

CHAPTER 5.0 ANALYSIS OF LONG-TERM EFFECTS

5.1 MAXIMUM THEORETICAL BUILD-OUT SCENARIO

The theoretical build-out scenario is included in this EIR to provide the ability to understand the maximum theoretical development of the 2012 General Plan. The theoretical build-out scenario demonstrates the residential and nonresidential development levels that are potentially achieved by the 2012 General Plan.

The calculations in Table 5-1 are based on the SANDAG 2050 Regional Growth Forecast projections for La Mesa, which were developed using input from the City. Since La Mesa is almost completely developed with few vacant parcels (totaling about 10 acres), additional residential and nonresidential development would be allowed through zoning regulations and the development review process.

**Table 5-1
Projected Population Growth and Development**

| | Existing (2012) ¹ | 2012 General Plan Horizon Year (2035) Projections ² | 2050 SANDAG Regional Growth Forecast Projections ² | Percent change from 2012 to 2050 |
|-------------------|------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Population | 58,296 | 68,682 | 78,174 | 34.1% |
| Residential units | 25,840 | 28,985 | 32,566 | 26.0% |
| Number of jobs | 25,807 | 31,018 | 32,018 | 24.1% |

¹ SANDAG collects address-level employer records from the California Employment Development Department (EDD) and supplements that data with business license records from the local jurisdictions as well as uniformed military jobs numbers from Navy Region Southwest. SANDAG uses 2010 employment data from EDD for planning purposes. At this time, 2012 employment data are not available from EDD.

Source: SANDAG 2011

The SANDAG 2050 Regional Growth Forecast is the most accurate projection of the build-out of La Mesa according to current plans and policies. Land-use scenarios, and associated population, housing, and employment projections, as shown in Table 5-1, were created based on a vision of La Mesa beyond the 2012 General Plan. The forecast is not intended to be a prescription for future growth. Rather, the forecast is intended to show possible future development patterns based on regional projections and local input (SANDAG 2010a). Employment (number of jobs) is an indicator of the projected growth and intensity of nonresidential development.

As shown in Table 5-1, under the SANDAG 2050 Regional Growth Forecast, La Mesa's population is projected to be 78,174, with 32,566 residential units and 32,018 jobs.

The SANDAG 2050 Regional Growth Forecast assumes nearly full development of all land in the City, pursuant to the density and/or intensity specified in the Land Use and Urban Design Element of the 2012 General Plan, additional input from the City's planning department, and forecasted regional and local trends. Such development would represent a substantial change in the level of residential development and nonresidential development described for existing conditions. In 2012, the City had 25,840 existing residential units and 27,579 existing jobs. The 2010 population was 58,296. Under the SANDAG 2050 Regional Growth Forecast, when compared to existing conditions, there would be a 26 percent increase in total housing units, a 16 percent increase in jobs and, and a 34 percent increase in population.

Given the generalized nature of the forecast process, the analysis did not account for variations due to the implementation of additional regulations or site-specific conditions that could affect attainment of density. For example, parking requirements, slope and other land suitability characteristics, and implementation of environmental regulations may make attainment of maximum densities and/or intensities infeasible, and site-specific easements may restrict development of certain properties to levels below what is permitted by the zoning. Another variable is that decision makers have the authority to approve, deny, or modify discretionary projects based on numerous site-specific factors.

Aesthetics

Under the 2012 General Plan maximum build-out scenario, new development and redevelopment that has the potential to disrupt scenic vistas of resources such as hillsides, ridgelines, and open space would be allowed to occur. Infill development of vacant parcels and general intensification of development may limit some viewsheds of hills or reduce the feeling of open space within the planning area. Intensification would likely result in taller and more densely clustered buildings than currently exist, which could result in a potentially significant impact to scenic resources, such as the segment of SR-125 that is a designated State Scenic Highway. New development pursuant to the 2012 General Plan may increase the amount of light and glare within the planning area. Under the maximum theoretical build-out scenario, the potential for scenic vistas to be more impacted by the increase in dwelling units and nonresidential square footage would exist, and this situation would also have increased potential, as compared to the expected scenario, to impact the aesthetic quality of the planning area as infill development intensifies. Due to the magnitude of change in intensity of development under the theoretical build-out scenario and the lack of specific development projects and associated project-level mitigation, the impacts to

aesthetics and visual resources would be significant and unavoidable under the theoretical build-out scenario.

Air Quality

Under the expected build-out scenario under the 2010 General Plan, future development in the City would generate additional VMT and associated emissions of ozone precursors and particulate matter. Development in the planning area would be required to demonstrate compliance with the strategies and measures adopted as part of the RAQS and SIP during the environmental review process, as well as with the requirements of SDAPCD to reduce emissions of particulate matter. Operational and construction-related emissions require mitigation to prevent violation of air-quality standards under the 2012 General Plan. Air quality impacts to sensitive receptors and from odors under the 2012 General Plan would not be significant given compliance with existing plans and regulations.

