

4 Environmental Impact Analysis

As discussed under CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(d), where a project involves the adoption of regulations, such as the 2021 LRDP, the lead agency shall describe the project as a development proposal for the purpose of environmental analysis. Consistent with that approach, this EIR analyzes the environmental effects from reasonably foreseeable growth and development projected under the proposed 2021 LRDP (See Section 2, *Project Description*). This analysis is provided for the specific resource areas identified for further analysis in the Initial Study and scoping process.

The *CEQA Guidelines* §15382 defines “significant effect on the environment” as:

a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any of the physical conditions within the area affected by the project including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, ambient noise, and objects of historic or aesthetic significance. An economic or social change by itself shall not be considered a significant effect on the environment. A social or economic change related to a physical change may be considered in determining whether the physical change is significant.

Scope of the Environmental Impact Analysis

In July 2020, UCR conducted an Initial Study for the proposed 2021 LRDP, which determined the potentially significant impacts that may occur with implementation of the proposed 2021 LRDP. The Initial Study identified potentially significant impacts that required additional analysis in a Draft EIR. Such identified impacts are related to Aesthetics (CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Criterion a, c, and d), Agricultural Resources (Criterion a and e), Air Quality (Criterion a, b, and c), Biological Resources (Criterion a, b, c, and d), Cultural Resources (Criterion a and b), Energy (Criterion a and b), Geology and Soils (Criterion a, c, and f), Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions (Criterion a and b), Hazards and Hazardous Materials (Criterion a [operational], b, c, and f), Hydrology and Water Quality (Criterion a, b, c, and e), Noise (Criterion a and b), Public Services (Criterion a, c, and d), Recreation (Criterion a and b), Transportation (Criterion a, b, c, and d), Tribal Cultural Resources (Criterion a and b), Utilities and Service Systems (Criterion a, b, c, d, and e), and Wildfire (Criterion a, b, c, and d).

The proposed 2021 LRDP’s potential environmental effects are analyzed for the following environmental resource areas:

- 4.1 Aesthetics
- 4.2 Agricultural Resources
- 4.3 Air Quality
- 4.4 Biological Resources
- 4.5 Cultural Resources
- 4.6 Energy
- 4.7 Geology and Soils
- 4.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- 4.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- 4.10 Hydrology and Water Quality
- 4.11 Noise
- 4.12 Population and Housing

- 4.13 Public Services
- 4.14 Recreation
- 4.15 Transportation
- 4.16 Tribal Cultural Resources
- 4.17 Utilities and Service Systems
- 4.18 Wildfire

In some instances, several of the underlying significance criteria address overlapping issues and may be combined into an individual impact analysis in this EIR.

The Initial Study also determined that impacts from multiple environmental issue topics would be less than significant and would, therefore, not be addressed further in the Draft EIR consistent with CEQA Guidelines Sections 15063(c)(3)(A) and 15128. These topics included: Aesthetics (CEQA Guidelines Appendix G, Criterion b), Agricultural Resources (Criterion b, c, and d), Air Quality (Criterion d), Biological Resources (Criterion e and f), Cultural Resources (Criterion c), Geology and Soils (Criterion b, d, and e), Hazards and Hazardous Materials (Criterion a [construction], d, e, and g), Hydrology and Water Quality (Criterion d), Land Use and Planning (Criterion a and b), Mineral Resources (Criterion a and b), Noise (Criterion c), Population and Housing (Criterion a and b), and Public Services (Criterion b and e). Impacts found to be less than significant and those areas with a conclusion of no impact, would inherently also not result in cumulatively considerable impacts and no further cumulative analysis is required. Additional details on these analyses are provided in the Initial Study, included as Appendix A of this Draft EIR.

Based upon community concerns raised during the public scoping period, Hazards and Hazardous Materials (Criterion d and e) and Population and Housing (Criterion a and b) were carried forward into the EIR for additional review (See Section 4.9 and Section 4.12, respectively).

General Format of the Environmental Analysis

As provided by Section 15126.2(a) of the CEQA Guidelines, direct, indirect, short-term, on-campus, and/or off-campus impacts are addressed, as appropriate, for each environmental resource area. Sections 4.1 through 4.18 of this EIR contain a discussion of the potential environmental effects from implementation of the proposed 2021 LRDP, including information related to existing site conditions, analyses of the type and magnitude of individual and cumulative environmental impacts, policies of the proposed 2021 LRDP that relate to the environmental resource area, and mitigation measures that could reduce or avoid environmental impacts. The analysis of environmental impacts considers both the construction and operational phases associated with implementation of the proposed 2021 LRDP.

