL RESOURCES.</b> 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Checklist Discussion**

**a), b) No Impact.**

According to the Department of Conservation, California Geological Survey, there are no known mineral resources within the City’s jurisdiction that are of local, regional, or state importance. There are no recovery sites or mineral resource sites delineated in the general plan, specific plan, or other local land use plan. Implementation of the Housing Element Update would not result in any increased loss of availability of mineral resources. Therefore, **no impacts** on mineral resources will occur.

Regulations and responsible agencies exist at the state level with regard to mineral resources and include:

- Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975
- Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources
- Division of Mines and Geology

**Mitigation Measures**

None required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>13. NOISE.</b> Would the project result in:				
a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Noise Fundamentals**

Sound is described in terms of amplitude (i.e., loudness) and frequency (i.e., pitch). The standard unit of sound amplitude measurement is the decibel (dB). The dB scale is a logarithmic scale that describes the physical intensity of the pressure vibrations that make up any sound. The pitch of the sound is related to the frequency of the pressure vibration. Since the human ear is not equally sensitive to a given sound level at all frequencies, a special frequency-dependent rating scale has been devised to relate noise to human sensitivity. The A-weighted dB scale (dBA) provides this compensation by emphasizing frequencies in a manner approximating the sensitivity of the human ear.

Noise, on the other hand, is typically defined as unwanted sound audible at such a level that the sound becomes an undesirable by-product of society’s normal day-to-day activities. Sound becomes unwanted when it interferes with normal activities, causes actual physical harm, or results in adverse health effects. The effects of noise on people can be placed into four general categories:

- Subjective effects (e.g., dissatisfaction, annoyance);
- Interference effects (e.g., communication, sleep, and learning interference);
- Physiological effects (e.g., startle response); and
- Physical effects (e.g., hearing loss).

The definition of noise as unwanted sound implies that it has an adverse effect, or causes a substantial annoyance, to people and their environment. However, not every unwanted audible sound interferes with normal activities, causes harm, or has adverse health effects. For unwanted audible sound (i.e., noise) to be considered adverse, it must occur with sufficient frequency and at such a level that these adverse impacts are reasonably likely to occur.

### **Vibration Fundamentals**

Vibration can result from a source (e.g., train operations, motor vehicles, machinery equipment, etc.) causing the adjacent ground to move and creating vibration waves that propagate through the soil to the foundations of nearby buildings. This effect is referred to as groundborne vibration. The peak particle velocity (PPV) or the root mean square (RMS) velocity is usually used to describe vibration levels. PPV is defined as the maximum instantaneous peak of the vibration level, while RMS is defined as the square root of the average of the squared amplitude of the vibration level. PPV is typically used for evaluating potential building damage, while RMS velocity in decibels (VdB) is typically more suitable for evaluating human response.

The background vibration velocity level in residential areas is usually around 50 VdB. The vibration velocity level threshold of perception for humans is approximately 65 VdB. A vibration velocity level of 75 VdB is the approximate dividing line between barely perceptible and distinctly perceptible levels for many people. Most perceptible indoor vibration is caused by sources within buildings, such as the operation of mechanical equipment, movement of people, or slamming of doors. Typical outdoor sources of perceptible groundborne vibration are construction equipment, steel-wheeled trains, and traffic on rough roads. If a roadway is smooth, the groundborne vibration from traffic is rarely perceptible. According to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the range of interest is from approximately 50 VdB, which is the typical background vibration velocity level, to 100 VdB, which is the general threshold where minor damage can occur in fragile buildings. The effects of groundborne vibration include movement of the building floors, rattling of windows, shaking of items on shelves or hanging on walls, and rumbling sounds. In extreme cases, the vibration can cause damage to buildings. Building damage is not a factor for most projects, with the occasional exception of blasting and pile-driving during construction. Annoyance from vibration often occurs when the vibration levels exceed the threshold of perception by only a small margin. A vibration level that causes annoyance will be well below the damage threshold for normal buildings.

### **Environmental Setting**

The City is a mix of urbanized and suburban areas, and is subject to numerous noise sources, primarily vehicular traffic on roadways. Major east/west roadways include Interstate-8, State Route-94, Fletcher Parkway, El Cajon Boulevard, university Avenue, and La Mesa Boulevard. Major north/south roadways include State Route-125, Baltimore Drive, Jackson Drive, Spring Street, 70<sup>th</sup> Street, and Lake Murray Boulevard. The level of traffic noise varies with many factors, including traffic volume, vehicle mix (truck percentage), traffic speed, and distance from the roadway.

Other major sources of noise include railroad, aircraft, industrial, commercial, and construction activity. The San Diego Imperial Valley Railroad freight line and the Orange Line and Green Line of the MTS light rail (San Diego Trolley) currently operate in the City. The freight and Orange Line corridor passes through the La Mesa planning area adjacent to Spring Street, Fletcher Parkway, and Water Street. The Green Line corridor is located adjacent to Alvarado Road; it passes through mixed-use areas south of Interstate-8 and joins the Orange line corridor east of Baltimore Road. Trolley operations occur through the City as bidirectional weekday operations. City residents are subjected to periodic noise from aircraft overflights associated with Gillespie Field and Montgomery Field airports; however, the noise contours for these airports do not extend into City limits. The City is also subject to typical urban noise sources such as police and fire department sirens, landscaping equipment, barking dogs, and car alarms.

There are various stationary noise sources throughout the City. Many industrial noise sources are located in the area west of Jackson Drive on Center Drive, Commercial Street, and Hercules Street. Construction noise levels within the City vary depending on the distance between the activity and receptors and the type of equipment used, how it is operated, and how well the equipment is maintained.

Many land uses are considered sensitive to noise. Noise-sensitive receptors within the City include single- and multi-family residential, schools, parks, libraries, hospitals, churches, habitat, and open space.

### **Regulatory Setting**

Various private and public agencies have established noise guidelines and standards to protect citizens from potential hearing damage and other adverse physiological and social effects associated with noise. Federal, state, regional, and local guidelines include the following:

- Federal Transit Administration and Federal Railroad Administration Standards
- Federal Aviation Administration Standards
- California Noise Control Act
- California Code of Regulations
- City of La Mesa General Plan
- City of La Mesa Municipal Code

### **Checklist Discussion**

The project is the adoption of the City of La Mesa Housing Element 2021-2029 Update. The project will not result in the approval of any physical improvements and does not propose any changes to the General Plan Land Use Element, to a base designation, or to any physical development standards. The Housing Element Update includes an inventory of sites that are adequate to accommodate the City's assigned share of regional housing need, but it does not propose development projects. As no specific development projects are proposed by the project, no specific noise and vibration impacts can be evaluated. Inasmuch as the Housing Element Update could indirectly result in residential development and improvement, potential impacts are discussed below.