Under the theoretical build-out conditions pursuant to the 2012 General Plan, the increased development capacity and density would add a substantial number of automobile, train, and airplane trips, as well as stationary-source emissions, which could potentially affect the City's ability to meet regional, state, and federal clean air standards, including implementation of the RAQS and/or applicable portions of the SIP. The increase in operational and construction-related emissions may result in the violation of air quality standards temporarily or persistently in the planning area. However, impacts from odors and on sensitive receptors are unlikely to be significant, since existing regulations and plans that prevent these impacts would still govern them. It is infeasible at this Program EIR-level to provide more specific mitigation that would reduce impacts from operational, construction-related, and other emissions to a less-than-significant level, since no specific development projects are known at this time. Therefore, the impacts to air quality under the theoretical build-out scenario would be significant and unavoidable.

Biological Resources

While biological resources are limited within the planning area, and additional development under the theoretical build-out scenario would not necessarily encroach into protected habitats, it would be reasonable to assume that an increase in impacts on the edge on habitats (including isolated vegetation communities and riparian and wetland habitats) would occur from increased population and development. The increase in population and residential development would cause significant disturbances to biological resources due to encroachment, accumulation of litter, runoff, exposure to human activity and domestic pets, and possible further degradation of natural habitat from nonnative plant species.

Under the theoretical build-out scenario, the intensification of development could also result in increased noise levels throughout the City. During the development and redevelopment process, there would be elevated noise from construction. In addition, there would be a general increase in ambient noise from roadway traffic and transit associated with population growth. An increase in noise levels has the potential to affect behavioral and physiological responses in noise-sensitive wildlife receptors. Adverse responses to increased noise may include hearing loss, the temporary masking of vocalizations commonly used during the breeding season, nest abandonment, and decrease in predator awareness, thereby resulting in a decrease in reproductive and overall fitness of certain animal species.

Although the 2012 General Plan includes policies and implementation programs that would lessen impacts, the magnitude of change under the theoretical build-out scenario would result in substantial impacts to biologic resources. It is infeasible at this Program EIR-level to provide more specific mitigation that would reduce impacts to a less-than-significant level because no specific projects are known. Therefore, these impacts would be significant and unavoidable.

Cultural Resources

As part of the development required to achieve the theoretical build-out scenario, extensive grading of large amounts of area within the City would be necessary—much more than would be anticipated under the expected build-out. For the projects that would be infill and redevelopment, grading for such projects would occur on previously graded surfaces. The likelihood of encountering archaeological resources is greatest on sites that have been minimally excavated in the past (e.g., undeveloped parcels, vacant lots, and lots containing surface parking), so previously excavated areas are generally considered to have a low potential for archaeological or historic resources, since the soil containing such resources has been removed. However, projects required to create the theoretical build-out scenario would likely involve underground parking areas, underground tanks, new pipelines, or replacement of pipelines, all at a lower depth than current development. In addition to grading, the maximum build-out would also be likely to impact historic structures as building demolition and surface clearance activities occur.

The potential for encountering human remains during construction activities is possible, and impacts to human remains under the theoretical build-out scenario may occur.

Although the 2012 General Plan includes policies and implementation programs that would lessen impacts to cultural resources, it is infeasible at the Program EIR-level to provide specific mitigation that would reduce impacts to a less-than-significant level, since no specific development projects are proposed. Due to the magnitude of grading that would be required to support the development and redevelopment of residential and nonresidential structures under

the theoretical build-out scenario, the potential for adverse physical or aesthetic effects to prehistoric, historic, or architecturally significant buildings, structures, objects, or sites, or impacts to existing archeological resources or the disturbance of any human remains, including those interred outside formal cemeteries, would be significant and unavoidable.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

GHG emissions resulting from the theoretical build-out scenario would be greater than those under the expected scenario of the 2012 General Plan, with additional emissions resulting from both construction and operations. While emissions from operations would be ongoing, emissions resulting from temporary construction activities are equally relevant, since GHGs from these activities would persist in the atmosphere. As a result, the theoretical build-out scenario would result in the generation of more GHG emissions from all sources than would occur from residential and nonresidential development under the 2012 General Plan scenario.

The 2012 General Plan contains policies and implementation programs that are aimed at reducing GHG emissions and avoiding conflict with adopted GHG-limiting plans, policies, and regulations. These programs are expandable and provide a framework for meeting future GHG emissions limits; however, it is infeasible at this Program EIR-level to provide specific mitigation that would reduce impacts to a less-than-significant level for the theoretical build-out scenario. In addition, ARB has not established a statewide or communitywide GHG emissions limit beyond 2020. Therefore, the timing and level of reductions needed beyond 2020 is uncertain, as is the City's role in developing local measures to parallel the state's efforts. Due to the magnitude of change in the level of residential and nonresidential development under the theoretical build-out scenario, and the lack of specific development projects and associated project-level mitigation, the impact on GHG emissions would be significant and unavoidable.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

The additional development required to realize theoretical build-out could occur on contaminated sites in the City, as well as induce an increase in the number of underground storage tanks that may increase the number of leaking underground storage tanks and hazardous sites. The theoretical build-out scenario may also cause an increase in the use, transport, and disposal of hazardous substances in the planning area. Taken together, the conditions that would occur under the theoretical build-out scenario would create a more substantial risk of exposure of persons and sensitive receptors to potential health hazards than under the expected development scenario of the 2012 General Plan.

