Rialto Pacific Electric Trail Project

Initial Study / Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration

Prepared for:

City of Rialto
150 South Palm Avenue
Rialto, California 92376

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SECTION 1
PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), as established by statute (Public Resources Code [PRC] §§ 21000 *et seq.*), requires that the environmental implications of an action by a local agency be estimated and evaluated before project approval. The City of Rialto (City) proposes construction of a Pacific Electric (PE) Trail (proposed trail or proposed project) along the former Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) track Right-of-Way (ROW) in San Bernardino County, with funding from the San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBCTA). The proposed project is included in the SBCTA Non-Motorized Transportation Plan, which was most recently revised in June 2018. The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) is the administering agency for this program and, as such, this project requires the design and environmental certification to be completed to the satisfaction of Caltrans based on the Caltrans Local Assistance process and Caltrans environmental procedure. As the proposed project was awarded $7.8 million in funding through the Caltrans Active Transportation Program (ATP) Cycle 6, environmental compliance pursuant to both CEQA and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) would be pursued. The City is the Lead Agency pursuant to CEQA, and Caltrans is the federal Lead Agency pursuant to NEPA.

The purpose of the proposed project is to connect the various parts of the City internally and externally to the surrounding region by providing innovative nonmotorized, safe, and sustainable transit modes that meet the needs of all users. The proposed project would also provide a continuous trail that largely separates pedestrians and cyclists from vehicular traffic. The proposed project would result in the City's expansion of its recreational amenities; enhance safety; and increase connectivity of the City's parks, schools, and neighborhoods while aligning with the City's overall mission to provide a safe family atmosphere. The proposed project would support an increase in the number of pedestrians and bicyclists to public transportation, provide safe access for the community to several destinations through the City, and provide access to the historic Rialto Depot building (designed by Thornton Fitzhugh) adjacent to the proposed trail alignment, which would be restored as part of a separate project.

In 2022, the City conducted a feasibility study to explore the existing 18-mile PE Trail, which determined that there is a need for an extension of the trail from where it currently ends on Cactus Avenue to Pepper Avenue.[1] This approximately 1.75-mile extension would enhance connectivity through the City. The proposed trail would be a paved concrete surface for the shared use path to match the existing PE Trail to the west; specifically, it would comprise a 10-foot (Class I) multiuse path with 2-foot graded shoulder on each side. Additional components of the project include a trailhead/parking lot on the east side of Cactus Avenue, signalized crossings at Cactus Avenue and Riverside Avenue, and widened curb ramps where the trail crosses roadways. The trail would be striped to accommodate two-way pedestrian/bicycle traffic and would have proper signage for safety. When complete, the entire PE Trail would be approximately 19.85 miles long, running east to west.

The analysis in this Initial Study includes a desktop review of trail design and approach, roadway engineering, quantity calculations, environmental surveys, permit applications to other agencies (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and Regional Water Quality Control Board), ROW engineering, utility coordination, hydraulic and hydrology analysis,

[1] City of Rialto Public Works Department. January 2022. Feasibility Study. Pacific Electric (PE) Trail Expansion. Prepared by Alta Planning + Design, in association with Converse Consultants, Psomas, Epic Land Solutions, Inc.

Air Quality Impact Assessment (AQIA), geotechnical engineering, and topographic and boundary surveying. The design team would review the proposed project and study the hydrologic effects and air quality impacts of the proposed trail along with additional examination of potential water quality and air quality improvements. This Initial Study and supporting environmental analysis will support the decision-making process to be undertaken by the City, in their role as the Lead Agency pursuant to CEQA, in considering the proposed project for approval.

1.1 PROJECT TITLE

Rialto Pacific Electric Trail Project

1.2 LEAD AGENCY

City of Rialto
150 South Palm Avenue
Rialto, California 92376

1.3 PRIMARY CONTACT PERSON

Art Cervantes, Engineering Manager
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335 West Rialto Avenue
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1.4 PROJECT LOCATION

The approximately 13.8-acre proposed project site is located within the City of Rialto (see Figure 1.4-1, *Regional Vicinity Map*, at the end of this section). The proposed trail would run parallel to and between Rialto Avenue and Foothill Avenue, extending from Cactus Avenue to Pepper Avenue. The proposed trail runs within the ROW of an abandoned railroad track, within the City of Rialto, which consists of residential, commercial, and manufacturing areas.

The neighboring cities include Muscoy to the north, San Bernardino to the east, Riverside to the south, and Fontana to the west. The City is surrounded by Interstate Highway 15 (I-15) to the north and west, I-215 to the east, and State Route (SR) 60 to the south. Both I-10 and SR 210 run through the City from east to west. The proposed project area is bound by SR 66 (i.e., Foothill Avenue) to the north, Cactus Avenue to the east, Rialto Avenue to the south, and Pepper Avenue to the west. The proposed trail location is nestled within an urban community that would stretch from Cactus Avenue, along the south of Bud Bender Park and the Rialto Cemetery, to Pepper Avenue (Figure 1.4-2, *Project Location*; Figure 1.4-3, *Project Footprint Map*, at the end of this section). Due to the nature of the proposed project as a pedestrian walkway, the project site could be accessed through several ingresses in between North Cactus Avenue to the west and North Pepper Avenue to the east. The project runs parallel to East Foothill Boulevard (also known as Historic Route 66) at 1,940 feet north of the proposed project and West Rialto Avenue, approximately 680 feet south of the proposed project.

The project intersects or includes the following Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APNs):

- 12814105
- 13019110
- 13014118
- 13014113
- 13014228
- 13014229
- 13015142
- 13015141
- 13015143
- 13015144
- 13016128
- 13017127
- 13017128
- 13017234
- 13040332
- 13040333
- 13042103
- 13042103

The proposed project site appears on the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute series Fontana and San Bernardino topographic quadrangles (Figure 1.4-4, *Topographic Map,* at the end of this section).[2] The elevation of the proposed project site ranges from approximately 1,190 feet above mean sea level (AMSL) near North Pepper Avenue to 1,240 feet AMSL near North Lilac Avenue at the east end of the trail. The project site rises in elevation by 115 feet from the east to the west at a slope of 11 percent over approximately 1.5 miles.

1.5 RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES

CEQA Section 21069 states that a "responsible agency" is a public agency, other than the lead agency, which has responsibility for carrying out or approving a project. The SBCTA serves as the main sponsor for the proposed project. The administering agency for this program is Caltrans. The design and environmental certification for the proposed project would satisfy the Caltrans Local Assistance process and environmental procedure requirements.

1.6 GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION

The proposed project would be located in a railroad ROW on land owned and operated by the City and the SBCTA. The project site is located within City boundaries and would not require any changes to the General Plan land use designations.

The City's Railroads land use designation is a type of ROW that operates within the City's boundaries. The ROW is no longer in use, but it was previously used for freight transportation. The proposed project exists entirely within this ROW.

Specific Plans

There are eight specific plans identified in the Land Use Element of the City's General Plan, which are scattered throughout the City.[3] A section of the project site, between Willow Avenue and Sycamore Avenue, is located within the Rialto Central Area Specific Plan. The proposed project's rails-to-trails development would comply with the Specific Plan's Commercial-Highway zoning allowed land use (p): "All other uses which are consistent with the intent of that zone, as reviewed and Approved by the City Planning Commission."[4]

[2] Department of Conservation. 2015. Seismic Hazard Zone Report for the Orange 7.5-Minute Quadrangle, Los Angeles, Orange and San Bernardino Counties, California.

[3] City of Rialto. 2023. City of Rialto General Plan Update: Land Use Element. https://www.yourrialto.com/DocumentCenter/View/4457/2023-Land-Use-Element?bidId=

[4] City of Rialto. September 2023. Draft Foothill Central Specific Plan. https://www.yourrialto.com/754/Foothill-Central-Specific-Plan (accessed December 2024).

1.7 ZONING

The zoning designation along the length of the proposed project site is mostly within the Transportation Corridor (T-C) and the Rialto Central Area Specific Plan. The T-C is used exclusively for rail-based land uses. The project site is located within City boundaries, and the proposed project would not require any changes to the City's zoning designations.

1.8 BACKGROUND AND EXISTING CONDITIONS

1.8.1 Background

The project site is located within the City of Rialto, which is located in the southern region of San Bernardino County. With a diverse population of 107,041 as of 2018,[5] the City has several incredible amenities such as its many parks, cultural center, community playhouse, and its connection to the Pacific Electric Inland Empire Trail. Expanding the City's trail network would help increase the number of users who can bike/walk to public transportation.

Healthy communities depend on social determinants for greater health and well-being of a community such as improved physical activity and access to safe, open spaces and recreational facilities among others. A healthy community, as noted in the City's General Plan, provides for healthier living; superior air quality; a safe and effective transportation system with diverse travel options; and opportunities for recreation and physical activity such parks, trails, and open spaces as well as extensive walking and cycling routes.[6]

1.8.2 Existing Conditions

Site visits were conducted on September 4, 6, and 11, 2024, and October 4, 2024, to characterize existing conditions at the project site, including photographs of the project site from publicly accessible locations (see Figure 1.8-1, *Site Photographs Map*, and Figure 1.8-2, *Site Photographs*, at the end of this section).

The proposed project site is a gravel-paved vacant access road that is maintained by the SBCTA. The proposed project site is intersected by two existing bikeways (Class I and Class III) and recreational facilities.[7] The proposed project site is surrounded by a transit network that includes roadways, bikeways, public transit, and commuter railways.

Public access to the project area is available at nearly every intersection as well as through Bud Bender Park, these access points represent the goal of the project to be an inclusive multiuse pathway for public use.

Roadways

The City's 2023 Circulation Element Update to the General Plan identifies several major regional freeways, two major freight/commuter railroad lines, an extensive roadway network, and several

[5] Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). May 2019. SCAG: Local Profile of the City of Rialto. https://scag.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/rialto_localprofile.pdf

[6] City of Rialto. 2023. City of Rialto General Plan. Chapter 4: Making the Connections. The Circulation Chapter. https://www.rialtoca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/4455/2023-Circulation-Element?bidId=

[7] City of Rialto. 2023. City of Rialto General Plan. Chapter 4: Making the Connections. The Circulation Chapter. https://www.rialtoca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/4455/2023-Circulation-Element?bidId=

transit lines. The regional and local roadway system is a hierarchal system of highways and local streets developed to provide regional traffic movement and local access. I-10 and SR-210 traverse the City in an east-west direction, providing regional access to most of the City. I-15 also provides access to the northern portion of the City. The City's roadway network is generally based on a grid system, with major arterials spaced 1 to 2 miles apart. Along the northern City border, Riverside Avenue runs from northwest to southeast, paralleling the Lytle Creek Wash. The proposed project site runs parallel between a modified major arterial I roadway (Foothill Avenue) and a roadway partially identified as major arterial roadway and secondary arterial roadway (Rialto Avenue), and is intersected by three major arterial roadways (Cedar Avenue, Cactus Avenue, and Pepper Avenue), one secondary arterial roadway (Maple Avenue), modified arterial II roadway (Riverside Avenue), and six collector roadways (Linden Avenue, Lilac Avenue, Willow Avenue, Acacia Avenue, Sycamore Avenue, and Eucalyptus Avenue).[8] Foothill Avenue is also identified as a Federal and State Truck Route (Route 66).[9]

Bikeway Network

Bikeways provide access to schools, parks, and other open space areas within the community. In addition, bikeways also provide access to public transit and destination locations city-wide and county-wide. The planned bikeway network is not a contiguous network. The proposed project is part of the City's current Bikeway Master Plan, a "rails-to-trails" conversion of the former Pacific Electric Railroad right-of-way. The City's Bikeway Master Plan consists of Class I, Class II, and Class III bikeways.

The City currently has approximately 14 miles of existing bikeways.[10] Additionally, the City has approximately 18 miles of bikeways under current Capital Improvement Projects (CIP), consisting of Class II and Class III bikeways.

Class I – Bike Paths

Class I bikeways are paved off roadways bike paths with no allowance of motorized vehicular traffic and include at-grade or grade-separated road crossings. These paths are typically along uninterrupted corridors, such as rivers, creeks, flood control channels, and railroad ROWs. Bike paths that are adjacent to channels, waterways, and railroad ROWs are intended as a shared facility for recreational purposes not just for bicycling but also for walking, running/jogging, and equestrian use.

Class II – Bike Lanes

Class II bikeways are bicycle facilities or bike lanes located to the right of vehicular lanes that are signed and striped along a roadway. Bicycle facilities or bike lanes typically occur on collector and arterial roadways providing connectivity by way of the street network. While not as attractive to users as the Class I bike paths due to the road-sharing aspect, bike lanes are more feasible to install and have increased accessibility and connectivity options as they can be implemented on varying types

[8] City of Rialto. 2023. City of Rialto General Plan. Chapter 4: Making the Connections. The Circulation Chapter. https://www.rialtoca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/4455/2023-Circulation-Element?bidId=

[9] San Bernardino County. October 2020. Transportation and Mobility Element of the County of San Bernardino General Plan. https://countywideplan.sbcounty.gov/policy-plan/transportation-mobility/

[10] City of Rialto. March 2020. City of Rialto Active Transportation Plan. https://issuu.com/ktua/docs/rialto_atp_final_2020_march_low_res

of streets. The nearest Class II bike lane is along Bloomington Avenue and accessible through the Class III bikeway along Riverside Avenue.

Class III – Bike Routes

Class III bikeways are bike routes located on roads that include signage and are shared with vehicular traffic. Class III bike routes are intended to provide a continuum to the bikeway network. Class III bike routes are defined as having no designated road markings along the route for bicyclists as they are shared with motor vehicles on the roadways. In addition to the Class I bike path, there is also an existing Class III bicycle route along Riverside Avenue.

Pedestrian Network

The City is incorporating Complete Streets (Assembly Bill 1358/Senate Bill 1000) requirements by planning for an interconnected multimodal transportation network that meets the needs of motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians including children, persons with disabilities, and seniors. The goal of Complete Streets is to enhance pedestrian facilities with improvements to sidewalks, curb ramps, signage, lighting, Americans with Disabilities (ADA) tactile pads, and streetscape amenities. Through Complete Streets facilities, the City is encouraging pedestrian connectivity and enhancements through various improvements that allow for all modes of travel, such as walking, bicycling, and transit for reaching key destinations in a safe and direct manner within a community or region.

Public Transportation System

There is a public transit bus route (Route 22) in the vicinity of the proposed project site that is operated by OmniTrans. Route 22 services the north and south sides of the City via Riverside Avenue. There are two routes (bus lines 15 and 22) and five bus stops accessible to the proposed project ROW.[11] Bus line 15 runs eastbound and westbound along Rialto Avenue with bus stops at the intersections of Eucalyptus Avenue, Pepper Avenue, and Meridian Avenue. Bus line 22 runs northbound and southbound along Riverside Avenue with stops at the intersections of Wilson Avenue, Rialto Avenue, 1st Street, and 2nd Street.[12] The OmniTrans buses are equipped with bike racks on the front of every bus that can carry up to three bikes at a time.[13]

As a contributor to the bikeway network, the proposed project is intended to connect the communities to public transit and destinations throughout the City and county. There are continuous bus stops along the Riverside Avenue and Rialto Avenue corridors accessible from the project site that would link destinations and other transit options City- and county-wide.

Recreational Facilities

Bud Bender Park is the only recreational facility near the proposed project site. It abuts the proposed project's ROW between North Willow Avenue and North Lilac Avenue and is directly accessible. Bud Bender Park is used as a baseball park, playground, pedestrian thoroughfare, community garden, and has public restroom facilities within its 10 acres.

[11] OmniTrans. N.d. Route 15. Available at: https://omnitrans.org/routes/route-15/ (accessed November 20, 2024).

[12] OmniTrans. N.d. Route 22. Available at: https://omnitrans.org/routes/route-22/ (accessed November 20, 2024).

[13] OmniTrans. N.d. How to Ride the Bus. https://omnitrans.org/ride-guide/how-to-ride/#riding_with_a_bike (accessed November 20, 2024).

1.9 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project would extend the PE Trail approximately 1.75 miles, using the former UPRR ROW. Construction would start at the PE Trail terminus at Cactus Avenue and continue easterly to Rialto's eastern boundary on Pepper Avenue. The proposed trail would be a paved shared-use path to match the existing PE Trail; specifically, it would be a 10-foot (Class I) multiuse path with 2-foot graded shoulder on each side. In addition, the proposed project would include a trailhead/parking lot on the east side of Cactus Avenue, signalized crossings at Cactus Avenue and Riverside Avenue, and widened curb ramps where the trail crosses roadways. The trail would be striped to accommodate two-way pedestrian/bicycle traffic and would have signage for safety.

The proposed project would incentivize new active transportation users and promote public health by providing residents with a dedicated Class I trail that includes full ADA accessibility, landscaping enhancements, and access to amenities, including two trail crossings at the intersections of Cactus Avenue and Riverside Avenue. Furthermore, the proposed project would provide opportunities for local access points.

Once the proposed project is completed and connected to the existing trail, the entire PE Trail would be approximately 19.85 miles east to west, with possibilities for connecting to a network of pathways that include the Santa Ana River Trail and San Jose Creek connecting to the San Gabriel River Trail.

Proposed Pacific Electric Trail Extension

The main trail would be approximately 1.75 miles long and extend from the PE Trail terminus at Cactus Avenue to Pepper Avenue. The proposed project would bisect South Lilac Street, South Willow Street, South Riverside Avenue, South Sycamore Avenue, South Acacia Avenue, South Eucalyptus Avenue, North Palm Avenue, North Olive Avenue, and North Date Avenue. The bisections of these streets would create eight street-to-street intersections on the proposed project's pathway.

City Bikeways

The proposed project would advance the City's trail network and enhance pedestrian and bikeway connectivity and opportunities. The proposed project would connect to and extend the existing PE Trail and increase biking opportunities in an area that has very limited available options for cyclists. There are no bike lanes or existing Class I, II, or III bike routes within 1 mile of the proposed project.

1.10 CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES

The environmental analysis for the proposed project is based on a potential reasonable worst-case impact scenario for construction activities, including site preparation, grading, paving, and delivery and hauling of construction materials and equipment.

Demolition

Demolition activities would include the removal of the existing gravel along the UPRR and base material for the proposed width of the trail.

Construction

Construction activities associated with the proposed project would entail excavation of material sources, clearing and grubbing, grading, placement of aggregate base and asphalt concrete, revegetation, installation of signs, and installation of lighting and other safety features necessary to meet current ADA requirements, plus City and County design practice. The anticipated depth for the trail is 12 inches, and the anticipated depth range for posts and fencing would be approximately 30 to 36 inches, pending fence height and required structural depths. Temporary fencing would be erected to limit construction impacts to sensitive resources.

Construction activities for the proposed project would include a Class I multiuse path composed of Asphalt Concrete (AC) paving and decomposed granite (D.G.) shoulders; midblock crossings including Portland Cement Concrete (PCC) sidewalks and modified curb ramps plus inclusion of crosswalk striping; access gates; a trailhead at Cactus Avenue; new street signs; path striping and wayfinding signage; and landscaping along selected shoulders or Best Management Practices (BMPs) adjacent to the path (see “Best Management Practices,” below).

Existing utilities within the project area would not be removed or relocated. Utilities within the proposed project site would remain in place and be protected during construction of the proposed project.

Construction Schedule and Phases

Construction of the proposed project is expected to commence in 2026 and would continue for approximately 8 months. Coordination with the SBCTA would be required to determine the seasons when construction can occur. The development of the project would entail three construction activities: site preparation, grading, and paving.

Construction Equipment

Construction would require varying levels of personnel and equipment at the proposed project site during different phases of construction. Construction equipment would include trail dozers, skid steers, narrow track loaders, rollers, and vibrating plate compactors. Specialized narrow-width equipment is anticipated to be used in areas where the priority is to minimize the width of the construction impact. Hand excavation would be required in limited areas where the trail narrows and/or where the trail may cross within the dripline of oak trees found near Bud Bender park. The construction equipment types assumed in the impact analysis herein are listed with approximate quantities for the proposed project’s limit of work from the Cactus Avenue to Pepper Avenue (Table 1.10-1, *Anticipated Construction Equipment*).

TABLE 1.10-1
ANTICIPATED CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT

Type of Equipment/Vehicle	Approximate Duration of On-Site Construction Activity (days)
Skid Steer Loaders	120
Cement and Mortar Mixers	90
Rubber Tired Dozers	15
Plate Compactors	90
Pavers	90
Paving Equipment	90
Rollers	90
Concrete and Cement Pumps	90
Excavators	120
Graders	90
Power Drills and Saws	15
Line Striping Machines	10
Dump Truck	120
Cold Milling Machine	15
Water Trunk (Dust Control)	90
Portable Restrooms	240

Staging Areas

The proposed project would also include one to two temporary construction staging areas, to be reviewed and confirmed by the City, for maintaining equipment and storing materials during construction. The staging areas would be located within the trail ROW. The staging of materials and vehicles would not create any road blockages and would be entirely within the proposed project area. The staging areas would be fenced off from the public.

Best Management Practices

Site preparation and construction of the proposed project would be carried out in a manner consistent with the City building code (adopted from the 2019 State Building Code).[14] Daily construction activities would be consistent with City of Rialto Municipal Code Section 9.50.010 regulations, which states that construction equipment is permitted to operate between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, between 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturdays, and is prohibited on Sundays or holidays.

Drainage would be maintained where possible and away from the channel (see Appendix A, *Water Quality Recommendation*). Temporary fencing would be built and installed to limit construction impacts to sensitive receptors and restrict access to the construction site. Temporary fencing installation and clearances would comply with SBCTA requirements.

The contractor shall conduct construction activities in such a manner that the maximum noise levels at the affected project site would not exceed established noise levels. The construction contractor would be required to incorporate BMPs consistent with the guidelines provided in the *California Stormwater Best Management Practice Handbooks: Construction*, for elimination of non-

[14] California Existing Building Code 2022: Adoption of California Existing Building Code. https://up.codes/viewer/california/ca-existing-building-code-2022 (accessed January 2025).

stormwater discharge from the project site; retaining eroded sediments and other pollutants on the site; retaining stockpiles of earth and other construction related materials on site; proper storage of fuels, oils, solvents, and other toxic materials to prevent spills from being washed into the drainage system; retaining concrete wastes on-site until they can be disposed as solid waste; proper covered storage of trash and construction related solid wastes to prevent contamination of rainwater and dispersal by wind; stabilization of roadways to inhibit sediments from being deposited into the public way; and stabilization of any slopes with disturbed soils or denuded of vegetation to inhibit erosion by wind and water. Should the construction period continue into the rainy season, supplemental erosion measures would need to be implemented.

Wherever possible, grading activities would be undertaken outside the normal rainy season (i.e., October 15 to April 15 for most of Southern California), thus minimizing the potential for increased surface runoff and the associated potential for soil erosion. A recommended construction period would begin in late April or early May and completed in late January, assuming the majority of the construction would be completed within this recommended 9-month period. BMPs would be required to control surface runoff and soil erosion for construction taking place during rainy periods. BMPs for erosion control would be implemented during construction and improvements in accordance with the stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWPPP) that would be required by the California State Water Resources Control Board through the Construction General Permit during the construction phase as the project site is over 1 acre in size (see Section 1.13, *Discretionary Approvals*).

The contractor shall comply with South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) emissions and air quality regulations including Rule 403 requirements regarding fugitive dust control. Construction equipment shall be turned off when not in use. The construction contractor shall ensure that all construction and grading equipment is properly maintained. All vehicles and compressors shall utilize exhaust mufflers and engine enclosure covers (as designed by the manufacturer) at all times.

The contractor would be required to remove all solid waste generated during construction, including diversion of at least 25 percent of their waste stream from landfills, in accordance with Assembly Bill 939. The contractor would also be required to recycle or reuse 50 percent by weight of all construction and demolition debris removed from the project site and submit a recycling and reuse plan and annual reporting to demonstrate compliance with the plan.

1.11 OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

Operation and maintenance activities would include irrigation to maintain the new planting areas along the trail. The use of chemical herbicides would be limited to chemicals that are not banned by the state and enforced by the county of San Bernardino.[15] Trails operation and maintenance activities would be conducted by the City.

1.12 RELATED PROJECTS

In accordance with Section 15130 of the State CEQA Guidelines, the cumulative impacts that could occur from the proposed project are analyzed in Section 3.21, *Mandatory Findings of Significance*, of this Initial Study using a list of related projects. Cumulative impacts (e.g., two or more individual effects that, when considered together, compound or increase the environmental impact(s) of a

[15] California Restricted Materials Requirement. N.d. San Bernardino County. https://awm.sbcounty.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/84/2022/04/California-Restricted-Pesticides-List-English.pdf?x67268 (accessed January 2025).

proposed project) can result from individually minor but collectively significant impacts taking place over a period of time.

The area surrounding the project study area was examined to determine whether there are currently any projects in progress or proposed for the future that could potentially add to the impacts of the proposed project, creating cumulative significant impacts (evaluated in Section 3.21, *Mandatory Findings of Significance*). It was determined that there are five related projects (see Table 1.12-1, *List of Related Projects*; Figure 1.12-1, *Related Projects Map*, at the end of this section).

TABLE 1.12-1
LIST OF RELATED PROJECTS

Label	Project Name	Location	Recreational Facility?	Description
A	436 West Rialto Ave. Project	436 West Rialto Avenue. Rialto, CA 92376. ~691 feet south of the proposed project area near the intersection of S Lilac and Bud Bender Park.	No. The project would be the AIRFEF Rialto Commerce Center II, LP.	**Pending-** Development of a 299,780 square foot industrial warehouse building on 13.38 acres of land.
B	160 North Cactus Ave Industrial	160 N. Cactus Avenue, Rialto, CA. 92376. Located 400 feet southwest of the proposed project area between closest to the area near the existing Pacific Electric Bike Trail and N. Cactus Avenue.	No. Industrial warehousing.	**Pending-** The Applicant would demolish existing structures and construct a new industrial warehouse building totaling approximately 159,700 square feet, including an approximately 6,750 square-foot office/mezzanine area and associated landscaping, parking, and loading docks.
C	Rialto & Linden Industrial Warehouse Project	1527 West Rialto Avenue. Rialto, CA 92376. Located ~1 mile south west of the proposed project.	No. Industrial warehousing.	**Pending** (December 23 2024:The proposed project consists of construction of a two-story 40,000-square-foot industrial warehouse with a 2,000-square-foot second floor office and associated site improvements including the installation of new internal drive aisles and parking spaces, landscaping, and utility improvements.
D	Santa Ana Truck Terminal Project	Near 2540 South Riverside Avenue, Rialto, CA 92376. Located 3 miles south of the proposed project.	No. Industrial yard.	**Pending** (August 26, 2024): The Project would include the construction of one truck terminal warehouse and one truck repair shop on an approximately 45.7-acre site in the City of Rialto. The proposed project site is located within the Agua Mansa Industrial Corridor Specific Plan.

TABLE 1.12-1
LIST OF RELATED PROJECTS

Label	Project Name	Location	Recreational Facility?	Description
E	2720 S. Willow Avenue Development Project	2720 South Willow Avenue, Rialto, CA 92376. The project is located ~3.4 miles southwest of the proposed project.	No. Industrial project.	**Pending (**May 2, 2024): The proposed Project would include the development of one 118,000 square feet (sf) industrial warehouse on an approximately 5.63-acre project site. The proposed Project would include 111,000 sf warehouse space and 7,000 sf of office space. Construction of the proposed Project would include the demolition of two existing warehouses located on-site. In addition, the proposed Project would include associated on-site improvements including landscaping, surface parking, and sidewalks.

1.13 REQUIRED APPROVALS

The proposed project would require the approval of municipal, county, and state agencies. These required approvals include measures that would mitigate impacts to known and unknown resources to the proposed project area. The approvals below do not include discretionary approvals/actions (actions that trigger CEQA).

- **City of Rialto:** Plan check review and approval; grading permit and inspections.
- **Caltrans:** Required Cultural Resources analysis with the approval of an Archaeological Survey Report (ASR) and Historical Resources Evaluation Report (HRER).
- **California State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB):** Construction General Permit for a construction project on 1+ acre (requires the development of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan [SWPPP]).
- **Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB):** The project is expected to drain to the upper Santa Ana River watershed and is tributary to the Santa Ana Reach 3 and 4 River, which is listed as a 303(d) impaired waterbody. Waste discharge requirements related to fill activities may be required. The project proponent would be responsible for complying with other applicable permits. This determination may be subject to change.
- **Utilities:** Review and approval of projects within utility corridor, under license agreement with Rialto (including clearance review for proposed grading activities).