Sections 4.1 through 4.18 follow the same general format:

- **Environmental Setting.** The assessment of each issue area begins with a discussion of the Environmental Setting related to the issue. According to Section 15125 of the CEQA Guidelines, an EIR must include a description of the existing physical environmental conditions in the vicinity of the project to provide the “baseline condition” against which project-related impacts are compared. Normally, the baseline condition is the physical condition that exists when the NOP is published. As described in greater detail in Section 3, *Environmental Setting*, baseline conditions contained in this EIR are generally taken from the 2018/2019 academic year, when the draft 2021 LRDP was being prepared.

- **Regulatory Setting.** The Regulatory Setting subsection provides a summary of regulations, plans, policies, and laws that will shape the way development would occur under the LRDP. The regulatory setting may also include discussion of inconsistency with applicable plans. However, UCR is part of the University of California, a constitutionally created entity of the State, with “full powers of organization and government” (Cal. Const. Art. IX, Section 9).

As a constitutionally-created State entity, UCR is not subject to municipal regulations of surrounding local governments, such as the City of Riverside (City) General Plan or land use ordinances, for uses on property owned or controlled by the University that are in furtherance of the University’s educational purposes. Although there is no formal mechanism for joint planning or the exchange of ideas, UCR may consider, for coordination purposes, aspects of local plans and policies for the communities surrounding the UCR campus when it is appropriate and feasible, but it is not bound by those plans and policies in its planning efforts.

- **Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures.** The Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures subsection identifies the resource area “significance criteria” and analysis methodology to determine whether impacts are considered significant.

The subsection further describes the impact of reasonably foreseeable growth and development projected under the proposed 2021 LRDP, proposed mitigation measures for significant impacts, and the level of significance after mitigation.

Each effect under consideration for an issue area is separately listed in bold text with the discussion of the effect and its significance. Each bolded impact statement also contains a statement of the significance determination for the environmental impact as follows:

- **Significant and Unavoidable.** The impact reaches or exceeds the defined threshold of significance and mitigation measures are therefore required if feasible. However, application of feasible mitigation measures would not reduce the impact to a less than significant level.
- **Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated.** The impact reaches or exceeds the defined threshold of significance and mitigation measures. Mitigation measures if adopted, will reduce the significant impact to a less than significant level. If proposed mitigation measures are not adopted, such impacts would be significant and unavoidable.
- **Less than Significant.** The impact does not reach or exceed the defined threshold of significance levels and mitigation measures are not required.
- **No Impact.** No adverse effect on the environment would occur and mitigation measures are not required.

Following each environmental impact discussion is a list of proposed mitigation measures (if feasible) and the residual effects or level of significance remaining after implementation of the mitigation measure(s). Consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.4, the EIR includes proposed mitigation measures if feasible; however, a final decision on those measures will be made until the project is considered by the Regents. Additionally, other agencies may have approval authority over some of the mitigation measures.

In cases where the mitigation measure for an impact could have a significant environmental impact in another environmental resource area, this impact is discussed and evaluated as a secondary impact in conjunction with the mitigation measure.

- **Cumulative Impacts.** Cumulative impacts refer to two or more individual effects which, when considered together, are considerable or which compound or increase other environmental

impacts.” (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15355). CEQA requires that cumulative impacts be discussed when the “project’s incremental effect is cumulatively considerable... [or] ... provide a basis for concluding that the incremental effect is not cumulatively considerable (CEQA Guidelines Section 15130 (a)).” This section evaluates the cumulative impacts associated with the proposed 2021 LRDP in conjunction with other planned and pending developments in the area listed in Section 4.3, *Cumulative Development* below.

The geographic scope defines the geographic area in which projects may contribute to a specific cumulative impact. The geographic scope of the cumulative impact analysis varies depending upon the specific environmental issue area being analyzed. Past, present, and future reasonably foreseeable projects within the defined geographic area for a given cumulative issue must be considered. CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(b) presents two possible approaches for adequately discussing significant cumulative impacts. It indicates that either of the following could be used:

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

Past and present projects are considered as part of the baseline when evaluating project impacts. Any exceptions are noted in the individual sections.