Although the 2012 General Plan includes policies and implementation programs that would lessen these impacts, the magnitude of change in the level of residential and nonresidential development under the theoretical build-out scenario and associated growth would be significant. Since no specific development projects are proposed, it is infeasible at this Program EIR-level to provide specific mitigation measures that would reduce impacts to a less-than-significant level. Therefore, impacts associated with hazards and hazardous materials would be significant and unavoidable under the theoretical build-out scenario.

Hydrology and Water Quality

Although the theoretical build-out scenario would result in development and redevelopment throughout the City, future new development would be limited to a number of small vacant parcels and redevelopment would be limited to the City's existing urban areas, which would not be expected to substantially increase the amount of existing impervious surfaces or substantially change the flow velocity or volume of storm water runoff. New construction would be required to comply with federal, state, and local regulations governing water quality and pollution prevention; water quality impacts would be less than significant, as with the 2012 General Plan. Some areas of the City are subject to dam inundation or flood hazards, and more residents and structures would be exposed to these hazards under the maximum development scenario than the growth expected under the 2012 General Plan. However, implementation of policies and programs of the General Plan, along with required mitigation from this EIR, would reduce these risks to a less-than-significant level.

Land Use

The extensive redevelopment required to achieve the theoretical build-out scenario could create substantial incompatibilities such as bulk, shading, and noise between adjacent land uses as existing buildings are removed and replaced with more dense or intense development. Although the 2012 General Plan contains policies and implementation programs that would reduce impacts, it is infeasible at this Program EIR-level to provide more specific mitigation that would reduce impacts below a significant level, since specific development projects are not known. Due to the magnitude of growth under the theoretical build-out scenario and the lack of specific development projects and associated project-level mitigation, impacts related to land use and planning would be significant and unavoidable under the theoretical build-out scenario.

Noise

The existing General Plan, Noise Ordinance, and applicable standards of other agencies were not written in anticipation of the level of future development that would necessitate the theoretical

build-out condition. As such, the increase of noise from construction related to the redevelopment required for this theoretical maximum development scenario, as well as noise generated by the increased number of automobile or transit trips from the associated population increase, would cause exposure of sensitive receptors to future noise levels that would exceed established standards. Increased noise related to construction activities and population growth would also cause a substantial increase in the existing ambient noise levels, and would create land-use incompatibilities associated with increased noise.

Although the 2012 General Plan includes policies and implementation programs that would lessen impacts, it is infeasible at this Program EIR-level to provide specific mitigation that would reduce impacts to below a significant level, since specific development projects are not known. Due to the magnitude of change in the level of residential and nonresidential development under the theoretical build-out scenario, and the lack of specific development projects and associated project-level mitigation, all impacts to noise would be significant and unavoidable under the theoretical build-out scenario.

Paleontological Resources

The development levels associated with the theoretical build-out scenario would require extensive grading of large amounts of area within the City—much more than would be anticipated under the expected build-out scenario. For the projects that would be infill and redevelopment, grading for such projects would occur on previously graded surfaces. Because the likelihood of encountering paleontological resources is greatest on sites that have been minimally excavated in the past, these previously excavated areas would have lower potential for encountering paleontological resources since the soil containing them has already been removed. However, projects required to create the theoretical build-out scenario likely would involve underground parking areas, underground tanks, new pipelines, or replacement of pipelines, all at a lower depth than the previous development.

Although the 2012 General Plan includes policies and associated implementation programs that would lessen impacts, it is infeasible at the Program EIR-level to provide specific mitigation that would reduce impacts to a level of less than significant, since no specific development projects are proposed. Due to the magnitude of ground disturbance that would be required to support the residential and nonresidential densities required to achieve the theoretical build-out scenario, and the lack of mitigation available for paleontological resources, the potential for adverse effects to paleontological resources would be significant and unavoidable.

Population and Housing

To achieve the theoretical build-out scenario, there would be major changes in the overall level of development across the planning area, including more residential units and nonresidential square footage, than under the expected scenario of the 2012 General Plan. This conversion would lead to displacement of residents while older existing dwelling units are replaced with higher-density dwelling units. However, according to the General Plan's Housing Element, the City can accommodate a potential capacity of 5,058 new housing units (primarily multi-family) on currently vacant and underused sites. This is more than adequate to accommodate the housing needs; impacts related to the displacement of substantial numbers of people or housing would be less than significant.