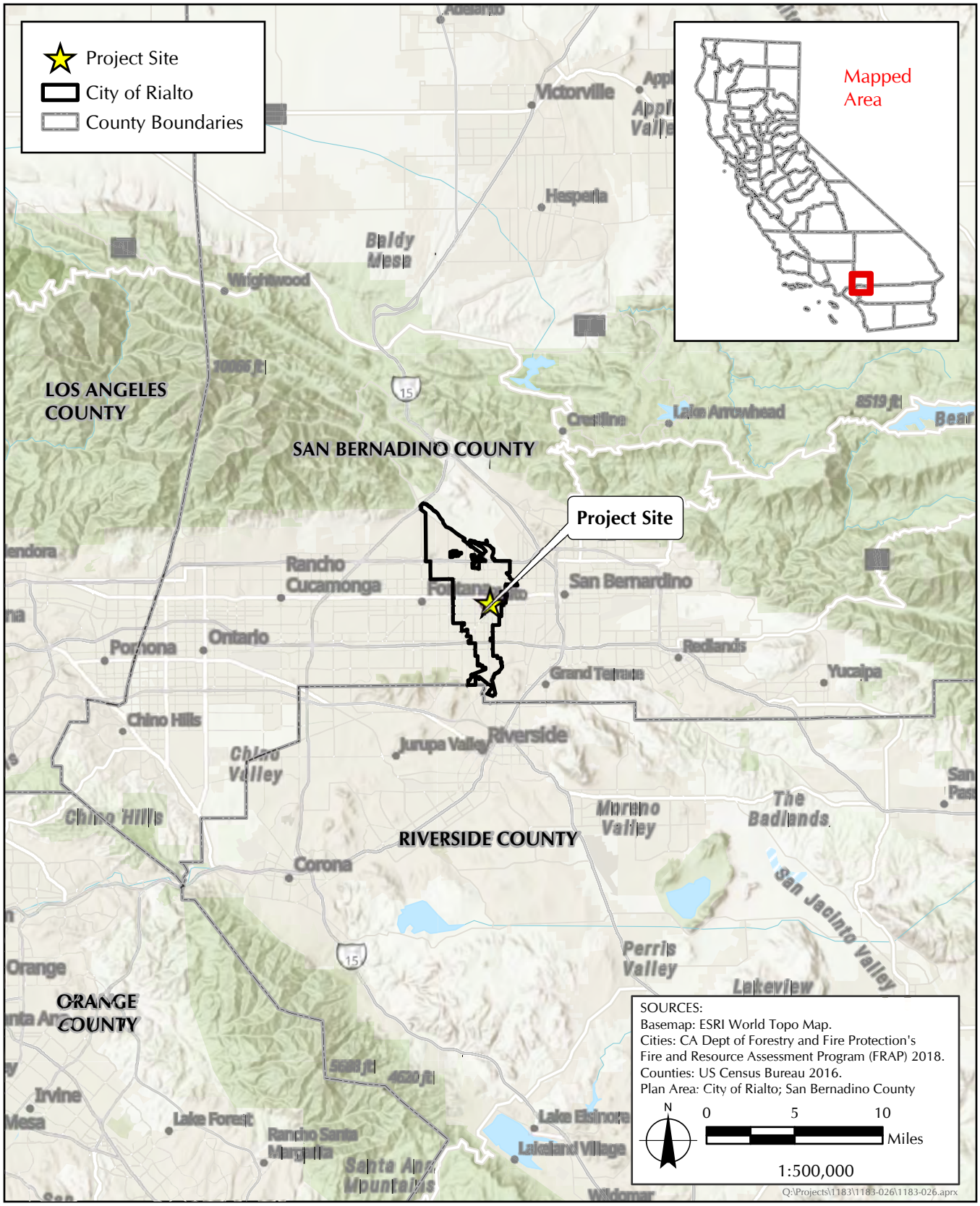


FIGURE 1.4-1

Regional Vicinity Map

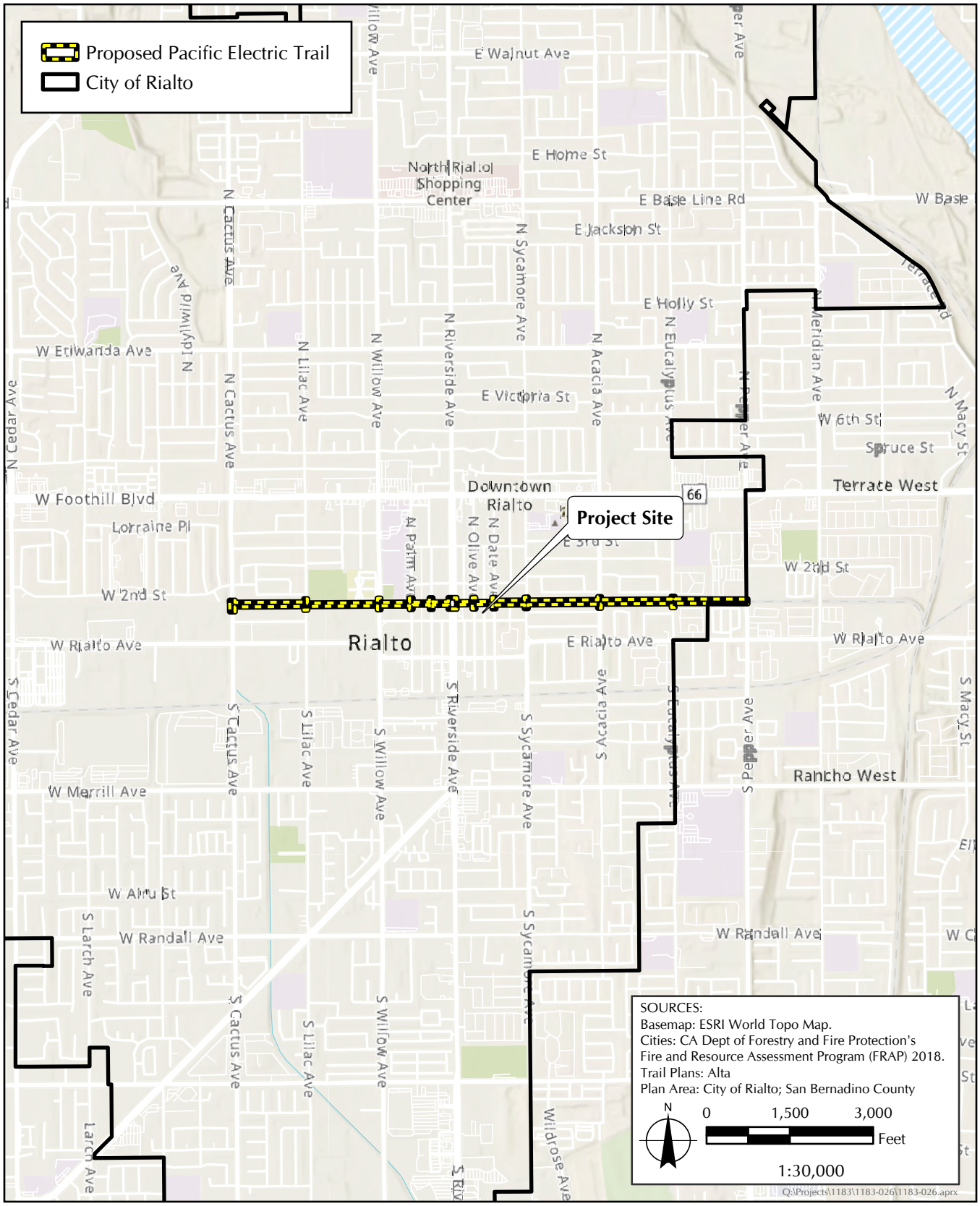


FIGURE 1.4-2

Project Location Map

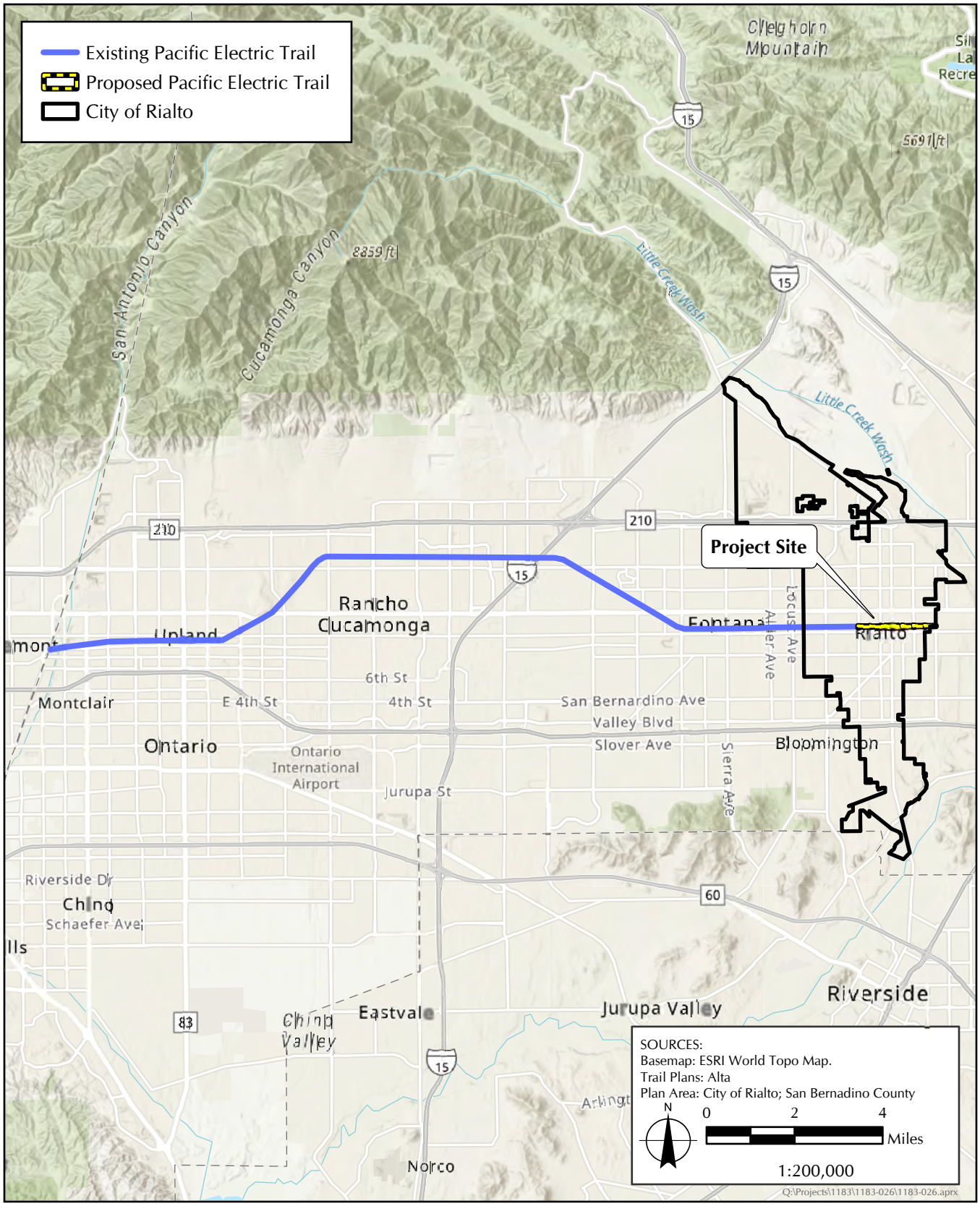
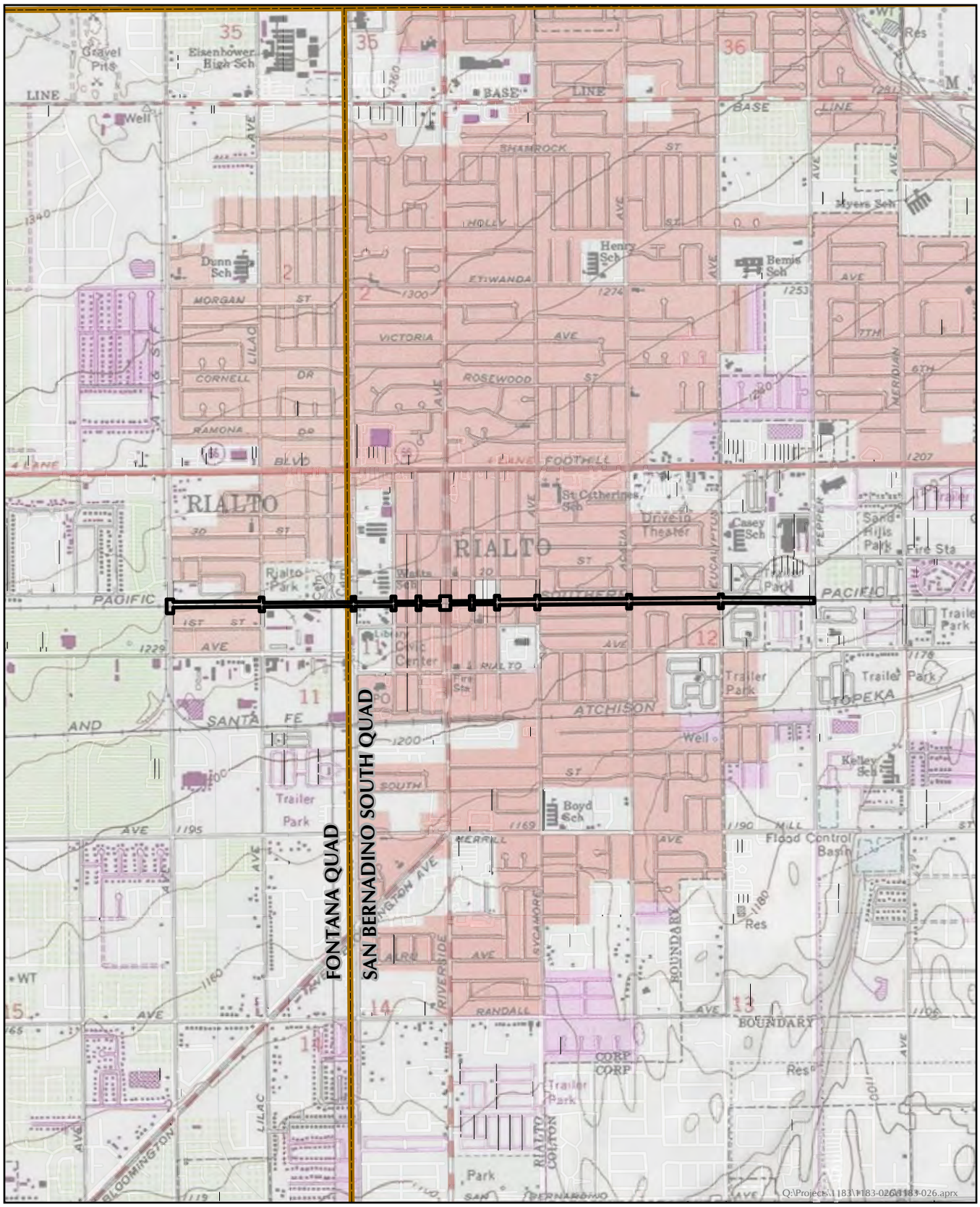


FIGURE 1.4-3
Project Footprint Map



USGS 7.5' Quad(s): Fontana, San Berandino South

Proposed Pacific Electric Trail

N

0 1,000 2,000 Feet

1:24,000

FIGURE 1.4-4

Topographic Map

SOURCES: Basemap: ESRI World Topo Map; Trail Plans: Alta; Plan Area: City of Rialto; San Bernadino County

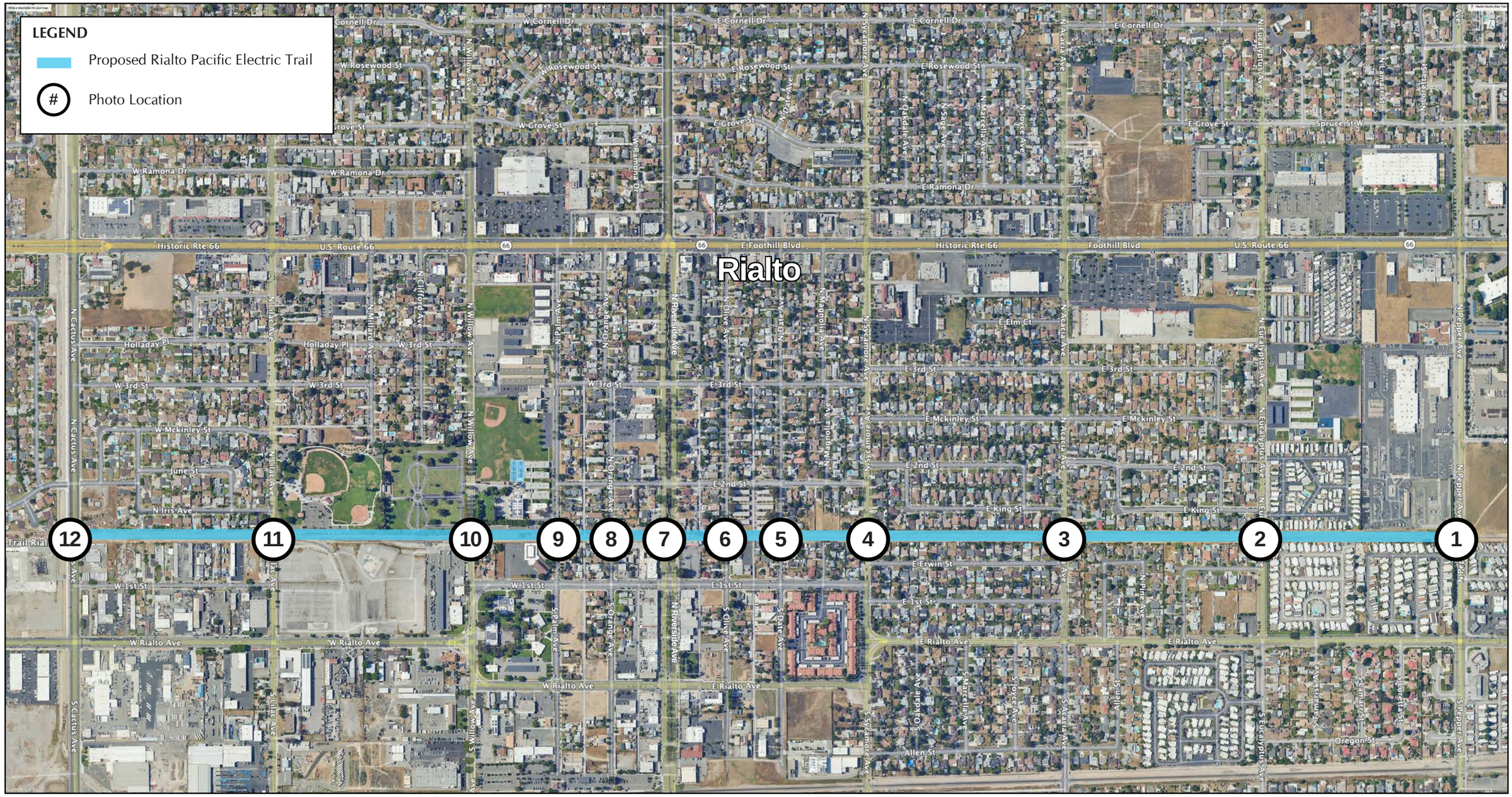
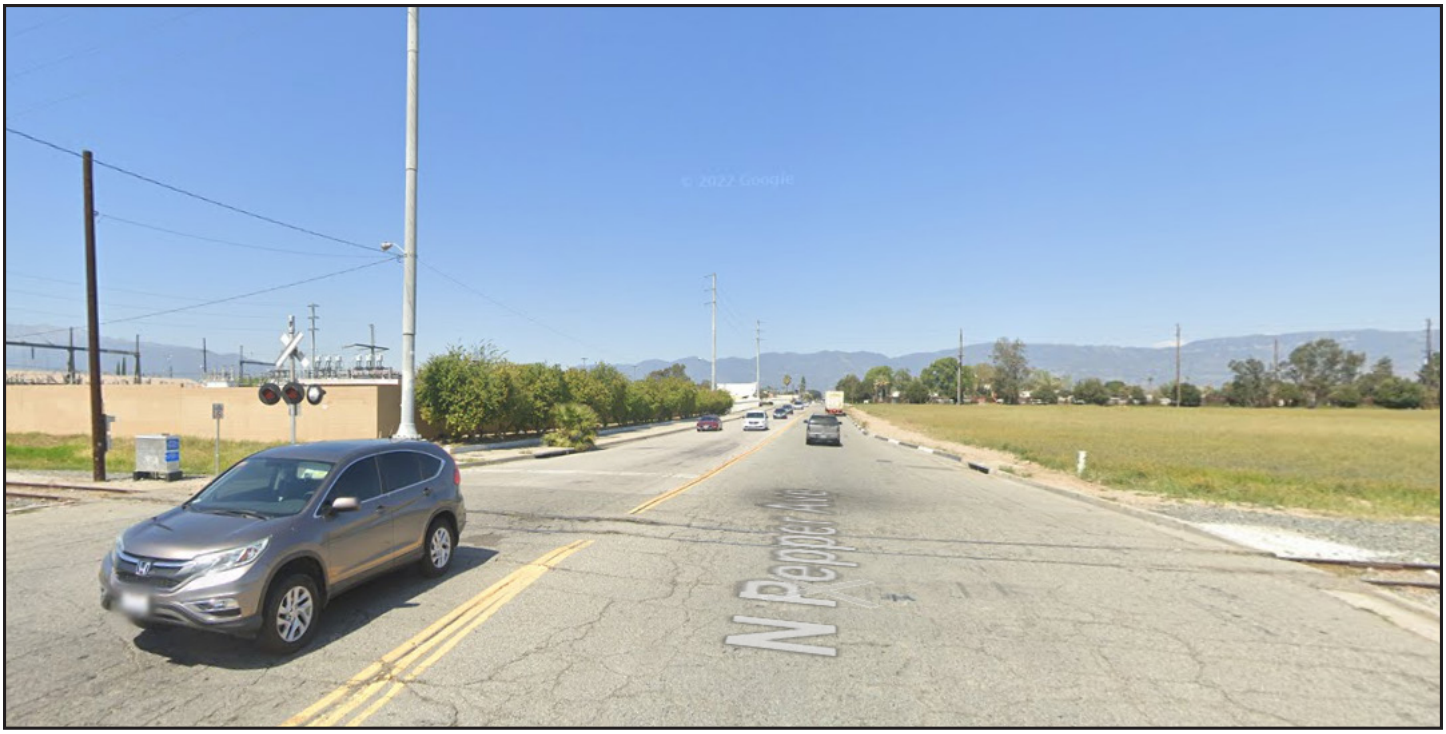


