

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project Location

The proposed Esperanza Specific Plan (formerly Legacy) project totals approximately 223 acres and is designated as Planning Subarea 25 of the New Model Colony (NMC) within the City of Ontario. The proposed project area is located near the southeastern portion of the NMC and adjacent to the San Bernardino and Riverside County boundary line. The site is approximately 2 miles south of State Highway 60 and approximately one-half mile west of Interstate 15 (Figure I-2-1, Regional Location). The Specific Plan area is situated between Mill Creek Avenue and Milliken Avenue immediately north of Bellegrave Avenue. The southern and eastern edges of the proposed project site are adjacent to the boundary between San Bernardino and Riverside counties and the northern boundary abuts Subarea 19. For clarification, Milliken Avenue is named Hamner Avenue in Riverside County. Both names refer to the same street that forms the eastern boundary. Also, Mill Creek Avenue is named Cleveland Avenue in Riverside County and forms the western boundary of the Specific Plan (Figure I-2-2, Vicinity Map).

Project Background/Existing Site Conditions

The proposed Esperanza Specific Plan (the Specific Plan) is located within an approximately 8,200-acre portion of the City of Ontario that was annexed into the City in November of 1999. This area was referred to at that time as the City of Ontario Sphere of Influence. This large area, located south of the original City of Ontario, is now referred to as the New Model Colony. The NMC General Plan Amendment (GPA) establishes land use designations for the entire 8,200 acres. The Specific Plan site is located within Subarea 25 of the GPA. All subareas within the GPA, including Subarea 25, are required to be developed through a Specific Plan to implement GPA policy. Subarea 25, in its entirety, allows for the development of 736 single-family residential units and 720 multi-family units, for a total of 1,456 dwelling units. The Specific Plan will be developed in accordance with GPA Subarea 25 policies.

The Specific Plan site is composed of land held by three separate property owners. The Specific Plan applicant is Armada, LLC which owns the southwestern 74 gross acres of the site. The southeastern 64 gross acres of the Specific Plan area are owned by Amberhill Development LTD, and the northern 85 gross acres are owned by Pietersma Family Trust et al. and Bidart Family Trust (Figure I-2-3, Property Ownership).

The existing uses within the proposed Specific Plan site include a variety of rural uses. The site is characterized as agricultural dairy lands with an active dairy operating in the north-central portion of the site and some cropland. Several dairy homes exist on site and some portions of the site remain vacant land. An earthen detention basin exists in the southwest corner of the Specific Plan (Figure I-1-4, Aerial Photograph). Several above ground tanks, well heads, abandoned foundations, and debris dumped on the site are noticeable upon site inspection.

Project Actions and Applications

The proposed project includes the following actions and applications:

Esperanza Specific Plan (Subarea 25) is an application for approximately 916 single-family detached residential dwelling units, about 494 cluster/town home attached dwelling units, a 10-acre elementary school site, and a total of nine (9) acres of parks (two 1-acre mini parks, one 2-acre pocket park, and one 5-acre neighborhood park). The development will be phased, beginning in the southern portion of the site. Should the school district not use the proposed school site, 46 single-family homes are proposed, bringing the total allowable units within Subarea 25 to 1,456. Where potential environmental effects differ between the school use and the residential use for the 10-acre school site, the worst environmental effect between the two land uses is evaluated herein.

Williamson Act Contract Cancellation includes application to cancel active Williamson Act contracts for approximately 18%, or 40.08 acres within the Specific Plan site. The parcel included within the current cancellation is 0218-252-003 (40.08 acres). In the future, parcels 0218-252-007 (26.28 acres), -008 (34.25 acres), -009 (18.20 acres) and -010 (.04 acre well site) will either need to let the notice for non-renewal expire or file for cancellation to facilitate the development of the proposed project.

Subdivision Maps – Concurrent with the Specific Plan, the following Tentative Tract Maps will be processed: TT 17930, TT 17749, TT 17934, TT 17935, and TT 17936. The Esperanza Specific Plan EIR evaluates these tracts. Additional subdivision maps will be submitted in the future to implement the Specific Plan. An Initial Study will be prepared (pursuant to CEQA) at the time of submittal of future tract maps to determine the nature and extent of additional environmental analysis necessary.