Public Services

Build-out at the theoretical maximum in the planning area would lead to considerably larger populations of residents and employees within the City, which exceed the anticipated growth scenarios for the City. This growth in population would require an increase of public services, which would, in turn, necessitate the construction of additional or improved public facilities, such as fire stations, police stations, public libraries, and public schools. These new and upgraded facilities and services necessary to maintain service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives could cause significant environmental impacts. Due to the magnitude of change in the level of residential and nonresidential development under the theoretical build-out scenario, and the lack of specific development projects and associated project-level mitigation, impacts to public services and utilities would be significant and unavoidable under the theoretical build-out scenario.

Transportation and Traffic

The expected level of development resulting from implementation of the 2012 General Plan would result in an increase in residential population and nonresidential daytime population. This expected growth would have significant impacts on the LOS of several intersections and numerous roadway segment volumes during the peak hours. At the expected level of development, impacts to transportation and traffic would be significant and unavoidable. With the additional development levels that would occur under the theoretical build-out scenario, impacts to transportation and traffic would be exacerbated by substantial increases of the number of average daily trips and percent of daily vehicle miles traveled at LOS E or F.

Utilities and Energy

Existing public utility planning does not anticipate the growth in population and development that would occur with the theoretical build-out condition. Almost all utility planning documents in the region rely heavily on population growth and development projection data provided by SANDAG. No population growth analysis produced by SANDAG has projected the population within the planning area at levels similar to those found in the theoretical build-out scenario. As a result, demand for excessive amounts of water beyond projected available supplies and excessive amounts of electrical power, fuel, or other forms of energy would be generated in the planning area. In addition, with increased population and development, there would be more demand for utilities under the theoretical build-out scenario, which could require construction of new or physically altered utilities. This could cause significant environmental impacts in order to maintain service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives. Due to the magnitude of change in the level of residential and nonresidential development under the theoretical build-out scenario, and the lack of specific development projects and associated project-level mitigation, impacts to public services and utilities would be significant and unavoidable under the theoretical build-out scenario.

5.2 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

This section discusses the cumulative impacts associated with implementation of the 2012 General Plan. CEQA Guidelines define a cumulative impact as one in which two or more individual effects that, when considered together, are considerable or that compound or increase other environmental impacts. The individual effects may be changes resulting from a single project or a number of separate projects. The cumulative impact from several projects is the change in the environment that results from the incremental impact of the project when added to other closely related past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant projects taking place over a period of time (CEQA Guidelines Section 15355).

CEQA Guidelines Section 15130 describes the requirements for the discussion of cumulative impacts in an EIR. It states that an EIR should discuss cumulative impacts of a project when the project's incremental effect is cumulatively considerable. The discussion should reflect the severity of the impacts and their likelihood of occurrence, but the discussion need not provide as much detail as is provided for the impacts attributable to the project alone. In addition, the CEQA Guidelines allow for a project's contribution to be rendered less-than-cumulatively considerable with implementation of appropriate mitigation.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(b) presents two possible approaches for analyzing cumulative impacts:

- A list of past, present, and reasonably anticipated future projects producing related or cumulative impacts, including those projects outside the control of the agency.
- A summary of projections contained in an adopted local, regional, or statewide plan, or related planning document, that describes or evaluates conditions contributing to the cumulative effect. Such plans may include a General Plan, RTP, or plans for the reduction of GHG emissions. A summary of projections may also be contained in an adopted or certified prior environmental document for such a plan. Such projections may be supplemented with additional information such as a regional modeling program. Any such document should be referenced and made available to the public at a location specified by the lead agency.

The 2012 General Plan establishes policy to guide future development within the City and implementation that is long term in nature. The Regional Growth Projections Method is appropriate in evaluating cumulative impacts of the 2012 General Plan because it provides general growth projections for the region and considers long-term growth.

SANDAG has an adopted regional growth forecast through the horizon year of 2050. The 2050 Regional Growth Forecast is based on adopted General Plan land uses for all jurisdictions and was prepared for the 2050 RTP/SCS. The 2050 Regional Growth Forecast is also used to provide inputs for air quality management plans. The 2050 Regional Growth Forecast functions as a planning tool and does not predict the course of future events. Experience shows that these forecasts are most reliable at the regional and county levels, and less so for smaller areas like cities and Census tracts.

As shown in Table 5-2, SANDAG's 2050 Regional Growth Forecast for the City projects a 2035 population total of 68,682 persons and 28,985 households (SANDAG 2011). SANDAG's adopted growth forecast for the City is based on land uses consistent with the 2012 General Plan. The 2050 Regional Growth Forecast projects a 2035 population of 4,026,131 and 1,417,520 households in San Diego County.

**Table 5-2
City of La Mesa and San Diego County Growth Forecast**

| | City of La Mesa | | | County of San Diego | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|--------|--------|---------------------|-----------|--------|
| | 2012 | 2035 | Change | 2012 | 2035 | Change |
| Population | 58,296 | 68,682 | 17.8% | 3,143,429 | 4,026,131 | 28.1% |
| Housing Units | 25,840 | 28,985 | 12.2% | 1,165,818 | 1,417,520 | 21.6% |

Source: SANDAG 2011

Implementation of the 2012 General Plan would add population growth of 10,386 and 3,145 housing units to La Mesa by 2035. The population growth rate from 2012 to 2035 is approximately 17.8 percent for La Mesa and 28.1 percent for the County of San Diego.