FIGURE 1.8-1
Site Photos Map



SOURCE: Google Maps

PHOTO 1a
Pepper Ave - North

SOURCE: Google Maps

PHOTO 1b
Pepper Ave - East

FIGURE 1.8-2
Site Photographs

SOURCE: Google Maps

PHOTO 1c
Pepper Ave - South

PHOTO 1d
Pepper Ave - West

FIGURE 1.8-2
Site Photographs

PHOTO 2a
Eucalyptus Ave - North

PHOTO 2b
Eucalyptus Ave - East

FIGURE 1.8-2
Site Photographs

SOURCE: Google Maps

PHOTO 2c
Eucalyptus Ave - South

PHOTO 2d
Eucalyptus Ave - West

FIGURE 1.8-2
Site Photographs

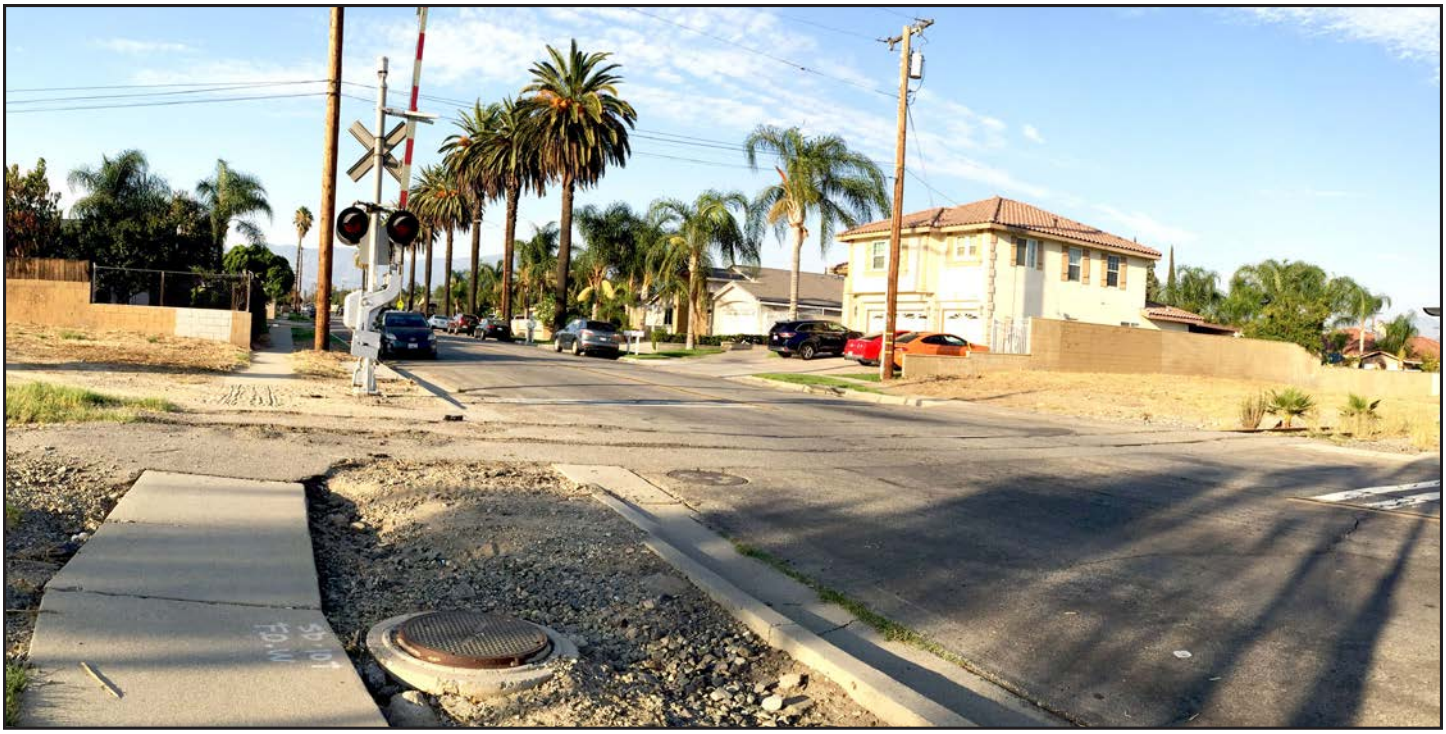


PHOTO 3a
Acacia Ave - North

PHOTO 3b
Acacia Ave - East

FIGURE 1.8-2
Site Photographs

PHOTO 3c
Acacia Ave - South

PHOTO 3d
Acacia Ave - West

FIGURE 1.8-2
Site Photographs

PHOTO 3e
Acacia Ave - South Sidewalk

FIGURE 1.8-2
Site Photographs

PHOTO 4a
North Sycamore Ave - North

PHOTO 4b
North Sycamore Ave - East

FIGURE 1.8-2
Site Photographs

PHOTO 4c
North Sycamore Ave - South

PHOTO 4d
North Sycamore Ave - West

FIGURE 1.8-2
Site Photographs

PHOTO 5a
North Date Ave - North

PHOTO 5b
North Date Ave - East

FIGURE 1.8-2
Site Photographs

SOURCE: Google Maps

PHOTO 5c
North Date Ave - South

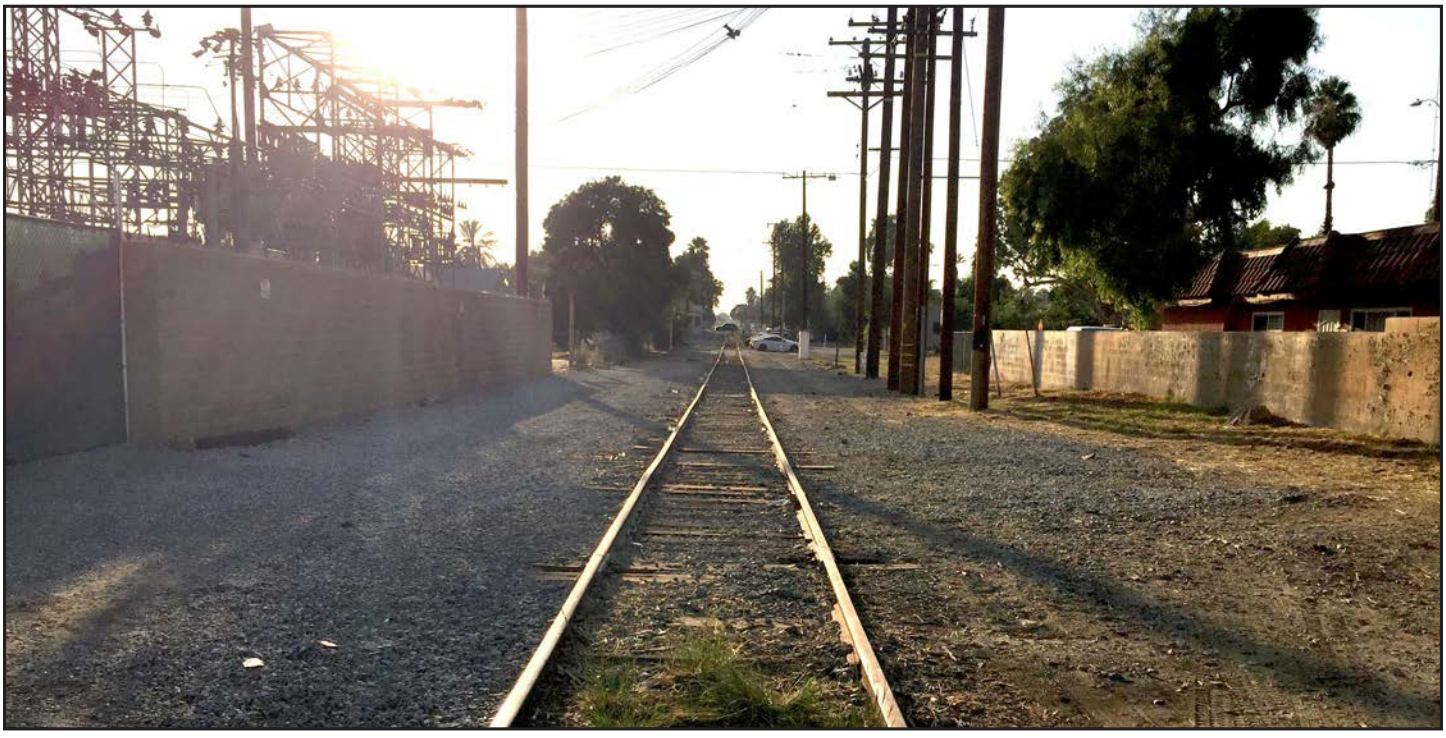


PHOTO 5d
North Date Ave - West

FIGURE 1.8-2
Site Photographs

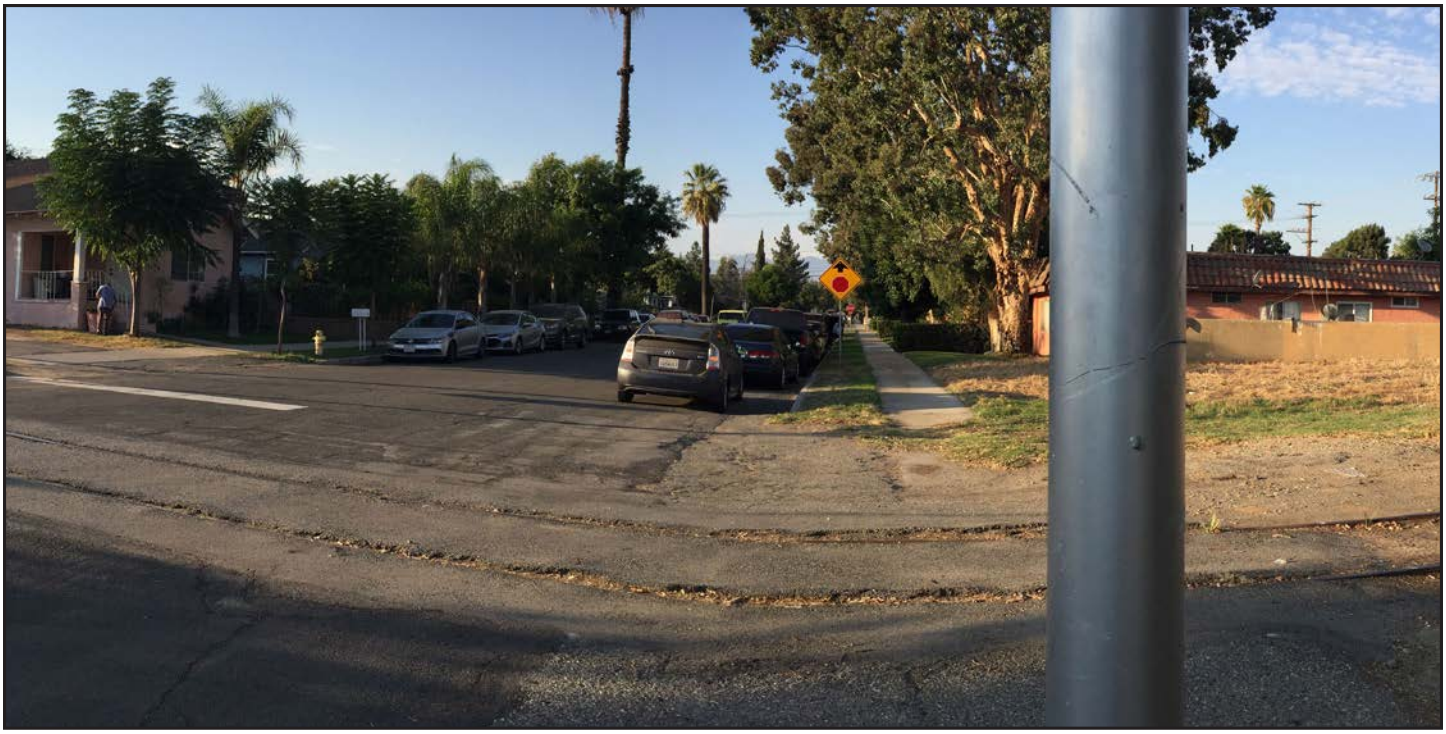


PHOTO 6a
North Olive Ave - North

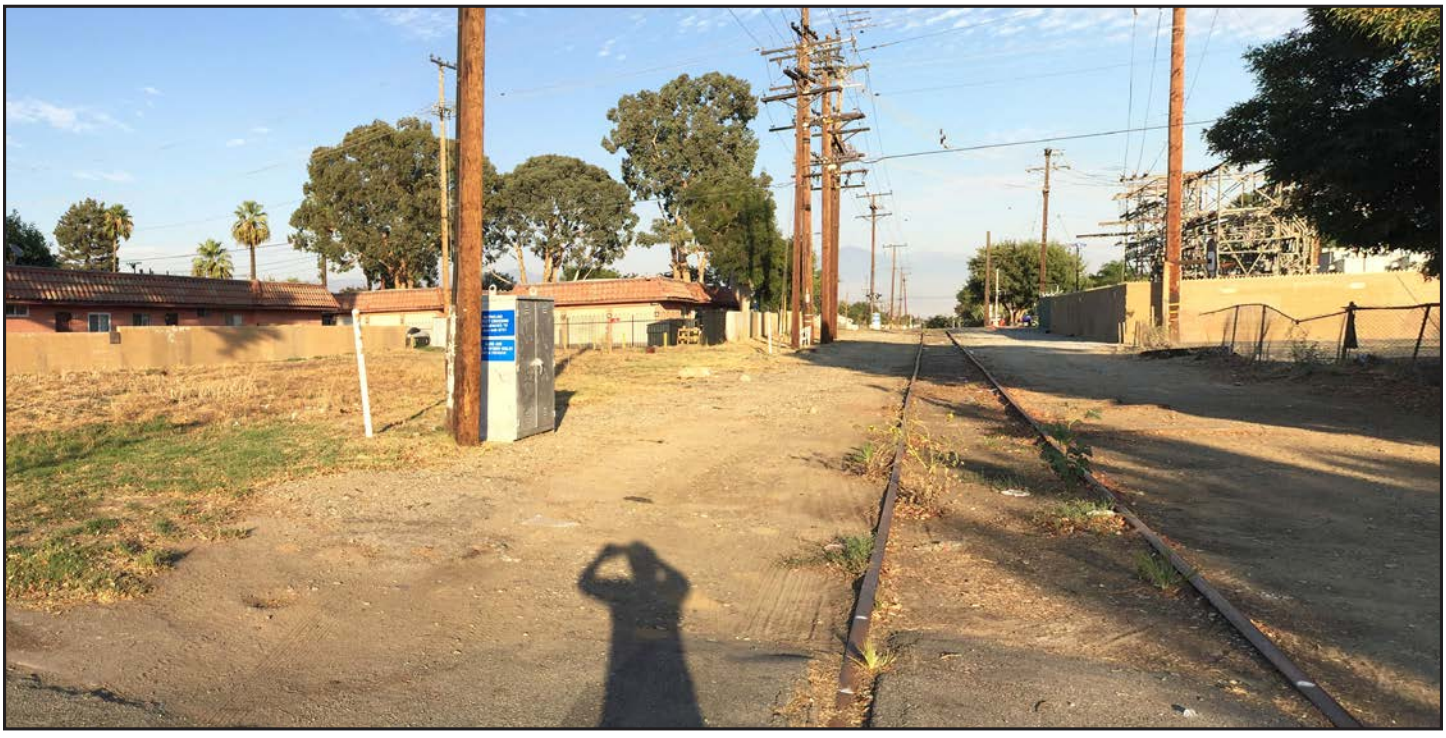


PHOTO 6b
North Olive Ave - East

FIGURE 1.8-2
Site Photographs

SOURCE: Google Maps

PHOTO 6c
North Olive Ave - South

PHOTO 6d
North Olive Ave - West

FIGURE 1.8-2
Site Photographs

PHOTO 6e
North Olive Ave - Drainagea

FIGURE 1.8-2
Site Photographs

PHOTO 7a
Riverside Ave - North

PHOTO 7b
Riverside Ave - East

FIGURE 1.8-2
Site Photographs

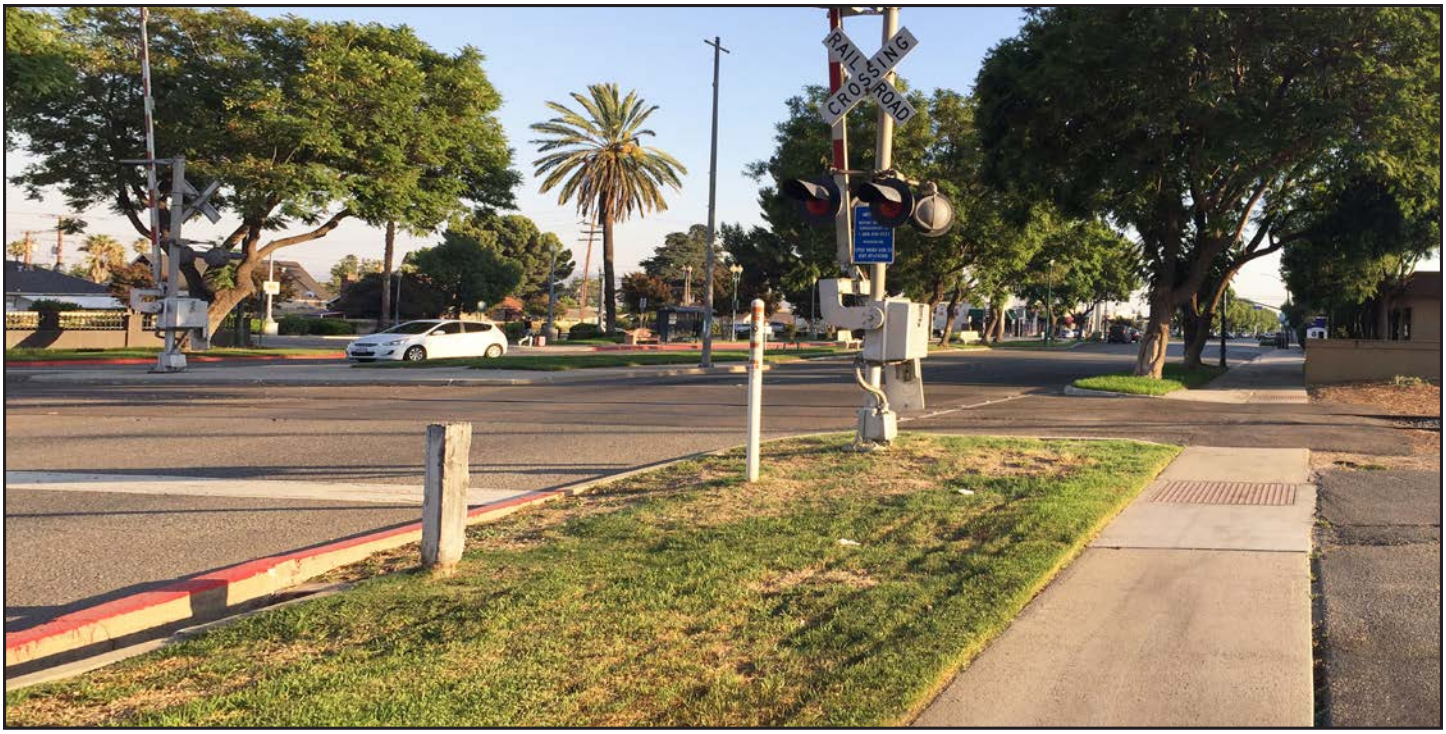


PHOTO 7c
Riverside Ave - South

PHOTO 7d
Riverside Ave - West

FIGURE 1.8-2
Site Photographs

PHOTO 8a
North Orange Ave - North

PHOTO 8b
North Orange Ave - East

FIGURE 1.8-2
Site Photographs

SOURCE: Google Maps

PHOTO 8c
North Orange Ave - South

PHOTO 8d
North Orange Ave - West

FIGURE 1.8-2
Site Photographs

SOURCE: Google Maps

PHOTO 9a
North Palm Ave - North

PHOTO 9b
North Palm Ave - East

FIGURE 1.8-2
Site Photographs

SOURCE: Google Maps

PHOTO 9c
North Palm Ave - South

PHOTO 9d
North Palm Ave - West

FIGURE 1.8-2
Site Photographs

PHOTO 10a
North Willow Ave - North

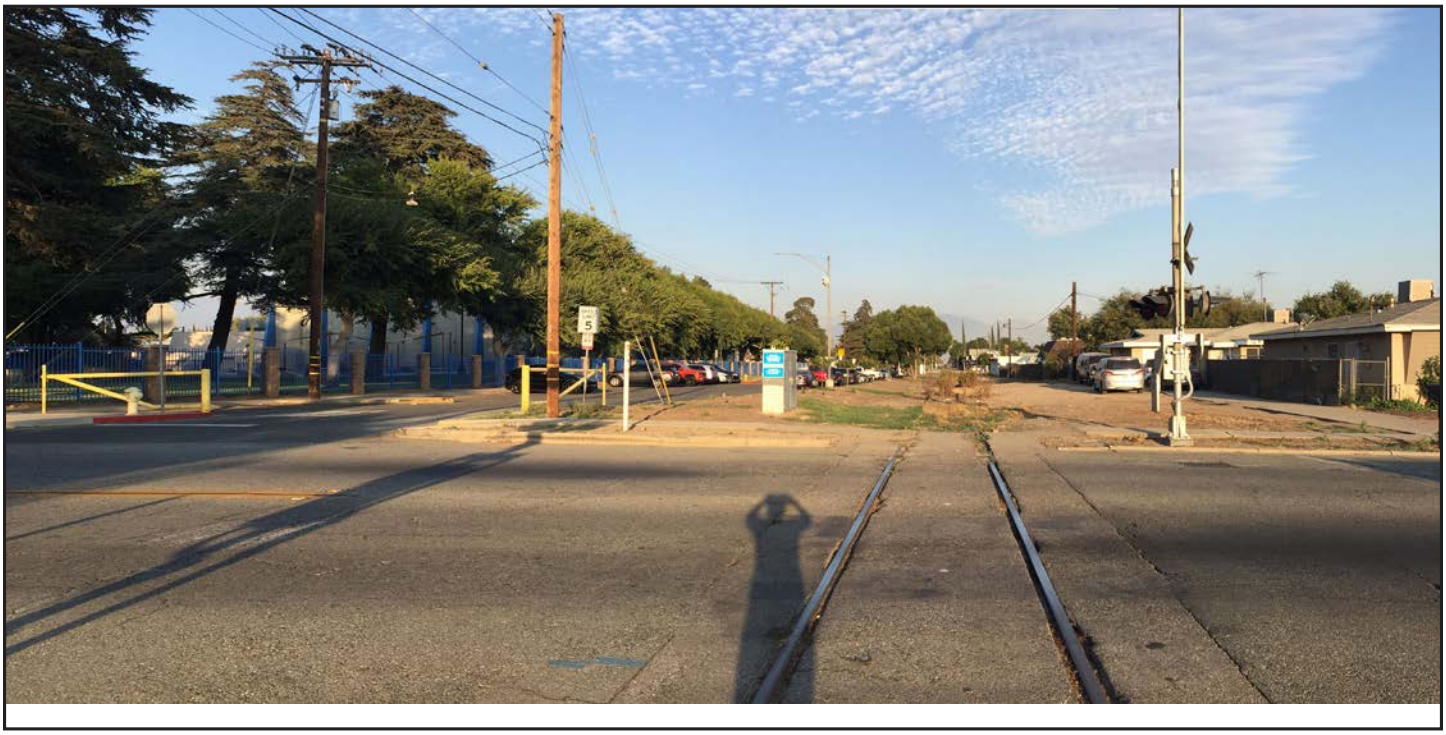


PHOTO 10b
North Willow Ave - East

FIGURE 1.8-2
Site Photographs

PHOTO 10c
North Willow Ave - South

PHOTO 10d
North Willow Ave - West

FIGURE 1.8-2
Site Photographs

PHOTO 10e
North Willow Ave - Cemetary

FIGURE 1.8-2
Site Photographs

SOURCE: Google Maps

PHOTO 11a
North Lilac Ave - North

PHOTO 11b
North Lilac Ave - East

FIGURE 1.8-2
Site Photographs

SOURCE: Google Maps

PHOTO 11c
North Lilac Ave - South

PHOTO 11d
North Lilac Ave - West

FIGURE 1.8-2
Site Photographs

PHOTO 11e
North Lilac Ave - Bud Bender Park Resource

FIGURE 1.8-2
Site Photographs

PHOTO 12a
North Cactus Ave - North

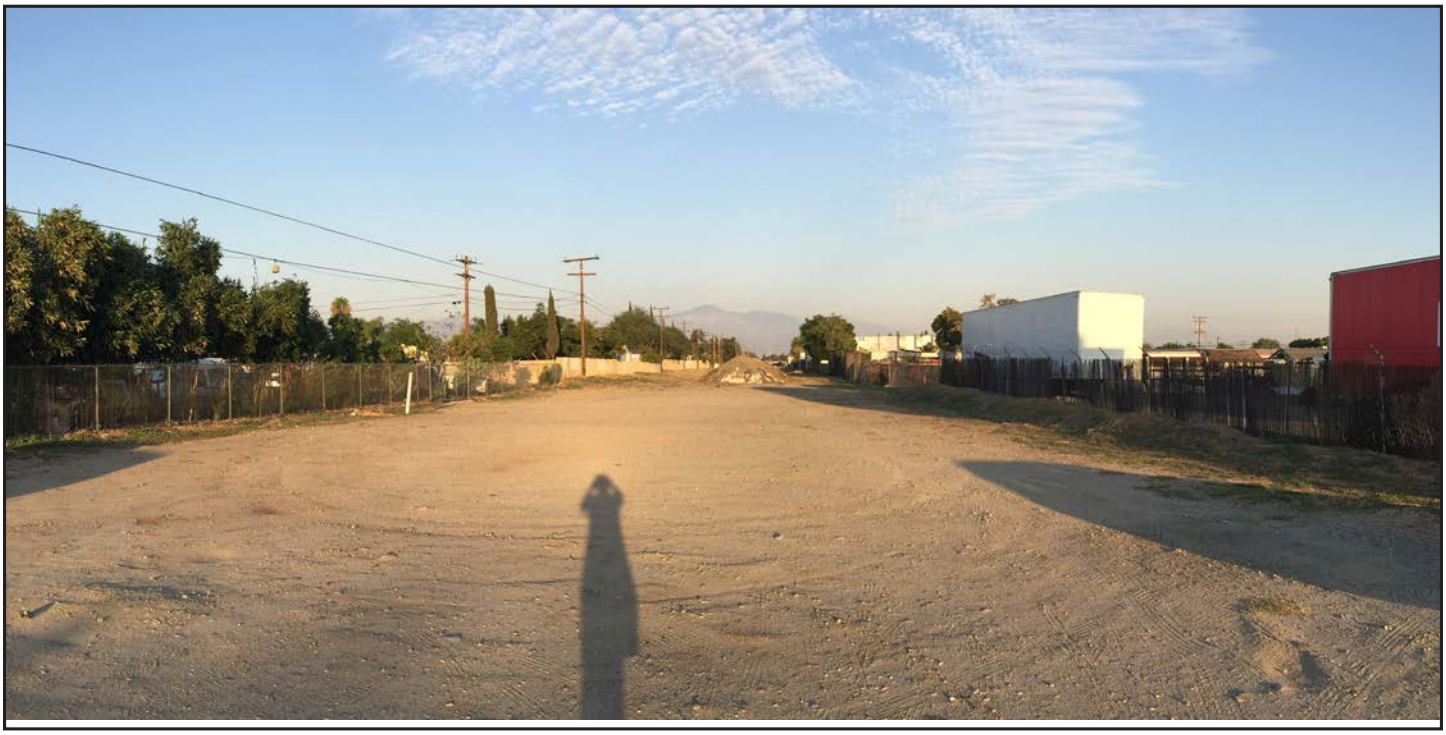


PHOTO 12b
North Cactus Ave - East

FIGURE 1.8-2
Site Photographs

PHOTO 12c
North Cactus Ave - South

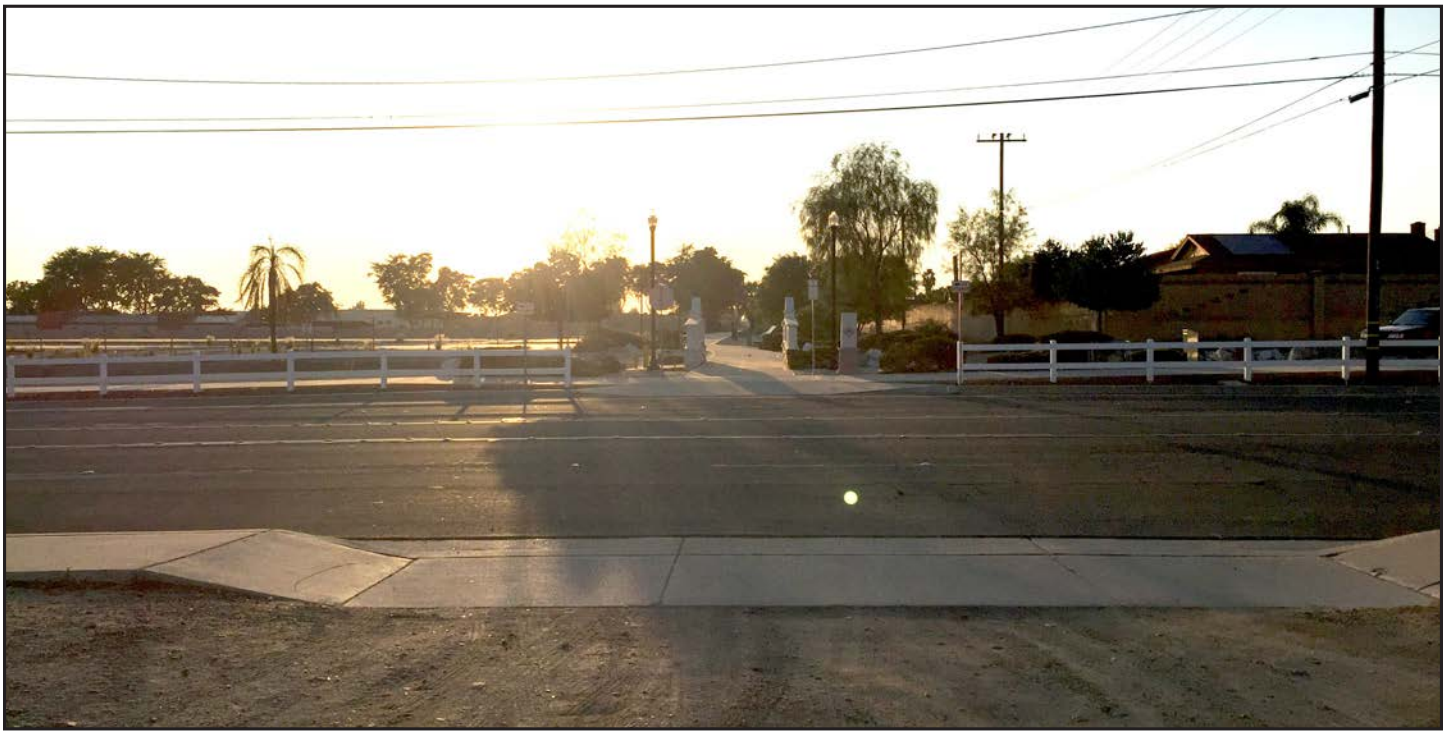


PHOTO 12d
North Cactus Ave - West

FIGURE 1.8-2
Site Photographs

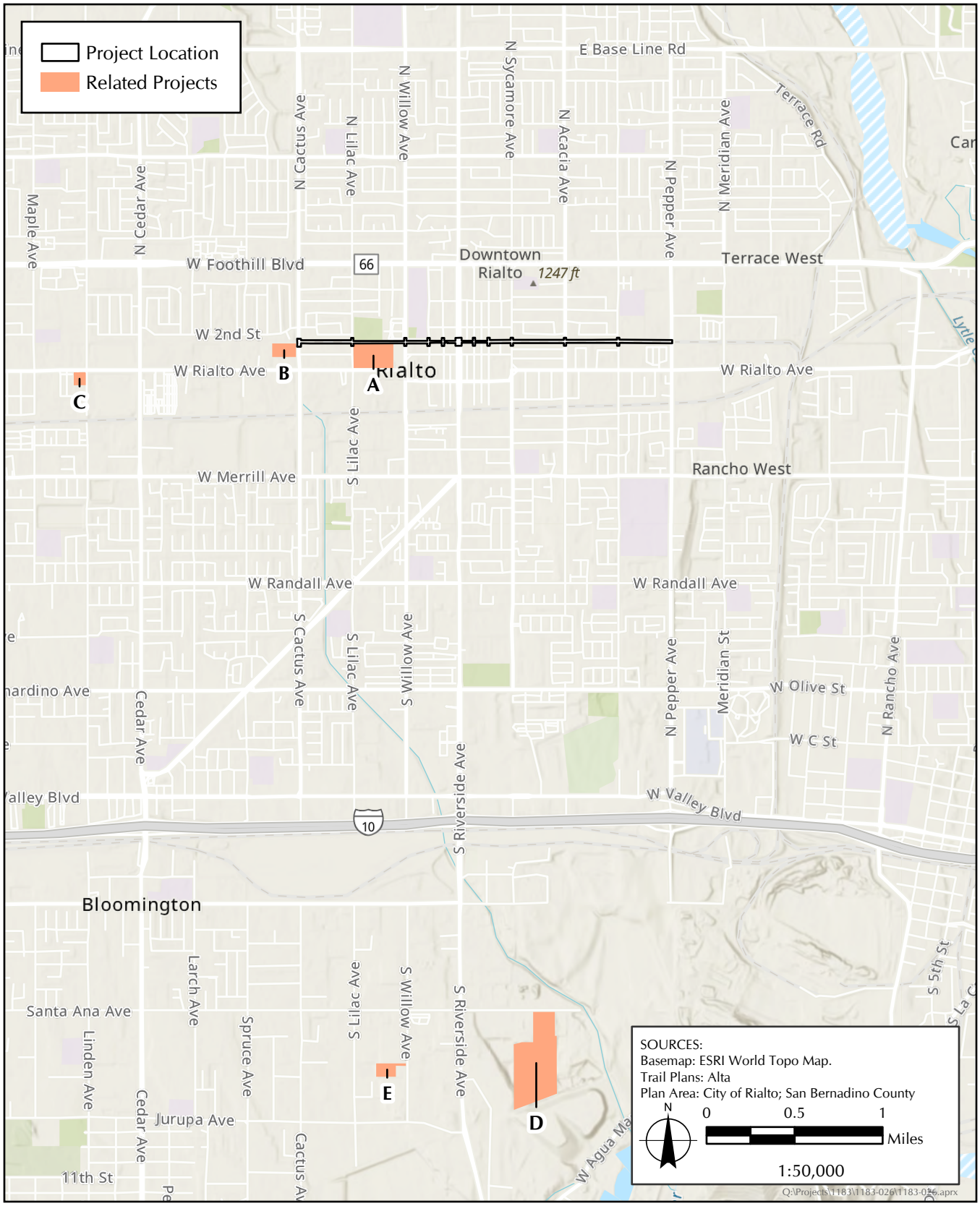


FIGURE 1.12-1

Related Projects Map

SECTION 2.0
ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

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

☐ Aesthetics	☐ Greenhouse Gas Emissions	☐ Public Services
☐ Agriculture & Forestry Resources	☒ Hazards & Hazardous Materials	☐ Recreation
☐ Air Quality	☐ Hydrology / Water Quality	☒ Transportation
☒ Biological Resources	☐ Land Use / Planning	☒ Tribal Cultural Resources
☒ Cultural Resources	☐ Mineral Resources	☐ Utilities / Service Systems
☐ Energy	☒ Noise	☐ Wildfire
☒ Geology / Soils	☐ Population / Housing	☐ Mandatory Findings of Significance

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 revisions on the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

☐ I find 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 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

10/1/25

Date

Art Cervantes

Printed Name

Engineering Manager

Title

SECTION 3.0
ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

The environmental analysis provided in this section describes the information that was considered in evaluating the questions in Section 2.0, *Environmental Checklist*. The information used in this evaluation is based on a review of relevant literature and technical reports (see Section 4.0, *References*, and Appendices A through J), in addition to field reconnaissance.

3.1 Aesthetics

Would the project:	*Potentially Significant Impact*	*Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Explanation

a. No impact. The proposed project would have a significant impact on scenic vistas if the development of the PE Trail resulted in an adverse effect on scenic vistas. Per the City of Rialto's 2010 General Plan, scenic vistas are defined as "picturesque views that are visible from certain parts of the City" that create a backdrop of the natural landforms and foothills.[1] Per the General Plan, protected views include the following:

- La Loma Hills
- Jurupa Hills
- Box Spring Mountains
- Moreno Valley
- Riverside
- San Gabriel Mountains
- San Bernardino Mountains

The viewsheds of the two neighboring cities of Moreno Valley and Riverside are also protected by limiting building heights per Community Design Policy: Public Realm – Scenic Vistas (Goal: 2-14, Policy 2-14.2) to preserve scenic vistas.

[1] City of Rialto. December 2010. City of Rialto General Plan. https://www.rialtoca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1494/2010-General-Plan

The proposed project is a rails-to-trails pedestrian and cycling thoroughfare that would extend the PE Trail by approximately 1.75 miles. The proposed project would consist of a 10-foot-wide paved shared use path, 2-foot graded shoulder on either side of the path, trailhead, parking lot, signalized crossing, widened curb ramps, ADA accessibility features, trail striping, landscaping enhancements, access to amenities, safety lighting and safety signage. The height of the proposed project would not exceed the surrounding building heights and would not obstruct visibility of scenic vistas. The PE Trail would increase pedestrian and cyclist public views of the identified protected vistas. The project area is currently not accessible. The proposed project would allow cyclists and pedestrians access and increase opportunities to maximize views of scenic vistas. Therefore, there would be no impact. No further analysis is warranted.

b. No impact. The proposed project would have a significant impact on scenic highways if it would substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway. The project site is located approximately 30.4-miles northwest of the nearest officially designated (OD) state scenic highway, the 28.2-mile segment of State Route 243 (SR-243) in Riverside County from Banning city limits near Interstate 10 (I-10) down to SR 74.[2] In addition, the project site is located approximately 29.5 miles southwest of the nearest eligible (E) state scenic highway, SR-330 in San Bernardino County from SR 30 near Highland to SR 18 near Running Springs. While there are no scenic roadways identified in the City's General Plan, the City does identify key corridors. Key corridors would improve the visual quality of the community's major streets with abundant landscaping and trees consisting of enhancements taking "the form of screening any visual blight from the public right-of-way (ROW), which includes Riverside Avenue, Base Line Road, and Foothill Boulevard.[3]

The project site is a paved access road on relatively flat terrain that contains no trees, rock outcroppings, or historic buildings that are within a state scenic highway. Additionally, the proposed project would not be visible from the nearest officially designated and eligible scenic highway routes due to distance and existing visual barriers including intervening development, ornamental trees, topographic conditions, and highway sound walls. The proposed project does, however, intersect Riverside Avenue, a key City corridor, almost halfway between N. Cactus Avenue and N. Pepper Avenue. The proposed project would include improvements that would enhance the railway ROW corridor and thus reduce blight at the intersection of Riverside Avenue. The proposed project would not have an adverse effect on the scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway. Therefore, the project would have no impact. No further analysis is warranted.

c. Less than significant impact. The proposed project would have a significant impact on the degradation of visual character and quality of public views of a site and its surroundings if it conflicts with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality in an urbanized area. The General Plan states that the City will require all new nonresidential development to incorporate well-designed landscaping that is diverse, colorful, and sustainable. The areas will be attractive and consistent with the overall landscaped character of Rialto. Furthermore, sidewalks, trails, and bicycle paths should supplement and complement street systems in establishing the

[2] California Department of Transportation. N.d. California State Scenic Highway Map. https://caltrans.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=465dfd3d807c46cc8e8057116f1aacaa (accessed April 27, 2025).

[3] City of Rialto. December 2010. City of Rialto General Plan. https://www.rialtoca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1494/2010-General-Plan

character of the neighborhood.[4] While the City aims to improve pedestrian safety and encourage walking, the City's goal is also to revitalize the downtown and citywide neighborhoods with the intent of eliminating citywide blight. This is the sole purpose of the Rialto Redevelopment Agency (RDA). In addition, enhancements should screen any visual blight from the public ROW and provide well-designed and well-maintained landscaping along corridors. The Public Realm, Signage Goal 2-13 (Achieve quality aesthetic design of all signage in the City of Rialto), Policy 2-13.1, states, "Prohibit the indiscriminate placement of highway directional signs, traffic signs, street identification signs, and other similar devices in any manner that creates visual blight or driver confusion." Furthermore, Measure 8.74, per the City's General Plan, was included for seeking funding to construct the Pacific Electric Bike Trail along the former Pacific Electric Railway ROW, including amenities for bicyclists and pedestrians consisting of lighting, seating areas, bicycle racks, landscaping, and similar features. The project is located in a highly urbanized area within a primarily residential area and is consistent with the City's General Plan, applicable zoning regulations and requirements.

Construction activities associated with the proposed project would entail excavation, grading, clearing and grubbing, placement of trail path materials, revegetation, installation of signs and lighting, other trail features, and temporary construction fencing. The construction activities would create temporary visually adverse conditions. Materials and equipment would be stored at one to two designated staging areas located along the ROW, to be approved by the City. Installation of temporary construction fencing would help reduce the unsightly conditions of construction. The proposed project would be consistent with the City's goals, zoning regulations, and requirements in relation to scenic quality, pedestrian access, blight, and visual character. Construction activities and fencing would adversely affect visual character and scenic quality of the project site; however, this would be a temporary condition during the approximately 8-month construction period. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant. No further analysis is warranted.

d. Less than significant impact. The proposed project would have a significant impact on daytime and nighttime views if there is a new substantial source of light and glare created in the project area. Views are protected in the General Plan by a reduction of glare from any proposed projects. The General Plan includes Measure 8.74 for seeking funding to construct the Pacific Electric Bike Trail along the former Pacific Electric Railway ROW, including amenities for bicyclists and pedestrians consisting of lighting, seating areas, bicycle racks, landscaping, and similar features. In addition, the General Plan states that while decorative street lighting can help improve the aesthetics of a development as well as provides safety and visibility for pedestrians during nighttime, project building materials "should be carefully selected as to not produce glare or other distracting disturbances" that would obstruct daytime or nighttime views.[5] In addition, per Community Design Policy: Public Realm – Scenic Vistas (Goal: 2-14, Policy 2-14.3), projects should ensure to include building materials that do not produce glare, such as polished metals or reflective windows. Per Section 18.61.140 of the City's Lighting Code (Ordinance 1382 section 1 (part), 2006):[6]

[4] City of Rialto. December 2010. City of Rialto General Plan. https://www.rialtoca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1494/2010-General-Plan

[5] City of Rialto. December 2010. City of Rialto General Plan. https://www.rialtoca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1494/2010-General-Plan

[6] City of Rialto. N.d. Municode Codification – 18.61.140 Lighting Code. https://library.municode.com/ca/rialto/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT18ZO_CH18.61DEGU_18.61.140LI (accessed April 27, 2025).

- All exterior lighting shall be coordinated as to style, material, and color and designed to avoid spillover glare beyond the site boundaries, particularly where incompatible uses are located in close proximity. Neutral and earthtone color lighting fixtures with other appropriate measures to conceal the light source from adjoining properties and adjacent street used by the public shall be required.
- Exterior lighting shall provide illumination for the security and safety of on-site areas such as entrances, exits, parking, loading, shipping and receiving, pathways, and other work areas.
- All building facade recesses shall be well lit to encourage a safe environment.
- Night lighting shall be provided for all pedestrian movement paths such as walkways and where stairs, curbs, ramps, and crosswalks occur.
- The location of light fixtures shall correspond to anticipated use. Lighting of pedestrian movement paths shall illuminate changes in grade, path intersections, seating areas and any other uses along movement path which if left unlighted would create an unsafe condition.
- The level of lighting shall not exceed one-half footcandle at any residential property line or one footcandle at any nonresidential property line.

In addition, Section 15.10.020 of the City's Safety Code (Ordinance 1414, Section 3, 2008; Ordinance 1234 (part), 1995: Ordinance 919, 1984; Ordinance 914 (part), 1984)[7] notes that lighting shall be engineered so as not to produce direct glare or "stray light" on adjacent properties.

Safety lighting is being implemented as part of the proposed project. While the proposed project would include improvements that would enhance the railway ROW corridor, safety lighting is anticipated for the proposed project per Measure 8.74 and trail improvement goals per the City's General Plan. The proposed project would abide by all lighting and glare code requirements including those that require materials that avoid glare and reduce effects on daytime views and light overspill that could affect nighttime views. The implementation of safety lighting would have a less than significant impact on nighttime views as a result of a new source of substantial light or glare. No further analysis is warranted.

[7] City of Rialto. N.d. Municode Codification – 15.10.020 Personal Safety Code. https://library.municode.com/ca/rialto/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT15BUCO_CH15.10PUSABUCORE_15.10.020PESA (accessed April 27, 2025).

3.2 Agriculture and Forestry Resources

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

Would the project:	***Potentially Significant Impact***	***Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated***	***Less than Significant Impact***	***No Impact***
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Explanation

a. No impact. The proposed project would have a significant impact if the development of the Rialto Pacific Electric trail converted prime, unique, or statewide important farmland. Per the

California Important Farmland Finder,[1] the proposed project area is located entirely within a built urban environment and not within any known prime, unique, or statewide important farmland. The project would, therefore, not convert any prime, unique, or statewide important farmland from their intended use and would have no impact to prime, unique, or statewide important farmland resources. No further analysis is warranted.

b. No impact. The proposed project would have a significant impact if it would result in the development of agricultural zoned land or impact a Williamson Act. As stated above, the proposed project would be entirely within a built urban environment and not within land zoned for agricultural use. The zoning for the proposed project is mostly designated within the Transportation Corridor (T-C)[2] and also within the Rialto Central Area Specific Plan,[3] which is composed of several different zonings (see Section 3.11, *Land Use and Planning*). Per the California Williamson Act Enrollment website,[4] the proposed project is not within land under Williamson Act agreements term and, therefore, would have no impact to Williamson Act land. No further analysis is warranted.

c. No impact. The proposed project would have a significant impact if the project area was zoned as forest, timberland, or timberland production land and development would diminish it. As stated above, the proposed project is within a built urban environment and would not impact any known forest, timberland, or timberland production zones lands. Therefore, the proposed project would have no impact. No further analysis is warranted.

d. No impact. The proposed project would have a significant impact if the project area was zoned as forest land and would result in a loss of that forest land. As stated above, the proposed project is within a built urban environment and would not impact any known forest lands. Therefore, the proposed project would have no impact. No further analysis is warranted.

e. No impact. The proposed project would have a significant impact if the development would involve the conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use. As stated above, the proposed project is within a built urban environment and would not impact any known forest lands or farmland. Therefore, the project would have no impact. No further analysis is warranted.

[1] California Department of Conservation. N.d. California Important Farmland Finder. https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/DLRP/CIFF/ (accessed December 2024).

[2] City of Rialto, CA. n.d. Municode Codification. https://library.municode.com/ca/rialto/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT18ZO_CH18.45TRCOZO (accessed December 2024).

[3] Your Rialto. N.d. Rialto Zoning Map. https://www.yourrialto.com/DocumentCenter/View/1513/Zoning-Map---July-2013 (accessed December 2024).

[4] California Department of Conservation. N.d. California Williamson Act Enrollment Finder. https://www.zillow.com/homedetails/1424-N-Michigan-Ave-Pasadena-CA-91104/20919614_zpid/ (accessed December 2024).

3.3 Air Quality

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

Would the project:	*Potentially Significant Impact*	*Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable Federal or State ambient air quality standard?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Explanation

a. Less than significant impact. The proposed project would have a less than significant impact regarding conflict with or obstruction of the applicable air quality plan. The project is located in the South Coast Air Basin (SCAB), comprising all of Orange County and the nondesert regions of Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino counties. The South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) is the agency primarily responsible for comprehensive air pollution control in the SCAB and reducing emissions from area, point stationary, and indirect sources. The SCAQMD prepared the 2022 Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) to meet federal and state ambient air quality standards (Table 3.3-1, *SCAQMD Air Quality Significance Thresholds*).[1] The 2022 AQMP contains a comprehensive list of pollution control strategies directed at reducing emissions and achieving ambient air quality standards. These strategies are developed, in part, based on regional population, housing, and employment projections prepared by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). SCAG is the regional planning agency for Los Angeles, Orange, Ventura, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Imperial counties and addresses regional issues relating to transportation, the economy, community development, and the environment.