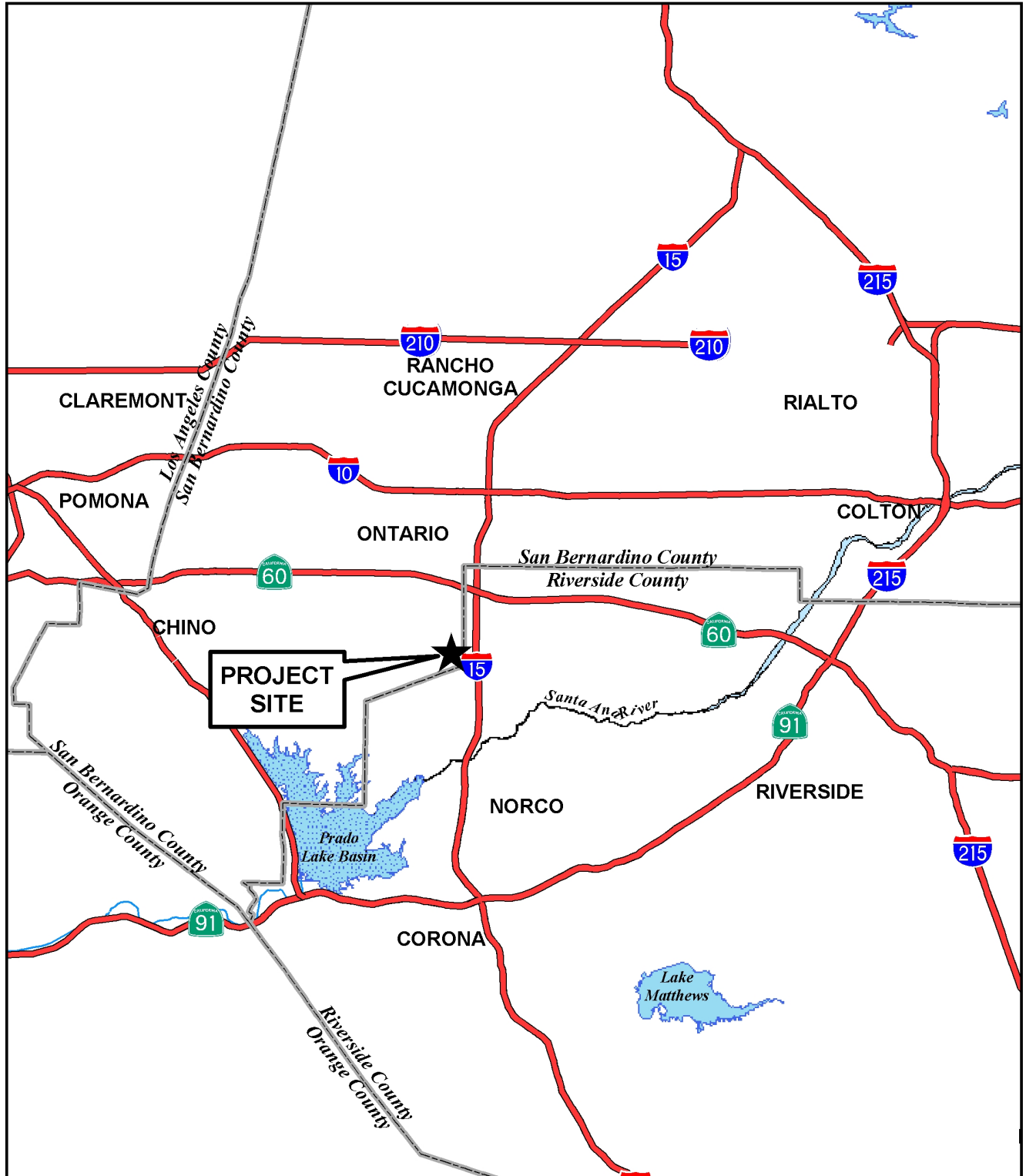
Development Agreement is an agreement between the developer and the City that will establish provisions for the development of the project with respect to phasing of land use, installation and financing of infrastructure, and timing of construction of public improvements.

Project Description

The Specific Plan is a master planned residential community of approximately 916 single-family residential dwelling units, about 494 cluster/town home attached dwelling units, a 10-acre elementary school site, and a total of nine (9) acres of park land (two 1-acre mini parks, one 2-acre pocket park, and one 5-acre neighborhood park). The Specific Plan is divided into ten (10) distinct “Neighborhoods,” or development plan areas, in addition to the school and park sites. Figure I-2-5 illustrates the Specific Plan land use plan. Table I-2-A, *Land Use Summary*, identifies each development plan and/or land use area, number of dwelling units per acreage, and units per acre.