#### **a) *Less Than Significant Impact.***

##### **Construction**

Construction of individual housing projects will generate noise, and will temporarily increase noise levels at adjacent land uses. The significance of noise impacts during construction depends on the noise generated by various pieces of construction equipment, the timing and duration of noise generating activities, and the distance between construction noise sources and noise sensitive receptors. Construction activities generate considerable amounts of noise, especially during the construction of project infrastructure when heavy equipment is used. Construction noise impacts are more significant when construction occurs during noise-sensitive times of the day (early morning, evening, or nighttime hours near residential uses), the construction occurs in areas immediately adjoining noise sensitive land uses, or when construction lasts extended periods of time. Construction activities could result in annoyances to existing uses adjacent to the individual project sites. Although these receptors would likely be exposed to construction noise levels that could be heard above ambient conditions, the exposure would be temporary and would not be considered adverse. All development, including construction

activities, must comply with the City of La Mesa Municipal Code, Section 10.80.100, which prohibits the operation of construction devices between the hours of 10:00 p.m. of one day and 7:00 a.m. of the next day or on Sundays. Short-term, temporary construction noise that complies with the Municipal Code will result in impacts that are expected to be less than significant. The identified opportunity sites are located in established residential and mixed-use commercial/residential districts near major transportation corridors, including railroads and the existing noise conditions are not quiet. In addition, future projects would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the requirements of CEQA and would be required to perform a project-specific evaluation of potential noise impacts. Projects would be required to reduce construction noise levels to the extent feasible to comply with state and local standards and codes. With compliance with the City’s Municipal Code, the temporary construction activities associated with future development will be **less than significant**.

Operation

Stationary noise sources associated with the project would include those typical of suburban areas (e.g., mechanical equipment, dogs/pets, landscaping activities, weekly garbage collection, cars parking). These noise sources are typically intermittent and short in duration, and would be comparable to existing sources of noise experienced at surrounding residential uses. Further, all stationary noise activities would be required to comply with the City’s Municipal Code requirements and the California Building Code requirements pertaining to noise attenuation. Therefore, potential operational noise impacts of future residential projects largely will be associated with motor vehicle trips generated by the proposed developments. Since most of the anticipated development sites will result in the replacement of existing development with new housing and mixed-use projects, the increase in the number of vehicle trips is not expected to be significant. The majority of the expected development sites are located along major transportation corridors with existing transit stops. The identified opportunity sites are located in established residential and mixed-use commercial/residential districts near major transportation corridors, including railroads; the existing noise conditions are not quiet and any minor increase in vehicle trips generated will only marginally increase noise levels and will likely be below established thresholds for consideration of a significant impact. Therefore, operational impacts related to noise would be **less than significant**.

**b) *Less Than Significant Impact.***

Construction

Construction activities can also generate varying degrees of groundborne vibration, depending on the construction procedures and the construction equipment used. The operation of construction equipment generates groundborne vibrations that spread through the ground and diminish in amplitude with distance from the source. The effect on buildings located in the vicinity of the construction site varies depending on soil type, ground strata, and construction characteristics of the receptor buildings. The results from vibration can range from no perceptible effects at the lowest groundborne vibration levels, to low rumbling sounds and perceptible groundborne vibration at moderate levels, to slight damage at the highest levels. The FTA has adopted damage criteria that sets the levels of construction vibration that would be required to damage nearby structures. The most stringent criteria (for buildings extremely susceptible to vibration damage) is 0.12 PPV inches per second (in/sec).<sup>16</sup> **Table 8, Typical Groundborne**

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<sup>16</sup> *Federal Transit Administration, Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment, September 2018.*

**Vibration Levels for Construction Equipment**, presents typical groundborne vibration levels for construction equipment.

**Table 8  
Typical Groundborne Vibration Levels for Construction Equipment**

Equipment	Approximate PPV (in/sec)				Approximate RMS (VdB)			
	25 Feet	50 Feet	75 Feet	100 Feet	25 Feet	50 Feet	75 Feet	100 Feet
Large Bulldozer	0.089	0.031	0.017	0.011	87	78	73	69
Caisson Drilling	0.089	0.031	0.017	0.011	87	78	73	69
Loaded Trucks	0.076	0.027	0.015	0.010	86	77	72	68
Jackhammer	0.035	0.012	0.007	0.004	79	70	65	61
Small Bulldozer	0.003	0.001	0.0006	0.0004	58	49	44	40
<i>Note: in/sec = inches per second.</i>								
<i>Source: FTA, Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment, 2018. Derived from Equation 12.</i>								

Groundborne vibration generated by construction projects is usually highest during pile driving, rock blasting, soil compacting, jack-hammering, and demolition-related activities. However, construction of future development is not likely to require rock blasting considering the built-out character of the area or piling driving because the area is not subject to liquefaction hazards; however, jack hammering will likely be required for demolition activities and grading will be required for site preparation. As shown in Table NOI-1, even at a close distance of 25 feet, which would be anticipated for development within existing residential and mixed-use areas, none of the typical construction equipment, including jackhammers or bulldozers would achieve the most stringent damage criteria of 0.12 PPV in/sec. Accordingly, impacts related to vibration during construction would be **less than significant**.

Operation

Future development that would occur in accordance with the policies of the Housing Element Update would be residential or mixed-use in nature. Such uses do not generate vibration at levels that would cause building damage or human annoyance. Identified opportunity sites are located in established residential and mixed-use areas of the City and the majority are currently developed. Future development considered under the Housing Element Update will not require rezoning of parcels and would be consistent with the existing and planned surrounding uses for their locations. As such, future development would be consistent with the existing environment and would not exceed established thresholds for consideration of a significant impact. Therefore, operational impacts related to vibration would be **less than significant**.

**c) Less Than Significant Impact.**

As discussed in **Section 2.9, Hazards and Hazardous Materials**, most of La Mesa lies within Montgomery Field Airport Influence Review Area 2 and the northeastern edge of La Mesa is within Gillespie Field Airport Influence Review Area 2. However, no portion of the City is located within the Noise Exposure Contours

for either airport.<sup>17,18</sup> Therefore, impacts related to excessive noise from airports potentially resulting from future development supported by the Housing Element would be **less than significant**.

**MITIGATION MEASURES.**

None required.

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<sup>17</sup> *San Diego County, Airport Land Use Commission, Gillespie Field Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan, December 20, 2010, Exhibit III-1 Compatibility Policy Map: Noise.*

<sup>18</sup> *San Diego County, Airport Land Use Commission, Montgomery Field Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan, December 20, 2010, Exhibit III-1 Compatibility Policy Map: Noise.*

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with the Incorporated Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>14. POPULATION AND HOUSING.</b> Would the project:				
a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Environmental Setting**

Table 9, City of La Mesa Population Projections, and Table 10, City of La Mesa Housing Projections, present projections of population and housing for the La Mesa.