[1] South Coast Air Quality Management District. December 2022. 2022 Air Quality Management Plan. https://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/clean-air-plans/air-quality-management-plans/2022-air-quality-management-plan/final-2022-aqmp/final-2022-aqmp.pdf?sfvrsn=16 (accessed December 2024)

TABLE 3.3-1
SCAQMD AIR QUALITY SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLDS

Maximum Daily Thresholds		
Pollutant	**Construction**	**Operation**
NO_x	100 lbs/day	55 lbs/day
VOC	75 lbs/day	55 lbs/day
PM_{10}	150 lbs/day	150 lbs/day
$PM_{2.5}$	55 lbs/day	55 lbs/day
SO_x	150 lbs/day	150 lbs/day
CO	550 lbs/day	550 lbs/day
Lead	3 lbs/day	3 lbs/day
Toxic Air Contaminants (TACs), Odor, and GHG Thresholds		
TACs (including carcinogens and noncarcinogens)	Maximum Incremental Cancer Risk ≥ 10 in 1 million	
	Cancer Burden > 0.5 excess cancer cases (in areas ≥ 1 in 1 million)	
	Chronic & Acute Hazard Index ≥ 1.0 (project increment)	
Odor	Project creates an odor nuisance pursuant to SCAQMD Rule 402	
GHG	10,000 MT/yr CO2eq for industrial facilities	
Ambient Air Quality Standards for Criteria Pollutants[a]		
NO_2	SCAQMD is in attainment; project is significant if it causes or contributes to an exceedance of the following attainment standards:	
1-hour average	0.18 ppm (state)	
Annual arithmetic mean	0.03 ppm (state) and 0.0534 ppm (federal)	
PM_{10}		
24-hour average	10.4 µg/m^3 (construction)[b] & 2.5 µg/m^3 (operation)	
Annual average	1.0 µg/m^3	
$PM_{2.5}$		
24-hour average	10.4 µg/m^3 (construction)[b] & 2.5 µg/m^3 (operation)	
SO_2		
1-hour average	0.25 ppm (state) & 0.075 ppm (federal – 99th percentile)	
24-hour average	0.04 ppm (state)	
Sulfate 24-hour average	25 µg/m^3 (state)	
CO	SCAQMD is in attainment; project is significant if it causes or contributes to an exceedance of the following attainment standards:	
1-hour average	20 ppm (state) and 35 ppm (federal)	
8-hour average	9.0 ppm (state/federal)	
Lead		
30-day average	1.5 µg/m^3 (state)	
Rolling 3-month average	0.15 µg/m^3 (federal)	

Note: lbs/day = pounds per day; ppm = parts per million; µg/m^3 = micrograms per cubic meter; MT/year CO2eq = metric tons per year of CO2 equivalents; NOx = nitrogen oxide; VOC = volatile organic compounds; PM_{10} = particulate matter 10 microns or less in diameter (coarse PM); $PM_{2.5}$ = particulate matter 2.5 microns or less in diameter (fine PM); SO_X = sulfates; CO = carbon monoxide; TACs = toxic air contaminants; GHG = greenhouse gases; NO_2 = nitrogen dioxide; SO_2 = sulfur dioxide.
[a] Ambient air quality thresholds for criteria pollutants based on SCAQMD Rule 1303, Table A-2 unless otherwise stated.
[b] Ambient air quality threshold based on SCAQMD Rule 403.
Source: South Coast Air Quality Management District. April 1993. CEQA Air Quality Handbook.

With regard to future growth, SCAG has prepared the 2024-2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (Connect SoCal 2024), which provides population, housing, and employment projections for cities under its jurisdiction. The growth projections in the 2024-2050 RTP/SCS are based in part on projections originating under County and City General Plans. These growth projections were utilized in the preparation of the air quality forecasts and consistency analysis included in the 2022 AQMP. Connect SoCal 2024 was approved in April 2024.

The proposed project involves the construction of active transportation infrastructure at the old Pacific Electric Railway. SCAG's Connect SoCal 2024 has a stated goal to increase active transportation mode share to 8.4 percent by 2050.[2] The proposed project would increase the active transportation mode share percentage as prescribed by Connect SoCal 2024.

The 2022 AQMP was adopted by the SCAQMD as a program to lead the SCAB into compliance with several criteria pollutant standards and other federal requirements. It relies on emissions forecasts based on demographic and economic growth projections provided by Connect SoCal 2024. SCAG is charged by California law to prepare and approve "the portions of each AQMP relating to demographic projections and integrated regional land use, housing, employment, and transportation programs, measures and strategies." The SCAQMD recommends that, when determining whether a project is consistent with the current AQMP, a lead agency must assess whether the project would directly obstruct implementation of the plan and whether it is consistent with the demographic and economic assumptions (typically land use-related, such as resultant employment or residential units) upon which the plan is based.

The proposed Project operations would support the Transportation Control Measures in the 2022 AQMP Regional Transportation section. Thus, the proposed project is not expected to conflict with or obstruct the implementation of the AQMP. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant. No further analysis is warranted.

b. Less than significant impact. The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to air quality in relation to resulting in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project is nonattainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard. The California Air Resources Board (CARB)–maintained air monitoring stations measure SCAB air pollutant levels. The nearest monitoring station to the project site is the San Bernardino-4th Street Monitoring Station, located at 24302 4th Street, San Bernardino, California 92410, which is approximately 4.64 miles northeast of the proposed project area. The analysis for this evaluation was based on the three most recent years of available data from these locations for ozone (O_3), fine particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$), coarse particulate matter (PM_{10}), and nitrogen dioxide (NO_2) (Table 3.3-2, *Summary of Ambient Air Quality at San Bernardino-4th Street Monitoring Station*).

[2] Southern California Association of Governments. April 2024. Connect SoCal: A Plan for Navigating to a Brighter Future. https://scag.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/23-2987-connect-socal-2024-final-complete-040424.pdf?1714175547 (accessed December 20, 2024).

TABLE 3.3-2
SUMMARY OF AMBIENT AIR QUALITY AT THE SAN BERNARDINO-4TH STREET MONITORING STATION

Pollutant	Year		
	2021	2022	2023
Ozone (O_3)			
Maximum 1-hr concentration (ppm)	0.142	0.128	0.143
Days exceeding CAAQS (0.09 ppm)	66	60	58
Days exceeding NAAQS (no standard)	6	3	6
State Maximum 8-hour concentration (ppm)	0.113	0.105	0.118
National Maximum 8-hour concentration (ppm)	0.112	0.105	0.118
Days exceeding CAAQS (0.070 ppm)	101	103	87
Days exceeding NAAQS (0.070 ppm)	98	96	84
$PM_{2.5}$			
National maximum 24-hour concentration (µg/m^3)	57.9	40.1	52.9
State maximum 24-hour concentration (µg/m^3)	57.9	40.1	52.9
Measured days exceeding NAAQS (35 µg/m^3)	1	2	1
AAM (µg/m^3)	11.8	11.2	10.5
Does measured AAM exceed NAAQS (15 µg/m^3)?	No	No	No
Does measured AAM exceed CAAQS (12 µg/m^3)?	No	No	No
PM_{10}			
National maximum 24-hour concentration (µg/m^3)	182.4	177.8	*
State maximum 24-hour concentration (µg/m^3)	71.2	*	*
Measured days exceeding NAAQS (150 µg/m^3)	1	1	0
Measured days exceeding CAAQS (50 µg/m^3)	4	*	*
AAM (µg/m^3)	31.7	*	*
Does measured AAM exceed NAAQS (no standard)?	Yes	*	*
Does measured AAM exceed CAAQS (20 µg/m^3)?	Yes	*	*
NO_2			
National maximum 1-hour concentration (ppb)	56.3	52.6	56.0
State maximum 1-hour concentration (ppb)	56	52	56
Days exceeding NAAQS (0.100 ppm)	0	0	0
Days exceeding CAAQS (0.18 ppm)	0	0	0
State AAM (ppb)	15	15	13
Does measured AAM exceed NAAQS (0.053 ppm)?	No	No	No
Does measured AAM exceed CAAQS (0.03 ppm)?	No	No	No
CO (not measured at San Bernardino-4th Street monitoring station)			
SO_2 (not measured at San Bernardino-4th Street monitoring station)			
HS (not measured at San Bernardino-4th Street monitoring station)			

Note: ppm = parts per million by volume; µg/m^3 = micrograms per cubic meter; AAM = annual average; CO = carbon monoxide; SO_2 = sulfur dioxide; HS = hydrogen sulfide; CAAQS = California Ambient Air Quality Standards; NAAQS = the National Ambient Air Quality Standards; ppb = parts per billion by volume; * Denotes insufficient data.
Source: California Air Resources Board. N.d. Top 4 Summary: Select Pollutant, Years, & Area. http://www.arb.ca.gov/adam/topfour/topfour1.php (accessed December 11, 2024).

Yorke Engineering, LLC (Yorke) conducted an air quality and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions technical study and estimated emissions with CalEEMod, Version 2022.1.1.28 (see Appendix B, *Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Technical Study*). CalEEMod is a statewide land use emissions computer model that calculates both construction and operation emissions from land use projects such as the proposed project. The construction scenario includes the construction duration of 7 months for the approximately 13.8-acre project site. The model estimates both mitigated and unmitigated emissions the proposed project would generate.

Construction Emissions

The construction phase of the proposed project is expected to result in less than significant impacts to air quality regarding a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant during construction (see Table 3.3-3, *Overall Estimated Maximum Daily Construction Emissions*).

TABLE 3.3-3
OVERALL ESTIMATED MAXIMUM DAILY CONSTRUCTION EMISSIONS

Construction Phase	Construction Emissions (Pounds/Day)					
	ROGs	NOx	CO	SOx	$PM_{2.5}$	PM_{10}
Overall maximum daily emissions	3.5	39.1	38.6	< 1	2.1	5.2
Maximum estimated daily emissions for construction	3.5	39.1	38.6	< 1	2.1	5.2
SCAQMD daily significance construction threshold (pounds/day)	75	100	550	150	55	150
Significant?	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**

Note: ROG = reactive organic gases; NO_x = oxides of nitrogen, CO = carbon monoxide, SO_x = oxides of sulfur; $PM_{2.5}$ = fine particulate matter; PM_{10} = coarse particulate matter; SCAQMD = South Coast Air Quality Management District.
Source: Appendix B, *Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Technical Study*.

Compared to the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), the San Bernardino County portion of the SCAB is a nonattainment area for 8-hour ozone and PM_{10} for near source monitors.[3] Compared to the CAAQS, the San Bernardino County portion of the SCAB is a nonattainment area for 1-hour ozone, 8-hour ozone, and PM_{10}.[4] The proposed project would generate these pollutants during construction. The results of the model show that the construction impacts are under the state thresholds and impacts would not contribute substantially to existing or projected air violations. While air quality emissions are under SCAQMD thresholds, they would result in a minor addition of short-term construction emissions. Construction activities would be short term and persist for an anticipated duration of seven months and would not result in substantial, long-term impacts. The proposed project would be required to comply with CARB's requirements to minimize short-term emissions from on-road and off-road diesel equipment; and with SCAQMD's regulations such as Rule 403 for controlling fugitive dust and Rule 1113 for controlling VOC emissions from architectural coatings to mitigate criteria pollutant emissions.

The SCAQMD's 2003 guidance on addressing cumulative impacts for air quality is as follows: "As Lead Agency, the SCAQMD uses the same significance thresholds for project specific and

[3] U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. 2024. U.S. EPA Green Book. Nonattainment Areas for Criteria Pollutants. http://www.epa.gov/green-book (accessed December 2024).

[4] California Air Resources Board. 2023. Air Quality and Land Use Handbook: A Community Health Perspective. http://www.arb.ca.gov/desig/adm/adm.htm (accessed December 2024).

cumulative impacts for all environmental topics analyzed in an Environmental Assessment or EIR." "Projects that exceed the project-specific significance thresholds are considered by the SCAQMD to be cumulatively considerable. This is the reason project-specific and cumulative significance thresholds are the same. Conversely, projects that do not exceed the project-specific thresholds are generally not considered to be cumulatively significant."[5] SCAQMD cumulative air quality significance thresholds are the same as project-specific air quality significance thresholds. Because the criteria pollutant mass emissions impacts shown in Table 3.3-3 are not expected to exceed any of the SCAQMD air quality significance thresholds, cumulative impacts from comparable development projects are also expected to be less than significant. Therefore, potential adverse impacts from implementing the proposed project would not be "cumulatively considerable" as defined by State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064(h)(1) for air quality impacts.

Operation Emissions

The operational phase of the proposed project is expected to result in less than significant impacts to air quality regarding a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant during operations. As discussed in Appendix B, the proposed project's operational emissions would be negligible and, thus, under SCAQMD's CEQA significance thresholds. Long-term operation-related air emissions from the proposed project are likely to result from vehicles traveling to and from the proposed project area. The proposed project includes a trail extension from Cactus Avenue to Pepper Avenue that would connect the various parts of the City internally and externally to the surrounding region by providing innovative nonmotorized, safe, and sustainable transit modes that meet the needs of all users, thus, lowering operational emissions relative to existing conditions.

Therefore, the proposed project would result in less than significant air quality impacts related to criteria pollutants. No further analysis is warranted.

c. Less than significant impact. The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to air quality in relation to exposing sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations during construction and operation. Sensitive receptors are defined as locations with human populations, including children, the elderly, and people with illnesses or others who are more susceptible to the effects of air pollutants relative to the general population. Land uses classified as sensitive receptors by the SCAQMD in the CARB's Air Quality Handbook include residences, schools, playgrounds, childcare centers, athletic facilities, long-term health care facilities, rehabilitation centers, convalescent centers, and retirement homes.[6] Sensitive receptors include high- and low-density single-family residences, mobile homes and trailer parks, and medium and high-density multi-family residences that border the proposed project site to the north and south; and elementary schools and religious facilities to the north of the proposed project site. Approximately 154 sensitive receptors intersect the project boundary to the north and south (Figure 3.3-1, *Sensitive Receptors*). Sensitive receptors within a quarter-mile of the proposed project site include 1,440 high-density, 3 duplexes/triplexes, and 24 low-density residences; 11 mobile homes and trailer parks; two elementary schools; one government office; four religious facilities; one special care facility; one cemetery; and two local parks: Bud Bender Park and Sand Hills Park.

[5] South Coast Air Quality Management District. August 2003. White Paper on Potential Control Strategies to Address Cumulative Impacts from Air Pollution. https://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/Agendas/Environmental-Justice/cumulative-impacts-working-group/cumulative-impacts-white-paper.pdf (accessed December 2024).

[6] California Air Resources Board. 2005. Air Quality and Land Use Handbook: A Community Health Perspective. http://www.arb.ca.gov/ch/handbook.pdf

Localized Significance Threshold Analysis

The construction of the proposed project would not result in substantial pollutant concentrations during construction (see Table 3.3-3). The SCAQMD's Localized Significance Threshold (LST) methodology was used to analyze neighborhood scale impacts of nitrogen oxide (NO_x), carbon monoxide (CO), PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$ on nearby receptors associated with project-specific mass emissions. For determining localized air quality impacts from small projects in a defined geographic source receptor area (SRA), the LST methodology provides mass emission rate lookup tables for 1-acre, 2-acre, and 5-acre parcels by the SRA. Since the anticipated disturbed acreage on any one day is 5 acres, the 5-acre screening lookup tables were used to evaluate NO_x, CO, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$ impacts on nearby sensitive receptors. The proposed project site is 13.8 acres in SRA Zone 34 – Central San Bernardino Valley. The evaluation was performed using the closest distance within SCAQMD LST tables of 25 meters (82 feet) for construction.

Pollutant concentrations disperse with increasing distance from the construction area. On-site construction emissions would meet the LST passing criteria at the nearest receptors (25 meters average distance; see Table 3.3-4, *Construction Emissions Localized Significance Threshold Evaluation*). These emissions would also be below the level of significance and would decrease rapidly with distance from the proposed project. Due to the short-term nature of project construction, sensitive receptors are not expected to be adversely affected by construction.

TABLE 3.3-4
CONSTRUCTION EMISSIONS LOCALIZED SIGNIFICANCE THRESHOLD EVALUATION

Category	Construction Emissions (Pounds/Day)			
	NOx	**CO**	**$PM_{2.5}$**	**PM_{10}**
Construction emissions	39.1	38.6	2.1	5.2
Total	39.1	38.6	2.1	5.2
SCAQMD daily significance construction threshold (pounds/day)	270	1,746	8	14
Significant?	**No**	**No**	**No**	**No**
Note: ROG = reactive organic gases; NO_x = oxides of nitrogen, CO = carbon monoxide, SO_x = oxides of sulfur; $PM_{2.5}$ = fine particulate matter; PM_{10} = coarse particulate matter; SCAQMD = South Coast Air Quality Management District. **Source:** South Coast Air Quality Management District. October 2009. Appendix C. https://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/ceqa/handbook/localized-significance-thresholds/appendix-c-mass-rate-lst-look-up-tables.pdf?sfvrsn=2				

During operations and maintenance of the proposed project, activities would include irrigation to maintain planting areas along the designed trail and the limited use of chemical herbicides that are not banned by the state and enforced by the County of San Bernardino. As discussed, the operational emissions from the proposed project would be negligible and well below the SCAQMD significance thresholds. Therefore, the proposed project would not be expected to result in significant impacts to air quality related to the exposure of sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. No further analysis is warranted.

d. Less than significant impact. Potential sources that may emit odors during construction activities include equipment exhaust and architectural coatings. Odors from these sources would be localized and generally confined to the immediate area surrounding the Project site. The proposed Project would utilize typical construction techniques, and the odors would be typical of most construction sites and temporary in nature. Construction of the proposed Project would not cause an odor nuisance as defined in SCAQMD Rule 402. With respect to odors during operation,

according to the SCAQMD CEQA Air Quality Handbook,[7] land uses and industrial operations that are associated with odor complaints include agricultural uses, wastewater treatment plants, food processing plants, chemical plants, composting, refineries, landfills, dairies, and fiberglass molding. The proposed trail extension would not result in activities that create objectionable, or nuisance odors as defined in Rule 402. Therefore, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts related to objectionable odors. No further analysis is warranted.

[7] California Air Resources Board. 2005. Air Quality and Land Use Handbook: A Community Health Perspective. http://www.arb.ca.gov/ch/handbook.pdf

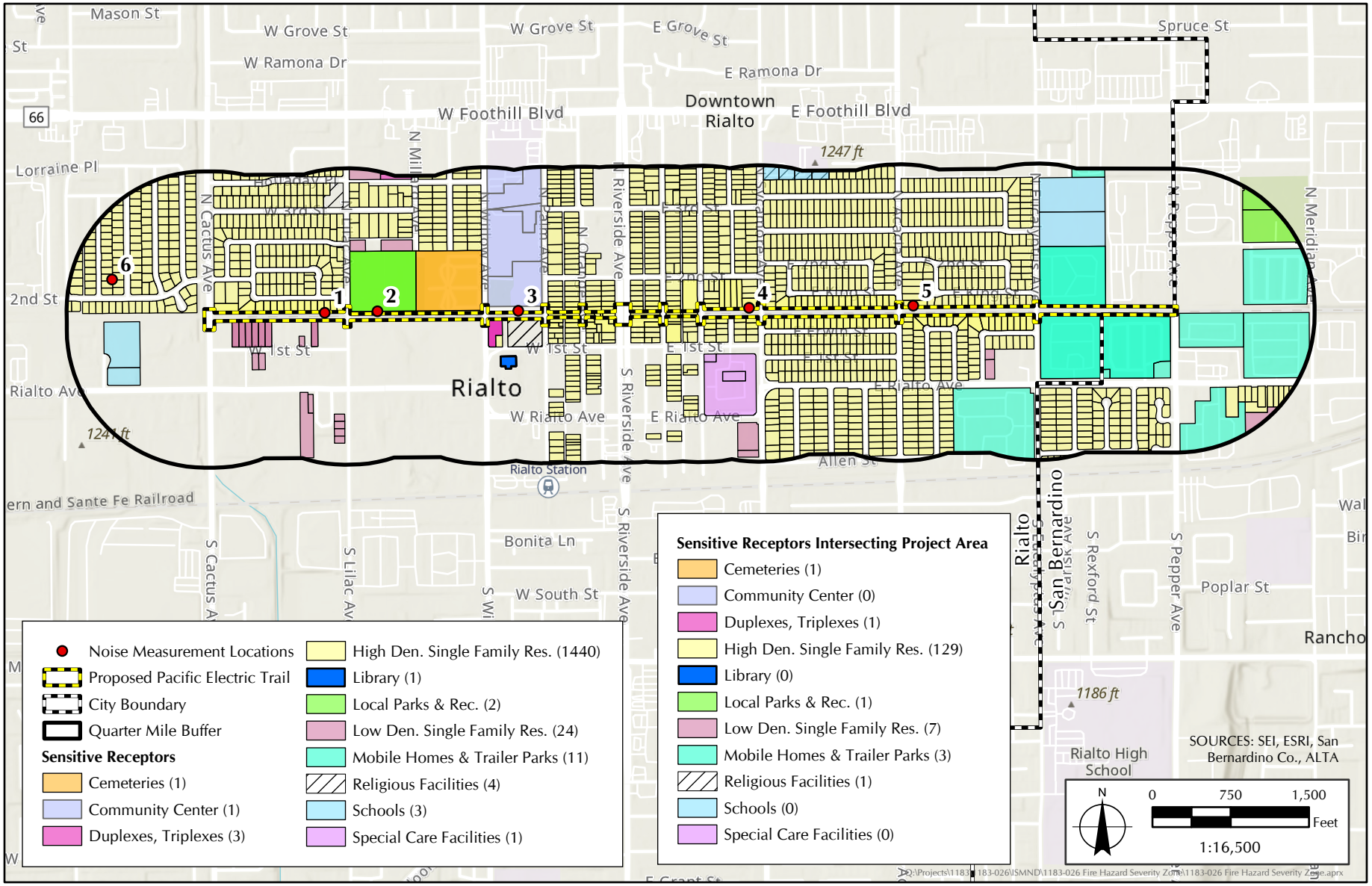


FIGURE 3.3-1

Sensitive Receptors

3.4 Biological Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☒	☐	☐
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Explanation

a. No impact. The proposed project would result in no impact to biological resources regarding any species provided protection under federal, state, and local laws, regulations, policies or plans. There would be no substantial adverse effect as a result of habitat modifications; nor would there be take, harm, or harassment of any candidate, sensitive, or special status species. The proposed

project site is within a highly urbanized region, surrounded by developed areas consisting of streets, sidewalks, parking lots, residential, commercial, and manufacturing areas, abandoned railroad tracks, and street landscaping with non-native plant species. The proposed project site itself is a Pacific Electric Trail along the former Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) track Right-of-Way (ROW) in San Bernardino County, California. The site is entirely developed, characterized by the UPRR ROW, paved surface parking lots, residential, commercial, and manufacturing areas, abandoned railroad tracks (approximately 95 percent of the ground cover), and landscaping composed of non-native trees and shrubs (5 percent of ground cover). Project impacts are restricted to an urban/developed area containing little vegetation other than ornamental street trees.

To determine whether any special status species have the potential to occur at the proposed project site, a records search of the California Native Diversity Database (CNDDB) and the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) Electronic Inventory was conducted for the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute series San Bernardino South topographic quadrangle, where the proposed project is located, and all eight surrounding topographic quadrangles. Additionally, an unofficial species list was requested and received from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) on December 11, 2024. The potential for listed species within the proposed project site was determined by conducting a desktop analysis of habitat requirements, as well as a site visit that was conducted by a qualified biologist on September 4, 2024 as part of a Draft Natural Environment Study (Minimal Impacts) prepared for the project (Appendix C, *Pacific Electric Trail Expansion Natural Environment Study [Minimal Impacts]*).

Records searches identified 56 species of plants and animals known to occur within the vicinity of the proposed project area that are listed as rare, threatened, or endangered pursuant to the federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) and the California Endangered Species Acts (CESA). This includes 40 plant species and 16 wildlife species; 3 fish, 2 amphibians, 1 crustacean, 1 insect, and 9 bird species (Appendix D, *Biological Resources Desktop Analysis Results*). No USFWS-designated critical habitat for listed species was found to exist within five miles of the proposed project site. Based on desktop analysis, site reconnaissance, and absence of existing suitable habitat, none of the 56 FESA and CESA listed species were determined to be present within the proposed project site.

The records searches identified 57 other sensitive species that are not listed pursuant to FESA and CESA but are afforded special recognition by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), USFWS, or other resource agencies and organizations (Appendix D). Based on the desktop analysis and the site visit, none of the sensitive species that were identified as having the potential to occur within the nine topographic quadrangle search area, none were determined likely to be present within the proposed project area due to an absence of suitable habitat for these species.

No special status species were observed during the site survey and none of the species documented in the records search were determined to be present within the proposed project area. Therefore, the proposed project would result in no impacts to sensitive biological resources afforded protection by other federal, state, or local statutes, regulations, policies, or plans. No further analysis is warranted.

b. No impact. The proposed project would result in no impact to biological resources regarding riparian habitat or any other sensitive natural community provided protection under federal, state, and local laws, regulations, policies or plans. There would be no substantial adverse effect as a result of habitat modifications; nor would there be take, harm or harassment of any candidate,

sensitive, or special status species. The proposed project site is within a highly urbanized region, surrounded by developed areas consisting of streets, sidewalks, parking lots, residential, commercial, and manufacturing areas, abandoned railroad tracks and street landscaping with non-native plant species. The proposed project area is entirely developed and consists of mostly paved areas with buildings and landscaping with no native communities present.

The CNDDB,[1] the San Bernardino South USGS 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle map, all eight surrounding topographic quadrangle maps, the National Wetland Inventory (NWI),[2] and aerial imagery were reviewed to identify the nearest riparian habitats and sensitive natural communities to the proposed project site. Natural communities and habitats at the proposed project site were assessed during a site visit conducted by a qualified biologist on September 4, 2024.

The nearest drainage demarcated on the USGS 7.5-minute series topographic quadrangle is an unnamed concrete drainage channel, located approximately 0.57 mile east of the project site. A total of nine sensitive natural communities were identified as potentially present in the region as a result of the CNDDB query. These include Riversidian Alluvial Fan Sage Scrub, Southern California Arroyo Chub/Santa Ana Sucker Stream, Southern Coast Live Oak Riparian Forest, Southern Cottonwood Willow Riparian Forest, Southern Mixed Riparian Forest, Southern Riparian Forest, Southern Riparian Scrub, Southern Sycamore Alder Riparian Woodland, and Southern Willow Scrub. However, based on the desktop analysis and the site visit, no natural communities are present at the proposed project site or in the immediate vicinity. As a result, riparian habitats and sensitive communities were determined to be absent from the project area. Therefore, the project would have no impact. No further analysis is warranted.

c. No impact. The proposed project would result in no impact to biological resources regarding federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means. The San Bernardino South USGS 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle map, all eight surrounding topographic quadrangle maps, and the NWI[3] were reviewed to identify the nearest wetlands to the proposed project site subject to protection under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. In addition, conditions within the proposed project area were evaluated by a Sapphos Environmental, Inc. qualified biologist during a site visit conducted on September 4, 2024.

No historic or currently existing federal jurisdictional wetlands were identified within, or immediately adjacent to, the project site. The nearest drainage demarcated on the USGS 7.5-minute series topographic quadrangle is an unnamed concrete drainage channel, located approximately 0.57 mile east of the project site. The portion nearest to the project site is labeled as a freshwater pond by NWI; however, this area is fully developed, and the drainage likely no longer exists.

As a result of the desktop analysis and site visit, it was determined that federal jurisdictional wetlands are absent from the proposed project area and its immediate vicinity. Because no such wetlands are present at the site, the proposed project would result in no impacts to biological

[1] California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Biogeographic Data Branch. N.d. Rarefind 5: A Database Application for the Use of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife Natural Diversity Database (accessed December 17, 2024).

[2] U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. N.d. National Wetlands Inventory Map. http://www.fws.gov/wetlands/Wetlands-Mapper.html (accessed December 17, 2024).

[3] U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. N.d. National Wetlands Inventory Map. http://www.fws.gov/wetlands/Wetlands-Mapper.html (accessed December 17, 2024).

resources in relation to federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means. No further analysis is warranted.

d. Less than significant with mitigation incorporated. The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts after the incorporation of mitigation in relation to the movement of any native resident or migratory fish and/or wildlife species or established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or native wildlife nursery sites. A site assessment by a Sapphos Environmental, Inc. qualified biologist was conducted on September 4, 2024. Additionally, a desktop analysis, including review of aerial photographs, was conducted to identify any potential wildlife movement corridors and nursery sites within the proposed project site. The proposed project site is located within a highly urbanized region, surrounded by developed areas consisting of streets, sidewalks, parking lots, residential, commercial, and manufacturing areas, abandoned railroad tracks and street landscaping with non-native plant species. There are no prominent topographic or vegetative features associated with the proposed project site or surrounding the site that would funnel wildlife through the area; nor is there any contiguous natural habitat through which wildlife would be expected to move.

The proposed trail runs within the ROW of an abandoned railroad track within the City of Rialto, which consists of residential, commercial, and manufacturing areas. The proposed project site is composed entirely of developed/disturbed or landscaped areas, including residential, commercial, and manufacturing districts, as well as an abandoned railroad. Vegetation within these areas is limited to landscaping plants, overlapping residential plants, or roadside grasses and weeds. Trees that occur outside of the project impact area include tree of heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*) and Mexican fan palm (*Washingtonia robusta*).

During the site survey conducted on September 4, 2024, several native and non-native common bird species protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) were observed within, and adjacent to, the project site. Species observed within the project site included Allen's hummingbird (*Selasphorus sasin*), American crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*), American goldfinch (*Spinus tristis*), American kestrel (*Falco sparverius*), American robin (*Turdus migratorius*), Anna's hummingbird (*Calypte anna*), black phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*), common raven (*Corvus corax*), Eurasian collared-dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*), European starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*), house finch (*Haemorhous mexicanus*), house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), house wren (*Troglodytes aedon*), lesser goldfinch (*Spinus psaltria*), mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*), northern mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*), red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), rock pigeon (*Columba livia*), song sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*), and turkey vulture (*Cathartes aura*).

No nests were observed within any of the trees and shrubs on the project site or within the vegetation in the surrounding area; however, the survey was conducted outside of nesting season (February 15 to August 15).

No other wildlife species were observed at the site. The proposed project area does not contain suitable habitat for any listed, sensitive, or locally important species.

Based on the desktop analysis and site survey, birds afforded protection pursuant to the MBTA are present at the project site, and potential nesting during breeding season may occur in trees located throughout the area. No wildlife movement corridors were identified in the vicinity of the

proposed project. Additionally, the CDFW Habitat Connectivity Viewer ranks the project area as having a ranking of 1, meaning the area has limited habitat connectivity opportunity.[4]

To reduce potential impacts to nesting birds below the level of significance, Mitigation Measure BIO-1 would be required:

> **BIO-1:** A qualified biologist shall conduct a nesting bird survey within 14 days prior to the start of construction activities, if construction takes place during the nesting bird season (February 1–August 31). If a protected nest is found within the project impact area or BSA, an appropriately sized no work buffer shall be established around the nest to prevent disturbance until the nest has fledged. The qualified biologist shall monitor active nests to confirm construction activities will not result in nest failure and to determine once the nest is inactive and the no work buffer can be removed.

Due to the absence of wildlife movement corridors in the vicinity of the proposed project area, no impediment to the current wildlife connectivity is anticipated. Potential impacts to nesting birds, afforded protection pursuant to the MBTA, would be less than significant with implementation of mitigation. No further analysis is warranted.

e. No impact. The proposed project would result in no impact to biological resources regarding local tree preservation policies or ordinances. The proposed project is consistent with applicable goals and policies of the Conservation, Open Space, and Parks and Recreation Elements of the City of Rialto General Plan and Draft General Plan Update.[5,6] The Draft Safety and Noise Element of the City's General Plan Update[7] contains policies related to the Urban Forest Management Plan, including the following:

- Policy 5–3.3: Develop a street tree planting palette. Upon development of the street tree planting palette, prioritize tree planting from the approved street tree list based on the existing tree canopy and the population's vulnerability to extreme heat. Where possible, integrate shade trees with bike and pedestrian infrastructure.
- Policy 5–3.4: Update the minimum landscape requirements for large commercial and residential developments to ensure that landscape areas and plantings provide for adequate shade over paved areas.
- Policy 5–3.5: Promote the development of a network of green spaces throughout the city, prioritizing areas with low park access.
- Policy 5–3.6: Develop a program and funding mechanisms to increase and maintain the urban tree canopy, prioritizing neighborhoods with low tree canopy coverage and/or high urban heat island effect.

[4] California Department of Fish and Wildlife. N.d. Habitat Connectivity Viewer. https://apps.wildlife.ca.gov/bios6/?bookmark=648 (accessed December 19, 2024).

[5] City of Rialto. 2010. Rialto General Plan. https://www.yourrialto.com/DocumentCenter/View/1494/2010-General-Plan

[6] City of Rialto. October 2023. City of Rialto General Plan Update. Initial Study/Negative Declaration. https://www.yourrialto.com/DocumentCenter/View/4572/General-Plan-Update-Draft-Mitigated-Negative-Declaration?bidId=

[7] City of Rialto Community Development Department. September 2023. Safety and Noise. Public Draft. Prepared by Dudek. https://www.yourrialto.com/DocumentCenter/View/4458/2023-Safety-Element?bidId= (accessed December 2024).

These policies would apply to the proposed project, as the trail would promote recreational use of open space. While the proposed project is not anticipated to require the removal of any native trees for the creation of the new trail, the project would be subject to the updated policies listed above if new street trees are intended to be planted or trimming of existing trees to be implemented. Therefore, there would be no impact. No further analysis is warranted.

f. No impact. The proposed project would result in no impact to biological resources regarding conflicts with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP), Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP),[8] or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan. There are no HCPs or NCCPs with boundaries that intersect the project site. No further analysis is warranted.