The Specific Plan will be developed as a cohesive and attractive community. All major streets will include enhanced parkway landscaping and Milliken Avenue will include a landscaped median per the NMC Streetscape Master Plan (detailed cross sections are provided in the

Specific Plan). Landscaped entry areas with project and NMC signs are proposed as a part of the Specific Plan. These areas are planned for all major intersections within the Specific Plan. A Southern California Edison (SCE) easement exists along the east side of Mill Creek Avenue. This easement will also be landscaped if approved by SCE. A class 3 Bike Path is proposed within the improved right of way of Merrill Avenue as required in the New Model Colony GPA. This and other bike/pedestrian pathways will eventually connect residents within Subarea 25 to the planned City of Ontario bikeway system and to their local parks and schools.



Regional Location

Figure I-2-1



Legend

- Project Boundary
- County Line

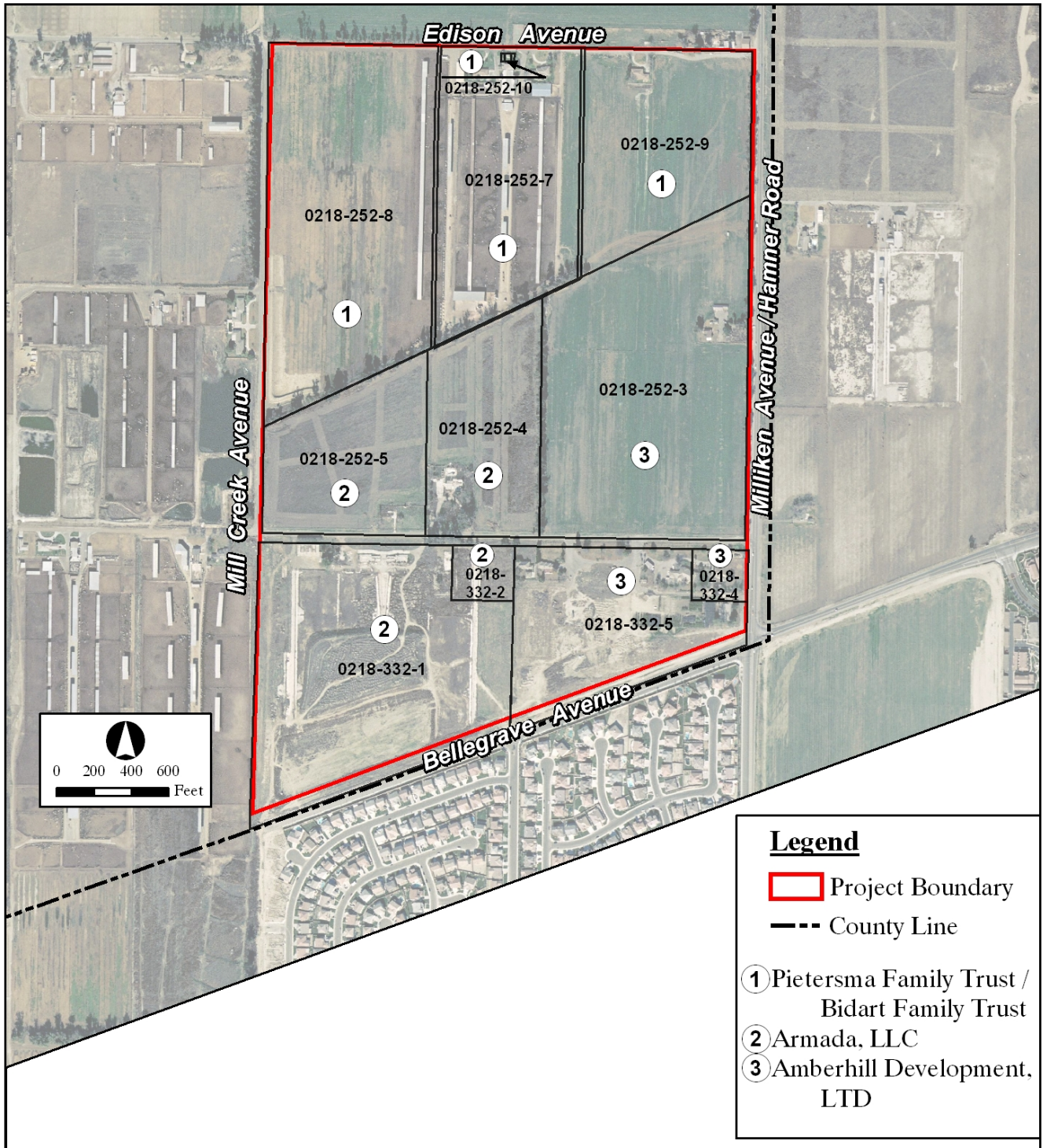


Source: AirPhoto USA, February 2004



Vicinity Map

Figure I-2-2
I-2-5



Property Ownerships

Figure I-2-3



Source: AirPhoto USA, February 2004



Aerial Photograph

Figure I-2-4
I-2-7



Source: The Galloway Group, 2006



Esperanza Specific Plan Draft EIR

Land Use Plan

Figure I-2-5
I-2-8

Table I-2-A Land Use Summary

Esperanza Specific Plan				
Land Use	Product Type	Units	Acres ¹	Units/Acre
Residential				
PA 1	Row Townhomes	258 DU	18.6 AC	13.9 DU/AC
PA 2	Alley-Loaded SFD	165 DU	21.1 AC	7.8 DU/AC
PA 3	Motorcourt Townhome	238 DU	17.3 AC	13.8 DU/AC
PA 4a	6-Pack Courtyard	89 DU	19.6 AC	7.6 DU/AC
PA 4b	6-Pack Courtyard	59 DU	Included in 4a acreage	7.6 DU/AC
PA 5	4-Pack Courtyard	161 DU	17.6 AC	9.2 DU/AC
PA 6	Alley-Loaded SFD	61 DU	7.6AC	8.0 DU/AC
PA 7	50' x 85' SFD	90 DU	15.6 AC	6.0 DU/AC
PA 8	50' x 100' SFD	91 DU	16.1 AC	5.7 DU/AC
PA 9	2-Pack SFD	93 DU	15.3 AC	6.1 DU/AC
PA 10	50' x 85' SFD	105 DU	16.4 AC	6.3 DU/AC
Parks			9.0 AC	
Neighborhood Edge			6.3 AC	
Buffers				
Roadways			28.3 AC	
SCE Easements and Well Sites			4.1 AC	
RESIDENTIAL		1,410 DU	212.9AC	6.62 DU/AC
LAND USE TOTAL				
School Site			10.1 AC	
PROJECT TOTAL		1,410 DU	223.0 AC	

