the future of southern california

Murrieta

General Plan Update

Section 4.0:

Basis of Cumulative Analysis

4.0   BASIS OF CUMULATIVE ANALYSIS

4.1   INTRODUCTION

CEQA Guidelines Section 15355 defines cumulative impacts as "*two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental impacts . . .*" The following elements are necessary in an adequate discussion of cumulative impacts, as noted in *CEQA Guidelines* Sections 15130(b) through 15130(e).

(b)   *The discussion of cumulative impacts shall reflect the severity of the impacts and their likelihood of occurrence, but the discussion need not provide as great detail as is provided for the effects attributable to the project alone. The discussion should be guided by standards of practicality and reasonableness, and should focus on the cumulative impact to which the identified other project contribute rather than the attributes of other projects which do not contribute to the cumulative impact. The following elements are necessary to an adequate discussion of significant cumulative impacts:*

    (1)   *Either:*

        (A)   *A list of relevant past, present and probable future projects, producing related or cumulative impacts, including, if necessary, those projects outside the control of the agency, or*

        (B)   *A summary of projections contained in an adopted General Plan or related planning document, or in a prior environmental document which has been adopted or certified, which described or evaluated regional or area-wide conditions contributing to the cumulative impact.*

    (2)   *When utilizing a list, as suggested in paragraph (1) of subdivision (b), factors to consider when determining whether to include a related project should include the nature of each environmental resources being examined, the location of the project and its type. Location may be important, for example, when water quality impacts are at issue since projects outside the watershed would probably not contribute to a cumulative effect. Project type may be important, for example, when the impact is specialized, such as a particular air pollutant or mode of traffic.*

(3) Lead agencies should define the geographic scope of the area affected by the cumulative effect and provide a reasonable explanation for the geographic limitation used.

(4) A summary of the expected environmental effects to be produced by those projects with specific reference to additional information stating where that information is available; and

(5) A specific analysis of the cumulative impacts of the relevant projects. An EIR shall examine reasonable, feasible options for mitigating or avoiding the project's contribution to any significant cumulative effects.

(c) With some projects, the only feasible mitigation for cumulative impacts may involve the adoption of ordinances or regulations rather than the imposition of conditions on a project-by-project basis.

(d) Previously approved land use documents such as general plans, specific plans, and local coastal plans may be used in cumulative impact analysis. A pertinent discussion of cumulative impacts contained in one or more previously certified EIRs may be incorporated by reference pursuant to the provisions for tiering and program EIRs. No further cumulative impact analysis is required when a project is consistent with a general, specific, master or comparable programmatic plan where the lead agency determines that the regional or areawide cumulative impacts of the proposed project have already been adequately addressed, as defined in Section 15152(f), in a certified EIR for that plan.

(e) If a cumulative impact was adequately addressed in a prior EIR for a community plan, zoning action, or general plan, and the project is consistent with that plan or action, then an EIR for such a project should not further analyze that cumulative impact, as provided by Section 15183(j).

4.2   CUMULATIVE ANALYSIS IN THIS EIR

Cumulative impacts may be discussed in terms of proposed General Plan 2035 (proposed project) impacts, in combination with impacts anticipated for future development (including approved and planned development within the project area and surrounding affected area), and impacts associated with growth within the region. The geographic area for each impact varies, depending on the nature of the impact, whether it is regional, such as air quality, or local, such as noise.

Quantification can be difficult for cumulative impacts, as it requires speculative estimates of impacts including, but not limited to the following: the geographic diversity of impacts (impacts of future development may affect different areas); variations in time of impacts; and data for buildout projections may change following subsequent approvals. However, every attempt has

been made herein to make sound qualitative judgments of the combined effects of, and relationship between, land uses and potential impacts.

This EIR assesses the overall environmental effects of the proposed General Plan 2035 at a program level of detail. This EIR evaluates the overall (cumulative) effects of development in accordance with the land use designations, land use assumptions, and all goals, policies and implementing measures contained in the proposed General Plan 2035. Therefore, the environmental analysis in Section 5.1 through Section 5.22 of this EIR considers project impacts in combination with regional impacts, where applicable, that could be expected as other cities within Riverside County.

In compliance with *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15130(1)(b), this section of the EIR describes the environmental effects of the proposed General Plan 2035 in combination with the effects of regional buildout, as forecasted in the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide (RCPG).

As of 2009, based on County of Riverside Tax Assessor's and WRCOG Subregion Socio-Economic data, the City of Murrieta population is estimated to be 101,253 persons, making it the fifth most populous City of Riverside County's 26 cities. These residents receive public services from the public agencies discussed in Section 5.15 through Section 5.22. The City is anticipated to have a maximum total of 44,484 dwelling units by the year 2035, which would result in a maximum population of 133,452 persons[1] in the year 2035. Therefore, the addition of 10,734 dwelling units over the next 25-year period would result in an additional 32,199 residents in the City under implementation of the proposed General Plan 2035 conditions.

SCAG provides population, housing, and employment projections to 2035. As of January 2010, the County's population was an estimated 2,139,535 persons. According to SCAG, with a forecast population of approximately 3,596,680 persons by 2035, the County's population is projected to grow approximately 68 percent between 2010 and 2035. SCAG forecasts the City's population will increase by approximately 26.4 percent between 2009 and 2035, for a total population of approximately 127,962 persons by 2035. Comparatively, the City is forecast to grow at a much lower rate between 2009 and 2035 than the County, which is forecast to more than double in size. By 2035, SCAG forecasts the City will constitute approximately 3.6 percent of the County's population. The County's housing inventory as of January 2010 totaled 784,357 DU, with a vacancy rate of 13.01 percent and an average household size of 3.084 persons. The County's housing inventory is projected to total 1,360,038 DU by 2035, representing an increase of approximately 73.4 percent between 2010 and 2035. As of October 2010, the County's labor force totaled 910,900 persons, with an unemployment rate of 14.7 percent. Between 2000 and 2010, the unemployment rate almost doubled. According to SCAG projections, Riverside County's labor market is projected to increase from 784,998 jobs in 2010 to 1,413,552 jobs by 2035. The labor market's growth rate between 2010 and 2035 would be approximately 80 percent (628,524 jobs).

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[1] This population projection is based on 44,484 DU, 100 percent occupancy, and 3.0 persons per household.

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