[8] California Department of Fish and Wildlife. August 2023. California Regional Conservation Plans. https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=68626&inline

3.5 Cultural Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	☐	☒	☐	☐
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Explanation

a. Less than significant with mitigation incorporated. The proposed project would have the potential to cause a substantial change in the significance of four historical resources as defined by CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5, which are eligible for the City of Rialto Local Listing but are ineligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) (see the Cultural Resources Technical Report [CRTR; Appendix E], the Archaeological Survey Report [see Appendix F, *Draft Section 106 Documentation*], and the Historic Resources Evaluation Report [Appendix F]). Methods used to characterize the proposed project in relation to historical resources, archaeological resources, and human remains included: a records search of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC) at California State University, Fullerton, on August 1, 2024, and April 30, 2025; and a historical records and archival research of aerial photographs available at the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB) Fairchild Aerial Photo Collection online digital archives, in-house maps and library documents, and digital County Assessor's Office data and historic newspaper publications. In addition, SEI staff also completed searches of the Historic Property Data File, NRHP, CRHR, California Historical Landmarks, California Inventory of Historic Resources, and California Points of Historical Interest for the proposed project and surrounding 0.25-mile area. A Sacred Lands File (SLF) database search and Native American contacts list request was submitted via email to the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) on July 29, 2024, for the proposed project. Native American outreach per CEQA included hardcopy and email letters sent to 21 Native American tribes identified by the NAHC. An intensive archaeological pedestrian survey was completed on September 11, 2024, by a qualified archaeologist.

A review of the CHRIS SCCIC data for the proposed project found that there were no previously recorded historical resources within the 0.25-mile record search. The findings of an SCCIC record search do not completely determine whether there are resources within the project area but whether previously recorded resources are within 0.25-mile of the project area.

On September 11, 2024, Sapphos Environmental, Inc. staff conducted a survey of the proposed project footprint and did not identify potential historical resources, unique archaeological resources, or human remains within the proposed project area. Evaluations were completed by

qualified architectural historians, including an exemption of 142 built environment resources and evaluations for resource eligibility to the NRHP, CRHR, and City of Rialta Historic Preservation Ordinance for Local Listing. Three resources (the Pacific Electric Depot and two Sears Craftsman Bungalows) had been previously determined eligible for the NRHP but were reevaluated and found ineligible due to a loss of integrity since their original recording. The remaining resources were either exempted from evaluation or recommended ineligible for the NRHP and CRHR. Four resources are eligible for CEQA Local Listing: the Pacific Electric Depot (119 N Riverside Avenue; Assessor's Parcel Number [APN]: 013-019-111), Sears Bungalows (125 N Riverside Avenue; APN: 013-016-106), 129 N Riverside Avenue (APN: 013-016-107); and Police Station (APN: 013-019-111). Therefore, the impact on historical resources would be less than significant with mitigation for resource avoidance incorporated (MM-CUL-1). No further analysis is warranted.

Moreover, although a survey of the proposed project documents over 90 percent of the area is disturbed by historic development, the possibility remains for the discovery of intact buried historical resources contained in undisturbed soil within the proposed project area. The incorporation of mitigation measures CUL-1, CUL-2, and CUL-3 will ensure that any substantial adverse change to the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5 will be less than significant.

MM-CUL-1: If previously unidentified cultural resources are unearthed during construction activities, construction work within 60 feet of the find shall be halted and directed away from the discovery until a Secretary of the Interior qualified archaeologist assesses the significance of the resource. The archaeologist, in consultation with the City, State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), any interested Tribes including the Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation, and any other responsible public agency, shall make the necessary Treatment Plan of the find(s) and for the evaluation and mitigation of impacts if the finds are found to be eligible to the National or California Registers or qualify as a unique archaeological resource under CEQA (PRC Section 21083.2). Additional coordination requirements shall be implemented as described in MM-TRC-1.

MM-CUL-2: Respectful treatment of human remains, burials, and cemeteries. In accordance with Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code, if human remains are encountered during excavation activities, the County Coroner shall be notified immediately by the City. No further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby areas reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent remains within 100 feet shall occur until the County Coroner has determined the appropriate treatment and disposition of the human remains.

If the County Coroner determines that the remains are or are believed to be Native American, they shall notify the NAHC within 24 hours. In accordance with Section 5097.98 of the PRC, the NAHC shall immediately notify the person(s) it believes to be the most likely descendant (MLD) of the deceased Native American. The descendants shall complete their inspection and make a recommendation within 48 hours of being granted access to the site. The designated Native American representative would then recommend, in consultation with the City, the preferred disposition of the human remains. The MLD's recommendation shall be followed if feasible and may include scientific removal and nondestructive analysis of the human remains and any items associated with Native American burials. If the City rejects the MLD's recommendations, the agency shall rebury the remains with appropriate dignity on the property within a time frame agreed upon between the City and the MLD in a location that will not be subject to further subsurface disturbance (14 California Code of Regulations §15064.5(e)).

MM-CUL-3: Historic built environment resources, i.e., the Pacific Electric Depot (119 N Riverside Avenue APN:013-019-111), Sears Bungalows (125 N Riverside Avenue; APN: 013-016-106), 129 N Riverside Avenue (APN: 013-016-107); and Police Station (APN: 013-019-111) have been recommended eligible for inclusion in the Local Listing as defined by the City of Rialto Historic Preservation Ordinance. Proposed project activities shall avoid adverse impacts to these four resources. If avoidance is unfeasible, a Historic Properties Treatment Plan shall be prepared by a qualified Architectural Historian, in consultation with the City, any other local government agencies, and the SHPO prior to the start of project activities that may cause a significant change to the eligibility of the resource pursuant to CEQA.

b. Less than significant with mitigation incorporated. The proposed project would have the potential to create a substantial adverse change in the significance of a known archaeological resource or a potentially existing archaeological resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5. The Cultural Resources Technical Report (Appendix E) and the Draft Section 106 Documentation (Appendix F) document that the proposed project footprint was subject to an intensive pedestrian survey on September 11, 2024, conducted in 15-meter transects by Sapphos Environmental, Inc. No historic or prehistoric archaeological resources were identified. A record search, historic research of maps, aerial imagery, and Government Land Plats, as well as an NAHC SLF search on August 24, 2024 and tribal outreach under both CEQA and Section 106 consultation were conducted to determine whether the project area would impact known or potential archaeological sites.

Native American outreach and survey results suggest low sensitivity for archaeological resources in the proposed project area. However, the possibility remains for the discovery of intact buried archaeological resources contained in undisturbed soil within the proposed project area. The incorporation of mitigation measures CUL-1, CUL-2, and TRC-1 shall ensure that any substantial adverse change to the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5 would be less than significant. No further analysis is warranted.

c. Less than significant with mitigation incorporated. The project would not disturb any known human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries. As described in the CRTR and ASR, historic research of maps, aerial imagery, and Government Land Plats, as well as a NAHC SLF search on August 24, 2024 and tribal outreach under both CEQA and Section 106 consultation, and intensive pedestrian survey was conducted to determine whether the proposed project would impact areas known to be sensitive for human remains. The project area is not a known cemetery.

The NAHC Sacred Lands File search returned negative results, and no tribal consultation responses indicated the presence of ancestral burials in the project footprint (Appendix E; Appendix F). If previously unknown human remains are encountered during ground-disturbing activities, the proposed project would comply with Section 7052 of the Health and Safety Code, which states that the disinterment of remains known to be human without authority of law is a felony. The implementation of CUL-2 shall comply with Section 7050.5, which requires that construction or excavation be stopped in the vicinity of discovered human remains until the county coroner can determine whether the remains are those of a Native American.

Despite the highly disturbed landscape within the proposed project footprint, there remains the potential for the presence of human remains, burials, or cemeteries. Incorporation of CUL-2 and TRC-1 shall ensure any inadvertent discovery of human remains has a less than significant impact. No further analysis is warranted.

3.6 Energy

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Explanation

a. Less than significant impact. The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to energy in relation to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources. The proposed project would help achieve energy reduction goals by improving connectivity of the surrounding residential neighborhoods to the City's parks, schools, and neighborhoods. The proposed project would also encourage pedestrian, bicycle, and public transportation in the area.

Construction

Construction of the proposed project would require the use of energy, including electricity and carbon-based fuels, for construction equipment for the 8-month anticipated construction period. Electrical power in the City of Rialto is supplied by Southern California Edison (SCE). Southern California Gas (SoCalGas) provides natural gas services to the City. Electric power would be required for lighting and electrically powered hand tools as necessary. The majority of energy used for project construction would consist of petroleum-based fuels such as gasoline and diesel for on-road vehicles and off-road construction equipment. Construction workers would travel to and from the project site throughout the duration of construction. Heavy-duty construction equipment of various types would be used for construction activities and would rely on diesel fuel. The amount of electricity used for construction would be minimal and of limited duration. The use of construction equipment is necessary to complete the required improvements and would not result in a wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources. It is assumed that natural gas is not required for the construction of the proposed project. Petroleum-based fuels would be used during the entirety of construction of the proposed project. Diesel or gasoline consumed by construction equipment would be the primary energy resource expended. There would also be vehicle miles traveled (VMT) associated with the transportation of construction materials and construction worker commutes, which would result in petroleum consumption. It is assumed that construction workers would travel to and from the project site in gasoline-powered vehicles.

The proposed project would also be required to comply with Policy 2-31.1 of Goal 2-31 in the Rialto General Plan, which requires "the incorporation of energy conservation features into the design of all new construction and site development activities."[1]

Operations and Maintenance

Operation and maintenance activities would include energy expended from on-site lighting along the trail alignment and irrigation to maintain the landscaping areas along the trail. During operation, the proposed project would result in a reduction of energy usage through an expanded connectivity of recreational and nonmotorized transit opportunities connecting the project area to various parts of the City. It is assumed that heavy equipment including excavators, graders, and haul trucks would not be used during operational and maintenance activities.

Therefore, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to energy in relation to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources. No further analysis is warranted.

b. Less than significant impact. The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in relation to conflict with, or obstruction of, a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency, including the State Renewables Portfolio Standards (RPS), the Southern Association of Government's (SCAG) Connect SoCal, and the City of Rialto's General Plan: Conservation Element.

State Renewables Energy Portfolio Standards

The RPS is a regulatory mandate to increase production of energy from renewable sources such as wind, solar, biomass and other alternatives to fossil and nuclear electric generation. It is also known as a renewable electricity standard. The California state legislature passed Senate Bill (SB) 350 in fall 2015, which requires all utilities in the state to source half of their electricity sales from clean, renewable sources such as wind, solar, geothermal, and biopower, by 2030.[2] SB 350 sets ambitious annual targets for energy efficiency and renewable electricity aimed at reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. SB 350 directs the California Energy Commission (CEC) to establish annual targets that will achieve a statewide cumulative doubling of energy efficiency savings and demand reductions in electricity and natural gas final end uses by January 1, 2030. This mandate is one of the primary measures to help the state achieve its long-term climate goal of reducing GHG emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030.

SCAG Connect SoCal

The proposed project is not anticipated to conflict with energy efficiency strategies in the most recent SCAG Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS), Connect SoCal 2024. A key environmental goal outlined by the plan is to create a healthy region for the people of today and tomorrow by integrating the region's development pattern and transportation network to enable more sustainable use of energy resources. Additionally, the plan includes a Sustainable Development strategy, which supports quality of life and economic growth for the region's present and future populations by ensuring that essential resources, such as

[1] City of Rialto. December 2010. Rialto General Plan. https://www.yourrialto.com/DocumentCenter/View/1494/2010-General-Plan

[2] California Energy Commission. 2020. Renewables Portfolio Standards. https://www.energy.ca.gov/programs-and-topics/programs/renewables-portfolio-standard

energy, are responsibly managed.[3] Furthermore, the proposed project site intersects a SCAG-designated High-Quality Transit Corridor (HQTC) on Riverside Avenue, which is a fixed-route bus service with service intervals of no longer than 15 minutes during peak commute hours.[4]

Rialto General Plan

The Rialto General Plan Conservation Element addresses the conservation, protection, development, utilization, and reclamation of the City's natural resources, including energy sources. The following relevant policies and goals related to energy would apply to the proposed project:

Goal 2-38: Mitigate against climate change

- **Policy 2-38.3:** provide enhanced bicycling and walking infrastructure, and support public transit, including public bus service, the Metrolink, and the potential for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT).

Goal 2-31: Conserve energy resources

- **Policy 2-31.1**: require the incorporation of energy conservation features into the design of all new construction and site development activities.

The City has also established several programs encouraging recycling, including (but not limited to): Waste Motor Oil Collection Program, Curbside Green Waste Recycling Program, Sharp Objects/Needles Medical Recycling Program, Construction and Demolition Waste Recycling Program, and Bulk-item Materials Collection Program.[5] The City promotes energy efficiency through these recycling programs. Waste collection, transfer, recycling, and collection services for the City are contracted to private waste haulers.

Construction

Construction of the proposed project would require petroleum fuels used for on- and off-site construction equipment and construction worker trips. Construction of the proposed project would require the temporary and minimal use of energy, including electricity and carbon-based fuels, for construction equipment. Because the construction activities would be temporary, there would be no long-term energy impacts associated with the construction of the proposed project. As stated in Section 1, *Project Description*, concrete wastes would be retained on-site until they can be disposed of as solid waste, and storage of trash and construction related solid wastes would be properly covered in compliance with the *California Stormwater Best Management Practice Handbook: Construction*.[6]

[3] Southern California Association of Governments. April 2024. Connect SoCal. https://scag.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/23-2987-connect-socal-2024-final-complete-040424.pdf?1714175547

[4] Southern California Association of Governments. N.d. High Quality Transit Corridors Interactive. https://maps.scag.ca.gov/portal/apps/experiencebuilder/experience/?id=97f9699f14654b3b8895c74846541f75&page=home (accessed December 12, 2024).

[5] City of Rialto. December 2010. Rialto General Plan. https://www.yourrialto.com/DocumentCenter/View/1494/2010-General-Plan

[6] California Stormwater Quality Association. 2024. California Storm Water Best Management Practice Handbooks: Construction. https://www.casqa.org/resources/bmp-handbooks

Operations and Maintenance

The proposed project would reduce the long-term consumptive use by encouraging and diversifying nonmotorized and sustainable transit modes. The provision of the proposed trail would enhance the existing vacant area to incorporate principles of the Circulation, Open Space and Recreation, Safety, and Environmental Justice Elements of the Rialto General Plan (see Section 1, *Project Description*). The proposed project would encourage the use of local public transit and other mobility options by providing safe access for nonmotorized and sustainable transit modes. Therefore, the proposed project would be consistent with the recommendations and goals of the RPS, SCAG, and the City to encourage energy efficiency and reduce energy consumption. The proposed project would not involve the construction of any habitable or other structures that would involve excessive use of energy during operation.

Therefore, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in relation to conflict with or obstruction of a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. No further analysis is warranted.

3.7 Geology and Soils

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
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? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	☐	☐	☒	☐
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	☒	☐
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☐	☐	☒
iv) Landslides?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Explanation

a(i). Less than significant impact. The proposed project would have a significant impact if a known earthquake fault in the Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone may result in loss, injury, or death due to fault rupture. Per the Alquist-Priolo site reports,[1] the proposed project is north of the Rialto-Colton fault line on the western section of the proposed project, 770 feet north of the intersection of West Rialto Avenue and South Willow Avenue. The proposed project would include the construction of an additional 1.75 miles of trail that would extend the existing historic rail corridor and a trailhead. Users of the trail would be transient, and there would be no new permanent population as a result of the proposed project that could be exposed to fault rupture. Furthermore, the proposed project would not rupture a known fault line during development and construction because it would not involve deep excavations that could cross into or disrupt the fault line. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact. No further analysis is warranted.

a(ii). Less than significant impact. The proposed project would result in significant impacts if strong seismic ground shaking would cause substantial adverse effects, including risk of loss, injury, or death. The proposed project is within Southern California and, therefore, within a seismically active area. The proposed project would develop a walking and cycling trail. In the event of an earthquake, the proposed project would increase exposure to strong seismic ground shaking to anticipated pedestrians and bicyclists utilizing the proposed trail pathway. The proposed project does not include design features that present risk to the public or the environment during an earthquake, such as tall buildings or other large structures. The trail would be located at the ground level. Bridges would be installed and/or modified consistent with California Building Code standards, which account for earthquake resiliency. Thus, potential injury and damage from seismic activity from proposed project elements would be diminished from the existing condition, exposing fewer people and less property to the effects of a major earthquake. Furthermore, the adverse effects of strong seismic shaking would be addressed by existing building codes. Therefore, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts. No further analysis is warranted.

a(iii). No impact. The proposed project would have a significant impact if seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction, would cause substantial adverse effects, including risk of loss, injury, or death. Liquefaction is the transformation of saturated, loose, fine-grained sediment to a fluid-like state because of earthquake shaking or other rapid loading. Liquefaction is known to occur in loose or moderately saturated granular soils with poor drainage. The proposed project would not include residential development, occupied structures, or critical facilities that would be subject to liquefaction. Implementation of the proposed project would not exacerbate potential liquefaction; rather, the potential for liquefaction would remain unchanged following proposed project development. The proposed project would comply with the California Building Code and would be on top of or adjacent to an existing railroad that is underlain by Hanford soil types. Hanford soils, per the U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Geological Survey[2] soil survey, consists of very deep material that formed in moderately coarse textured alluvium dominantly from granite. These soils are well drained and have moderately rapid permeability. These factors

[1] California Department of Conservation, California Geological Survey. N.d. Alquist-Priolo Site Investigations. https://maps.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/informationwarehouse/apreports/ (accessed December 2024).

[2] Esri Community Maps. N.d. Soil Survey Map. https://www.arcgis.com/apps/View/index.html?webmap=38a93357a08b4f6d94d7e07a424fafd5 (accessed January 2025).

significantly reduce the chances of liquefaction, and the soils are not considered to be unstable. Therefore, there would be no impact. No further analysis is warranted.

a(iv). No impact. The proposed project would have a significant impact if landslides would cause substantial adverse effects, including risk of loss, injury, or death. The proposed project is located on a flat terrain within an existing railroad corridor. The project area does not include steep slopes or hillsides and, thus, does not have the potential for landslides. The proposed project would comply with the California Building Code and is proposed on top of or adjacent to an existing railroad that is underlain by Hanford soil types, as described above. These soils are not considered unstable. Therefore, there would be no impact. No further analysis is warranted.

b. Less than significant impact. The proposed project would have a significant impact if it would result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil. Construction activities would disturb the soil and could, therefore, potentially cause erosion. The proposed project would implement best management practices to address soil erosion and sediment control, including the following, per the Rialto General Plan's Policy 5-2.2:[3]

> "Require the implementation of adequate erosion control measures for development projects to minimize sedimentation damage to drainage facilities."

Techniques for soil and erosion control involve the use of straw wattles, silt fencing, soil stabilization techniques, and site waterings for controlling wind erosion. Erosion control requirements are designed to stabilize soils and minimize the potential transport of sediment to receiving waters during and post construction. Compliance with these best management practices would avoid potential soil erosion impacts. Following construction, the trail and surrounding right-of-way would have minimal areas of exposed soil. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant. No further analysis is warranted.

c. No impact. The proposed project would cause a significant impact if it were 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. The proposed project is located on Hanford soils, which are considered to be stable due to their high permeability and well-drained character. In addition, the proposed project would develop a walking and cycling trail. The proposed project does not include design elements that present risk to the public or the environment due to soil instability, such as tall buildings or other large structures. The trail would be located at the ground level. Bridges would be installed and/or modified consistent with California Building Code standards. Therefore, there would be no impact. No further analysis is warranted.

d. No impact. The proposed project would have a significant impact if located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property. As outlined in a map of swelling clays within the United States, the proposed project would not be located in an area with expansive clay soils of a high swelling potential.[4] Therefore, there would be no impact. No further analysis is warranted.

[3] City of Rialto. 2010. Rialto General Plan. https://www.yourrialto.com/DocumentCenter/View/1494/2010-General-Plan

[4] Olive, W. A. 1989. Swelling Clays Map of the Conterminous United States. https://geology.com/articles/soil/expansive-soils-map-900.gif (accessed December 2024).

e. No impact. The proposed project would have a significant impact if it were located on soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water. The proposed project would not include the installation or modification of septic tanks or wastewater disposal systems. Therefore, there would be no impact. No further analysis is warranted.

f. Less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated. The proposed project would have a significant impact if it would directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature. The proposed project is a replacement rails to trails project within a heavily developed railroad corridor underlain by disturbed soils. While there may be potential for paleontological resources within the proposed project area, the proposed project does not involve any deep excavation that could result in the inadvertent discovery of paleontological resources. However, it is also possible that paleontological resources could be discovered during shallow excavations. As such, the possibility of encountering previously unknown paleontological resources cannot be discounted, and the potential impact is considered to be significant. Mitigation Measure GEO-1 would reduce the impact to paleontological resources during construction to a less than significant level.

> **MM-GEO-1**: **Inadvertent Discovery of Paleontological Resources.** If fossils are encountered during construction (i.e., bones, teeth, or unusually abundant and well-preserved invertebrates or plants), the lead agencies and contractor shall divert construction activities away from the discovery within 50 feet of the find, and a professional paleontologist shall be contracted to document the discovery as needed, to evaluate the potential resource, and to assess the nature and importance of the find. Based on the scientific value or uniqueness of the find, the paleontologist may record the find and allow work to continue, or recommend salvage and recovery of the material, if it is determined that the find cannot be avoided. The paleontologist shall make recommendations for any necessary treatment that is consistent with currently accepted scientific practices. Any fossils collected from the area shall then be deposited in an accredited and permanent scientific institution where they would be properly curated and preserved.

Implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-1 would reduce this impact to a less than significant level because a plan to address discovery of unanticipated paleontological resources and to preserve and/or record those resources would be implemented. No further analysis is warranted.

3.8 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
Would the project:				
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Explanation

a. Less than significant impact. The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in relation to generating greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment. The proposed project site is nestled within an urbanized community in the City of Rialto and is surrounded by commercial, residential, and industrial uses (see Chapter 1, *Project Description*). The project site contains areas of vacant land and is currently occupied by a railroad easement; and there are no existing sources of GHG emissions. The proposed project includes a 1.75-mile trail alignment extension that would provide innovative nonmotorized and sustainable transit modes, connecting the project area to various parts of the City and surrounding region. The proposed project would help achieve GHG reduction goals by increasing the number of pedestrians and bicyclists accessing public transportation and would provide access to the adjacent historic Rialto Depot building.

Pursuant to Senate Bill (SB) 375, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) has set the following GHG reduction target for the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) region: reduce per capita GHG emissions from passenger vehicles by 19 percent by 2035 pursuant to Assembly Bill (AB) 32 and SB 375.[1] Per Connect SoCal 2024, the six-County SCAG region is on track to meet this goal as it applies to emissions from automobiles and light trucks and has achieved the 2020 target of 8 percent emissions reduction from 2005 levels by 2020.[2]

Construction Phase

Yorke conducted an air quality and GHG emissions technical study and estimated emissions with CalEEMod, Version 2022.1.1.28 (see Appendix B, *Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Technical Study*). The calculated emissions are based on a 7-month construction schedule starting in September 2025 and ending in April 2026. Construction emission results are based on the annual emissions output and have been amortized over 30 years based on South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) guidance (Table 3.8-1, *Construction GHG Emissions*

[1] Southern California Association of Governments. April 2024. Connect SoCal. https://scag.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/23-2987-connect-socal-2024-final-complete-040424.pdf?1714175547 (accessed December 11, 2024).

[2] Southern California Association of Governments. April 2024. Connect SoCal. https://scag.ca.gov/sites/main/files/file-attachments/23-2987-connect-socal-2024-final-complete-040424.pdf?1714175547 (accessed December 11, 2024).

Summary and Significance Evaluation).[3] Since there are no substantial operational GHG emissions associated with the proposed project, the only emissions included are construction emissions.

TABLE 3.8-1
CONSTRUCTION GHG EMISSIONS SUMMARY AND SIGNIFICANCE EVALUATION

Greenhouse Gases	Project Construction Emissions	Amortized Construction Emissions (MT/year)	Project Total (MT/year)	Threshold (MT/year)*	Significance
CO_2	436	15	15	—	—
CH_4	<1	<1	<1	—	—
N_2O	<1	<1	<1	—	—
R	<1	<1	<1	—	—
CO_2e	444	15	15	3,000	**No**

Note: Amortized annual emissions apply to the total emissions from 2025 to 2026. These data can be found in the "Annual" CalEEMod data files within Appendix B, *Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Technical Study*.
MT = metric tons; CO_2, carbon dioxide; = CH_4, = methane N_2O, = nitrous oxide; R = refrigerants.
*The SCAQMD has proposed a mass emissions significance threshold of 3,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent ($MTCO_2e$) per year for non-industrial uses. There are no individual significance thresholds for CO_2, CH_4, N_2O, and R as they cumulatively constitute CO_2e.

The results demonstrate that carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions comprise approximately 99 percent of construction emissions expected from the proposed project. The amortized annual GHG emissions are 15 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent ($MTCO_2e$) per year, which are below the SCAQMD threshold of 3,000 $MTCO_2e$ per year. Therefore, GHG emissions impacts during construction would be less than significant.

Operations

Compared to existing conditions, the proposed project would reduce per capita vehicle miles traveled (VMT) by improving connectivity to public transit and increasing active transportation accessibility and is expected to reduce vehicular use in the area, thereby reducing GHG emissions (see section 3.17, *Transportation*). Operational emissions anticipated from the proposed project include emissions from energy use, such as on-site lighting along the trail alignment; mobile sources, such as on-road motor vehicles; water and wastewater; and area sources, such as landscaping maintenance activities. While energy, mobile, and area sources would negligibly increase, compliance with the goals and policies included within Rialto's Climate Adaptation Plan would help decrease long-term GHG emissions within the City, including the project site.

The proposed project would, therefore, result in less than significant impacts regarding the generation of GHG emissions. No further analysis is warranted.

b. Less than significant impact. The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in relation to conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose

[3] South Coast Air Quality Management District. December 2008. Interim CEQA GHG Significance Threshold for Stationary Sources, Rules, and Plans. https://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/ceqa/handbook/greenhouse-gases-(ghg)-ceqa-significance-thresholds/ghgboardsynopsis.pdf?sfvrsn=2 (accessed December 20, 2024).

of reducing the emissions of GHGs. The 2022 Climate Change Scoping Plan[4] is California's primary document used to ensure State GHG reduction goals are met. The plan identifies an increasing need for coordination among state, regional, and local governments to achieve the GHG emissions reductions that can be gained from local land use planning and decisions. Nearly all the specific measures identified in the 2022 Climate Change Scoping Plan are implemented at the state level, with CARB and/or another state or regional agency having the primary responsibility for achieving required GHG reductions. The proposed project is in line with the 2022 Climate Change Scoping Plan as it increases active transportation infrastructure, which is included in many of the 2022 Climate Change Scoping Plan's measures.

The California legislature passed the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008 (SB 375) to connect regional transportation planning to land use decisions made at a local level. SB 375 requires metropolitan planning organizations to include a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) in their regional transportation plans to achieve the per capita GHG reduction targets. For the SCAG region, the SCS is contained in the 2024-2050 Regional Transportation Plan/SCS, or Connect SoCal 2024. Connect SoCal 2024 focuses the majority of new housing and job growth in high-quality transit areas and other opportunity areas on existing main streets, downtowns, and commercial corridors, resulting in an improved jobs-housing balance and more opportunity for transit-oriented development. In addition, SB 743, adopted September 27, 2013, encourages land use and transportation planning decisions and investments that lower VMT that contribute to GHG emissions, as required by AB 32. The proposed Project would encourage active transportation, which would reduce overall VMT and consequently GHG emissions. Thus, the proposed Project would not interfere with SCAG's ability to implement the regional strategies outlined in Connect SoCal 2024.

The proposed project would also be in line with the policies set out in the applicable goals listed above in the Rialto General Plan.[5] The proposed project would enhance bicycling and walking infrastructure and, in turn, encourage alternative transportation in the City. Moreover, the proposed Project is included as Policy 4-8.2 for Goal 4-8 in the Rialto General Plan.[6] The proposed project would be implementing this policy to "pursue a 'rails-to-trails' conversion of the Pacific Electric Railroad Right-of-Way to a bicycle or multiuse path." Thus, the proposed project would not interfere with the goals of the Rialto General Plan.

The proposed project is listed in the City's 2021 Climate Adaptation Plan as Implementation Action 1.2c: Pepper Avenue as part of the plan's active transportation plan.[7] Thus, the proposed project does not interfere with the goals of the 2021 Climate Adaptation Plan.

As such, impacts related to conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions would be less than significant. No further analysis is warranted.

[4] California Air Resources Board. December 2022. 2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality. https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2023-04/2022-sp.pdf (accessed December 2024).

[5] City of Rialto. December 2010. Rialto General Plan. https://www.yourrialto.com/DocumentCenter/View/1494/2010-General-Plan

[6] City of Rialto. December 2010. Rialto General Plan. https://www.yourrialto.com/DocumentCenter/View/1494/2010-General-Plan

[7] City of Rialto. September 2021. Rialto Climate Adaptation Plan. https://www.rialtoca.gov/651/Rialto-Climate-Adaptation-Plan

3.9 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
Would the project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	☐	☒	☐	☐
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☒	☐	☐
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the Project area?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒
g) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fire?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Impact Analysis

Hazards and hazardous materials at the proposed project site were evaluated based on a Limited Phase II Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) Report and Updated Phase II ESA Report prepared in support of the project (Appendix G, *Limited Phase II Environmental Site Assessment Report and Updated Phase II Environmental Site Assessment Report*), and the Safety Elements of the County of Orange General Plan and the City of Placentia General Plan.

a. Less than significant impact. The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to hazards and hazardous materials related to creating a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials from the proposed project. The proposed project is not expected to increase the transportation, production, storage, or use of any hazardous materials through its construction activities or ongoing operation and maintenance activities.

Construction activities associated with the proposed project would entail demolition of existing rail structures, clearing and grubbing, excavation, grading, placement of aggregate base and asphalt concrete, revegetation, installation of signs and lighting, and other safety related features necessary to meet current Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. Normal use of construction-related hazardous materials (petroleum products, adhesives and concrete wastewater) would occur during construction of the proposed project. These materials would not be likely to present a significant hazard because of the small quantities created and used. Contractors would follow standard construction industry protocol practices when operating equipment during the proposed project.

Therefore, there would be less than significant impacts to hazards and hazardous materials in relation to creating a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. No further analysis is warranted.

b. Less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated. The proposed project would result in impacts to hazards and hazardous materials related to the creation of a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous material into the environment. Impacts would be reduced to below the level of significance with the incorporation of mitigation measures.

Construction of the proposed project would result in significant impacts due to reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous material into the environment due to elevated arsenic levels reported in soil samples collected between Lilac Avenue and Pepper Avenue. The Limited Phase II ESA and the Updated Phase II ESA at Pacific Electric railroad easement reported concentrations of arsenic in soil samples collected between Lilac Avenue and Pepper Avenue in excess of established background concentrations in Southern California of 12 milligrams per kilogram (mg/kg) (Appendix G). These elevated concentrations were reported in soil samples collected between 1 and 5 feet below ground surface and at distances of 10, 15, and 20 feet from the rail lines. Elevated arsenic concentrations were not reported in any samples collected 25 feet away from the rail lines. The elevated concentrations of arsenic are most likely from the historic applications of arsenic-containing herbicides and pesticides used as weed control and abatement along rail lines.

The reported presence of concentrations of arsenic above established Southern California background levels of arsenic of 12 mg/kg within the project site requires that the proposed project implement Mitigation Measure HAZ-1, which would ensure that soil with elevated concentrations of arsenic, as defined within the rail lines between Lilac Avenue and Pepper Avenue, would be managed properly without constraint to the project.

The results and conclusions of the Updated Phase II ESA have defined the elevated arsenic concentrations and extent of soil remediation that would be required prior to construction of the Pacific Electric Trail extension. Implementation of mitigation measure HAZ-1 would reduce the potential impact for the proposed project to create a significant hazard to the public or environment

due to reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous material to a less than significant level.

> **MM-HAZ-1:** The results and conclusions reported from the Updated Phase II ESA shall be used to develop a Soil Management Plan to address the elevated Arsenic concentrations in subsurface soil from 1 to 5 feet below ground surface and at distances 5, 10, 15, and 20 feet away from the rail lines. The Soil Management Plan should have a Remedial Action Plan component to address potentially hazardous soil generated during construction activities on the proposed expansion of the Pacific Electric Trail between Lilac Avenue and Pepper Avenue. The anticipated construction activities and remedial action include soil excavation, soil removal, transportation and disposal of potentially contaminated soil. The Soil Management Plan, Remedial Action Workplan, and subsequent report shall be written by a qualified environmental professional with a State of California license as a Professional Geologist or Professional Engineer. The Soil Management Plan and Remedial Action Workplan shall outline procedures to manage all soil and potentially contaminated soil and prevent exposure to hazardous materials during construction, development, remediation activities, and trail use.

With implementation of this mitigation measure and when standard construction practices are followed, the proposed project would not be constrained. Therefore, impacts to hazards and hazardous materials in relation to creating a significant hazard to the public or the environment due to reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous material into the environment would be reduced to below the level of significance by the incorporation of mitigation measure MM-HAZ-1 .

c. Less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated. The proposed project would result in impacts to hazards and hazardous materials with respect to the emission of hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school. Impacts would be reduced to below the level of significance with the incorporation of mitigation measure MM-1 listed above.