Notes: (1) Residential Acres excludes R/W, easements, well sites, parks, and edge buffers. The school and park acreages excludes R/W; (2) In the event the school site is not utilized by the School District, this area is permitted to be developed for residential uses to add a maximum of 46 dwelling units to the total unit count; (3) Total number of dwelling units to be 1,456 in the event the 10-acre school site is not utilized by the School District.

Table I-2-B Proposed Project Infrastructure and Utility Providers

Service or Utility Type	Provider
Water Service	City of Ontario
Sewer Service	City of Ontario
Storm Drain Facilities	On-site storm drain system and County Line Channel (City of Ontario/ Riverside County joint project)
Refuse	City of Ontario
Electricity	SCE
Gas	The Gas Company
Communications	Verizon, City of Ontario

Existing and proposed streets within and adjacent to the Specific Plan will be improved to NMC GPA standards and will provide internal access and through-traffic flow. Milliken Avenue and Bellegrave Avenue exist adjacent to the project, but currently are not constructed to General Plan standards. Eucalyptus (future Merrill Avenue), Mill Creek and Edison Avenues exist today as small rural roads that serve portions of the area. Mill Creek Avenue will be improved and extended south to Bellegrave Avenue. Eucalyptus Avenue will be replaced by a realigned Merrill

Avenue. Edison Avenue will be abandoned adjacent to the project site and realigned to the north to provide east/west access throughout the NMC.

Infrastructure services such as water, sewer, and storm drain facilities do not currently exist within the City of Ontario to serve the project site. Table I-2-B, above, indicates by what entity infrastructure and utilities are proposed to be provided.

Project Objectives

As stated in the Specific Plan, the project proposes to meet the following objectives and address the following issues:

1. To create a Livable Environment;
2. To plan for a Circulation System Serving Motorists, Bicyclists and Pedestrians;
3. To provide for Adequate Public Community Facilities;
4. To establish a provision for New Parks and Open Space; and
5. To promote exceptional Architecture and Site Planning.