**Table 9  
City of La Mesa Population Projections**

Projection Year					Percent Change	
2000	2010	2020	2035 *	2050 *	2020-2035	2020-2050
54,751	57,065	59,966	70,252	77,881	17.2 %	29.9 %

\* Represents an estimate from the SANDAG 2050 Regional Growth Forecast.  
Source: Bureau of the Census, 2000-2010; Department of Finance E-1: Population Estimates, 2020; SANDAG 2050 Series 13 Regional Growth Forecast (2050), 2013.

**Table 10  
City of La Mesa Housing Projections**

Projection Year				Percent Change		
2020	2030	2040	2050	2020-2030	2020-2040	2020-2050
26,929	28,414	20,922	33,407	5.5 %	14.8 %	24.1 %

Source: Department of Finance E-5: Population and Housing Estimates, 2020; SANDAG 2050 Series 13 Regional Growth Forecast, 2020.

According to the California Department of Finance 2020 Population Estimates, the City population was 59,966, an increase of about 6.5 percent since the 2010 Census. Household size increased from 2.3 persons per household in 2010 to 2.5 persons per household in 2018 according to the 2014-2018 American Community Survey.

**Regulatory Setting**

Regulations and plans exist at state, regional, and local levels with regard to populations and housing and include:

- California Government Code Section 65583 and 655849(a)(1)
- Senate Bill 375
- SANDAG 2050 Regional Transportation Plan
- Regional Housing Needs Assessment

**Checklist Discussion**

**a) *No Impact.***

The project is the adoption of the City of La Mesa Housing Element 2021-2029 Update. The General Plan Housing Element is a policy document that addresses the housing need in the City; no actual development or rezoning/redesignation of land is proposed as part of the Housing Element Update. The Housing Element Update contains housing goals intended to encourage housing to meet the City’s housing needs. The expectation is that as growth occurs consistent with the existing General Plan, housing would be provided that serves all income levels of the city, including both moderate- and low-income residents. The project will not result in the approval of any physical improvements and does not propose any changes to the General Plan Land Use Element, to a base designation, or to any physical development standards. Although the project does not propose development projects itself, it identifies opportunity sites that are adequate to accommodate up to 3,797 new housing units. Based on the 2018 persons per household rate of 2.5, the development of 3,797 housing units would generate 9,493 new residents. The City’s population in 2020 was 59,966 and SANDAG 2050 Regional Growth Forecast estimates the City to increase to 70,252 by 2035 and 77,881 by 2050 which represents a 17 percent and 29 percent increase from 2020 estimated population. Housing policies leading directly and indirectly to population growth from the Housing Element Update would be accommodated within the anticipated future population growth for the City.

Additionally, the Housing Element in large measure does not proposed changes to the City’s adopted housing-relate policies and programs including those set forth in the General Plan (2013) and the 2013-2021 Housing Element. The Housing Element also provides for the continuation of the preexisting policies and programs that were adopted in the 2013-2021 Housing Element. Moreover, the new policies and programs that are proposed would not have an y potential to affect the environment. Therefore, adopting the 2021-2029 Housing Element Update would not create new impacts or increase the significance of impacts identified in the General Plan EIR (pages 4.11-4 to 4.11-6).

By their very nature, Housing Element Updates are proposed to accommodate anticipated growth within a jurisdiction. The Housing Element Update demonstrates that the state-mandated share of housing for the City can be accommodated and is consistent with development levels anticipated by regional and local planning documents. Accordingly, future development in accordance with the Housing Element Update would not be unplanned. Further, as individual housing projects are proposed, they will be analyzed individually for their potential impacts on population and housing. Therefore, as a policy document, the Housing Element would not induce substantial population growth and **no impact** would occur.

**b) *Less Than Significant Impact.***

The project is the adoption of the City of La Mesa Housing Element 2021-2029 Update. The General Plan Housing Element is a policy document that addresses the housing need in the City; no actual development or rezoning/redesignation of land is proposed as part of the Housing Element Update. The project will not result in the approval of any physical improvements and does not propose any changes to the General Plan Land Use Element, to a base designation, or to any physical development standards. Further, the Housing

Element Update includes an inventory of sites that are adequate to accommodate the City's assigned share of regional housing need, but it does not propose development projects.

Additionally, the Housing Element in large measure does not proposed changes to the City's adopted housing-relate policies and programs including those set forth in the General Plan (2013) and the 2013-2021 Housing Element. The Housing Element also provides for the continuation of the preexisting policies and programs that were adopted in the 2013-2021 Housing Element. Moreover, the new policies and programs that are proposed would not have an y potential to affect the environment. Therefore, adopting the 2021-2029 Housing Element Update would not create new impacts or increase the significance of impacts identified in the General Plan EIR (pages 4.11-4 to 4.11-6).

The Housing. Element goals, objective and policies and the development at the identified opportunity sites will not displace existing housing necessitating replacement housing elsewhere as the majority of the opportunity sites are developed with underutilized commercial buildings. Although displacement is not anticipated, projects that could result in displacement maybe required to provide relocation assistance and/or replacement housing in accordance with federal, state and local requirements. As a policy document, the Housing Element would not result in the displacement of people or housing. Therefore, **no impacts** would occur.

**Mitigation Measures**

None required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>15. PUBLIC SERVICES.</b> 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Environmental Setting**

**Fire Protection**

Fire protection services in La Mesa are provided by Heartland Fire and Rescue (Heartland), an organization formed by a joint powers agreement that includes the cities of La Mesa, El Cajon, and Lemon Grove. Heartland includes over 130 staff that serves a population of over 186,000 people and responds to over 22,000 calls for emergency service each year. The La Mesa Operations Division is staffed with one Operations Division Chief, one Battalion Chief, 12 fire captains, 12 fire engineers, and 15 firefighters/paramedics.

Heartland Fire operates eight fire stations, with three located in La Mesa. Station 11, located at 8034 Allison Avenue, serves the central and western sections of the City, and is staffed with three career personnel daily, including one captain, one engineer, and one firefighter/paramedic, one medic engine, one rescue engine, and one fire truck. Station 12, located at 8844 Dallas Street, serves the northern section of the City and employs three career personnel daily, including one captain, one engineer, and one firefighter/paramedic, and maintains one medic engine and one reserve engine on site. Station 13, located at 9110 Grossmont Boulevard, serves the eastern section of the City.