Three schools are located within 0.25 mile of the proposed project (Table 3.9-1, *Schools Located within 0.25 Mile of the Proposed Project*; Figure 3.9-1, *Schools within One-Quarter Mile of the Proposed Project*).

TABLE 3.9-1
SCHOOLS LOCATED WITHIN 0.25 MILE OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

Name	Figure 3.9-1 Reference	Distance from Project Site (miles)	Distance from Project Site (feet)	Funding Entity
Bob Murphy County Community School	A	0.117	620.044	San Bernardino Office of Community Education
St. Catherine of Siena School	B	0.224	1,181.236	Rialto Unified School District
Merle Casey Elementary School	C	0.099	523.948	Rialto School District of San Bernardino County

Construction activities associated with the proposed project would entail demolition of existing rail structures, clearing and grubbing, excavation, removal of potentially contaminated soil, backfilling with clean soil, grading, placement of aggregate base and asphalt concrete, revegetation, installation of signs and lighting, and other safety related features necessary to meet current ADA requirements.

Because of the potential for remedial activities and excavation and removal of contaminated soil within the project site, the proposed project would be required to implement Mitigation Measure HAZ-1. This mitigation measure would ensure that the potential for the proposed project to create a significant hazard to the public or environment related to emitting hazardous emissions or handling hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school would be less than significant. With implementation of this mitigation measure and when standard construction practices are followed, the proposed project would not be constrained.

In addition, normal use of construction-related hazardous materials (petroleum products, adhesives and concrete wastewater) would occur during the proposed project. These materials would not likely present a significant hazard because of the small quantities created and used. Contractors would follow standard construction practices when operating during the proposed project.

Therefore, impacts to hazards and hazardous materials in relation to creating a significant hazard to the public or the environment related to emitting hazardous emissions or handling hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school would be reduced below the level of significance by the incorporation of the mitigation measure HAZ-1.

d. No impact. The proposed project would result in no impacts to hazards and hazardous materials in relation to being located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials site. The Limited Phase II ESA performed for the proposed project did not identify the proposed project site pursuant to the Government Code Section 65962.5. In addition, the proposed project site did not appear in the State of California Water Board's GeoTracker or DTSC EnviroStor database; nor is it identified as a known hazardous waste site on the EDR database search. Therefore, there would be no impacts related to location on a hazardous materials site. No further analysis is warranted.

e. No impact. The proposed project would result in no impacts to hazards and hazardous materials in relation to being located within 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. There are no airports located within 2 miles of the proposed project site. The nearest airport to the project site is San Bernadino Internation Airport, which is 6.52 miles to the east of the project. Therefore, there would be no impacts in relation to proximity to an airport. No further analysis is warranted.

f. No impact. The proposed project would result in no impacts in relation to hazards and hazardous materials in relation to impairing the implementation of or physically interfering with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. The City of Rialto General

Plan Safety Element Exhibit 5.11 illustrates evacuation routes throughout the City.[1] As shown therein, no evacuation route corridors are within or would intersect with the project site.

Furthermore, chapter 5 of the Rialto General Plan, Subsection Evacuation Routes and Emergency Shelters, states the following, "Pre-planning for evacuation in response to a disaster is difficult. The nature, size, and location of a disaster cannot be predicted, so it is impractical to tell people where they should evacuate prior to an event. The decision to evacuate an area will be determined by the appropriate emergency response agencies. However, in the event of a disaster, actual evacuation route movement is conducted by the Rialto law enforcement agencies. A public notice utilizing California's Emergency Alert System (EAS) is broadcast over local radios and television stations to alert the community of disaster-related events. Evacuation warning information includes:

- Evacuation type (voluntary or mandatory)
- Routes available out of area
- Location of evacuation centers
- Duration of emergency (anticipated)
- Time remaining before the situation becomes critical

Chapter 8 of the Rialto General Plan, under Measure 8.86 of the Implementation Plan states the following "At the time of an emergency, community evacuation routes and emergency shelter facilities shall be identified based on available safe routes and undamaged buildings. Develop a detailed emergency response manual by City's Emergency Response Team that describes the appropriate actions and responsibilities of personnel designated for participation in emergency response activities. The emergency response manual shall include a map indicating clearly the City's designated evacuation routes and an operating plan for evacuation management to ensure safe and orderly evacuation. It should also include detailed listings of personnel and responsibilities in the event of an emergency.

The mitigation measures and construction activities within the proposed project limits would be contained within the fenced area adjacent to the Pacific Electric Trail. Any proposed staging area for the proposed project would also be within a fenced area and would not physically impede an existing emergency response plan or pre-designated evacuation plan.

Therefore, the proposed project would result in no impact in relation to impairing the implementation of or physically interfering with an adopted emergency response plan. No further analysis is warranted.

g. No impact. The proposed project would result in no impacts to hazards and hazardous materials in relation to exposing people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires. The proposed project would not expose people or property to indirect wildfire risks because the project site is not located within a wildland fire risk area. The nearest Fire Hazard Severity Zone (designated Very High and High) within a Local

[1] City of Rialto. September 2023. City of Rialto General Plan. Safety and Noise. Public Draft. Exhibit 5.11, Evacuation Route Corridors. https://www.rialtoca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/4458/2023-Safety-Element?bidId=. (Accessed April 7, 2025).

Responsibility Area (LRA) is located approximately 2.4 miles to the north of the proposed project site (Figure 3.9-2, *Proximity of the Proposed Project to the Nearest Fire Hazard Severity Zone*).[2]

In addition, as the project site is relatively flat and no structures are proposed, people or structures wound not be exposed to increased wildland fire risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes (see Section 3.10, *Hydrology and Water Quality*). Therefore, there would be no impacts in relation to exposing people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires. No further analysis is warranted.

[2] California Department of Forestry and Fire Prevention (CAL FIRE). N.d. LRA Fire Hazards Severity Zone Maps. https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/what-we-do/community-wildfire-preparedness-and-mitigation/fire-hazard-severity-zones/fire-hazard-severity-zones-maps (accessed April 14, 2025).

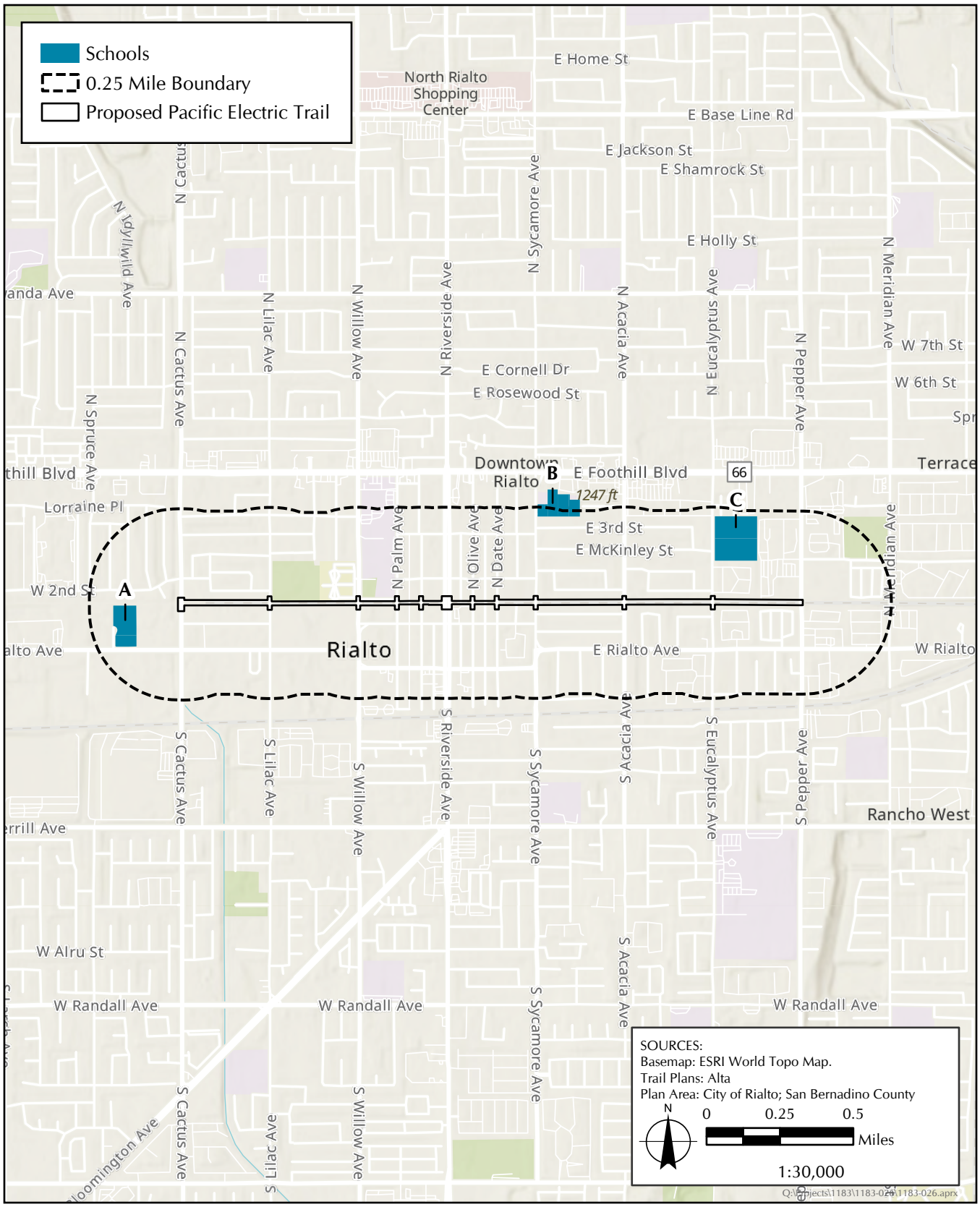


FIGURE 3.9-1

Schools within One-Quarter Mile of the Proposed Project

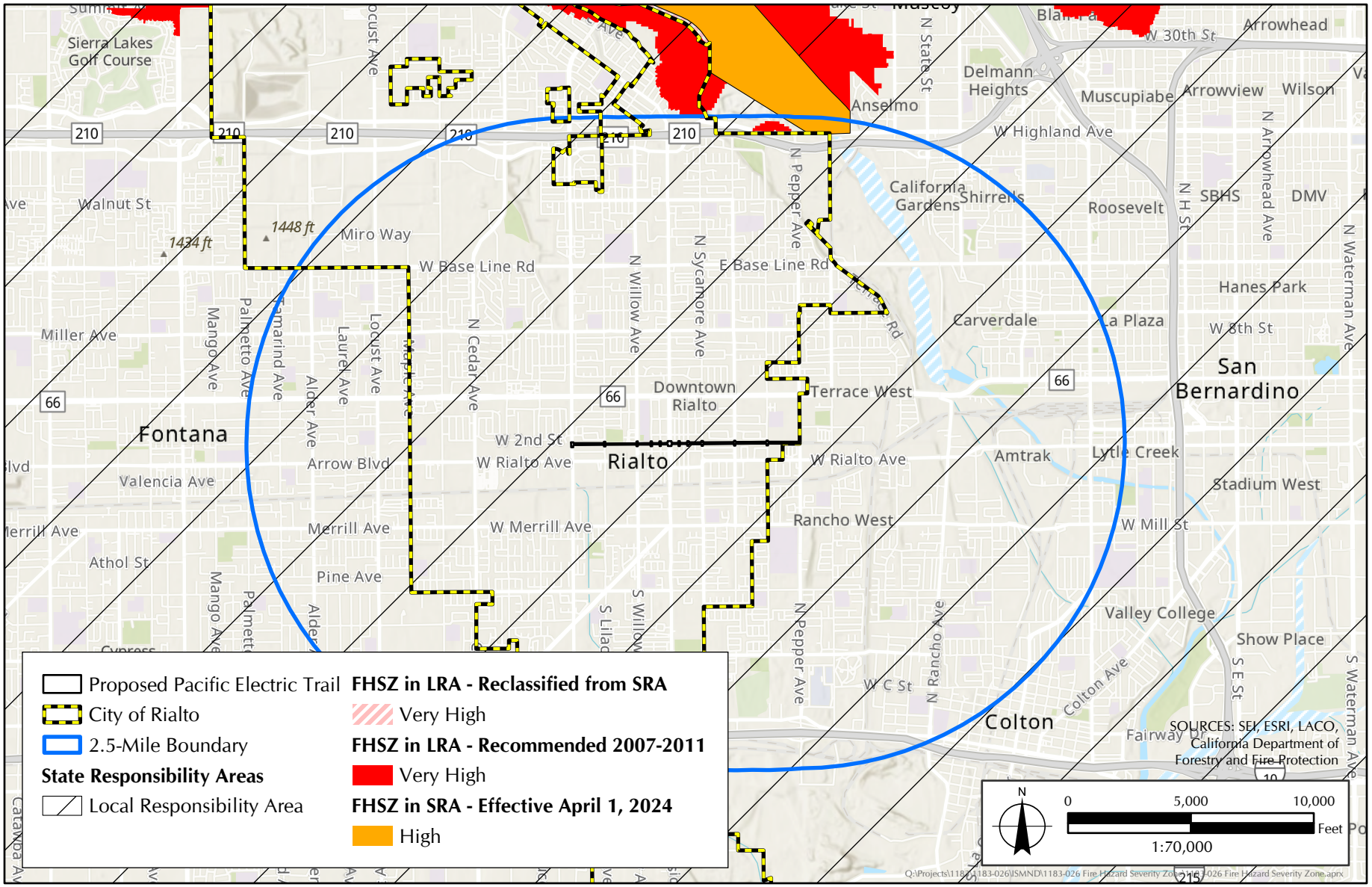


FIGURE 3.9-2

Proximity of the Proposed Project to the Nearest Fire Hazard Severity Zone

3.10 Hydrology and Water Quality

Hydrology and water quality were evaluated with regard to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Discharge Mapping Tool Report, the Santa Ana River Basin Plan for the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), and the San Bernardino County Santa Ana River Watershed Stormwater Resource Plan. The analysis presented in this section is based on the Water Quality Recommendation for the proposed project along the former Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) track Right-of-Way (ROW) in San Bernardino County (see Appendix A) and the Natural Environment Study (Minimal Impact) (NES[MI]) prepared for the proposed project (Appendix C).

Would the project:	***Potentially Significant Impact***	***Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated***	***Less than Significant Impact***	***No Impact***
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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;	☐	☐	☒	☐
ii) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site;	☐	☐	☒	☐
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; or	☐	☐	☒	☐
iv) impede or redirect flows?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	☐	☐	☐	☒

e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

a. Less than significant impact. The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to hydrology and water quality in relation to violating water quality standards, waste discharge requirements, or otherwise substantially degrading surface or ground water quality. The project involves the development of a multiuse trail along the former UPRR ROW in the City of Rialto. The historic use of the proposed project site is for a railroad easement, which includes historic use of grease or lubricants on the railroad switches, stormwater[1] run-off from the adjacent Southern California Edison (SCE) facility, and soil/asphalt/rock piles located at the proposed project site. The project area is characterized by flat terrain and pervious surfaces with two primary outfalls connecting to an existing storm drain system. Both outlets drain to the upper Santa Ana River watershed and are tributary to the Santa Ana Reach 3 and 4 (HUC 10 18070203), which is listed as a 303(d) impaired waterbody.[2]

According to the Water Quality Recommendation,

> "The City of Rialto is listed as co-permittee of the California Regional Water Quality Control Board Santa Ana Region Order No. R8-2010-0036 NPDES [National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System] No. CAS618036, as described in the *NPDES Permit and Waste Discharge Requirements for the San Bernardino County Flood Control District, the County of San Bernardino, and the Incorporated Cities of San Bernardino County within the Santa Ana Region Area-Wide Urban Storm Water Runoff Management Program (2010)*. The City's discharges are thus subject to the waste discharge requirements set forth in this NPDES Order. Per the NPDES Order, A Water Quality Management Plan is required for the proposed project which will include control measures for any listed pollutant to an impaired waterbody on the 303(d) list such that the discharge shall not cause or contribute to an exceedance of receiving water quality objectives." (Appendix A)

In addition, the NES(MI) determined the proposed project would result in no impacts to any water bodies as a result of project-related activities (see Appendix C). Furthermore, the Geotechnical Investigation Report for the proposed project found that no wells within one mile of the site have reported groundwater less than 210 feet below ground surface (Appendix H, *Geotechnical Investigation Report*). Groundwater is thus expected to be far below the existing surface throughout the site. In regard to contaminated soil risks, a Limited Phase II Environmental Site Assessment Report found evidence of arsenic contamination in excess of Southern California background level on a majority of the site. Arsenic was found within 5 feet below ground surface (bgs) between N. Lilac Avenue and N. Pepper Avenue (Appendix G). However, arsenic was

[1] In layman's terms, "stormwater" is defined as an abnormal amount of surface water due to a heavy rain or snowstorm. The term "storm water" is used when employed by the cited source of information. In all other instances, *stormwater* is used, consistent with the provision of Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines and as defined by the EPA. Stormwater runoff is generated when precipitation from rain and snowmelt events flows over land or impervious surfaces and does not percolate into the ground. As the runoff flows over the land or impervious surfaces (paved streets, parking lots, and building rooftops), it accumulates debris, chemicals, sediment, or other pollutants that could adversely affect water quality if the runoff is discharged untreated.

[2] California Water Boards. N.d. Final California 2012 Integrated Report (303(d) List/305(b) Report), Supporting Information, Regional Board 8 – Santa Ana Region. https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/tmdl/2012state_ir_reports/01101.shtml (accessed January 2, 2025).

detected to be below the screening level in a single block of the site between N. Cactus Avenue and N. Lilac Avenue. Therefore, the proposed project is expected to have less than significant impact on ground water quality.

Construction

During construction, the proposed project would be required to implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). The SWPPP would outline the implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) to effectively control erosion and sedimentation and mitigate the introduction of pollutants associated with construction activities. Construction activities, including grading, excavation, and concrete pouring for the trail surface and related structures (e.g., trailhead, crossings, curb ramps, parking lot), have the potential to generate soil erosion and sedimentation, degrading water quality. The project would incorporate a suite of BMPs to minimize these impacts, including, but not limited to, silt fences, sediment traps, stabilized construction entrances, and minimizing soil disturbance. While soil erosion and sedimentation are potential water quality concerns during construction, the project would not violate water quality standards with implementation of the BMPs listed in the required SWPPP.

The proposed project would also generate concrete dust and debris, which can degrade stormwater runoff. To address this, the project would employ measures to minimize dust generation, such as proper stockpiling and covering of materials, and the utilization of dust suppressants when necessary. The implementation of an approved SWPPP and the diligent application of BMPs would ensure compliance with all applicable water quality standards and protect the project area from adverse impacts on surface and groundwater quality. Therefore, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to hydrology and water quality in relation to violating water quality standards, waste discharge requirements, or otherwise substantially degrading surface or ground water quality during construction. No further analysis is warranted.

Operations and Maintenance

Operation and maintenance activities for the proposed project would include irrigation to maintain the small new planting areas along the trail. All project landscaping would be performed in accordance with industry standards and would not use any pesticides or herbicides that have been banned by the City or San Bernardino County. Pesticides used for maintenance of the trail and landscaping would not include restricted materials and pesticides deemed to have a higher potential to cause harm to public health compared to other pesticides. It is not anticipated that operations and maintenance of the trail would substantially violate waste discharge requirements or any water quality standards for stormwater runoff. The proposed project would meet all the requirements in the San Bernardino County Flood Control District and the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit.[3] Therefore, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to hydrology and water quality in relation to violating water quality standards, waste discharge requirements, or otherwise substantially degrading surface or ground water quality during operation and maintenance. No further analysis is warranted.

[3] California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Santa Ana Region. 2010. Order No. R8-2010-0036 NPDES No. CAS618036: National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit and Waste Discharge Requirements for the San Bernardino County Flood Control District, the County Of San Bernardino, and the Incorporated Cities of San Bernardino County within the Santa Ana Region. https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/santaana/board_decisions/adopted_orders/orders/2010/10_036_sbc_ms4_permit_01_29_10.pdf (accessed January 2025).

b. Less than significant impact. The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in relation to substantially decreasing groundwater supplies or reducing groundwater recharge that would impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin. While the introduction of impervious surfaces will marginally increase surface runoff, the project incorporates design features to minimize this impact. The proposed parking lot on the east side of North Cactus Avenue will be constructed with permeable asphalt concrete, a material designed to allow for the infiltration of stormwater. Similarly, secondary trails and pathways will utilize aggregate surfacing and decomposed granite, both of which possess inherent permeability and facilitate stormwater infiltration. The construction of the widened curb ramps would minimally increase impervious cover.

Based on a review of the 7.5-minute series topographical map, no water resources are located within the immediate vicinity of the project site (Figure 1.4-4, *Topographic Map*). Furthermore, the project is not located within a significant aquifer, and the anticipated construction depth (approximately 1 foot bgs) is insufficient to intersect with the groundwater table, which typically occurs at depths exceeding 37 feet. This minimizes the potential for direct impacts on groundwater resources. Lastly, the proposed project is required to implement Low Impact Development (LID) BMPs to the maximum extent possible (MEP) sized for a design capture volume (DCV) from a 24-year, 85th percentile storm event of a 2-year, 1-hour rainfall depth (Appendix A). The applicability and feasibility for LID BMPs were evaluated, and it was determined that infiltrating runoff over and through contaminated soil directly into the ground may pose risk to underground water. The proposed project has brownfield soil contamination of arsenic from the previous railroad use; therefore, LID options that provide treatment prior to infiltrating into the soil such as bioretention infiltration BMP without underdrain is the advisable infiltration practice to satisfy the regulatory requirement stated in the WQMP (Appendix A). Therefore, the proposed project would have less than significant impacts to water resources or groundwater supplies. No further analysis is warranted.

c(i). Less than significant impact. The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to hydrology and water quality in relation to alteration of existing drainage patterns in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site. The existing trail is characterized by flat topography and pervious materials (i.e., gravel and decomposed granite), allowing for substantial stormwater infiltration. The construction of a paved concrete trail (10-foot path with 2-foot graded shoulders) would increase the amount of impervious surface within the project area, which has the potential to alter existing drainage patterns. Increased impervious surfaces could increase surface runoff, and potentially increase the volume and velocity of stormwater flow over the surface of the trail. Increased runoff volume and velocity also has the potential to increase soil erosion along the trail. Eroded soil can be transported by stormwater runoff and deposited in the Rialto Channel, leading to increased sedimentation. However, the potential increase in erosion and siltation would be addressed by the project's SWPPP using BMPs to prevent substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site during construction.

The proposed project would not alter the existing site topography, and the majority of the trail would be constructed within the existing railroad ROW. This minimizes the potential for substantial changes to the natural drainage pathways. Upon project completion and during regular operations and maintenance, the existing drainage patterns across the site, including concrete lined culverts and unlined drainage pipes for stormwater conveyance along the eastern side of the proposed project, would not substantially change. Furthermore, stormwater management would be conducted in accordance with the approved SWPPP to ensure compliance with sediment and erosion controls. Therefore, the impact on hydrology and water quality in relation to alteration of

existing drainage patterns in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site would be less than significant. No further analysis is warranted.

c(ii). Less than significant impact. The proposed project would not substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on-site or off-site. The project will generate approximately 105,320 square feet of new impervious area within the upper Santa Ana River Watershed. This is expected to increase the rate and volume of surface runoff. The San Bernardino Technical Guidance Document for Water Quality Management Plans (WQMP) published in 2013 provides the technical guidance for meeting the WQMP requirements from the MS4 Permit, which requires all new development and significant redevelopment projects covered by the order to incorporate LID BMPs to the MEP (Appendix A). The Water Quality Recommendation states the proposed project fits the classification of a "Priority Project" and is required to incorporate infiltration LID BMP to the MEP, and use biotreatment, harvest, and others BMPs for the remainder of the design capture volume (Appendix A). For Hydrologic Conditions of Concern, the San Bernardino Technical Guidance Document for WQMP exempts this project from the need for hydromodification since all downstream conveyance channels drain to an adequate sump, to the Rialto Channel, a significant existing stormwater drainage infrastructure at the project's western boundary (Appendix A). This allows for the effective and efficient conveyance of all stormwater runoff generated by the project through the designed stormwater discharge channels directly into the Rialto Channel. The recent 2024 Rialto Channel Restoration Project, driven by the need to address increased flows due to recent development and heavy storm events in February 2024, has enhanced the channel's capacity to handle increased runoff.[4] These improvements, coupled with the existing capacity of the Rialto Channel, would effectively accommodate any incremental increase in runoff resulting from the proposed project. During construction, minor alterations to flow patterns may occur within the project site. These temporary changes would be addressed by the project's SWPPP through the implementation of BMPs to prevent flooding on- or off-site. The combination of the existing Rialto Channel capacity, the recent restoration efforts, and the incorporation of LID BMPs will effectively manage any increased runoff generated by the project. Therefore, the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact regarding substantially increasing the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on-site or off-site. No further analysis is warranted.

c(iii). Less than significant impact. The proposed project would not exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff. The construction of the paved trail would increase the amount of impervious surface within the project area. This would increase the volume and velocity of surface water runoff, potentially leading to increased erosion and sedimentation. The project site is located adjacent to the Rialto Channel, an existing stormwater drainage infrastructure. The Rialto Channel conveys stormwater and outflow from the Cactus Basins in an undersized earth and rock-lined trapezoidal channel. The San Bernardino County Santa Ana River Watershed Stormwater Resource Plan authorized the 2024 Rialto Channel Restoration Project to widen the Rialto Channel to allow for more infiltration and provide additional flood capacity.[5] The project also enhanced the channel's capacity to handle increased runoff. The restoration of the Rialto Channel included the removal of 13,240 yards of sediment, improving flow capacity, reinforcement of

[4] San Bernardino County Public Works. August 2024. Rialto Channel Restoration Project 2024. https://dpw.sbcounty.gov/transportation/rialto-channel-restoration-project-2024 (accessed January 2025).

[5] San Bernardino County Public Works. N.d. San Bernardino County Santa Ana River Watershed Stormwater Resource Plan. https://dpw.sbcounty.gov/santa-ana-river-watershed-stormwater-resource-plan/ (accessed January 2025).

channel slopes with 12,200 tons of rock, enhancing stability and reducing erosion and grading of the channel invert to ensure proper flow and minimize future sediment buildup.[6]

Lastly, the proposed project would not contribute to substantial additional sources of polluted runoff. During construction, the quality of stormwater runoff would be maintained pursuant to the project SWPPP and the WQMP requirements from the MS4 Permit. The site-specific SWPPP would identify and mitigate any sources of potential pollution from construction activities or point sources of run-on. Stormwater run-off from the adjacent SCE facility will be mitigated by the LID BMP control measures. The WQMP requires the proposed project to incorporate LID BMP control measures for all identified pollutants and any 303(d) listed pollutants, so discharges do not cause or contribute to an exceedance of receiving water quality objectives.[7] The trail is primarily designed to be a recreational area, with limited potential for substantial pollutant sources. Unlike industrial or commercial areas, the proposed trail would not generate substantial amounts of pollutants such as heavy metals, oils, or chemicals. The primary use of the proposed trail would be for recreational activities such as walking, biking, and jogging, which are not expected to generate substantial sources of pollution. Maintenance of the proposed landscaping would not include use of herbicides and pesticides that have been banned by the City, and there are not anticipated to be any substantial additional sources of pollutants as a result of the operations, maintenance, and daily activities. Therefore, the existing capacity of the Rialto Channel, the recent restoration efforts, the incorporation of stormwater management features, and implementation of the SWPPP to address erosion and sedimentation strongly suggests that the proposed project would not create or contribute runoff water that exceeds the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff and the impact would be less than significant. No further analysis is warranted.

c(iv). No impact. The proposed project would not impede or redirect flood flows. Construction activities including removal of the existing gravel along the abandoned railroad, clearing and grubbing, grading, placement of aggregate base and asphalt concrete, revegetation, installation of signs, and other safety related features will not significantly alter the existing site topography or drainage patterns. The existing site features a well-defined drainage system, with stormwater typically collecting at a low point west of intersecting roadways and subsequently draining into the existing street gutter system. Cross-streets within the project vicinity, including Cactus Avenue, Lilac Avenue, Palm Avenue, Olive Avenue, Sycamore Avenue, Acacia Avenue, Eucalyptus Avenue, and Pepper Avenue, are equipped with catch basins and underground pipes that effectively collect and convey stormwater runoff. Also, the proposed project design incorporates measures to minimize impacts on drainage patterns. These measures include:

- Impervious Area Dispersion: Maximizing the dispersion of impervious areas to direct runoff towards pervious areas, facilitating infiltration (see Water Quality Recommendation).
- Bioretention with No Underdrain: Implementing bioretention features without underdrains to capture and treat stormwater runoff, maximizing infiltration and minimizing runoff volume (see Water Quality Recommendation).

[6] San Bernardino County Public Works. August 2024. Rialto Channel Restoration Project 2024. https://dpw.sbcounty.gov/transportation/rialto-channel-restoration-project-2024 (accessed January 2025).

[7] California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Santa Ana Region. 2010. Order No. R8-2010-0036 NPDES No. CAS618036: National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit and Waste Discharge Requirements for the San Bernardino County Flood Control District, the County Of San Bernardino, and the Incorporated Cities of San Bernardino County within the Santa Ana Region. https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/santaana/board_decisions/adopted_orders/orders/2010/10_036_sbc_ms4_permit_01_29_10.pdf (accessed January 2025).

Furthermore, the project site is adjacent to the Rialto Channel, a significant existing stormwater drainage infrastructure. Flood flows would continue to be directed into the Rialto Channel within the proposed trail project that was recently enhanced to handle increased runoff.[8] Based on these factors, including the existing drainage infrastructure, the incorporation of LID BMPs, and the increased capacity available the Rialto Channel, the proposed project would have no impact on impeding or redirecting flood flows. No further analysis is warranted.

d. No impact. The proposed project would not risk release of pollutants due to project inundation in flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zone. According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood hazard data, the proposed project site is located in an area of minimal flood hazard. The project area/construction area is not within a regulatory floodway or within the 100-year floodplain according to the Flood Insurance Rate Map (Panel 8657 [Map Number 06071C8657H] and Panel 8676 [Map Number 06071C8676J]). The proposed project is not within Special Flood Hazard areas and is outside of the floodplain.[9] Furthermore, all construction activities would occur within the existing ROW. The nearest waterbody is the Rialto Channel, located at the west end of North Cactus Ave., less than 1 mile west of the project site. During construction, pollutants generated on-site (such as concrete, asphalt, and sediment) would be managed by the project SWPPP, which would mandate housekeeping BMPs for storage, containment, and use of construction pollutants. BMPs include scheduling pollutant-generating activities when there is the least likely chance of exposure to rain. The proposed project would not change the existing topography or grading; and therefore, the risk of flood hazard would be unchanged. The operation, maintenance, and daily activities of the proposed project would not risk the release of pollutants. Therefore, there would be no impact associated with the risk of releasing pollutants due to project inundation in the case of flood hazard. No further analysis is warranted.

e. No impact. The proposed project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan. As the proposed project is more than 1 acre in size, it would be required to adhere to the Statewide Construction General Permit for Stormwater Discharges from Construction Activities.[10] Operations and maintenance of the proposed project would be consistent with the following water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plans:

- California Regional Water Quality Control Board Santa Ana Region Order No. R8-2010-0036 NPDES No. CAS618036[11]

[8] San Bernardino County Public Works. August 2024. Rialto Channel Restoration Project 2024. https://dpw.sbcounty.gov/transportation/rialto-channel-restoration-project-2024 (accessed January 2025).

[9] Federal Emergency Management Agency. N.d. FEMA National Flood Hazard Layer (NFHL). https://www.fema.gov/flood-maps/national-flood-hazard-layer (accessed October 2024).

[10] California State Water Resources Control Board. 2022. NPDES General Permit for Stormwater Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities (General Permit) Order WQ 2022-0057--DWQ NPDES No. CAS000002. https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board_decisions/adopted_orders/water_quality/2022/wqo_2022-0057-dwq.pdf (accessed January 2025).

[11] California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Santa Ana Region. 2010. Order No. R8-2010-0036 NPDES No. CAS618036: National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit and Waste Discharge Requirements for the San Bernardino County Flood Control District, the County of San Bernardino, and the Incorporated Cities of San Bernardino County within the Santa Ana Region. https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/santaana/board_decisions/adopted_orders/orders/2010/10_036_sbc_ms4_permit_01_29_10.pdf (accessed January 2025).

- San Bernardino County Santa Ana River Watershed Stormwater Resource Plan[12]
- Technical Guidance Document for Water Quality Management Plans[13]
- Santa Ana River Basin Watershed Report Action Plan[14]
- Water Quality Control Plan for the Santa Ana River Basin (Basin Plan)[15,16]

The proposed project design has taken these plans into consideration with respect to landscaping elements, planning for adequate stormwater drainage, maintaining pervious surfaces wherever possible, and avoiding additional sources of pollutants during daily use and operations and maintenance of the bike path. Therefore, there would be no impact.

[12] San Bernardino County Public Works. N.d. San Bernardino County Santa Ana River Watershed Stormwater Resource Plan. https://dpw.sbcounty.gov/santa-ana-river-watershed-stormwater-resource-plan/ (accessed January 2025).