Required Permits and Approvals

The following public officials and agencies will use this EIR when considering the following actions.

➤ City of Ontario Planning Commission

- Recommendation to the City Council of the City of Ontario for certification of the Final Environmental Impact Report.
- Recommendation to the City Council regarding approval of the Specific Plan for Subarea 25 of the NMC.
- Recommendation to the City Council to approve a certificate of tentative cancellation of Williamson Act contracts affecting parcel 0218-252-003, and to remove (diminishment) this parcel from the San Bernardino County Agricultural Preserve.
- Recommendation to the City Council to approve the Development Agreement
- Approval of tentative maps.

➤ City of Ontario City Council

- Certification of the Final Environmental Impact Report.
- Adoption of the Specific Plan.
- Adoption, by resolution, to diminish the San Bernardino County Agricultural Preserve by removing 40.08 acres and the issuance of a certificate of tentative cancellation of Williamson Act contract for the same 40.08 acres.
- Approval of the Development Agreement.

➤ **San Bernardino County Flood Control District**

- Approval of hydrology/storm water drainage system.
- Issuance of Permits for connection(s) to the County Line Channel.

➤ **San Bernardino County Department of Environmental Health**

- Issuance of well abandonment permits for existing onsite wells and appropriate approvals or permits for removal of septic systems.

➤ **City of Ontario**

- Issuance of Building Permits, Grading Permits, Construction Permits, Certificate of Occupancy, and Encroachment Permits.

Areas of Controversy and Unresolved Issues

No known areas of controversy have come to light as a result of the process of preparing this Draft EIR. The Public/Agency Involvement process included a Scoping meeting at which several issues were raised. These issues dealt with traffic concerns in general and the need for more freeway access; poor street lighting on Milliken Avenue; need for public parks; need for inter-district school transfers; timing/phasing of the parks and schools; need for public services such as fire, hospitals, and police; inter-county coordination; health and trash issues associated with existing dairies; adjacent land uses; and higher densities than Riverside County areas. These questions and concerns are addressed in the Draft EIR and/or are being resolved or completed as part of development of the New Model Colony as a whole.

One area of concern to the City that is still unresolved, is the transition of Edison Avenue in Ontario to Cantu Galleano Ranch Road (Galena Street) in Riverside County at Milliken Avenue along the eastern boundary of the New Model Colony. Ontario has identified that Edison Avenue will be 8 lanes wide as it approaches Milliken Avenue from the west while Riverside County has identified Cantu Galleano Ranch Road as being six lanes as it approaches Milliken from the east. This raises concerns because Cantu Galleano Ranch Road will carry much of the New Model Colony traffic approximately one-quarter mile to the new interchange being constructed with the I-15 Freeway. Riverside County has indicated that the 152-foot right of way assigned to Cantu Galleano Ranch Road is adequate to expand from 6 lanes to 8 lanes in the future should traffic volumes warrant without the need for acquisition of additional right-of-way. The City of Ontario and Riverside County are currently working on the design of Cantu-Galleano Ranch Road from Interstate 15 to Milliken Avenue. Due to the fact that adequate right of way is being acquired by the County of Riverside to accommodate Ontario traffic and because this issue is being addressed through the design and construction process for the interchange, it is not necessary to address in this EIR and no further discussion or analysis is provided herein.

Summary of Alternatives

The CEQA Guidelines, Section 15126.6, requires an EIR to evaluate a range of alternatives that avoid or reduce significant environmental impacts. Section 15126.6 identifies the parameters within which consideration and discussion of alternatives to the proposed project should occur. As stated in this section of the Guidelines, alternatives must focus on those that are feasible and which attain most of the basic objectives of the project. An EIR need not address every conceivable alternative nor consider alternatives which are infeasible.

The following alternatives were considered but eliminated from final analysis:

- Alternative that did not implement the land use designations and policies of the GPA for the NMC;
- Alternatives that require less developed land (e.g., higher densities) so that agricultural land can be retained on the site were determined to be infeasible due to: a) the lack of long-term viability for commercial agriculture within the Chino Basin (see Agricultural Resources, III-1, herein) and, b) the lack of such an alternative's ability to meet General Plan policies, land plan and goals for development of the NMC;
- Alternative site(s); and
- "No Project" alternative that generally meets the approved land uses.