**Police Protection**

The City’s Police Department provides police protection and general law enforcement services for the City. The Police Department’s headquarters building is located at 8085 University Avenue, approximately 0.75 mile southeast of the project site. The City maintains three patrol shifts that provide 24-hour response to calls for assistance and traffic control. The Police Department has 69 sworn officers and 31 civilian employees, as well as a large contingent of retired senior volunteers, and answers over 100,000 calls for service each year. The Police Department includes a Patrol Division, Investigations Unit, Special Investigations Unit, Traffic Unit, School Resource Unit, and Crime Prevention/Community Resource Unit and provides services such as patrol, investigations, traffic, school resources, support services, animal control, parking enforcement, and community resources services.

### Schools

Two organizations provide primary public school education in the City of La Mesa. The La Mesa–Spring Valley School District serves approximately 12,400 students within 26 square miles and includes 22 schools comprising 17 elementary schools and 5 middle schools/academies. The Lemon Grove School District includes one elementary school located in La Mesa. The other six schools governed by the district are located in the City of Lemon Grove.

Secondary education is provided by the Grossmont Union High School District. The Grossmont Union High School District covers 465 square miles, including the cities of El Cajon, La Mesa, Santee, and Lemon Grove; a small portion of the City of San Diego; and the unincorporated areas of Spring Valley, Dulzura, Alpine, Jamul, and Lakeside. Grossmont Union High School District serves 21,342 students across nine traditional high schools, two charter schools, two alternative high schools, one continuation high school, and three special education programs.

### Parks

There are 14 public parks in the City of La Mesa encompassing a total area of approximately 136 acres of parkland. The City's General Plan categorizes parks into four different classifications: regional parks, community parks, neighborhood parks, and pocket parks. Regional parks typically serve several communities and have substantially more acreage than parks in individual communities. Regional parks have a variety of recreation facilities and larger scale uses such as golf courses and swimming pools. Community parks serve a larger population within either a single community area or multiple communities, and uses typically include amenities such as field sports, picnic areas, play areas, and community centers. Neighborhood parks serve a smaller population within an area, but still include passive and active recreational facilities. Neighborhood parks may include tot lots, picnic facilities, and a multi-use court. Most of the City's parks are classified as neighborhood parks. Pocket parks are less than one acre in size and are primarily made up of hardscape-type plazas and walkways that support a variety of recreational opportunities.

### Other Public Facilities

The La Mesa Library shares space with the La Mesa post office in a building constructed by the City of La Mesa in 2008. The building is 17,725 square-feet with approximately 10,525 square-feet devoted to the library. Although the City owns the building, the La Mesa library is a branch of the County of San Diego public library service. An Agreement between the City and San Diego County provides for the County's use of the City's building, while San Diego County provides staffing, materials, and administration for the branch. The La Mesa Library circulates over 60,000 titles each month, making it one of the top circulating branches in the San Diego County Library system.

### Regulatory Setting

Regulations and policies exist the state and local level with regard to public services and include:

- California Mutual Aid Plan
- Senate Bill 50

- Quimby Act and Assembly Bill 1359
- City of La Mesa General Plan

### Checklist Discussion

Although the project does not propose development projects itself, it identifies opportunity sites that are adequate to accommodate up to 3,797 new housing units. Based on the 2018 persons per household rate of 2.5, the development of 3,797 housing units would generate 9,493 new residents, although some residents may be relocating from other areas within the City, potentially resulting in a smaller actual population increase.

#### a) ***Less Than Significant Impact.***

The City is already served by Heartland, which has facilities and staffing in the City to adequately serve future development. General Plan Safety Element Policy PSF-5.1.5 “New or supplemental fire equipment required to protect future mid-rise, high-rise, or large commercial structures shall be funded by the developer of these projects” will enable the City to upgrade fire services equipment to meet future demands. Furthermore, additional financial costs to the fire department is not an environmental issue but rather a fiscal one for the City. Increases in personnel necessary to serve increased population and structures will be addressed through the annual budget process and funded with property tax and other revenue generated by future development. The General Plan Housing Element is a policy document that addresses housing need in the City and does not include any specific development or rezoning/re-designation of land. Adoption of the Housing Element Update would not directly generate a demand for fire protection services by Heartland.

Additionally, the Housing Element in large measure does not propose changes to the City’s adopted housing-related policies and programs including those set forth in the General Plan and the previous Housing Element. The Housing Element Update also provides for the continuation of the pre-existing policies and programs that were adopted in the 2013-2021 Housing Element. Moreover, the new policies and programs that are proposed would not have any potential to affect the environment. Therefore, adoption of the 2021-2029 Housing Element would not create new impacts or increase the significance of impacts identified in the 2013 General Plan EIR (pages 4.12-20 and 4.12.21).

Implementation of the programs contained in the Housing Element could result in new housing that addresses the City’s RHNA allocation and the City’s policies addressing a range of housing needs including affordable housing. Most of the programs are continued from the previous housing element cycle. Many of them are modified to reflect the changed market conditions or streamlined to offer flexibility in implementation. As part of the planning and development review process, new residential development projects would be evaluated by Heartland to determine the level of and demand for fire protection services that would be generated by each project. Therefore, impacts to fire protection services will be **less than significant**.

#### b) ***Less Than Significant Impact.***

The City is currently provided with police protection services by the La Mesa Police Department. General Plan Safety Element Objective PSF-4.1 “The City will maintain a Police Department that is adequately staffed and funded to ensure a safe community” will enable the City to increase police staffing to meet future demands. Furthermore, additional financial costs to the fire department is not an environmental

issue but rather a fiscal one for the City. Increases in personnel necessary to serve increased population will be addressed through the annual budget process and funded with property tax and other revenue generated by future development. In addition, the 40,000-SF Police Department Headquarters building, located at 8085 University Avenue, was constructed in 2010 and meets present space needs and includes currently underused capacity committed to house the expanded police service functions required to meet the needs of future development. The General Plan Housing Element is a policy document that addresses housing need in the City and does not include any specific development or rezoning/re-designation of land. Therefore, adoption would not, in itself, create increased demand for La Mesa Police Department services.

Additionally, the Housing Element in large measure does not propose changes to the City's adopted housing-related policies and programs including those set forth in the General Plan and the previous Housing Element. The Housing Element Update also provides for the continuation of the pre-existing policies and programs that were adopted in the 2013-2021 Housing Element. Moreover, the new policies and programs that are proposed would not have any potential to affect the environment. Therefore, adoption of the 2021-2029 Housing Element would not create new impacts or increase the significance of impacts identified in the 2013 General Plan EIR (page 4.12-22).