[13] San Bernardino County Stormwater Program. N.d Technical Guidance Document for Water Quality Management Plans. https://www.sbcounty.gov/uploads/DPW/docs/SantaAnaRiver-WQMP-Final-June2013.pdf (accessed January 2025).

[14] University of Delaware. 2020. Santa Ana River Basin Watershed Report Action Plan. https://www.wrc.udel.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/SARA%20P%20Report.pdf (accessed January 2025).

[15] . Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board. N.d. Water Quality Control Plan for the Santa Ana River Basin. https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/rwqcb8/water_issues/programs/basin_plan/ (accessed January 2025).

[16] A Basin Plan is a regional plan that contains the Region's water quality regulations and programs to implement the regulations. California's Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (Porter-Cologne Act, which became Division 7 of the California Water Code, §13000 et seq.) establishes the responsibilities and authorities of the nine Regional Water Boards and the State Water Board as "the principal State agencies with primary responsibility for the coordination and control of water quality" (§13001). Each Regional Water Board is directed to "formulate and adopt water quality control plans for all areas within the region," including both surface waters and groundwater (§13240). A water quality control plan for the waters of an area is defined as having three components: beneficial uses to be protected, water quality objectives that protect those uses, and a program of implementation needed to achieve the water quality objectives (§13050).

3.11 Land Use and Planning

Would the project:	*Potentially Significant Impact*	*Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
a) Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Explanation

a. No impact. The proposed project would have no impact in relation to displacing or dividing established communities. The project would include the construction of an additional 1.75 miles of trail that would extend the existing historic rail corridor and a trailhead. The extension of the existing trailhead would be a replacement in-kind of the existing historic railroad tracks with a pedestrian and biking trail. The existing historic rail system, when originally created, divided communities and displaced communities. However, the proposed project would assist with connecting the communities of Rialto, Fontana, Upland, and Rancho Cucamonga by providing free and safe access to a pedestrian and cyclist pathway through these communities. Therefore, the proposed project would have no impact regarding dividing established communities. No further analysis is warranted.

b. No impact. The proposed project would have no impact in relation to conflict with existing land use plans, policies, and regulations related to environmental effects.

General Plan

The proposed project would be developed consistently with the Rialto General Plan[1] and the upcoming Rialto Foothill Central Specific Plan.[2] While the Rialto Foothill Central Specific Plan is not yet implemented, the existing policies in its current draft outline plans for projects such as the proposed project. The consistency of the General Plan and Rialto Foothill Central Specific Plan goals and policies is presented in Table 3.11-1, *Consistency with Relevant General Plan Goals and Policies*.

[1] City of Rialto. 2010. Rialto General Plan. https://www.yourrialto.com/DocumentCenter/View/1494/2010-General-Plan

[2] City of Rialto. September 2023. Draft Foothill Central Specific Plan. https://www.yourrialto.com/754/Foothill-Central-Specific-Plan (accessed December 2024).

TABLE 3.11-1
CONSISTENCY WITH RELEVANT GENERAL PLAN GOALS AND POLICIES

Goals and Policies	Project Consistency
Goal 4-8: Establish and maintain a comprehensive system of pedestrian trails and bicycle routes that provide viable connections throughout the City.	
• **Policy 4-8.2:** Pursue a "rails-to-trails" conversion of the Pacific Electric Railroad right-of-way to a bicycle or multi-use path.	**Consistent**. The proposed project would replace the existing Pacific Electric railroad line with a pedestrian and cycling trail and, therefore, would be consistent with Policy 4-8.2.
Goal 4-9: Promote Walking	
• **Policy 4-9.3:** Provide pedestrian-friendly and safety improvements, such as crosswalks and pedestrian signals, in all pedestrian activity areas.	**Consistent**. The proposed project would encourage safe thoroughfare for pedestrians and cyclists by developing a rails-to-trails project that would create safe intersection crossings and, therefore, would be consistent with Policy 4-9.3.
Goal 4-9: Promote Walking	
• **Policy 4-9.6:** Encourage new development to provide pedestrian paths through projects, with outlets to adjacent collectors, secondaries, and arterial roadways.	**Consistent**. The proposed project would develop pedestrian paths, with outlets to adjacent collectors, secondary, and arterial roadways. Therefore, the proposed project would be consistent with Policy 4-9.6.

The proposed project would completely align with the stated goals and policies of the General Plan and Rialto Foothill Central Specific Plan and, therefore, would have no impact in relation to conflict with existing land uses plans, policies, or regulation regarding environmental effects. No further analysis is warranted.

Zoning

The zoning for the proposed project is mostly designated within the Transportation Corridor (T-C)[3] and also within the Rialto Central Area Specific Plan,[4] which is composed of several different zonings. The zones within the Rialto Central Area Specific Plan are Cottage Commercial, Commercial Highway, Commercial Support, Urban Services, Core Commercial, Office Services, Increased Density Residential (R-X) Multi-Family Residential (MFR), Single Family Residential (SFR). The proposed project's rails-to-trails development would comply with the Specific Plan's Commercial-Highway zoning's permitted use (p): "All other uses which are consistent with the intent of that zone, as reviewed and Approved by the City Planning Commission."[5] The proposed project would not be subject to a zoning change and would remain as a transportation corridor and, therefore, would be within the existing uses of the zoned project area. Therefore, the proposed project would have no impact in relation to conflict with existing zones, plan, policy, or regulation. No further analysis is warranted.

[3] Rialto, CA, Code of Ordinances. Chapter 18.45 - T-C Transportation Corridor Zone. https://library.municode.com/ca/rialto/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT18ZO_CH18.45TRCOZO (accessed December 2024).

[4] Your Rialto. July 2013. Rialto Zoning Map. https://www.yourrialto.com/DocumentCenter/View/1513/Zoning-Map---July-2013 (accessed December 2024).

[5] City of Rialto. September 2023. Draft Foothill Central Specific Plan. https://www.yourrialto.com/754/Foothill-Central-Specific-Plan (accessed December 2024).

3.12 Mineral Resources

Would the project:	*Potentially Significant Impact*	*Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Explanation

a. Less than significant impact. The proposed project would have a significant impact if development would result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource with value to the region. The City of Rialto contains areas where geological data indicates that significant PCC-grade aggregate resources are present, represented as Mineral Resource Zone 2 (MRZ-2)[1]. The proposed project would be within MRZ-2. However, the proposed project would not involve removing or intentionally mining valued material from the project area; nor would it create an obstacle to future extraction. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on valuable mineral resources. No further analysis is warranted.

b. Less than significant impact. The proposed project would have a significant impact if development would result in the loss of locally important mineral resources as delineated on a local land use plan. The City of Rialto contains areas where geological data indicates that significant PCC-grade aggregate resources are present (PCC-1),[2] represented as MRZ-2.[3] The proposed project would be within MRZ-2. However, the proposed project would not involve removing or intentionally mining valued material from the project area. Therefore, the project would have a less than significant impact on locally important mineral resources. No further analysis is warranted.

[1] San Bernardino County. 2019. Countywide Plan Environmental Mineral Resources Zones 2 and 3. https://countywideplan.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/68/2021/01/Ch_05-11-MIN.pdf

[2] City of Rialto. 2010. Rialto General Plan. https://www.yourrialto.com/DocumentCenter/View/1494/2010-General-Plan

[3] San Bernardino County. 2019. Countywide Plan Environmental Mineral Resources Zones 2 and 3. https://countywideplan.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/68/2021/01/Ch_05-11-MIN.pdf

3.13 Noise

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
Would the project:				
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?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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 two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Explanation

a. Less than significant with mitigation incorporated. The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts with mitigation incorporated in relation to exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance.

Ambient Noise Levels

Noise measurements were collected at the project site to characterize ambient noise conditions. Noise measurements were collected at six locations adjacent to sensitive receptors for 15-minute intervals (see Figure 3.3-1, *Sensitive Receptors*, in Section 3.3, *Air Quality*). Ambient noise measurements were recorded with a Larson Davis Spartan 730 Noise Dosimeter (serial number 12092 and 12093), which meets and exceeds the minimum industry standards performance requirements as defined in the American National Standard Institute (ANSI) S1.4. The dosimeter was operated according to the manufacturer's written specifications. The ambient noise conditions range from 48.9 to 57.5 Leq (equivalent continuous sound level), consistent with the existing land uses (Table 3.13-1, *Ambient Noise Levels*; Appendix I, *Noise Measurement Results*). Noise levels are characterized by the surrounding land uses and traffic.

TABLE 3.13-1
AMBIENT NOISE LEVELS

Location	Serial #	Date	Start Time (PM)	End Time (PM)	Leq (dB)	Max (dB)
1 Lilac Ave	12092	9/20/24	4:30:41	4:45:41	48.9	63.4
2 Bud Bender Park	12093	9/20/24	4:34:38	4:49:38	49.4	63.4
3 Elementary school	12093	9/20/24	5:12:00	5:27:00	57.5	75.0
4 Sycamore Ave	12093	9/20/24	5:33:39	5:48:39	57.0	68.8
5 Acacia Ave	12093	9/20/24	5:54:28	6:09:28	56.4	71.9
6 Eucalyptus Ave	12093	9/20/24	6:14:20	6:29:28	54.1	67.3

Sensitive Receptors

The City of Rialto does not establish a definition of noise-sensitive receptors; however, land uses generally considered noise-sensitive include residences, schools, parks and playgrounds, religious institutions, hospitals, and other medical facilities. As shown in Figure 3.3-1, the proposed project site is located directly adjacent to sensitive receptors, including residences, parks, schools, and religious facilities within 0.25 mile.

Noise Regulations

Per Section 9.50.060 of the City Municipal Code, the following construction, operation, maintenance and repairs of equipment, apparatus, or facilities are exempt from the provisions of the Noise Control Chapter:

- park and recreation departments,
- public work projects, or
- essential public services and facilities.

The proposed project is a public works project, as it is an infrastructure project financed and procured by the City for public use. As a public works project, the proposed project would be exempt from the City's noise control standards established in the Municipal Code. Nonetheless, the relevant noise policies in the General Plan would apply to the proposed project.

Based on review of the Safety and Noise Element of the City General Plan, the City has established the following noise goals and polices related to the proposed project:

- **Goal 5-12:** Minimize the impact of point source and ambient noise levels throughout the community.
    - Policy 5–12.2: Consider noise impacts as part of the development review process, particularly the location of parking, ingress/egress/ loading, and refuse collection areas relative to surrounding residential development and other noise-sensitive land uses.
    - Policy 5–12.3: Ensure that acceptable noise levels are maintained near schools, hospitals, and other noise sensitive areas in accordance with the Municipal Code and noise standards contained in Exhibit 5-5.[1]

[1] Note that the City General Plan references Exhibit 5-5, *Permitted Facilities Dealing with Hazardous Waste*. This is likely an outdated reference to a previous version of the document. Policy 5-12.3 intends to reference the noise standards contained in Exhibit 5-13, *Rialto Noise Guidelines for Land Use Planning*.

- Policy 5–12.4: Limit the hours of operation at all noise generation sources that are adjacent to noise-sensitive areas.
- Policy 5–12.5: Require all exterior noise sources (construction operations, air compressors, pumps, fans and leaf blowers) to use available noise suppression devices and techniques to reduce exterior noise to acceptable levels that are compatible with adjacent land uses.

The City General Plan also establishes the following noise guidelines based on land use compatibility (Table 3.13-2, *City Noise Guidelines by Land Use Compatibility*).

TABLE 3.13-2
CITY NOISE GUIDELINES BY LAND USE COMPATIBILITY

Land Use Category	Community Noise Exposure Level (CNEL) (dB)						
	55–60	60–65	65–70	70–75	75–80	80–85	85+
Residential 2, 6, 12, Public Facility, School Facility							
Residential 21, 45							
Downtown Mixed Use							
Community Commercial, General Commercial, Business Park, Office							
Light Industrial							
General Industrial							
Open Space, Recreation, Resources							
Normally Acceptable: Specified land use is satisfactory, assuming buildings are of conventional construction.							
Conditionally Acceptable: New development should be undertaken only after detailed analysis of noise reduction requirements are made.							
Normally Unacceptable: New development should be generally discouraged, if not, a detailed analysis of noise reduction requirements must be made.							
Clearly Unacceptable: New construction or development should generally not be undertaken.							
Source: City of Rialto. September 2023. Exhibit 5.13. Rialto Noise Guidelines for Land Use Planning. https://www.rialtoca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/4458/2023-Safety-Element?bidId=							

Construction Impacts

Construction activities for the trail and parking lot would include excavation of existing gravel and base material, clearing and grubbing, grading, placement of aggregate base and asphalt concrete, revegetation, installation of signs, and installation of lighting and other features. The construction equipment to carry out these activities is listed in Table 1.10-1, *Anticipated Construction Equipment*, in Section 1.0, *Project Description*.

Noise impacts from construction of the proposed project would be a function of the noise generated by construction equipment, the location of the equipment, the timing and duration of the noise-generating construction activities, and the relative distance to noise sensitive receptors. Each phase of construction would involve the use of various types of construction equipment and would, therefore, have its own distinct noise characteristics. The proposed project would require the use of heavy equipment for the site preparation and grading of the project site during the initial phases of the anticipated 8-month construction phase.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Construction Noise Handbook provides typical noise levels of construction equipment at 50 feet from the source, as shown in Table 3.13-3, *Noise*

Levels for Typical Construction Equipment. Where typical or measured noise levels are not provided in the Construction Noise Handbook, a sample piece of the equipment's specifications was consulted for the maximum noise level at the source (assumed to be 5 feet). The sensitive receptors within 0.25 mile, including those adjacent to the proposed project site, would be located closer than a distance of 50 feet from the construction equipment that would be used. Therefore, in order to represent more accurate impacts to sensitive receptors, the standard sound attenuation equation over distance for a point source was used to calculate the estimated A-weighted decibel (dBA) level at a closer distance of 5 feet from the source.

Noise levels were calculated using the inverse square law equation for sound attenuation, as noise attenuates at a rate of approximately 6.0 dBA per doubling of distance from a point source:

$L_2 = L_1 - 20\ log_{10}\left(\frac{d_1}{d_2}\right)$, where

L_1 = known sound level at d_1 (from FWHA)
L_2 = calculated sound level at d_2
d_1 = distance of known sound level from the noise source (50 feet)
d_2 = distance of second location from the noise source (5 feet)

Individual pieces of construction equipment that would be used during construction of the proposed project could potentially generate maximum noise levels of 109 dBA at 5 feet from the noise source (Table 3.13-3). These maximum noise levels would occur when equipment is operating under full power conditions (i.e., with the equipment engine at maximum speed). However, equipment on construction sites often operates under less than full power.

As previously mentioned, the proposed project would be exempt from the City's noise control standards established in Section 9.50.060 of the City Municipal Code. However, the proposed project would still be subject to the policies established in the Safety and Noise Element of the City General Plan. The normally acceptable noise levels established in the City General Plan are up to 75 dBA for residential uses and school facilities, and up to 80 dBA for recreational uses (Table 3.13-1). Based on the construction equipment noise levels in Table 3.13-3, construction of the proposed project would bring the ambient noise levels for sensitive receptors into the clearly unacceptable ranges, thereby violating Policy 5-12.3 of the City General Plan.

TABLE 3.13-3
NOISE LEVELS FOR TYPICAL CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT

Equipment	Typical Noise Level at 50 feet from Source (dBA)	Calculated Noise Level at 5 feet from Source (dBA)
Cold milling machine	N/A	100
Compactors	82	102
Concrete and cement pumps	82	102
Dozers	85	105
Dump truck	76	96
Excavators	81	101
Graders	85	105
Line striping machines	N/A	86
Loaders	85	105
Mixers	85	105
Pavers / paving equipment	89	109
Power drills and saws	76	96
Rollers	74	94
Water trunk (dust control)	88	108
Source: Federal Highway Administration. 2017. Construction Noise Handbook. Table 9.1, Roadway Construction Noise Model Default Noise Emission Reference Levels and Usage Factors, and Table 9.9, FTA Construction Equipment Noise Emission Levels. https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/noise/construction_noise/handbook/handbook09.cfm Graco. N.d. LineLazer V 3900 Standard Series Gas Airless Line Striper, 2 Manual Guns. https://www.graco.com/us/en/contractor/product/17h450-linelazer-v-3900.html Wirtgen. N.d. Cold Milling Machine W 35 XRi. https://www.wirtgen-group.com/binary/full/o19286v77_brochure_W35XRi_0720_V1_enUS.pdf		

The proposed project would implement MM-NOISE-1 to use available noise suppression devices and techniques to reduce exterior noise to acceptable levels that are compatible with adjacent land uses, as established by the City General Plan.

> **MM-NOISE-1 : Construction Noise Reduction.** During construction, the construction contractor shall implement noise suppression devices and techniques to reduce noise levels at sensitive receptors to the "normally unacceptable" range established for each land use in the City General Plan (below 75 dBA for residential uses and school facilities, and below 85 dBA for recreational uses). New development in the "normally unacceptable" range is permitted by the City where detailed analysis of noise reduction is conducted first. Public Works shall require that the construction contractor use temporary sound barriers, equipment mufflers, noise baffles, and blankets where appropriate during construction activities. The contractor shall install temporary sound barriers between the work area and sensitive receptors. Per the FHWA Noise Barrier Design Handbook, a maximum noise reduction of 23 dBA can be achieved by a sound barrier, depending on the material. The construction contractor shall use the FWHA Noise Barrier Design Handbook and the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) standards to install sound barriers with the most effective materials and dimensions. Engine mufflers are anticipated to provide a noise reduction of another 10 dBA, resulting in a total reduction of 33 dBA to reach 76 dBA. Finally, construction equipment with noise levels over 105 dBA at 5 feet from the source shall operate at a maximum of 75% capacity. As the noisiest construction

equipment shall not operate at full power, they will produce less noise, and construction noise levels shall be heard at 75 dBA or below at the nearest sensitive receptors.

Additionally, to be consistent with Policy 5.12-4, the proposed project would adhere to the construction hours established in the Municipal Code (Table 3.13-4, *Construction Work Hours*).

TABLE 3.13-4
CONSTRUCTION WORK HOURS

Day	Hours (October 1 – April 30)	Hours (May 1 – September 30)
Monday—Friday	7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.	6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Saturday	8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.	8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Sunday	No permissible hours	No permissible hours
State holidays	No permissible hours	No permissible hours

Operation of the proposed project is not anticipated to result in a substantial increase in the ambient noise levels, as it would not increase traffic or operate noisy equipment. As such, ambient noise levels would be expected to be similar to existing conditions, which are consistent with the normally acceptable noise levels for recreational land uses (Tables 3.13-1 and 3.13-2).

Therefore, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts with incorporation of MM-NOISE-1 in relation to exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance. No further analysis is warranted.

b. Less than significant impact. The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in relation to generation of excessive groundborne vibration or noise levels. Existing vibration in the area is characterized by traffic and is minimal. U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration (FTA) guidelines were utilized to determine vibration impacts. The FTA measures building vibration damage in peak particle velocity (PPV), which is measured in inches per second (Table 3.13-5, *FTA Construction Vibration Impact Criteria for Building Damage*). The damage that vibration can cause depends on the type of building. The buildings in the vicinity of the proposed project site are assumed to fall under the engineered concrete and masonry category, which has a damage threshold of 0.3 inch per second PPV.

TABLE 3.13-5
FTA CONSTRUCTION VIBRATION IMPACT CRITERIA FOR BUILDING DAMAGE

Building Category	PPV (inches per second)
I. Reinforced-concrete, steel or timber (no plaster)	0.5
II. Engineered concrete and masonry (no plaster)	0.3
III. Non-engineered timber and masonry buildings	0.2
IV. Buildings extremely susceptible to vibration damage	0.12
Source: U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration. 2006. Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment.	

Construction of the proposed project would generate ground-borne vibration during grading and earth-moving activities. The FTA has published standard vibration velocities for various construction equipment operations. The typical vibration levels (in terms of inches per second PPV) at a reference distance of 25 feet, 50 feet, and 100 feet for construction equipment used

during construction activities are listed in Table 3.13-6, *Vibration Source Levels for Construction Equipment*.

TABLE 3.13-6
VIBRATION SOURCE LEVELS FOR CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT

Equipment	PPV at 25 feet (in/sec)	PPV at 50 feet (in/sec)	PPV at 100 feet (in/sec)
Vibratory roller	0.210	0.074	0.026
Large bulldozer	0.089	0.031	0.011
Loaded trucks (haul truck)	0.076	0.027	0.010
Small bulldozer	0.003	0.001	0.000
Note: PPV = peak particle velocity; in/sec = inches per second. *Assumed to be comparable to pile driving methods. **Source:** Federal Transit Administration. 2006. Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment.			

Construction of the proposed project would not include demolition or pile driving methods and, as such, impacts from these activities are not included in this construction vibration analysis. Although the proposed project is located directly adjacent to sensitive receptors, the sensitive receptor structures are set back from the property line; thus, a reference distance of 25 feet was used. As indicated in Table 3.13-6, vibration velocities from heaviest construction equipment that would be used would range from 0.003 to 0.210 inch per second PPV at a reference distance of 25 feet from the source. These levels are well below the potential damage threshold of 0.3 inch per second.

With respect to vibration during operation, the proposed project would limit activities to a mix of pedestrian, cycling, and other non-motorized activities. Typically, minimal vibration is generated from these types of activities. Therefore, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in relation to generation of excessive groundborne vibration or noise levels. No further analysis is warranted.

c. No impact. The proposed project would result in no impact in relation to exposing people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels due to location in the vicinity of an airstrip or airport land use plan. The nearest airport (San Bernardino International Airport) is located approximately 6 miles east of the proposed project site. Due to intervening distance and topography, noise from the airport would not be heard at the proposed project site. No further analysis is warranted.

3.14 Population and Housing

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
Would the project:				
a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Explanation

a. No impact. The proposed project would not induce substantial population growth in the project area, either directly or indirectly. The proposed project would not include any aspects that would increase the population of the surrounding area, such as the construction of new housing, hotels, or the development of other population-inducing projects.

The proposed project would include the construction of an additional 1.75 miles of trail that would extend the existing historic rail corridor and a trailhead. The proposed project is not expected to create a substantial increase of population permanently or in the short term because it would not result in an increase or expansion of residential housing or development of a project that would increase populations (e.g., increase job opportunities in the long term, lessen the burden of home ownership costs, or incorporate assistance for homeless people).

The project would not result in a substantial increase in population as a result of the labor required to construct and operate the refined project. The projected construction and operations employment only includes construction labor for the duration of development and any necessary repairs and maintenance. These changes would not increase employment such as to induce substantial unplanned population growth. The proposed project is located in the center of a dense urban area with a high population and readily available workforce, and labor needs would be met through the available labor in the surrounding area. Local contractors and employees would be available and would not require labor forces to move to or near the project area as a direct result of the proposed project.

Therefore, the proposed project would have no impact on population growth, either directly or indirectly. No further analysis is warranted.

b. No Impact. The proposed project would not displace substantial numbers of people or housing. The extension of the existing Pacific Electric Trail is planned as a conversion “rails-to-trails” project to replace the existing railroad lines with a pedestrian trail system and would not extend beyond the current rail right-of-way and the existing roadway. Therefore, the proposed project

would have no impact regarding displacing or removing housing or people that could necessitate the construction of housing elsewhere. No further analysis is warranted.

3.15 Public Services

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
Would the project:				
a) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered government 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 following public services:				
i) Fire Protection?	☐	☐	☐	☒
ii) Police Protection?	☐	☐	☐	☒
iii) Schools?	☐	☐	☐	☒
iv) Parks?	☐	☐	☒	☐
v) Other Public Facilities?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Explanation

a(i). No impact. As discussed in Section 3.14, *Population and Housing*, the proposed project would not increase the population of the surrounding area. The proposed project would increase pedestrian and cycling traffic to dissuade automobile usage for residents of the surrounding area. There is no expected impact that would increase calls regarding fire protection by the proposed project's operational use of a pedestrian and cycling path. The proposed project would have no impact on fire response or necessitate the need for the expansion of fire protection services. No further analysis is warranted.

a(ii). No impact. As discussed in Section 3.14, *Population and Housing*, the completion of the project as planned would not increase the population of the surrounding area. The proposed project would increase pedestrian and cycling traffic to dissuade automobile usage for residents of the surrounding area. There is no expected impact that would increase calls regarding police services, police responses, or expand the existing police protection for the surrounding area. The proposed project would have no impact. No further analysis is warranted.

a(iii). No impact. As discussed in Section 3.14, *Population and Housing*, the completion of the project as planned would not increase the population of the surrounding area. The proposed project would increase pedestrian and cycling traffic to dissuade automobile usage for residents of the surrounding area. The proposed project is not anticipated to deleteriously impact the services provided by nearby school services. There would be no increase of population that would result in the improvements of existing schools or necessitate the need to develop additional schools. The pedestrian pathway may decrease the burden for commuters to nearby schools. Therefore, the project would have no impact. No further analysis is warranted.

a(iv). Less than significant impact. As discussed in Section 3.14, *Population and Housing*, the completion of the project as planned would not increase the population of the surrounding area. The proposed project would increase pedestrian and cycling traffic to dissuade automobile usage for residents of the surrounding area. The project would have a significant impact if the development would deleteriously impact the services provided by the existing parks and recreational facilities in the surrounding area. The proposed project's goal of increasing foot and bike traffic may increase traffic to the nearby Bud Bender Park and increase wear and use of park provided services. However, the majority use of Bud Bender Park is for organized Baseball games and not general use for activities that daily pedestrian commuters would make much use of. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact. No further analysis is warranted.

a(v). No impact. As discussed in Section 3.14, *Population and Housing*, the completion of the project as planned would not increase the population of the surrounding area. The proposed project would increase pedestrian and cycling traffic to dissuade automobile usage for residents of the surrounding area. The proposed project would not overburden the city's capacity to provide services to the proposed pedestrian cycling trail or other services in the surrounding area. Therefore the proposed project would have no impact. No further analysis is warranted.

3.16 Recreation

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
Would the project:				
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Explanation

a. Less than significant impact. The proposed project would have a significant impact if it resulted in an increase of the use of parks and other recreational facilities in a way that would exacerbate their physical deterioration. The proposed project's goal of increasing foot and bike traffic may increase traffic to the nearby Bud Bender Park and increase wear and use of park provided services. However, the primary use of Bud Bender Park is for organized baseball games, and it is not expected that Bud Bender Park would see a substantial increase in use as a result of bike and foot traffic on the proposed project. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact. No further analysis is warranted.

b. Less than significant with mitigation incorporated. The proposed project would have a significant impact if the project would include or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which could have an adverse effect on the environment. The proposed project is a recreational facility to encourage pedestrian and cycling traffic. It would extend the PE Trail approximately 1.75 miles, using the former UPRR ROW. Construction would start at the PE Trail terminus at Cactus Avenue and continue easterly to Rialto's eastern boundary on Pepper Avenue. The proposed trail would be a paved shared-use path to match the existing PE Trail; specifically, it would be a 10-foot (Class I) multiuse path with 2-foot graded shoulder on each side. In addition, the proposed project would include a trailhead/parking lot on the east side of Cactus Avenue, signalized crossings at Cactus Avenue and Riverside Avenue, and widened curb ramps where the trail crosses roadways. The trail would be striped to accommodate two-way pedestrian/bicycle traffic and would have signage for safety.

The proposed project would incentivize new active transportation users and promote public health by providing residents with a dedicated Class I trail that includes full ADA accessibility, landscaping enhancements, and access to amenities, including two trail crossings at the intersections of Cactus Avenue and Riverside Avenue. Furthermore, the proposed project would provide opportunities for local access points.

The potential environmental impacts associated with construction and operation of the proposed recreational facility are evaluated throughout this Initial Study. With the implementation of BMPs, as described in Section 1.0, *Project Description*, and the mitigations measures described in Sections 3.4, *Biological Resources*, 3.7, *Geology and Soils*, 3.9, *Hazards and Hazardous Materials*, 3.13, *Noise*, and 3.17, *Transportation and Traffic*, the impacts of the proposed project would be less than significant. No further analysis is warranted.

3.17 Transportation

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
Would the project:				
a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Conflict with or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Explanation

a. No impact. The proposed project would result in no impact in relation to conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities.

The SBCTA Non-Motorized Transportation Plan (NMTP) was revised in June 2018.[1] The NMTP identifies facility priorities that will enable local jurisdictions to create an attractive and usable infrastructure that will enhance the enjoyment and quality of life for the residents of San Bernardino County. The NMTP serves as a vehicle for communicating the nonmotorized vision for circulation in the County, which is represented by the collective visions of each jurisdiction that is responsible for implementation of the plan.

The infrastructure improvements and programs recommended for circulation in the County are shaped by the NMTP goals and policies. Goals provide the context for the specific policies discussed in the NMTP. The goals provide the long-term vision and serve as the foundation of the plan. Goals are broad statements of purpose, while policies identify specific initiatives and provide implementation direction on elements of the NMTP. The following represent the goals of the NMTP that are relevant to the proposed project:

- **Goal 1:** Increased bicycle and pedestrian access – Expand bicycle and pedestrian facilities and access within and between neighborhoods, to employment centers, shopping areas, schools, and recreational sites.

- **Goal 2:** Increased travel by cycling and walking – Make the bicycle and walking an integral part of daily life in San Bernardino County, particularly (for bicycle) for trips of less than

[1] San Bernardino County Transportation Authority. 2018. Non-Motorized Transportation Plan. https://www.gosbcta.com/plan/non-motorized-transportation-plan-2018/ (accessed January 2025).

five miles, by implementing and maintaining a bikeway network, providing end-of-trip facilities, improving bicycle/transit integration, encouraging bicycle use, and making bicycling safer and more convenient.

- **Goal 3:** Routine accommodation in transportation and land use planning – Routinely consider bicyclists and pedestrians in the planning and design of land development, roadway, transit, and other transportation facilities, as appropriate to the context of each facility and its surroundings.

- **Goal 4:** Improved bicycle and pedestrian safety – Encourage local and statewide policies and practices that improve bicycle and pedestrian safety.

The NMTP establishes policies for implementation of the plan, of which the following are relevant to the proposed project:

- **Policy 1:** Local jurisdictions are the agencies responsible for the identification of non-motorized transportation projects within their jurisdiction for inclusion into the Plan. San Bernardino Associated Governments (SANBAG) shall only serve in an advisory capacity with respect to the identification of projects on the regional network. SANBAG shall provide advice on the inclusion of projects that may serve to better establish connectivity between jurisdictions, intermodal facilities and regional activity centers. However, local jurisdictions have sole authority over all projects included in the Plan.

- **Policy 2:** Local jurisdictions are also responsible for implementation of the projects included in the NMTP. SANBAG may provide advisory support to jurisdictions in the project development process on request. Should SANBAG be requested to provide assistance delivering a project in the Plan, such instances should be limited to development of regional non-motorized transportation facilities that provide connectivity to more than one jurisdiction or complete gaps within the regional non-motorized transportation network or serve to provide better access to transit facilities.

- **Policy 10:** SANBAG shall work with member agencies to coordinate delivery of the NMTP and projects contained in the Nexus Study.

Additionally, the NMTP establishes priorities for circulation. The setting of priorities for the plan involves more than just the identification of priority projects; the priorities also consider institutional initiatives that pave the way for the delivery of priority projects. The following priorities listed in the NMTP are relevant to the proposed project:

- **Priority 1:** Deliver the Class I backbone bicycle system. Although the Class I facilities can be considered a backbone bicycle system, there is much more to the network than just Class I facilities. Other types of facilities can also be delivered more quickly and less expensively, improving regional connectivity.

- **Priority 2:** Develop better bicycle connectivity between cities and subareas of the County. This must include improved collaboration with Caltrans, given the number of State highways connecting the subareas.

- **Priority 4**: Develop a better “sense of a system” through improved signage, markings, and wayfinding for both cyclists and pedestrians.

- **Priority 6:** Proactively coordinate integration of cycling and walking access accommodations to and from transit stations.

- **Priority 7:** Aggressively pursue grant funding and devote additional programmatic funding to nonmotorized facilities.

In addition to these goals, policies, and priorities, the NMTP identifies the proposed project. The plan states that the City's "marquee future improvement is the eastern extension of the PE Trail from Cactus Avenue to Pepper Avenue." The plan also establishes the PE Trail as part of the "Class I backbone system" of Class I circulation in the County.

The proposed project is included in the Bikeway Master Plan illustrated in the Circulation Chapter of the City General Plan.[2] The Circulation Chapter also identifies goals and policies for circulation in the City, the following of which are relevant to the proposed project:

- **Goal Mobility (MOB) – 4-1:** Provide transportation improvements to reduce traffic congestion associated with regional and local trip increases.
    - Policy MOB – 4-1.17: Require new streets and improvements to connect to established streets.

- **Goal MOB – 4-3:** Protect residences, sensitive land uses, and pedestrians from activities along rail corridors.
    - Policy MOB – 4-3.1: Continue to upgrade rail crossings to improve the pedestrian and vehicular circulation networks.

- **Goal MOB – 4-8:** Establish and maintain a comprehensive system of pedestrian trails and bicycle routes that provide viable connections throughout the City.
    - Policy MOB – 4-8.1: Expand Class I bicycle trails with amenities, particularly adjacent to open space areas, utility and flood control corridors, and abandoned rail corridors.
    - Policy MOB – 4-8.2: Pursue a "rails-to-trails" conversion of the Pacific Electric Railroad right-of-way to a bicycle or multi-use path.
    - Policy MOB – 4-8.3: Connect school facilities, parks, and other activity nodes within residential neighborhoods with bicycle trails on neighborhood streets.
    - Policy MOB – 4-8.5: Require major developments to include bicycle storage facilities, including bicycle racks and lockers.