This EIR includes an evaluation of the following three alternatives (Section IV-2):

- Alternative 1 – No Project, Continued Agricultural Use of the Site
- Alternative 2 – Reduced Density
- Alternative 3 – Residential Mixed Use
- Alternative 4 – Residential-No School

Section IV-2 of this EIR provides rationale and analysis for alternative selection and evaluation. The No Project Alternative is the environmentally superior alternative. Other than the No Project Alternative, Alternative 2- Reduced Density, is marginally environmentally superior to the proposed project in that this alternative would reduce air quality emissions to a level that would drop CO emissions to below threshold for operations. However, the Reduced Density alternative will not reduce overall air quality impacts to less than significant levels or eliminate the need to rely upon a Statement of Overriding Consideration for air quality impacts. Under Alternative 2, other development-related impacts are not lessened from those resulting from the proposed project. This alternative does not meet the GPA for the NMC objectives for proposed land uses.

Related Environmental Documents

The California Department of Transportation (CalTrans) proposed the Galena Interchange Project be located east of the proposed project site. The NEPA/CEQA environmental review for this project, which included technical studies for air, noise, agricultural resources, traffic, and biological resources are used as sources of information for the preparation of this document. The Galena Interchange assessed the general project area.

Section 15150 of the CEQA Guidelines allows all or portions of another document to be incorporated by reference into an EIR without the requirement of reproducing the entire source document into an EIR. The Esperanza Draft EIR uses information from various documents that were not prepared specifically for the Esperanza Specific Plan. The City of Ontario Sphere of Influence Final Environmental Impact Report, October 1997, SCH #97-061035 (GPA for the NMC Final EIR) examines, analyzes, and presents the potential impacts of annexing 8,200 acres of land into the City of Ontario. The GPA for the NMC Final EIR analyzed potential impacts related to most of the issue areas identified by CEQA. The area analyzed by this document includes the project site as Subarea 25. The GPA for the NMC Final EIR has been used as a source of information and is incorporated by reference, as appropriate, for the preparation of this Specific Plan Draft EIR. It is available at the City of Ontario Planning Department.

The GPA for the NMC Final EIR stated that it was prepared as a program-level EIR with the intent that later environmental analysis of each Subarea and/or development project would be tiered from it. Section 21068.5 of the Public Resources Code tiering as allowing for the use of general matters and environmental effects discussed in an EIR prepared for a policy, plan, program or ordinance that are followed by narrower or site-specific environmental analysis. Such narrower or site-specific EIRs incorporate by reference the discussion in any prior EIR and concentrate on the environmental effects which are capable of being mitigated or were not analyzed as significant effects in the prior EIR. Therefore, the background information, conclusions, and findings of the GPA for the NMC Final EIR will be used herein to provide a context for the site-specific analysis. Mitigation measures in the GPA for the NMC Final EIR which are relevant to the proposed project will be considered for inclusion or implementation in this EIR.

The Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration for the New Model Colony Infrastructure Master Plans, approved September 10, 2002 examines, analyzes, and mitigates the potential environmental effects of the infrastructure master plans prepared for the NMC. Portions of the infrastructure improvements analyzed are necessary to serve this site. This initial study and mitigated negative declaration are incorporated by reference with respect to the master planned infrastructure needed to serve the site. This document is available at the City of Ontario Planning Department.

The Water Supply Assessment and Written Verification of Sufficient Water Supply for the NMC, City of Ontario, October 2004 (WSA) documents the availability of water for the entire NMC of which this project is a part. As required by Senate Bills 610 and 221, the availability of water must be verified prior to project approval and EIR certification. The WSA document is incorporated by reference and is available at the City of Ontario Public Utilities Department.

Technical studies have been prepared specifically for all or portions of the Esperanza Specific Plan related to various potential environmental effects such as traffic, air quality, and biology. These technical reports are referenced in the Draft EIR and included as appendices herein.

Summary of Impacts

Potential significant impacts are discussed in detail in Section III of this EIR. The EIR/Issues Matrix, Section I-3, herein, summarizes in table format the potential impacts, proposed mitigation measures, implementation timing, responsible party to assure implementation, and the level of impact after mitigation. Environmental issues evaluated in the EIR which were determined to have effects considered not significant are not included in this table but are discussed in Section II, Effects Found Not Significant.