Implementation of the programs contained in the Housing Element could result in new housing that addresses the City's RHNA allocation and the City's policies addressing a range of housing needs including affordable housing. Most of the programs are continued from the previous housing element cycle. Many of them are modified to reflect the changed market conditions or streamlined to offer flexibility in implementation. As part of the planning and development review process, new residential development projects would be evaluated by La Mesa Police Department to determine the level of and demand for fire protection services that would be generated by each project. Therefore, impacts to fire protection services will be **less than significant**

**c) *Less Than Significant Impact.***

La Mesa–Spring Valley School District, Lemon Grove School District, and Grossmont Union High School District provides public education to school-age students in the City. The General Plan Housing Element is a policy document that addresses housing need in the City and does not include any specific development or rezoning/re-designation of land. Therefore, its adoption would not, in itself generate new students.

Additionally, the Housing Element in large measure does not propose changes to the City's adopted housing-related policies and programs including those set forth in the General Plan and the previous Housing Element. The Housing Element Update also provides for the continuation of the pre-existing policies and programs that were adopted in the 2013-2021 Housing Element. Moreover, the new policies and programs that are proposed would not have any potential to affect the environment. Therefore, adoption of the 2021-2029 Housing Element would not create new impacts or increase the significance of impacts identified in the 2013 General Plan EIR (pages 4.12-22 and 4.12-23).

Implementation of the programs contained in the Housing Element could result in new housing that addresses the City's RHNA allocation and the City's policies addressing a range of housing needs including affordable housing. Planning for future school facilities is the responsibility of the school districts. The environmental effects of expansion, construction, and operation of additional school facilities would be evaluated by individual school districts in their efforts to plan for construction of new schools or expansion of existing facilities. Furthermore, Government Code Section 65995 and Education Code Section 53080

authorize school districts to impose facility mitigation fees on new development to address any increased enrollment that may result. SB 50, enacted on August 27, 1998, substantially revised developer fee and mitigation procedures for school facilities as set forth in Government Code Section 65996. The legislation holds that an acceptable method of offsetting a project's effect on the adequacy of school facilities is payment of a school impact fee prior to issuance of a building permit. Once paid, the school impact fees would serve as mitigation for any project-related impacts to school facilities. As such, the City is legally prohibited from imposing any additional mitigation related to school facilities, as payment of the school impact fees constitutes full and complete mitigation.

La Mesa–Spring Valley School District, Lemon Grove School District, and Grossmont Union High School District collect developer fees for residential and commercial projects, and future development would be required to pay applicable school facilities fees prior to issuance of building permits. Payment of school fees would provide full and complete mitigation for impacts to school facilities in accordance with state law pursuant to Government Code Section 65996 and SB 50. Therefore, future development at identified opportunity sites would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered school facilities. Impacts related to schools would be **less than significant**.

**d) *Less Than Significant Impact.***

The Parks Master Plan establishes population-based park standards for neighborhood and community parks, including one neighborhood park per 5,000 residents and 1 community park per 20,000 residents. Based on the current population of La Mesa of 59,996 residents as estimated by the Department of Finance, 12 neighborhood parks and 3 community parks are needed to achieve the population-based park standards. The City currently provides 12 neighborhood parks and 1 community park and thus, a shortage of community parks currently exists. An additional 9,493 residents resulting from increased housing supply would result in a population-based park needs of 14 neighborhood parks and 3 community parks. The General Plan Housing Element is a policy document that addresses housing need in the City and does not include any specific development or rezoning/re-designation of land. Therefore, adoption would not, in itself, create increased demand for parks and recreation services.

Additionally, the Housing Element in large measure does not propose changes to the City's adopted housing-related policies and programs including those set forth in the General Plan and the previous Housing Element. The Housing Element Update also provides for the continuation of the pre-existing policies and programs that were adopted in the 2013-2021 Housing Element. Moreover, the new policies and programs that are proposed would not have any potential to affect the environment. Therefore, adoption of the 2021-2029 Housing Element would not create new impacts or increase the significance of impacts identified in the 2013 General Plan EIR (Initial Study page 32).

Implementation of the programs contained in the Housing Element could result in new housing that addresses the City's RHNA allocation and the City's policies addressing a range of housing needs including affordable housing. In order to generate funds for park improvements or to acquire land for parks, the City adopted two park development impact fees as part of the City's Municipal Code, including the Residential Parkland Dedication In-lieu Fee (Municipal Code Section 9.20.040) and the Residential Park Improvement Impact Fee (Municipal Code Section 9.20.050). These impact fees are designed for single and multi-family residential developments to mitigate the impact of new development on the City's existing facilities and infrastructure. Residential development projects are obligated to dedicate three acres of undeveloped parkland per one thousand people. The fees developed were based on population and growth projections, facility standards, amount/cost of facilities required to accommodate growth,

and total cost of facilities per unit of development. By collecting these fees, the goals and priorities of the City's recreational space and facilities standards established in the Parks Master Plan and General Plan can be met.

Development of housing to meet the City's share of regional housing needs presented in the Housing Element Update is subject to these fees. With payment of a parkland improvement fee to comply with the City's standards for parks, substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered population-based parks would not occur. Impacts related to parks would be **less than significant**.

**e) *Less Than Significant Impact.***

The La Mesa Library includes 10,525 square-feet of library space at the Civic Center complex. A minimum space service goal for the San Diego County Library system is 0.50 square-feet per capita. The La Mesa Library provides approximately 0.18 square-feet per capita based on the 2020 City population of 59,966 as estimated by the Department of Finance. Using the San Diego County Library system size metric, the La Mesa Library would need to be 29,983 square-feet to meet the current need, which is 19,458 square-feet more than the existing space. Therefore, the La Mesa Library is already below the San Diego County Library system space service goal. The General Plan Housing Element is a policy document that addresses housing need in the City and does not include any specific development or rezoning/re-designation of land. Therefore, adoption would not, in itself, create increased demand for library services.

Additionally, the Housing Element in large measure does not propose changes to the City's adopted housing-related policies and programs including those set forth in the General Plan and the previous Housing Element. The Housing Element Update also provides for the continuation of the pre-existing policies and programs that were adopted in the 2013-2021 Housing Element. Moreover, the new policies and programs that are proposed would not have any potential to affect the environment. Therefore, adoption of the 2021-2029 Housing Element would not create new impacts or increase the significance of impacts identified in the 2013 General Plan EIR (pages 4.12-23 and 4.12-24).

Additional residents resulting from increased housing supply would further increase library deficiency and additional libraries may be required. However, an increase of 9,493 residents would increase the deficiency by a negligible amount (from 0.18 to 0.15). Furthermore, the construction and operation of additional library facilities may result in environmental impacts. However, no specific facility is proposed at this time. New developments would be required to satisfy the demand for libraries. As part of the planning and development review process, all new residential development projects would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to determine the level of and demand for libraries that would be generated by the policies and programs of Housing Element Update. Therefore, impacts to library facilities would be **less than significant**.