The geographic area that could be affected by implementation of the 2012 General Plan depends on the type of environmental resource being considered. The general geographic area associated with different environmental effects of the 2012 General Plan defines the boundaries of the area considered in the cumulative impact analysis. Table 5-3 presents the general geographic areas associated with the different resources addressed in this Program EIR analysis.

**Table 5-3
Geographic Scope of Cumulative Impacts**

| Resource Issue | Geographic Area |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Aesthetics | Planning Area and Surrounding Communities |
| Air Quality | San Diego Region |
| Biological Resources | San Diego Region |
| Cultural Resources | San Diego Region |
| Greenhouse Gas Emissions | Statewide |
| Hazards and Hazardous Materials | San Diego Region |
| Hydrology and Water Quality | San Diego Region |
| Land Use | San Diego Region |
| Noise | San Diego Region |
| Paleontological Resources | San Diego Region |
| Population and Housing | San Diego Region |
| Public Services | San Diego Region |
| Transportation and Traffic | San Diego Region |
| Utilities and Energy | San Diego Region and Statewide |

Aesthetics

Infill development of vacant parcels and general intensification may limit some viewsheds of hills or reduce the feeling of open space in some areas in and around the City, and there would be a significant impact to the City or surrounding communities. Mitigation Measure AES-1 and the

design guidelines contained within the City's Urban Design Program would preserve and enhance existing scenic vistas and visually sensitive areas within the community, including the segment of SR-125 that is designated as a State Scenic Highway. Views from the adjacent Mount Helix neighborhood in unincorporated San Diego County and other communities would not be significantly impacted. Therefore, the 2012 General Plan would result in a less-than-significant cumulative impact to scenic vistas and scenic highways.

Redevelopment of Grossmont Shopping Center, a regional commercial center, and development and redevelopment of other sites has the potential to differ in design and scale than immediately adjacent uses, resulting in perceived visual impacts to residents and visitors. However, existing City regulations requiring design review and Mitigation Measures AES-2 would preserve the existing visual character of La Mesa's communities. Therefore, the 2012 General Plan would result in a less-than-significant cumulative impact to the visual character of La Mesa and the region.

Additional residential, commercial, and mixed-use infill and redevelopment would increase light and glare contributors. Through the development review process, the City also regulates outdoor lighting and building materials to avoid adverse light and glare effects. Current City practices address light and glare concerns. Thus, local contribution to any regional increase in light levels would not be cumulatively significant.

Air Quality

The 2012 General Plan and the related cumulative projects are under the jurisdiction of the SDAPCD and are all located in the SDAB. By its nature, air pollution is largely a cumulative impact. The nonattainment status of regional pollutants is a result of past and present development within the air basin, and this regional impact is a cumulative impact; projects within the air basin would contribute to this impact only on a cumulative basis. No single project would be sufficient in size, by itself, to result in nonattainment of the regional air quality standards. Instead, a project's emissions may be individually limited, but cumulatively considerable when taken in combination with past, present, and future development projects. All new development that results in an increase in air pollutant emissions above those assumed in regional air quality plans contributes to cumulative air quality impacts.

The cumulative analysis focuses on whether a specific project would result in cumulatively considerable emissions. Per CEQA Guidelines Section 15064(h)(4), the existence of significant cumulative impacts caused by other projects alone does not constitute substantial evidence that the proposed project's incremental effects are cumulatively considerable.

The determination of cumulative air quality impacts for construction-generated ozone emissions is based on whether the 2012 General Plan would result in emissions that exceed the applicable project-level thresholds of significance. Through the air quality analysis, it was determined that construction-related emissions related to the 2012 General Plan could exceed the recommend levels of significance for ROG, NO_x, CO, PM₁₀, or PM_{2.5} even with application of Mitigation Measure AQ-1. Additionally, long-term operational emissions associated with the 2012 General Plan would potentially conflict with an applicable air quality plan or violate an ambient air quality standard for criteria air pollutants ROG, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5}, even with application of Mitigation Measure AQ-2. In addition, implementation of the land uses identified in the 2012 General Plan would result in a net increase of long-term operation-related emissions from mobile and area sources. Therefore, construction and operation of the 2012 General Plan could result in a cumulatively considerable incremental contribution to a significant and unavoidable cumulative impact.

The traffic modeling for cumulative conditions, which includes traffic generated by the development of the 2012 General Plan, indicates that less-than-significant air quality impacts from mobile sources of CO would occur. Implementation of the 2012 General Plan would not cause additional roadway segments to operate at LOS F. Since the current operations do not result in a CO hotspot, the same roadway segment in the future would also not be anticipated to result in a CO hotspot. Additionally, hourly traffic volumes, which also affect the ability of a roadway or intersection to result in a CO hotspot, would not approach the screening thresholds identified in Section 4.2. Consequently, the 2012 General Plan would not result in a cumulatively considerable incremental contribution to a significant cumulative impact from exposure of sensitive receptors to CO emissions from mobile sources.