This Draft EIR uses both of these methods depending upon the specific resource areas. Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(b), Table 2-4 in Section 2, *Project Description*, lists projects that are occurring at UCR that are not dependent on the 2021 LRDP that were identified and considered in some of the cumulative impact analyses which rely on the list of projects. Table 2-4 contains interim projects on the UCR campus that were planned and approved for development under the guidance of the 2005 LRDP that incorporates environmental analysis tiered from the 2005 LRDP EIR and will be constructed prior to the adoption of the proposed 2021 LRDP.

The cumulative analysis presented in this EIR also uses a projections-based approach. Development that occurs by the planning horizon of the proposed 2021 LRDP is combined with the growth projections of applicable planning documents. The analysis utilizes different geographic scopes depending on the specific environmental resource area; additional details are provided in the individual sections.

- **References.** This section identifies sources relied upon for each environmental topic area analyzed in this document.

Cumulative Development

The cumulative analysis presented in this EIR uses a projections-based approach or list of projects approach depending upon the specific resource area. Development that occurs by the planning horizon of the proposed 2021 LRDP is combined with the growth projections of applicable planning documents. The analysis utilizes different geographic scopes depending upon the specific environmental resource area; additional details are provided in the individual sections in Section 4. Because different geographic scopes are utilized, the projections used vary from section to section.

To identify off-campus future and reasonably foreseeable projects, EIR preparers consulted the surrounding communities of the cities of Riverside and Moreno Valley, as well as the County of Riverside. A complete list of projects considered is provided as Appendix A to the Transportation Impact Analysis. The Transportation Impact Analysis is provided as Appendix J to this EIR. In addition, this Draft EIR reviewed the City's General Plan, City-adopted neighborhood plans, and relevant specific plans to assess projected development described within those plans during the lifetime of the proposed 2021 LRDP (years 2021 to 2035). The subsection on Long-Range Regional Growth describes these plans in more detail.

However, where the relevant geographic area extends beyond this boundary, Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) forecasts, the 2016 Air Quality Management Plan, Urban Water Management Plans (UWMPs), and other area plans have also been considered. Each resource section's cumulative analysis identifies the planning documents that correspond to the relevant geographic scope of the analysis. While this EIR relies on a projections approach for cumulative impacts, in some cases specific pending projects in the vicinity of the plan area are discussed to provide additional context.

As noted in other sections of this Draft EIR, some campus facilities and development proposals are in process pursuant to the 2005 LRDP. Collectively, those campus projects are in various stages of development, including in the planning phase, design stage, or construction phase and are included in Table 4-1 as cumulative projects. Past and present operational projects are not presented in the table, as they have already been incorporated into baseline conditions.

The Cumulative Projects List is not intended to be an all-inclusive list of projects in the region, but rather, an identification of projects constructed, approved, or under review in the vicinity of the UCR campus at the time the proposed 2021 LRDP environmental analysis commenced. Off-campus projects considered near-term (e.g. will likely be developed in the foreseeable future) were selected based on location (within 5 miles of the UCR campus) and size (affecting 10 or more acres, 100 or more units, or 100,000 or more sf). This geographic area was considered due to the proximity to the UCR campus and the potential for regionwide impacts. Long-range projects are expected to be developed over the course of the proposed 2021 LRDP (i.e., through 2035), but their implementation timeline is currently unknown. Long-range projects will undergo individual environmental analysis that will include a specific assessment of cumulative impacts, at the appropriate time in their development.

Table 4-1 UCR Cumulative Projects List

Project Name	Project Type	Approximate Project Size/ Dwelling Unit Count	Project Status
On-Campus Projects			
North District Phase 1	Residential	545,000 gsf	Under construction; anticipated construction completion Summer 2021
North District Future Phases	Residential	1,300,400 gsf	To be determined
Dundee Glasgow	Residential	Residence Hall 176,400 gsf/ Dining Hall 50,600 gsf	Glasgow (Dining Hall) and Dundee (Residence Halls) construction completed
The Barn	Dining Establishment/ Entertainment Center	8,350 gsf	Construction completed