**Mitigation Measures**

None required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>16. RECREATION.</b> Would the project:				
a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities, such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Environmental Setting**

Please refer to Environmental Setting above Section 15 – Parks.

**Checklist Discussion**

a), b) *Less Than Significant Impact.*

Please refer to discussion above Section 15.d – Parks.

**Mitigation Measures**

None required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>17. TRANSPORTATION.</b> Would the project:				
a) Conflict with a program plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Environmental Setting**

**Roadway System**

The topography of La Mesa creates a non-grid, discontinuous circulation system. The local roadway network and transit lines define most of the City’s circulation network. The City’s transportation system consists of highways, streets, pedestrian paths, transit routes, and bikeways. The circulation network is connected to a larger regional system. The planning area is served by three freeway: Interstate-8, State Route-94, and State Route-125. Surface streets connect La Mesa to the cities of San Diego, Lemon Grove, and El Cajon, in addition to unincorporated areas of San Diego County. The street system is composed primarily of local streets and local collector streets, with a few arterials and major collector streets. The majority of the identified opportunity sites are located along arterials and collector streets.

Arterials are designed to move large volumes of traffic and provide a high level of mobility between major residential, employment, and activity centers. They are also intended to move traffic between freeways and local/collector roads. They are intended not just for motor vehicle circulation, but also for transit, bicycle, and pedestrian circulation. The City’s General Plan provides general guidance for the form and function of arterial roadways and divides arterial roadways into two sub-categories: arterials and parkway arterials. The arterials and parkway arterials, together with freeways, form a network carrying relatively long-distance, high-speed traffic. Parkway arterials have a capacity of up to 45,000 vehicles daily, and larger arterials have a capacity of up to 35,000 vehicles daily. Smaller arterials can be two to four lanes and have a capacity of up to 15,000 vehicles daily. Arterials with identified opportunity sites are detailed below:

- **Fletcher Parkway** is a parkway arterial of six lanes that begins at Interstate-8 at its westernmost point, heads northeast to State Route-125, where it turns northward and continues into the City of El Cajon.
- **University Avenue** is an east/west arterial of two to four lanes that runs east from the City of San Diego to Baltimore Drive in La mesa.

- **Spring Street** is a four-lane arterial that begins at Interstate-8 in La Mesa and runs southeast to the Spring Valley area of the County of San Diego, where it transitions to Campo Drive.
- **Grossmont Center Drive** is a four-lane arterial that runs southeast from Fletcher Parkway until it transitions to La Mesa Boulevard.
- **Baltimore Drive** is a four-lane, north-south arterial that begins near the intersection of University Avenue and Spring Street in La Mesa and runs north to Lake Murray.

Collectors are intended to “collect” traffic from local roadways and carry it to roadways higher in the street classification hierarchy. These roadways serve as intermediaries between arterials and local road, and provide direct access to parcels in residential and nonresidential areas. Major collectors typically have two lanes of traffic in each direction and can carry a maximum of up to 25,000 vehicles daily. Local collectors have two to four lanes in each direction and can carry a maximum of 15,000 vehicles daily. Collectors with identified opportunity sites are detailed below:

- **Alvarado Road** is an east-west, two-lane collector that extends between Interstate-8 in La Mesa and College Avenue in the City of San Diego. The roadway generally parallels Interstate-8 and functions as a frontage road to the freeway.
- **Grossmont Boulevard** is an east/west, two- to four-lane collector that extends between Jackson Drive at its westernmost point east across State Route-125, where it heads northeast, crossing Interstate-8, terminating at Murray Drive.
- **Palm Avenue** is a two-lane, north-south collector that runs between Allison Avenue in the north and Spring Street in the south.

The remainder of the identified opportunity sites lie along the local access streets **Allison Avenue** and **Pine Street**. Local access streets are intended to serve adjacent properties and should enhance community livability. These roadways provide direct access to properties and connect to collectors and arterials. They carry limited through-traffic and speed limits normally do not exceed 25 miles per hour. These roadways typically carry less than 1,000 vehicles per day, and through-traffic is discouraged.

### **Transit System**

Transit opportunities within La Mesa are provided by the Metropolitan Transit System light rail Orange and Green lines and six bus routes. The Green Line Trolley runs from Santee at its northern end, through El Cajon, La Mesa, Mission Valley, Old Town, and Downtown San Diego, where it terminates. The Green Line has 27 stops, 3 of which are within La Mesa. The Orange Line runs from El Cajon at its northern end, through La Mesa, Lemon Grove, and Downtown San Diego, where it terminates. The Orange Line has 19 stops, 4 of which are within La Mesa. Bus routes through La Mesa include Routes 1, 14, 851, 852, 854/854X, and 855.

### **Regulatory Setting**

Regulations and policies exist at the state, regional, and local levels as follows:

- Senate Bill 743
- SANDAG’s 2050 Regional Transportation Plan

- San Diego Forward: The Regional Plan
- City of La Mesa General Plan
- City of Le Masa Bicycle Facilities and Alternative Transportation Plan

### Checklist Discussion

#### a), b) *Less Than Significant Impact.*

The project is the adoption of the City of La Mesa Housing Element 2021-2029 Update. The project will not result in the approval of any physical improvements and does not propose any changes to the General Plan Land Use Element, to a base designation, or to any physical development standards.

Though it proposes neither specific development projects nor changes in base zoning, the Housing Element Update identifies opportunity sites that are feasible for development. The location of many of which are located proximate to transit, consistent with the overarching principles of the San Diego Forward: The Regional Plan of increasing residential concentrations in areas served by transit and implementation of smart growth designed to strengthen the integration of land use and transportation. These opportunity sites are located within designated existing/planned and potential Smart Growth Opportunity Sites<sup>19</sup> which are place types associated with certain housing and employment density targets and transit service thresholds. Increasing the density in these locations will help the City concentrate development in areas consistent with statewide, regional, and local circulation system plan goals.

Inasmuch as Housing Element Update could indirectly result in residential development and improvement, the development would occur in residential and mixed-use areas of the City already designated in the General Plan for housing. Therefore, development within these sites and their associated transportation impacts have already been accounted for in association with the adopted land use plan. In addition, any future development projects supported by the Housing Element Update would be evaluated at the project proposal stage and subject to the state, regional, and local plans, and the policies therein. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**.