As discussed in Section 4.2, activities related to temporary, short-term construction associated with the 2012 General Plan are not anticipated expose sensitive receptors to substantial TAC concentrations. However, while development associated with the 2012 General Plan is not expected to include significant sources of TAC emissions, it is possible that individual projects constructed as part of the 2012 General Plan could expose sensitive receptors to adverse health impacts. Therefore, the 2012 General Plan would result in a cumulatively considerable incremental contribution to exposure of sensitive receptors to TACs.

As discussed in Section 4.2, the City has anticipated the possibility that sensitive receptors may be exposed to sources of odor during implementation of the 2012 General Plan. Major sources of odors could include new or expanded wastewater treatment and pumping facilities, manufacturing facilities with significant quantities of odorous materials, sanitary landfills and transfer stations, painting/coating operations (e.g., auto body shops), composting facilities, and confined animal facilities. Minor sources of odors include restaurants, coffee roasters, and other

urban land uses and are not typically associated with numerous odor complaints. With adherence to existing regulations and plans, impacts associated with odors would be reduced to a level less than significant and would not result in a cumulative impact.

Biological Resources

Cumulative impacts to biological resources may occur as a result of direct and indirect impacts involving the loss of sensitive biological resources and construction activities adjacent to sensitive biological resource areas. Implementation of the 2012 General Plan could result in impacts to nesting birds through the removal or trimming of trees and shrubs that could result as part of construction and maintenance activities in violation of the MBTA and CFG Code. New development could also impact scattered small habitat areas and underdeveloped property in the vicinity of the 70th Street, Amaya Street, and Spring Street transit stations, and would, therefore, have the potential to result in significant impacts to sensitive vegetation communities, sensitive plant species, and jurisdictional waters and wetlands. However, implementation of federal and state regulations, City programs, and the La Mesa Subarea Plan would reduce impacts related to biological resources to a level less than significant. Additionally, future development projects would be reviewed by the City per CEQA to identify potential impacts to biological resources on a project-by-project basis. If project-level impacts are identified, specific mitigation measures would be required. Therefore, implementation of the 2012 General Plan, with application of mitigation measures, would not result in cumulatively significant impacts to biological resources.

Cultural Resources

The cumulative context with respect to cultural resources includes the entire San Diego region, where a similar environment and similar historic and prehistoric occupation patterns yield similar resources. Cumulative projects located throughout the San Diego region would have the potential to result in a cumulative impact associated with the loss of archaeological and historical resources, including disturbance of human remains, through the physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of a resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of the resource would be materially impaired. Cumulative projects would be regulated by federal, state, and local regulations, including the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, California Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, PRC Section 5097, CEQA Section 21083.2, California Penal Code 622, the Mills Act, State Health and Safety Code Sections 18950–18961, Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and Standards, and the County of San Diego Resource Protection Ordinance. In addition, as discussed in Section 4.4.2, implementation of Mitigation Measures C-1, C-2, and C-3 would also serve to reduce both direct and cumulative impacts associated with implementation of the 2012 General Plan to a less-

than-significant level. Therefore, implementation of the 2012 General Plan would not result in cumulatively considerable impacts related to cultural resources.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The analysis of GHG emissions, and the associated contribution to climate change, is inherently a cumulative impact issue. GHG emissions are typically analyzed in relation to regional and state regulations. Therefore, project- and plan-level impacts of GHG emissions are treated the same as cumulative impacts. As stated in Section 4.5, adherence to SDAPCD rules and regulations and 2012 General Plan policies, and implementation of Mitigation Measure GHG-1 would reduce construction and operational GHG emissions impacts associated with implementation of the 2012 General Plan. By applying GHG emissions reductions that would result from existing federal and state measures, the City would achieve 7 percent reductions from baseline levels by 2020. Implementation of additional measures developed in the CAP would, at a minimum, meet the performance measure of 1990 levels by 2020, or 15 percent below 2005 levels by 2020. However, the level of GHG emissions reductions that may be achieved through state programs and measures beyond 2020 are unknown. Implementation of Mitigation Measure GHG-1 would comply with the 2020 target identified in AB 32 and the Scoping Plan. However, reductions beyond 2020 are uncertain at this time, as is the City's role in developing local measures to parallel the state's efforts; this impact would be significant and unavoidable after mitigation. Therefore, the level of reductions needed at the local level beyond 2020 are uncertain, and the cumulatively considerable incremental contribution to the increase in GHG emissions represented by implementation of the 2012 General Plan would be significant and unavoidable after mitigation.