University of California, Riverside
2021 Long Range Development Plan

Project Name	Project Type	Approximate Project Size/ Dwelling Unit Count	Project Status
Plant Growth Environments Facility (PGEF)	Academics/Research Facility	38,000 gsf	Construction completed
Student Success Center (SSC)	Student Support	80,000 gsf	Construction completion anticipated Summer/Fall 2021
Parking Structure 1	Parking	Approximately 1,079 spaces	Construction completion anticipated Summer 2021
Pierce Hall Renovation	Academic	Interior renovation	Phase 1 completed; Phase 2 completion anticipated Summer 2021
Batchelor Hall Renovation	Academic	Interior renovation	Construction anticipated to begin early 2021; completion anticipated Fall 2023
Student Health & Counseling Center	Academic/Student Services	50,000 gsf	Construction anticipated to begin Summer 2021; completion anticipated Summer 2023
School of Medicine Building 2	Academic	120,000 gsf	Construction anticipated to begin Summer 2021; completion anticipated Summer 2023
STEM Education Center (pending)	Non-Affiliated Education Facility	95,000 gsf	Planning and Environmental Review anticipated to begin Summer 2021; construction anticipated in 2-5 years
Off-Campus Projects – City of Riverside (within 5 miles of campus, greater than 10 acres, and/or more than 100 housing units or 100,000 sf of development)			
SEC Valley Springs Parkway and Gateway Drive (APN 291-450-055)	Healthcare Campus	504,000 gsf (hospital) 280 beds 370,000 gsf (medical office)	Currently in construction; parking structure in plan check
Alessandro Boulevard and Barton Street (APN 263-060-036)	Warehouse	603,000 gsf	To be determined
The Exchange/NEC Orange Street and Vista Avenue (APN 209-060-029)	Mixed Use	482 multi-family units 44,500 gsf retail/restaurant 4000 gsf gas station 229 hotel rooms 27 RV camping spaces	Currently in grading and building permit review
750 Marlborough Avenue (APN 257-060-002)	Warehouse	346,330 gsf	Plans are in for grading plan check
3667 Placentia (APN 246-070-002)	Warehouse	308,000 gsf	In litigation in the State appeals court. Timing of hearing and determination by the courts unknown.
Northerly side of Grove Community Drive, between Trautwein Road and Worchester Lane (APN 284-390-029)	Single-Family Residential	13.5 acres/85 units	unknown

Project Name	Project Type	Approximate Project Size/ Dwelling Unit Count	Project Status
3444 Center Street (APN 246-130-001)	Mobile Home Park	104 units	Currently in construction
APN 263-091-015	Industrial Business Park	176,149 gsf	unknown
4445 Magnolia (APN 217-070-027)	Riverside Community Hospital Expansion	251,500 gsf	No recent major projects
Off-Campus Projects – City of Moreno Valley (within 5 miles of campus, greater than 10 acres, and/or more than 100 housing units or 100,000 sf of development)			
Eucalyptus Avenue at Edgemont Street	Residential	384 units	Approved and received certificate of occupancy
Box Springs Road and Clark Street	Residential	266 units	Approved and received certificate of occupancy

gsf – gross square feet

sf – square feet

Note: There are no projects in Riverside County that are also within 5 miles of campus, greater than 10 acres, and/or more than 100 housing units or 100,000 sf of development.

Long-Range Regional Growth

The City and the San Bernardino-Ontario-Riverside region is an urban environment that will continue to experience growth and development over time. Regional, long-range development, and transportation projects are directed by Connect SoCal, SCAG’s Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS), the broader impacts of which were evaluated in the Program EIR for Connect SoCal, which serve as a foundation for subsequent, site-specific environmental review documents for individual transportation and development projects in the region (SCAG 2019). Table 4-2 depicts the 2020 population for the City and the San Bernardino-Ontario-Riverside region based on estimates from the Department of Finance (DOF) and the 2016 SCAG forecast. A detailed estimation of regional growth is provided in Section 4.12, *Population and Housing*.

Table 4-2 SCAG Projections for the City of Riverside, Moreno Valley, and the San Bernardino-Ontario-Riverside Region

	2020 Population Estimate	2035 Population Estimate	Change 2020-2035
City of Riverside	328,155	384,100	55,945
Moreno Valley	208,838	250,200	41,362
San Bernardino-Ontario-Riverside region	659,099	772,500	113,401

¹DOF 2020

²SCAG 2016

SCAG = Southern California Association of Governments

Local, long-range planning documents such as the City’s General Plan, neighborhood plans, and specific plans are designed to manage and direct growth in the area around UCR. These plans provide the context for longer-term cumulative impact analysis. The environmental impacts of each plan have been evaluated under CEQA, either as a separate CEQA document or included in the City’s

General Plan EIR. The cumulative impact analyses in this Draft EIR reviewed the City's neighborhood plans encompassing and abutting UCR.