#### c) *Less Than Significant Impact.*

Future development supported by the Housing Element would result in typical types of traffic associated with residential and mixed-use development (i.e., residents, visitors, and employee commutes). The Housing Element 2021-2029 Update does not propose any uses that would generate traffic from incompatible uses such as farm equipment. No specific plans for any development projects are proposed at this time; however, the design of roadway improvements, access roads, intersections, and driveways of any future project would be required to adhere to City of La Mesa design guidelines and standards and the final design must be approved by the City prior to the issuance of development permits. Accordingly, impacts related to design hazards potentially resulting from future development supported by the Housing Element would be **less than significant**.

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<sup>19</sup> SANDAG, *Smart Growth Concept Map, Mid-City and East County Subregional Map*, [https://www.sandag.org/uploads/projectid/projectid\\_296\\_13997.pdf](https://www.sandag.org/uploads/projectid/projectid_296_13997.pdf).

**d) *Less Than Significant Impact.***

As discussed previously, the Housing Element Update does not include specific development projects, and instead, only provides a framework for the City's anticipated future residential growth and housing demand. Potential future residential and/or mixed-use development supported by the Housing Element would not interfere with emergency access because such projects are not anticipated to alter street locations or access. All new development in the city is required to comply with existing fire codes and ordinances regarding emergency access, such as widths, surfaces, vertical clearance, brush clearance, and allowable grades. Future access and roadways would be reviewed for consistency with City of La Mesa design guidelines and standards and the final design must be approved by the City. Therefore, impacts to emergency access resulting from future development supported by the Housing Element would be **less than significant**.

**Mitigation Measures**

None required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<p><b>18. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES.</b> Consultation with a California Native American tribe that has requested such consultation may assist a lead agency in determining whether the project may adversely affect tribal cultural resources, and if so, how such effects may be avoided or mitigated. Whether or not consultation has been requested, would the project cause a substantial adverse change in a site, feature, place, cultural landscape, sacred place, or object, with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, which is any of the following:</p>				
<p>a. Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:</p>				
<p>i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Environmental Setting**

Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52, Gatto. Native Americans: California Environmental Quality Act) and CEQA Public Resources Code Section 21080.31, subdivisions (b), (d)), requires a lead agency to consult with any California Native American tribe that requests consultation and is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of a proposed project.

California Government Code Section 65352.3 (adopted pursuant to the requirements of Senate Bill (SB) 18) requires local governments to contact, refer plans to, and consult with tribal organizations prior to making a decision to adopt or amend a general or specific plan, or to designate open space that includes Native American Cultural Places. The tribal organizations eligible to consult have traditional lands in a local government’s jurisdiction, and are identified, upon request, by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). As noted in the California Office of Planning and Research’s Tribal Consultation Guidelines (2005), “the intent of SB 18 is to provide California Native American tribes an opportunity to participate in local land use decisions at an early planning stage, for the purpose of protecting, or mitigating impacts to cultural places.”

### Regulatory Setting

The regulation that guides the consideration and treatment of tribal cultural resources is:

- Assembly Bill 52
- Senate Bill 18

### **Checklist Discussion**

a) i), ii) ***No Impact.***

The Housing Element is a policy document consistent with the General Plan. The project is the adoption of the City of La Mesa Housing Element 2021-2029 Update. The project will not result in the approval of any physical improvements and does not propose any changes to the General Plan Land Use Element, to a base designation, or to any physical development standards. The Housing Element will not, in and of itself, result in impacts to tribal cultural resources. Therefore, **no impact** would occur.

In accordance with Senate Bill 18, the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) was contacted to obtain a list of tribes that may have cultural association with the project area. The NAHC provided a list of 16 tribes, which were provided based on project information in accordance with Senate Bill 18. The San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians provided a letter on February 24, 2021 indicating that the project is not within the boundaries of the recognized San Pasqual Indian Reservation and no further consultation was conducted or required.

Pursuant to the requirements of Assembly Bill 52, on February 22 2021, the City notified tribes that requested to be alerted of new projects. No tribes responded to the notification.

All future development will require project-specific environmental evaluation in order to determine that any potential impacts are less than significant. Potential tribal-related impacts are locations specific and cannot be assessed in a meaningful way until the location of a project site is known. At such time that a development proposal is considered that project will be subject to further review.

### **Mitigation Measures**

None required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>19. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS.</b> Would the project:				
a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Environmental Setting**

**Water**

Water within the City of La Mesa is provided by Helix Water District. Currently, the Helix Water District is 50 square-miles in size, serving a population of 270,375 people in east county communities of San Diego. Helix Water District relies primarily on water supply imported from the Colorado River and Northern California, purchased from the San Diego County Water Authority. The California Water Code requires each urban water supplier in the state to prepare an Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP) and update the plan every 5 years. The purpose of the UWMP process is to ensure that adequate water supplies are available to meet existing and future demands over a 20-year planning horizon considering normal, dry, and multiple dry years. Helix's current UWMP (the 2015 UWMP) includes projected land-use changes and population growth through 2040 and forecasts an additional 48,000 people. Since 2000, the water use in the district has steadily declined as a result of implementation of public and private conservation initiatives. The 2015 UWMP presents data that shows an adequate water supply to serve the needs of the Helix Water District's customers for the planning period, assuming both normal year and dry year(s) conditions.

**Wastewater**

The City of La Mesa manages and maintains the wastewater collection system, which is made up of approximately 156 miles of clay, concrete, and plastic sewer pipe. La Mesa is a member of the Metro Wastewater Joint Powers Authority, a coalition of agencies that use the Point Loma Wastewater Treatment Plant operated by the City of San Diego. The Treatment Plant treats approximately 175 million gallons of wastewater per day generated in a 450-square mile area by more than 2.2 million residents. The Treatment Plant has a treatment capacity of 240 million galls per day.<sup>20</sup> In 2010, La Mesa's average daily wastewater flow to the plant was 5.56 million gallons per day. La Mesa has a contracted wastewater treatment capacity limit of 6.99 million gallons per day, which is approximately 1.4 million gallons per day of unused capacity. The City has an established proactive maintenance program to minimize sewer spill events and replace infrastructure that has reached its useful life or is difficult to properly maintain. La Mesa has also instituted a stormwater inflow and infiltration reduction program to manage non-wastewater flows. The wastewater capital improvement program is an ongoing program that includes three types of projects: capacity, condition, and inflow/infiltration.

**Solid Waste**

Solid waste is provided by a private franchise hauler, EDCO Waste and Recycling, which handles all residential, commercial, and industrial collections within the City. Waste is collected and hauled to Otay Landfill in Chula Vista. Otay Landfill is a privately owned facility operating under a permit from the state with local enforcement by the County of San Diego, Department of Environmental Health. Approximately 5,000 tons of trash is processed at the landfill daily and the facility has a maximum permitted daily throughput of 6,700 tons per day. Currently, the Otay Landfill has sufficient remaining capacity and is anticipated to be closed in 2030.<sup>21</sup> La Mesa has implemented an aggressive effort to curb the amount of waste headed to the landfill. Working with EDCO, recycling of most categories of waste is available for all residences and commercial establishments located in the City. La Mesa is currently exceeding the state mandate to divert 50 percent of solid waste generated in the City.