- **Goal MOB – 4-9:** Promote walking.
    - Policy MOB – 4-9.1: Install sidewalks where they are missing, and make improvements to existing sidewalks for accessibility purposes. Priority should be given to needed sidewalk improvement near schools and activity centers. Provide wider sidewalks in areas with higher pedestrian volumes.
    - Policy MOB – 4-9.3: Provide pedestrian-friendly and safety improvements, such as crosswalks and pedestrian signals, in all pedestrian activity areas.
    - Policy MOB – 4-9.4: Accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists — in addition to automobiles — when considering new development projects.

[2] City of Rialto. 2023. "Exhibit 4.4 Bicycle Routes." In *Chapter 4: Making the Connections: The Circulation Chapter* of the 2023 Focused General Plan Update. https://www.rialtoca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/4455/2023-Circulation-Element?bidId=

- Policy MOB – 4-9.6: Encourage new development to provide pedestrian paths through projects, with outlets to adjacent collectors, secondaries, and arterial roadways.

The purpose of the proposed project is to connect the various parts of the city internally and externally to the surrounding region by providing nonmotorized, safe, and sustainable transit modes that meet the needs of all users. The proposed project would also provide a continuous trail that largely separates pedestrians and cyclists from vehicular traffic. The proposed project would expand the City's recreational amenities; enhance safety; and increase connectivity of the City's parks, schools, and neighborhoods. The proposed project would provide pedestrian and bicycle connections to public transportation and provide access to destinations throughout the City. Through development of the proposed project, the goals and policies related to circulation (particularly pedestrian and bicycle circulation) established in the County's Pacific Electric and the City's General Plan would be achieved. Therefore, the proposed project would result in no impacts in relation to conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities. No further analysis is warranted.

b. Less than significant impact. The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts in relation to conflict or inconsistency with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b). CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b) deals with a project's potential vehicle miles traveled (VMT), the number and distance of automobiles attributable to a project. As stated in Section 15064.3, subdivision (b) and clarified in the Office of Planning and Research (OPR) Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA, VMT refers to the amount and distance of automobile (on-road passenger vehicle) travel attributable to a project and heavy-duty truck VMT.[3]

The proposed project would be within existing right-of-way, which includes abandoned railroad tracks, dirt and gravel, and intersections (including paved roadway and sidewalk) on Cactus Avenue, Lilac Avenue, Willow Avenue, Palm Avenue, Orange Avenue, Riverside Avenue, Olive Avenue, Date Avenue, Sycamore Avenue, Acacia Avenue, Eucalyptus Avenue, and Pepper Avenue. The proposed project is currently accessible to the public by street crossings. However, it is undeveloped as a public right-of-way and the existing railroad tracks do not currently generate VMT.

The proposed project would increase temporary VMT due to the construction where workers and equipment would be deployed. During project construction, there would be temporary trips associated with haul trucks, delivery trucks, and workers. However, the additional trips would be temporary and would not result in unplanned population growth as a result of the construction duration due to the location of the project site in the center of a dense urban area with a readily available workforce. Therefore, construction would not result in a net increase in VMT that could result in a significant adverse impact, as the proposed project would reduce VMT over time.

Operation of the proposed project would also result in less than significant impacts to VMT. The project would be consistent with goals and policies of the Circulation Chapter of the City General Plan and the County's NMTP related to facilitating alternative modes of travel through the provision of multimodal trails. The City General Plan encourages and supports fixed-route transit, bus rapid transit (BRT), regular bus service, a comprehensive bicycle network, and walking. As

[3] State of California Governor's Office of Planning and Research. December 2018. Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA. http://opr.ca.gov/docs/20190122-743_Technical_Advisory.pdf

stated in the City General Plan, these approaches can help reduce VMT, and the goals and policies in the Circulation Chapter are established to achieve this reduction in VMT. Given that the proposed project works to achieve the circulation goals and policies for the bicycle and pedestrian network, the proposed project would work to reduce VMT in the City. The purpose of the proposed project is to expand the City's trail network and enhance pedestrian and biking connectivity. Per CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b), which describes criteria for analyzing VMT of transportation projects, "transportation projects that reduce, or have no impact on, vehicle miles traveled should be presumed to cause a less than significant transportation impact." During operations, the proposed project would reduce VMT through an expansion of recreational and nonmotorized transit opportunities connecting the project area to various parts of the City and surrounding region. The proposed project would encourage both nonmotorized transportation through the provision and expansion of bicycle and pedestrian pathways and create alternate modes of travel to work and school.

The proposed project involves the addition of 40 parking spaces; however, these parking spaces would encourage use of the proposed trail and would be used to support the proposed project's overall reduction in VMT. By providing parking spaces, the proposed project would allow users to park their vehicles closer to their origin points and utilize other modes of transportation along the trail to reach their destinations, ultimately reducing net VMT. Therefore, construction and operation of the proposed project would not result in a substantial increase in VMT and would result in less than significant impacts in relation to conflicting with or being inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3, subdivision (b). No further analysis is warranted.

c. No impact. The proposed project would result in no impact in relation to substantially increasing hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment). The proposed project would be within an existing right-of-way, which includes abandoned railroad tracks, dirt and gravel, and intersections (including paved roadway and sidewalk) on Cactus Avenue, Lilac Avenue, Willow Avenue, Palm Avenue, Orange Avenue, Riverside Avenue, Olive Avenue, Date Avenue, Sycamore Avenue, Acacia Avenue, Eucalyptus Avenue, and Pepper Avenue. The proposed project is currently accessible to the public by street crossings. However, it is undeveloped as a public right-of-way and does not currently have any bicycle paths, walking trails, pedestrian crossings or striping at intersections, or similar amenities.

There would be no impact from construction due to introduction of a design feature or incompatible uses within the vicinity of the project site. Construction activities and staging areas would be constrained within the trail right-of-way, including parking within the staging area. The proposed project could temporarily redirect access to roadways during the construction period. Traffic control could be required at intersection crossings, including, but not limited to, lane closures for short durations. The majority of the construction would occur along the railroad tracks. Temporary fencing may be implemented along the trail to restrict access to the construction site and prevent potential runoff and reduce noise during construction around existing obstructions. These construction activities are not anticipated to impact circulation and would not introduce a hazard.

The proposed project would improve circulation design, thereby enhancing safety and reducing hazards for bicycles and pedestrians. The purpose of the proposed project is to connect the various parts of the City internally and externally to the surrounding region by providing nonmotorized, safe, and sustainable transit modes that meet the needs of all users. The proposed project would also provide a continuous trail that largely separates pedestrians and cyclists from vehicular traffic. The proposed project would expand the City's recreational amenities; enhance safety; and increase connectivity of the City's parks, schools, and neighborhoods while aligning with the City's overall mission to provide a safe atmosphere with public services and policies. The

proposed project would provide pedestrian and bicycle connections to public transportation and provide access to destinations throughout the City.

Therefore, given that the proposed project has been designed to improve safety, the proposed project would result in no impacts in relation to substantially increasing hazards due to a design feature or incompatible land use. No further analysis is warranted.

d. Less than significant with mitigation incorporated. The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts with mitigation incorporated in relation to resulting in inadequate emergency access. As shown in the Safety Element of City General Plan,[4] the City has designated evacuation routes that allow community members to self-evacuate during times of a disaster. Within the proposed project site, Riverside Avenue serves as an arterial evacuation corridor. Riverside Avenue connects to a collector street (Rialto Avenue) to the south and arterial (Foothill Boulevard) to the north. With the exception of Riverside Avenue, the cross-streets within the proposed project site are not designated as evacuation corridors, but they do provide emergency access for police and fire safety: Cactus Avenue, Lilac Avenue, Willow Avenue, Palm Avenue, Orange Avenue, Riverside Avenue, Olive Avenue, Date Avenue, Sycamore Avenue, Acacia Avenue, Eucalyptus Avenue, and Pepper Avenue.

The proposed project may affect emergency access on these roadways on a temporary basis during construction. Traffic control could be required at intersection crossings, including lane closures for short durations. However, the majority of construction activities would occur along the railroad tracks. Lane closures would be coordinated with the City Public Works department, which provides services related to infrastructure, traffic safety, signage, and striping.

Emergency access to the project site and surrounding area would be maintained throughout construction activities through implementation of MM-TRANS-1, which would require the construction contractor and the City to prepare a Transportation Management Plan (TMP) that would delineate how the temporary lane closures would allow for adequate traffic flow and emergency access along City streets during construction.

> **MM-TRANS-1: Transportation Management Plan.** Prior to commencing construction, the construction contractor shall coordinate with City Public Works to prepare and finalize a Transportation Management Plan (TMP). The TMP shall encompass activities that will be implemented to minimize traffic delays that may result from lane restrictions or closures in a work zone during construction. In particular, the TMP shall delineate how temporary lane closures along the following cross streets will allow for adequate emergency access: Cactus Avenue, Lilac Avenue, Willow Avenue, Palm Avenue, Orange Avenue, Riverside Avenue, Olive Avenue, Date Avenue, Sycamore Avenue, Acacia Avenue, Eucalyptus Avenue, and Pepper Avenue.

During operation of the proposed project, the lanes along the City streets in the proposed project area would return to the same level of emergency access as existing conditions. Emergency access to the trail would be provided by the City streets as it would be publicly accessible. Therefore, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts with mitigation incorporated in relation to emergency access. No further analysis is warranted.

[4] City of Rialto. September 2023. Safety and Noise Element. Public Draft. https://www.rialtoca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/4458/2023-Safety-Element?bidId= (accessed January 2025).

3.18 Tribal Cultural Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
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:				
a) 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	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) 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 Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	☐	☒	☐	☐

This analysis draws from the Cultural Resources Technical Report (Appendix E) and Archaeological Survey Report prepared for the project (see Appendix F, *Draft Section 106 Documentation*). Methods for this study included the identification of existing tribal cultural resources and cultural resources that may have importance to Native American groups that are traditionally and ancestrally connected to the proposed project area to characterize the existing conditions and establish a baseline condition. Methods also included an assessment of potential adverse effects based on information gathered from published and unpublished literature, data searches of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) at the South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC), the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) Sacred Lands File database for the USGS 7.5-minute series Fontana and San Bernardino South 1985 topographic quadrangle maps, and a review of current and historic maps and aerial photographs, including historic Government Land Plats that may have contained information about Native American settlements or activity use areas within the area encompassing the proposed project. An intensive pedestrian survey of the proposed project footprint was performed to further characterize the existing conditions relative to potential tribal cultural resources.

On January 6, 2025, and September 17, 2025, the City of Rialto transmitted notification letters to tribal contacts on the City's tribal contact list to initiate the Assembly Bill (AB) 52 consultation process. The consultation process allows for tribes identified by the NAHC to enter into a

conversation with the lead agency that would result in concerns and mitigation measures requested by tribes to be incorporated during the construction or life of the project. Tribal contacts have 30 days upon receipt to request consultation with the City. One response was received from Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation.

Working Definition:

AB 52: An act to amend Section 5097.94 of, and to add Sections 21073, 21074, 21080.3.1, 21080.3.2, 21082.3, 21083.09, 21084.2, and 21084.3 to, the Public Resources Code (PRC), relating to Native Americans. The goal of AB 52 is to promote the involvement of California Native American Tribes in the decision-making process when it comes to identifying and developing mitigation for impacts to resources of importance to their culture. To reach this goal, the bill establishes a formal role for tribes in the CEQA process. CEQA lead agencies are required to consult with tribes about potential tribal cultural resources in the project area, the potential significance of project impacts, the development of project alternatives, and the type of environmental document that should be prepared. AB 52 specifically states that a project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment.

Tribal Cultural Resource. Defined in Public Resources Code (PRC) 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, that is listed or eligible for listing in the CRHR, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in PRC Section 5020.1(k).

a. Less than significant with mitigation incorporated. The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to tribal cultural resources with the incorporation of mitigation measures in relation to the eligibility for tribal cultural resource listing in the California Register of Historical Resources or in a local register of historical resources.

On October 17, 2024, a review of the CHRIS at the SCCIC for the project area found that there were no previously recorded historical resources within 0.25 mile of the proposed project. The findings of an SCCIC records search do not definitively determine whether there are resources within the project area but whether any previously recorded resources are within 0.25 mile of the project area.

An SLF search was requested at the NAHC on July 29, 2024. The NAHC responded on August 24, 2024, indicating that the quadrangles in which the proposed project footprint is located is negative for the presence of sacred lands or resources important to Native American representatives. In addition, a list of tribal entities was provided who may have knowledge of tribal cultural resources in the project area (see Appendix E).

The following 19 Native American tribes were contacted and sent letters via U.S. Postal Service for Section 106 consultation and CEQA AB 52 process on January 6, 2025, and September 17, 2025, respectively:

- Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians
- Augustine Band of Cahuilla Indians
- Cabazon Band of Cahuilla Indians
- Cahuilla Band of Indians

- Gabrieleño Band of Missions Indians – Kizh Nation
- Gabrieleno San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians
- Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council
- Gabrielino/Tongva Nation
- Gabrielino-Tongva Tribe
- Los Coyotes Band of Cahuilla and Cupeño Indians
- Morongo Band of Mission Indians
- Pauma Band of Luiseño Indians – Pauma and Yuima Reservation
- Ramona Band of Cahuilla
- San Fernando Band of Mission Indians
- Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians
- Serrano Nation of Mission Indians
- Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians
- Torres-Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians
- Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation

While the AB 52 process continues, to date, one comment has been received from the above Native American tribes thus far (see Appendix J, *Tribal Outreach*).

The one recorded response was received on June 24, 2025, from Kristen Tuosto representing the Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation. They expressed that the project was of low concern and requested the incorporation of a mitigation measure for tribal cultural resources. This concluded San Manuel's input on the project unless artifacts or inadvertent remains are discovered. (Please refer to Section 3.5, *Cultural Resources*, for mitigation measures pertaining to inadvertent discoveries of cultural and tribal cultural resources (MM-CUL-1), and respectful treatment of human remains (MM-CUL-2).

> **MM-TRC-1:** In the event that any pre-contact cultural resources are discovered during project activities, the Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation will be contacted and be provided information and be invited to perform a site visit when the archaeologist makes their assessment, in order to provide Tribal input. The archaeologist shall complete a California Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) 523-series form for the find and submit this document to the Lead Agency for dissemination to the Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation.
>
> If eligible pre-contact resources are discovered and avoidance cannot be ensured, drafts of the Secretary of Interior (SOI)–qualified archaeologist's cultural resources Treatment Plan and a Discovery and Monitoring Plan shall be provided to Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation for review and comment prior to the Plan implementation. The Lead Agency or designated point-of-contact shall, in good faith, consult with Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation on the disposition and treatment of any artifacts or other cultural materials encountered during the project.

In addition, an intensive pedestrian survey using no greater than 15-foot transects was conducted on September 11, 2024, by Sapphos Environmental, Inc. throughout the proposed project footprint to identify any potential surface archaeological resources or other cultural resources (see Appendix E). Additional attention was paid to areas of the project study area with exposed ground (i.e., no groundcover or hardscape). Approximately 90 percent of the proposed project footprint is highly disturbed with hardscape or landscape. The proposed project footprint primarily consists

of a previously disturbed dirt path directly adjacent to or in train tracks. No tribal cultural resources were identified as a result of the background research and survey.

The potential presence of significant buried tribal cultural resources is considered low based on information received from the Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation during AB 52 consultation. The project area is currently paved and substantially disturbed. It is unlikely that tribal cultural resources would be encountered within the depth of disturbed subsurface soils. However, the potential to encounter tribal cultural resources exists during ground-disturbing activities in native undisturbed soils that lay beneath the zone of previously disturbed soils.

Compliance with mitigation measures CUL-1, CUL-2, and TRC-1 would ensure that an inadvertent discovery of previously unknown tribal cultural resources that could be eligible for listing in a state or local register would result in a less than significant impact. Therefore, the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated to tribal cultural resources in relation to eligibility for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources or in a local register of historical resources. No further analysis is warranted.

b. Less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated. The proposed project would result in less than significant impacts to tribal cultural resources with mitigation incorporated in relation to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of PRC Section 5024.1. No listed or eligible resources are located within the proposed project footprint (see Appendix E). Furthermore, as stated above, the City sent letters to 19 Native American groups as part of Section 106 and AB 52 consultation on January 6, 2025, and September 17, 2025. A response was received from the Yuhaaviatam of the San Manuel Nation that did not identify known tribal cultural resources in the proposed project footprint and identified the proposed project area as having low sensitivity. Therefore, the proposed project site does not include resources determined to be significant pursuant to the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of PRC Section 5024.1. However, the potential to encounter previously unidentified resources exists during ground-disturbing activities in native soils.

Compliance with existing regulations, as described in Section 3.5, *Cultural Resources*, and applicable to tribal cultural resources, and implementation of mitigation measures CUL-1, CUL-2, and TRC-1 would ensure that discovery of previously unknown tribal cultural resources would be handled in consideration of the importance of the resource to California Native American tribes. Therefore, the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts with mitigation incorporated. No further analysis is warranted.

3.19 Utilities and Service Systems

	Potentially Significant Impact	*Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the Project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
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?	☐	☐	☒	☐
e) Comply with Federal, State, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Explanation

a. Less than significant impact. The proposed project would not 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. The proposed project would include the construction of an additional 1.75 miles of pedestrian and cycling trailway replacing the existing railroad corridor. The proposed project would require on-site lighting along the trail alignment and irrigation to maintain the landscaping areas along the trail. These impacts are anticipated to be minimal and would not require the expansion or new construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities. Therefore, the impact would be less than significant. No further analysis is warranted.

b. Less than significant impact. The proposed project would have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years.

Construction

During the construction phase of the proposed project, best practices would be used in dust control measures that would require the use of water to be applied in intervals. There may be other uses for water to reduce the potential for fire or the cleaning of materials during construction. These improvements are not anticipated to substantially impact existing water reservoirs or water supplies. Therefore, the impact during construction would be less than significant. No further analysis is warranted.

Operation

As stated above, the proposed project would require irrigation to maintain the landscaping areas along the trail. These improvements are not anticipated to substantially impact existing water reservoirs or water supplies to the degree that the surrounding area would not be able to be served in the foreseeable future or during normal, dry and multiple dry years. Other than irrigation, the proposed project would not include or require the extension of water infrastructure. The proposed project would not induce growth or increase demand during operation and maintenance. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in water supply impacts. Therefore, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact during operation. No further analysis is warranted.

c. Less than significant impact. Temporary portable toilets may be utilized during construction. Temporary facilities would be provided by the contractor selected to construct the proposed project and serviced by an approved sanitation facility. Under this scenario, the proposed project would not incur the need for increased wastewater treatment capacity. The proposed project would not result in any service change during construction, nor during operation and maintenance. Restrooms are not included in the proposed project. Therefore, there would be a less than significant impact. No further analysis is warranted.

d. Less than significant impact. The proposed project would not have a significant impact on state or local standards of excess solid waste.

Construction

The local solid waste management for the project is Burrtec Waste Industrial Industries. The proposed project would involve the removal of existing rail equipment (steel tracks, gravel, rail fasteners, railroad ties, joint bars, anchors, joint bars, lumber, etc.) and the existing soils. Waste generated during construction would be hauled off-site for reuse or disposal as required by federal, state, and local regulations. Materials that could not be reused or composted would be disposed of at the local Burrtec Solid Waste facility. Solid waste generated during construction would represent a very small fraction of the daily permitted tonnage of disposal facilities and would be sufficiently accommodated by existing landfills. As of 2006, the San Bernardino County Burrtec Solid Waste facility was expanded to receive upwards of 7,500 tons daily.[1] The construction-related impact would be less than significant.

[1] San Bernardino County. 2006. Burrtec Material Recovery Facility and Solid Waste Transfer Station Expand to 7500 Tons Daily. Negative Declaration.

Operations

The proposed project would include waste receptacles. Solid waste collected as a part of the proposed project operation would be disposed of by Burrtect Waste Industrial Industries. As stated above, in 2006, the San Bernardino County Burrtec Solid Waste facility was expanded to receive upwards of 7,500 tons daily. This solid waste disposal provider complies with local, state, and federal regulations pertaining to solid waste disposal needs. Therefore, the operational impact would be less than significant. No further analysis is warranted.

e. No impact. The proposed project would comply with local, state, and federal solid waste disposal regulations. As stated above, Burrtec Waste Industrial Industries would be responsible for the disposal of solid waste for the proposed project and would comply with local, state, and federal regulations pertaining to solid waste disposal needs. Therefore, there would be no impact. No further analysis is warranted.

https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/1992052019/4#:~:text=1992052019%20%2D%202006%2D08%2D07%20%2D%20NEG%20%2D%20Burrtec,Transfer%20Station%20Expand%20to%207500%20Tons%20Daily (accessed January 2025).

3.20 Wildfire

If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:	*Potentially Significant Impact*	*Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
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?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Explanation

a. No impact. The proposed project would result in no impacts to wildfire in relation to the impairment of adopted emergency response and/or emergency evacuation plans located in or near state responsibility areas (SRA) or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones (VHFHSZ). According to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's (CAL FIRE) website,[1] the Fire Hazard Severity Zone Maps for both local responsibility areas (LRAs) and SRAs indicate that the proposed project site is located approximately 5.3 miles northwest of the nearest SRA VHFHSZ. The City of Rialto, which includes the proposed project site, is located entirely within an LRA per the Draft Safety and Noise Element of the City's General Plan Update.[2] Per CAL FIRE, an LRA is an incorporated city, urban region, agricultural land, or portion of a desert where wildfire protection responsibility is within jurisdiction of a local government, which is

[1] California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), Office of the State Fire Marshall. N.d. Fire Hazard Severity Zone Maps. https://calfire-forestry.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=988d431a42b242b29d89597ab693d008 (accessed December 2024).

[2] City of Rialto Community Development Department. September 2023. Safety and Noise. Public Draft. Prepared by Dudek. https://www.yourrialto.com/DocumentCenter/View/4458/2023-Safety-Element?bidId= (accessed December 2024).

commonly provided by city departments, fire protection districts, counties, and CAL FIRE under contract.[3]

The City of Rialto is served by the City of Rialto Fire Department, which provides all fire, emergency medical service, technical rescue, hazardous material, and other related emergency service needs for the City.[4] The City has elected to provide predesignated evacuation routes as identified in Exhibit 5.11 (Evacuation Route Corridors) of the Draft Safety and Noise Element, which include freeways and arterial throughfares.[5] The City also provides emergency shelters in the event of a disaster and subsequent evacuation order in coordination with the Red Cross and Rialto Unified School District. As depicted in Exhibit 5.11 of the City's 2023 Safety Element of the General Plan Update, the evacuation routes would allow community members to self-evacuate during times of a disaster and gather along two key collector routes that lead to the Interstate 10 (I-10) and Interstate 210 (I-210) freeways, both located north and south of the proposed project site and traverse east-west along the northern and southern ends of the City's boundaries.[6] The closest primary evacuation corridor to the proposed project site is West Rialto Avenue, located approximately 0.14 mile due south. Per the Draft Safety and Noise Element, fire protection for the proposed project site is currently served by Station 204 of the Rialto Fire Department, located approximately 4.5 miles northwest of the proposed project site.

The proposed project is not within or near an SRA and VHFHSZ and would not hinder emergency response and emergency evacuation plans. Therefore, there would be no impact regarding impairment of an adopted emergency response plan and/or emergency evacuation plan. No further analysis is warranted.

b. No impact. The proposed project would result in no impact regarding exacerbated wildfire risk due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors that could expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire in or near SRA or lands classified as VHFHSZ. The proposed project site is topographically bounded within the South Coast Air Basin, which lies in the semipermanent high-pressure zone of the eastern Pacific Ocean and usually provides a mild climatological pattern, interrupted by periods of hot temperatures, winter storms, or Santa Ana winds. According to the Draft Safety and Noise Element of the City's General Plan Update, the northern section of the City is prone to wildfire concerns based on the presence of wildland areas, with a sharp contrast in terrain compared to southern Rialto with the rise of the San Gabriel Mountains.[7] However, the fire threat level at the proposed project site is little to no threat. Based on CAL FIRE's Fire Hazard Severity Zone Maps and the City's feasibility study for the proposed project, the proposed project site is not in or near an SRA or lands

[3] California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE). November 2019. Frequently Asked Questions about 2020 Fire Hazard Severity Zones. https://bof.fire.ca.gov/media/ttpi3n3m/full-14-b-vhfhsz-frequently-asked-questions.pdf (accessed December 2024).

[4] City of Rialto Community Development Department. September 2023. Safety and Noise. Public Draft. Prepared by Dudek. https://www.yourrialto.com/DocumentCenter/View/4458/2023-Safety-Element?bidId= (accessed December 2024).

[5] City of Rialto Community Development Department. September 2023. Safety and Noise. Public Draft. Prepared by Dudek. https://www.yourrialto.com/DocumentCenter/View/4458/2023-Safety-Element?bidId= (accessed December 2024).

[6] City of Rialto Community Development Department. September 2023. Safety and Noise. Public Draft. Prepared by Dudek. https://www.yourrialto.com/DocumentCenter/View/4458/2023-Safety-Element?bidId= (accessed December 2024).

[7] City of Rialto Community Development Department. September 2023. Safety and Noise. Public Draft. Prepared by Dudek. https://www.yourrialto.com/DocumentCenter/View/4458/2023-Safety-Element?bidId= (accessed December 2024).

classified as VHFHSZ and is generally flat with gentle slopes.[8] The proposed project site is located approximately 5.3 miles northwest of the nearest SRA VHFHSZ and is within a heavily urbanized area surrounded by commercial, residential, and industrial uses (see Chapter 1, Project Description). The proposed project would not exacerbate wildfire risks, thereby exposing project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire. Therefore, there would be no impact. No further analysis is warranted.

c. No Impact. The proposed project would result in no impact to wildfire in relation to requiring the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities that would exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment. The proposed project site is located approximately 5.3 miles northwest of the nearest SRA VHFHSZ, within a heavily urbanized area surrounded by commercial, residential, and residential uses. However, the fire threat level at the proposed project site is little to no threat. The proposed project is located within a developed Right-of-Way (ROW) and would not restrict potential emergency access. The proposed project would remove existing railroad infrastructure and construct a paved path with minimal planting, marked street crossings, access gates, and signage. Goal 5.5.2 of the 2023 Safety Element update requires all construction in the City to be in conformance with the California Building Code, which includes general construction requirements relating to fire and safety.[9] The proposed project would include a two-way publicly accessible path for cyclists and pedestrians during operations, and would contribute to the City's build-out, thus minimizing the potential for fire conditions. The proposed project area is not located in or near SRA or lands classified as VHFHSZ, would not exacerbate wildfire risks, and not require the installation or maintenance of infrastructure to avoid exacerbating impacts from a wildfire. Therefore, there would be no impact. No further analysis is warranted.

d. No Impact. The proposed project would result in no impact to wildfire in relation to exposure of people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, postfire slope instability, or drainage changes. The proposed project site is not located in or near SRA or lands classified as VHFHSZ. The proposed project site is generally flat with gentle slopes from east to west. Moreover, the City has no recorded history of landslide activity as indicated by the California Geological Survey.[10] As discussed in Section 3.10, *Hydrology and Water Quality*, the proposed project site is not located within a flood-susceptible area. Although the proposed project site would include a paved concrete surface that could decrease permeability, drainage is not expected to significantly change compared to existing conditions. Additionally, the fire threat level at the proposed project site is little to no threat. The proposed project includes a 1.75-mile trail alignment extension that would provide innovative nonmotorized and sustainable transit modes, connecting the project area to various parts of the City and surrounding region. As such, users would be transient along the trail and would not be subject to significant wildfire risk. Since the proposed project site is not located in or near SRA or lands classified as VHFHSZ and a flood-susceptible area or in an area with landslide

[8] City of Rialto Public Works Department. January 2022. Feasibility Study: Pacific Electric (PE) Trail Expansion. https://www.yourrialto.com/DocumentCenter/View/2499/Pacific-Electric-Trail-Expansion-Feasibility-Study?bidId= (accessed December 2024).

[9] City of Rialto Community Development Department. September 2023. Safety and Noise. Public Draft. Prepared by Dudek. https://www.yourrialto.com/DocumentCenter/View/4458/2023-Safety-Element?bidId= (accessed December 2024).

[10] City of Rialto Community Development Department. September 2023. Safety and Noise. Public Draft. Prepared by Dudek. https://www.yourrialto.com/DocumentCenter/View/4458/2023-Safety-Element?bidId= (accessed December 2024).

activity, the proposed project would not expose people or structures to significant risk from wildfire. Therefore, there would be no impact. No further analysis is warranted.

3.21 Mandatory Findings of Significance

Would the project:	*Potentially Significant Impact*	*Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated*	*Less than Significant Impact*	*No Impact*
a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?	☐	☐	☒	☐
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Explanation

a. Less than significant with mitigation incorporated. The proposed project would have a significant impact if it were to have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment in a way that would substantially reduce wildlife populations or California history or prehistory. As discussed in Section 3.4, *Biological Resources*, the proposed project would result in no impacts or less than significant impacts in relation to five of six environmental issue areas. The proposed project would have the potential to result in potentially significant impacts in relation to the movement of any native resident or migratory fish and/or wildlife species or established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or native wildlife nursery sites. However, mitigation measure BIO-1 would reduce potential impacts to below the level of significance.

As discussed in Section 3.5, *Cultural Resources*, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated for historical resources but has no potential to eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory. Analysis within the Cultural Resources Technical Report (Appendix E), Historical Properties Evaluation Report (see Appendix F, *Draft Section 106 Documentation*), and the Archaeological Survey Report (Appendix F), determined that the proposed project would not be within or adjacent to any known sensitive tribal cultural resources or known archaeological sites. However, the proposed project encompasses four historic built environment resources that, while ineligible for inclusion

in the National Register of Historic Places and California Register of Historical Resources, do meet the City of Rialto Historic Preservation Ordinance criteria for Local Listing.

As discussed in Sections 3.5, *Cultural Resources*, and 3.18, *Tribal Cultural Resources*, the potential presence of significant buried tribal or cultural resources is low in previously disturbed soils, however, in native undisturbed soils, the potential to encounter intact buried cultural and tribal cultural deposits increases. As a result of coordination undertaken with Native American tribes pursuant to AB 52, mitigation measures CUL-1, CUL-2, CUL-3, and TRC-1 would be implemented to reduce potential impacts to below the level of significance. Therefore, the proposed project would have less than significant impacts with mitigation incorporated in relation to eliminating important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory or other historical resources.

b. Less than significant impact. The list of related projects that could combine with the proposed project to result in a cumulative impact are listed in Table 1.12-1, *List of Related Projects*, in Section 1.0, *Project Description*. As shown in Table 1.12-1 and Figure 1.12-1, *Related Projects Map*, there are no planned or in-process recreational projects within 5 miles of the project area.

The proposed project could result in impacts due to potentially overlapping construction schedules of the related projects. However, as discussed in Section 3.17, *Transportation*, the proposed project would have no impact in relation to traffic or traffic-related hazards. With respect to air quality, as discussed in Section 3.3, *Air Quality*, the proposed project would not result in a cumulatively considerable increase of any criteria air pollutant.

Nonetheless, there is a possibility that the proposed project could have overlapping construction activities with the related projects that could result in other types of cumulative impacts. These cumulative impacts would be temporary and occur only during the timeline of construction activities and only within construction times during days. Furthermore, the City would be responsible for issuing construction permits for each of the related projects as well as the proposed project. As part of standard procedure, the City would coordinate construction times, days, and truck routes[1] with the proposed project and related projects to avoid or minimize potential hazards (i.e., safety, traffic/truck routes, air quality, noise, etc.). As such, the proposed project would result in a less than significant impact.

c. Less than significant with mitigation incorporated. The proposed project would have a significant impact if it would result in substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly. The proposed project would include an additional route for non-motorized transportation via a multi-use trail system intended to improve the quality of life and health for Rialto residents.

As detailed throughout this Initial Study, the proposed project would not exceed any significance thresholds or result in significant impacts in relation to several of the environmental categories typically associated with indirect or direct effects to human beings, including aesthetics, air quality, and public services.

As discussed in Section 3.9, *Hazards and Hazardous Materials*, the proposed project would result in no impacts or less than significant impacts in relation to five of seven environmental issue areas. The proposed project would have the potential to result in potentially significant impacts in relation to creating a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably

[1] Truck routes within the City of Rialto are regulated by Ordinance No. 1684.

foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment; and in relation to emitting hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school. However, mitigation measure HAZ-1 would reduce impacts to below the level of significance.

As discussed in Section 3.13, *Noise*, the proposed project would result in no impacts or less than significant impacts in relation to two of three environmental issue areas. The proposed project would have the potential to result in potentially significant impacts in relation to generating 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. However, mitigation measure NOISE-1 would reduce impacts to below the level of significance.

As discussed in Section 3.27, *Transportation and Traffic*, the proposed project would result in no impacts or less than significant impacts in relation to three of four environmental issue areas. The proposed project would have the potential to result in potentially significant impacts in relation to resulting in inadequate emergency access. However, implementation of mitigation measure TRANS-1 would reduce impacts to below the level of significance.

As such, significant impacts related to substantial adverse effects on human beings would not occur after implementation of mitigation measures.

SECTION 4.0
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