Connect SoCal

Connect SoCal is the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS adopted by SCAG in 2020.¹ It is a long-range vision plan that balances future mobility and housing needs with economic, environmental, and public health goals. Connect SoCal embodies a collective vision for the region's future and was developed with input from local governments, county transportation commissions, tribal governments, non-profit organizations, businesses, and local stakeholders in the counties of Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura. The plan details how the region will address its transportation and land use challenges and opportunities in order to achieve its regional emissions standards and GHG reduction targets. The RTP/SCS is updated every 4 years. Connect SoCal contains over 4,000 transportation projects—ranging from highway improvements, railroad grade separations, bicycle lanes, new transit hubs, and replacement bridges. One such transportation project is the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) and Caltrans I-215 North Project to add two high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes in an approximately 11-mile section of I-215 from Nuevo Road in Perris to the I-215/SR 60 interchange in the City near Box Spring Road, approximately 3 miles southeast of the campus (SCAG 2020).

The City of Riverside General Plan

The City's 2025 General Plan, adopted in 2007, is a strategic, long-range planning guiding growth to 2025. The main land use objectives of the General Plan include:

- Encouraging the revitalization of underutilized commercial properties through redesignation of lands for mixed-use development
- Allowing for higher-density residential uses at underutilized in-town locations
- Ensuring the provision of adequate public facilities and public services
- Accommodating the growth projected by SCAG in an environmentally sensitive manner
- Providing circulation facilities adequate to serve proposed land uses and meet community needs
- Minimizing the negative impacts of regional traffic upon the City's local roadways
- Establishing policies to protect residents from negative air quality and noise impacts
- Preserving and enhancing the City's natural and cultural assets

The City amended its land use section, including its land use policy map in 2019 (City of Riverside 2019).

University Neighborhood Plan

Included as Appendix C of the General Plan and adopted in 2008, the University Neighborhood Plan is intended to direct and manage growth and improve the quality of life in the University neighborhood, which encompasses the UCR campus and the single- and multi-family residential areas and retail areas north and east of the campus. The land use vision of the University Neighborhood Plan embodies the following goals:

¹ <https://scag.ca.gov/read-plan-adopted-final-plan>

- Protect the single-family neighborhoods nestled against the Box Springs Mountain Reserve Park to the east of the existing Watkins Drive and the University's need for quality, affordable housing for residents and UCR students, faculty, and staff
- Improve neighborhood shopping facilities where residents and UCR students, faculty, and staff can shop and meet in an appealing environment

The objectives and policies carried over from the General Plan 2025 recognize the importance of providing diverse housing opportunities in the University neighborhood, including new rental apartments, the retention of existing and future rental stock, and affordable housing units. These objectives and policies stress the importance of providing quality apartments and multi-family housing within the University neighborhood and recommend the development of future new student housing along the University Avenue corridor. Additionally, the objectives and policies encourage the protection of single-family neighborhoods and the minimization of potential town-grown conflicts. The University Neighborhood Plan also accommodates the expansion of UCR while ensuring the preservation and enhancement of residential areas within the University neighborhood and encourages the reuse or revitalization of underutilized commercial areas with appropriately scaled mixed-use developments to serve both residents and UCR students, faculty, and staff. A specific policy in the University Neighborhood Plan is to update the University Avenue Specific Plan to allow for mixed-use and residential development along the corridor that supports land use designations of the General Plan (City of Riverside 2008a).

Eastside Neighborhood Plan

Included as Appendix D of the City's 2025 General Plan and adopted in 2009, the Eastside Neighborhood Plan is intended to direct and manage growth and improve the quality of life in the Eastside Neighborhood, which encompasses the single- and multi-family residential, retail, and industrial areas directly east of West Campus, west of the downtown neighborhood, and south of Hunter Industrial Park. Plans related to the Eastside neighborhood include the University Avenue Specific Plan, which directs land uses and transportation modes along the University Avenue corridor, and the Riverside Marketplace Specific Plan, which directs land use and historic preservation in the Marketplace area (City of Riverside 2009).

Sycamore Canyon Specific Plan and Sycamore Highlands Specific Plan

The Canyon Crest Neighborhood is located south of West Campus and southwest of the I-215/SR 60 freeway. Canyon Crest includes the Sycamore Canyon Specific Plan and the Sycamore Highlands Specific Plan areas, adopted in 1984 and 1990, respectively. The Sycamore Canyon Specific Plan was last amended in 1991 (City of Riverside 1991). The Sycamore Highlands Specific Plan was amended in 2008. The main objective of these specific plans is to direct the development of existing and annexed lands for residential uses in a manner compatible with the preservation of open space areas high in scenic quality, biological, and cultural significance, including the Sycamore Canyon Park (City of Riverside 2008b).

References

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