**Checklist Discussion****a), b), c) d)      *Less Than Significant Impact.***

Helix Water District provides water service and Metro Wastewater Joint Powers Authority provides wastewater collection in the City. The General Plan Housing Element is a policy document that addresses housing need in the City and does not include any specific development or rezoning/re-designation of land. Therefore, its adoption would not, in itself generate new users requiring water service and wastewater collection. The Housing Element Update identifies opportunity sites that are feasible for development, but proposes no specific development projects. Inasmuch as Housing Element Update could indirectly result in residential development and improvement, the development would occur in residential and mixed-use areas of the City already designated in the General Plan for housing. The City is fully developed and served by existing utilities in place. Any future development supported by the Housing

<sup>20</sup> Point Loma Wastewater Treatment Plant. Webpage: <https://www.sandiego.gov/public-utilities/customer-service/water-wastewater-facilities/point-loma>, accessed February 2021.

<sup>21</sup> CalRecycle, *SWIS Facility/Site Activity Details, Otay Landfill (37-AA-0010)*, <https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/SolidWaste/SiteActivity/Details/1790?siteID=2863>.

Element will be required to provide appropriately sized and designed lateral connection. Most of the opportunity sites are now developed with other uses, and it is anticipated that there will be no significant increase in the demand on existing utilities and service systems or impacts to these services.

Additionally, the Housing Element in large measure does not propose changes to the City's adopted housing-related policies and programs including those set forth in the General Plan and the previous Housing Element. The Housing Element Update also provides for the continuation of the pre-existing policies and programs that were adopted in the 2013-2021 Housing Element. Moreover, the new policies and programs that are proposed would not have any potential to affect the environment. Therefore, adoption of the 2021-2029 Housing Element would not create new impacts or increase the significance of impacts for water and wastewater identified in the 2013 General Plan EIR (pages 4.12-24 to 4.12.28).

As discussed above, the 2015 UWMP ensures that adequate water supplies are available to meet existing and future demands over a 20-year planning horizon considering normal, dry, and multiple dry years. Helix's 2015 UWMP includes projected land-use changes and population growth through 2040 and forecasts an additional 48,000 people. The Point Loma Wastewater Treatment Plant has capacity to treat additional waste water. As future residential development projects are proposed, each project would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to ensure that adequate water and wastewater infrastructure capacity exists to serve the project, and, if necessary, mitigate for its impacts. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**.

**e) No Impact.**

The City of La Mesa actively implements waste reduction/diversion programs in compliance with State Law. La Mesa is currently exceeding the state mandate to divert 50 percent of solid waste generated in the City. The General Plan Housing Element is a policy document that addresses housing need in the City and does not include any specific development or rezoning/re-designation of land. As such, adoption of the Housing Element, by itself, would not generate solid waste impacts.

Additionally, the Housing Element in large measure does not propose changes to the City's adopted housing-related policies and programs including those set forth in the General Plan and the previous Housing Element. The Housing Element Update also provides for the continuation of the pre-existing policies and programs that were adopted in the 2013-2021 Housing Element. Moreover, the new policies and programs that are proposed would not have any potential to affect the environment. Therefore, adoption of the 2021-2029 Housing Element would not create new impacts or increase the significance of impacts for water and wastewater identified in the 2013 General Plan EIR (pages 4.12-28 and 4.12.29).

Implementation of the programs that are proposed include opportunity development sites that could result in new housing that addresses the City's RHNA allocation and City's policies supporting a range of housing types and affordability. The City includes recycling and diversion of solid waste programs that exceeds the State mandated policy of 50 percent. As future residential development projects are proposed, each project would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to ensure that recycling efforts continue to meet and exceed the State mandated law for recycling. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**.

**Mitigation Measures**

None required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>20. WILDFIRE:</b> If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:				
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Environmental Setting**

According to the San Diego County Online Wildfire Hazard Map, the City of La Mesa is not located within a Fire Hazard Severity Zone. Furthermore, the City is a built-out, urban environment that does not contain wildlands and is not located adjacent to any undeveloped wildlands.

**Checklist Discussion**

**a), b), c), d) No Impact.**

No portions of La Mesa are located near areas subject to wildfires and the identified potential development sites are all located within developed, urban areas that do not have an urban/wildland interface. Potential residential and/or mixed-use development would not interfere with adopted emergency response or evacuation plan because such projects are not anticipated to alter street locations or access. In addition, the City is a built-out, urban environment that is served by existing roads and infrastructure; no maintenance roads, fuel breaks, water sources, or utilities would need to be obtained or installed to serve any future residential development supported by the Housing Element Update. Furthermore, the majority of the identified opportunity sites are currently developed with existing uses and located within existing residential and mixed-use districts within the City. No vacant hillsides would be required to be graded or developed and no downslope risks would be created by future development. As such, **no impacts** related to wildfire would occur.

**Mitigation Measures**

None required.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<b>21. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE.</b> Would the project:				
a) Have the potential to substantially 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, substantially 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) 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.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Checklist Discussion**

**a) No Impact.**

The Housing Element is a General Plan policy document that addresses housing need in the City; no actual development or rezoning/re-designation of land is proposed as part of the Housing Element. The Housing Element does not authorize any development. Therefore, its adoption would not significantly 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 major periods of California history or prehistory. Therefore, **no impact** would occur.

**b) Less Than Significant Impact.**

The proposed project involves the adoption of the City’s General Plan Housing Element, which guides future housing. No specific development projects would occur as a result of the Housing Element; and no redesignation/rezoning of land is proposed. Therefore, adoption of the Housing Element, in itself, would not result in cumulative impacts.

Furthermore, cumulative impacts associated with future housing development have been evaluated at a program level in the General Plan EIR. The Housing Element in large measure does not propose changes

to the City's adopted housing related policies and programs including those set forth in the General Plan (Land Use Element) and the 2013-2021 Housing Element. Since the Housing Element is consistent with the General Plan, adopting the Housing Element would not create new cumulative impacts or increase the significance of cumulative impacts identified in the General Plan EIR. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**.

**c) *Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated.***

Future development supported by the Housing Element would be required to comply with numerous required measures related to human safety and the quality of the environment, as described throughout this document. Therefore, adoption of the Housing Element 2021-2029 Update would result in no environmental effects that would cause substantial direct or indirect adverse effects on human beings and impacts would be **less than significant**.

**Mitigation Measures**

None required.