Implementation of the 2012 General Plan would not increase the risk of physical harm related to impacts from climate change. Impacts would be less than significant and are not cumulatively considerable.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

As discussed in Section 4.6, impacts to the routine use, transportation, disposal, and release of hazardous materials from implementation of the 2012 General Plan would be less than significant based on the existing regulatory setting at the federal, state, and local levels, and the policies included in the 2012 General Plan. Compliance with existing regulations would also result in a less-than-significant impact regarding the potential for hazardous materials to be located within 0.25 mile of schools. Individual users of hazardous materials would continue to be regulated by local disclosure, permitting, and notification requirements of the "Disclosure of Hazardous Materials" program consistent with all federal, state, and local laws. In accordance

with federal, state, and local requirements and regulations, all new development facilitated by the 2012 General Plan that involves contaminated property, such as those sites identified by the Cortese List, would involve the cleanup and/or remediation of the property.

In addition, policies of the 2012 General Plan would not impact the development or function of the Montgomery Airport or Gillespie Airport in any manner. The City is currently in conformance with ALUCP height and land-use policies, and the proposed program-level modifications would not impact compliance. As a result, the 2012 General Plan would not result in a cumulatively significant impact associated with hazards or hazardous materials.

Hydrology

The City is located within the San Diego River, Sweetwater River, and Pueblo San Diego watersheds. These watersheds ultimately drain to the Pacific Ocean. As areas east and outside of La Mesa become more heavily populated, it is anticipated that there would be an increase in pollutant loads from urban runoff in the creek systems. Increased impervious surfaces associated with regional growth and land-use changes would collect pollutants that would be transported via storm water to the local municipal storm water conveyance system. Typical pollutants associated with increased urbanization would be expected to principally include sediment, oil and grease, metals, and nutrients.

Changes would likely include channel degradation and geotechnical instability, loss of natural habitat and recreation opportunities, and flooding. Cumulative impacts related to hydrologic conditions may be mitigated by implementation of local grading ordinances and NPDES permits. As proposed projects are submitted for environmental and engineering review, compliance with applicable regional, state, and federal water quality regulations would appropriately guide project designs such that potential impacts associated with increased runoff and pollutant generation from development and redevelopment are addressed. Future development projects in the region, including those in La Mesa, would need to be compliant with regulatory requirements that serve to minimize potential surface water quality and groundwater impacts, such as the Construction General Permit (Order 2009-0009-DWQ) and/or San Diego County Municipal Storm Water Permit (Order R9-2007-0001) and associated requirements of various municipal storm water management plans and land development requirements (e.g., Jurisdictional Urban Runoff Management Plan and SUSMP requirements).

Conformance and compliance to these water quality standards, WDRs, and storm water management programs for priority development projects would require that pre-project hydrology be maintained after construction is completed and that associated runoff be treated to remove or reduce pollutants (i.e., impacts to surface water and groundwater quality) to

insignificant levels. For projects that discharge to impaired water bodies, BMPs would be required that target removal of the pollutants that are causing the impairment of the water body. Additionally, site redevelopment in the City and the region may provide opportunities to create new pervious surfaces through new landscaping and use of porous pavements, which could reduce the amount of runoff and associated pollutants.

With adherence to and implementation of applicable permits and regulations, existing City programs and practices, policies of the 2012 General Plan, and existing water conservation and drought-tolerant landscaping regulations, development associated with the 2012 General Plan would not contribute to cumulatively significant impacts to water quality, hydrology, or drainage. In addition, implementation of the 2012 General Plan is not anticipated to result in significantly increasing the risk of flooding or exposing structures and people to an increased flood risk, as discussed in Section 4.7, and would, therefore, not contribute to a cumulatively significant impact in the region associated with flooding.

Land Use

Implementation of the 2012 General Plan would not physically divide established communities within the City or adjacent jurisdictions. Additionally, the 2012 General Plan contains policies and implementation programs intended to ensure that development is compatible with existing regional plans. The SANDAG RCP and the SANDAG 2050 RTP/SCS are regional planning documents. The City considered the RCP goals and implemented them to the extent feasible during the 2012 General Plan planning process. The RCP's smart growth principles are incorporated into the 2012 General Plan's visions and goals, which guide the Land Use Plan and provide the basis for many of the policies of the Land Use Element. Additionally, the 2012 General Plan is consistent with the SCS implementing actions applicable to local agencies as set forth in the 2050 RTP/SCS. The 2012 General Plan is also consistent with the Montgomery Field and Gillespie Field ALUCPs and adopted HCPs. Therefore, implementation of the 2012 General Plan would not contribute to a cumulatively significant land use impact.

Noise

Development associated with implementing the 2012 General Plan would result in an increase in noise levels over time related to construction, transportation, industrial/commercial activities, and other activities. Enforcement of federal, state, and local regulations, in combination with Mitigation Measures N-1 through N-4, would reduce potential impacts associated with noise to a less-than-significant level. Other communities within the San Diego region will also experience an increase in noise levels associated with future growth. Each of these communities is also subject to federal, state, and local regulations, and environmental mitigation designed to control

noise levels. This regulatory approach to noise control in the region avoids a significant cumulative impact. As a result, implementation of the 2012 General Plan would not contribute to a cumulatively significant noise impact.

Paleontological Resources

Ground-disturbing activities, such as construction associated with infill, redevelopment, and/or expansion of infrastructure, have the potential to impact buried paleontological resources. La Mesa is located in areas high in paleontological sensitivity. Thus, development of land pursuant to the 2012 General Plan has the potential to significantly impact unknown paleontological resources. However, application of federal, state, and local regulations, as well as Mitigation Measure PALEO-1 would reduce potential impacts to a less-than-significant level. Therefore, implementation of the 2012 General Plan would not result in a cumulatively significant impact to paleontological resources.

Population and Housing

By 2035, additional growth and development are anticipated within the region. From 2010, population of the region is forecasted to increase by 801,699 people, housing by 268,094 units, and employment by 312,292 jobs. The land-use components of the SANDAG 2050 RTP/SCS would induce substantial regional growth through policies and strategies that provide for the development of new housing units, job-supporting nonresidential land uses, and related improvements to public facilities and infrastructure.

The population of La Mesa is projected to grow by 17.8 percent from 2012 to 2035, but this growth is less than projected for the region as a whole (28.1 percent). Therefore, the 2012 General Plan would not contribute to substantial population growth in the region.

By 2035, it is anticipated that a substantial number of existing housing units in the San Diego region would be replaced, particularly in the heavily urbanized western portions of the San Diego region, such as downtown, Mid-City, and coastal communities of the City of San Diego; communities along the SR-76 corridor; and portions of El Cajon, National City, and Oceanside (SANDAG 2011).

Future development and redevelopment in La Mesa are anticipated to occur along transit corridors and adjacent to the five trolley stations located in the City, in accordance with the policies in the 2012 General Plan. Policies of the 2012 General Plan seek to meet local and regional growth demands with provisions for mixed-use and compact forms of development to supplement and support traditional housing options and regional growth goals and patterns. Five

privately owned trailer parks would potentially be replaced with new residential development. However, vacancies within the existing housing stock would absorb this displacement of residents. Permitted capacity of the mixed-use land-use designation (up to 40 dwelling units per acre) would allow for enough new residential development to replace any housing units lost. Therefore, implementation of the 2012 General Plan would not displace a substantial number of people or housing units, and would not contribute to a cumulatively significant impact.

Public Services, Utilities, and Energy

The geographic scope of cumulative impacts to public services, utilities, and energy resources is generally limited to the service district or jurisdiction; the cumulative scenario for each utility is the district or jurisdiction providing the service. The analysis in Section 4.12 of this Program EIR assesses the cumulative, long-term impacts of growth within the planning area on water service, sewer service, energy services, and solid waste services. Future regional growth will result in increased demand for police protection, fire protection, schools, libraries, water infrastructure, wastewater service, solid waste management, storm water and drainage facilities, and energy resources throughout the region. Local and regional service providers will continue to evaluate the levels of service desired and the funding sources available to meet increases in demand. In addition, local agencies must consistently review and update mutual aid agreements between the various service providers.

Funding and implementation of public services will generally be ensured by concurrency requirements, assessment district requirements, and development impact fees. Service providers and jurisdictions are generally planning for projected regional growth with expanded facilities funded through impact fees. Individual projects for the construction or expansion of new facilities would be evaluated through the CEQA review process, and responsible agencies would apply necessary mitigation measures to avoid or reduce potentially significant environmental impacts. Therefore, the City's contribution to cumulative impacts associated with expanding or constructing public services and facilities would be less than significant.

Future growth within the City will increase demand for utilities and services, including energy. To meet this increased demand, service providers will continue to evaluate their available levels of service and the funding sources available to meet increases in demand. Although the ability of local service providers to provide specific levels of services varies throughout the region, sound local planning to accommodate future growth and adherence to 2012 General Plan policies and implementation programs, along with implementation of the State Energy Code (Title 24) requirements, would avoid significant cumulative utility and energy impacts.

Transportation and Traffic

By 2035, planned transportation network improvements in the region identified in the SANDAG 2050 RTP/SCS would be completed and operational; these improvements include additional freeway and high-occupancy-vehicle connector improvements; transit projects, including improved trolley service to and from La Mesa; and various active transportation (bicycle and pedestrian) improvements. Region-wide, there would not be a substantial increase in the average commute time, decrease in accessibility within 30 minutes of peak-period work and higher-education trips, decrease in accessibility of non-work-related trips within 15 minutes, or increase in VMT in congested conditions (SANDAG 2011). In short, planned region-wide improvements should benefit transportation and traffic conditions by 2035. These improvements take into account the land use plans, population growth, and transportation networks located in individual jurisdictions in the region, including La Mesa.

Implementation of the 2012 General Plan would not result in significant impacts to intersection operation and would not result in a cumulatively significant impact on LOS in the region by 2035. Additionally, the 2012 would result in a less-than-significant impact on public transportation and bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and would, therefore, result in a less-than-significant cumulative impact in these areas.