ORANGE COUNTY
CLERK-RECORDER
CEQA FILING COVER SHEET

202585000661
FILED
July 10, 2025
HUGH NGUYEN
CLERK - RECORDER
By Deputy clerk

30-07/10/2025-0513

THIS SPACE FOR CLERK'S USE ONLY

Complete and attach this form to each CEQA Notice filed with the County Clerk-Recorder

TYPE OR PRINT CLEARLY

Project Title

2025 CIRCULATION ELEMENT UPDATE

Check Document being Filed:

- (•) Environmental Impact Report (EIR)
- ( ) Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) or Negative Declaration (ND)
- ( ) Notice of Exemption (NOE)
- ( ) Other (Please fill in type):

FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE ORANGE COUNTY CLERK-RECORDER ON July 10, 2025
Posted for 30 **days**

DEPUTY 333

Filing fees are due at the time a Notice of Determination/Exemption is filed with our office.For more information on filing fees and No Effect Determinations, please refer to California Code of Regulations, Title 14, section 753.5.

NOTICE OF DETERMINATION
FOR AN ADDENDUM TO AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

TO: ☐ County Clerk
County of Orange

☐ Office of Planning and Research

FROM: City of Rancho Santa Margarita
Development Services Department
Planning Division
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688
Contact: Wendy Starks, AICP, Principal Planner
(949)-635-1807 | wstarks@cityofrsm.org

SUBJECT: Filing of Notice of Determination in compliance with Section 21108 or 21152 of the Public Resources Code

State Clearinghouse Number: SCH No: 2018041075; Previously Certified 2020 City of Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan EIR

Project Title: 2025 Circulation Element Update

Project Applicant: City of Rancho Santa Margarita

Project Location: City of Rancho Santa Margarita, Orange County, California

Project Description: The Project involves a comprehensive update to the General Plan Circulation Element. The 2025 Circulation Element Update includes minor changes/additions to reflect the current regulatory setting, including recently adopted amendments to the General Plan Land Use Element, Housing Element, and Safety Element, revisions to goals and policies to provide additional clarity and direction, address more current transportation modes, identify opportunities for new bikeways, and to better reflect the community's circulation needs. This includes the addition of a new goal and policies, minor changes to existing goal and policies, and minor updates to the City's Circulation Plan.

This notice is to advise that the City of Rancho Santa Margarita (Lead Agency) has approved the 2025 Circulation Element Update on July 9, 2025, and has made the following determinations regarding the above-described Project:

FILED
JUL 10 2025
HUGH NGUYEN, CLERK-RECORDER
/D
DEPUTY
BY:

The City concluded, based on substantial evidence, that the 2025 Circulation Element Update Project (Project) would result in no new significant impacts that were not analyzed in the 2020 City of Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan FEIR (2020 General Plan FEIR), nor would the proposed Project cause a substantial increase in the severity of any previously identified significant impacts. The potential impacts associated with the proposed Project would either be the same or less than those described in the 2020 General Plan FEIR. In addition, there are no substantial changes to the circumstances under which the proposed Project would be undertaken

that would result in new or more severe environmental impacts than previously addressed in the 2020 General Plan FEIR, nor has any new information regarding the potential for new or more severe significant environmental impacts been identified.

- The 2020 City of Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan EIR (SCH No. 2018041075) was previously prepared and certified by the City of Rancho Santa Margarita pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.
- An Addendum to the City of Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan EIR was prepared by the City of Rancho Santa Margarita and considered by the City Council prior to approving the 2025 Circulation Element Update Project.
- No new Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) was adopted for this Project, as no new Mitigation Measures were required. The MMRP adopted for the 2020 City of Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan Final EIR remain in effect.
- A Statement of Overriding Considerations was adopted for the 2020 City of Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan Final EIR.
- Findings for the 2020 City of Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan Final EIR were previously made pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.

The environmental documentation and record of project approval may be examined during regular business hours at the City of Rancho Santa Margarita, Development Services Department, Planning Division, 22112 El Paseo, Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688.

Signature: Wendy Stanks

Title: Principal Planner

Date: 7/10/25

FILED
JUL 10 2025
HUGH NGUYEN, CLERK-RECORDER
BY: ID DEPUTY

ORANGE COUNTY
CLERK-RECORDER
CEQA FILING COVER SHEET

Recorded in Official Records, Orange County
Hugh Nguyen, Clerk-Recorder
NO FEE
$R0015125418$
202485000741 12:12 pm 08/29/24
390 SC4A Z01
0.00 50.00 0.00 0.00 0.00 0.00 0.00 0.00

THIS SPACE FOR CLERK'S USE ONLY

Complete and attach this form to each CEQA Notice filed with the County Clerk-Recorder

TYPE OR PRINT CLEARLY

Project Title

HOUSING ELEMENT IMPLEMENTATION AND REZONING PROJECT

Check Document being Filed:

- ◯ Environmental Impact Report (EIR)
- ◉ Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) or Negative Declaration (ND)
- ◯ Notice of Exemption (NOE)
- ◯ Other (Please fill in type):

FILED
JUL 10 2025
HUGH NGUYEN, CLERK-RECORDER
BY: ID DEPUTY

FILED
AUG 29 2024
HUGH NGUYEN, CLERK-RECORDER
BY: DEPUTY

FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE ORANGE
COUNTY CLERK-RECORDER ON August 29, 2024
Posted for 30 days

DEPUTY VG

Filing fees are due at the time a Notice of Determination/Exemption is filed with our office. For more information on filing fees and No Effect Determinations, please refer to California Code of Regulations, Title 14, section 753.5.

NOTICE OF DETERMINATION
FOR AN ADDENDUM TO AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

TO: ☒ County Clerk
County of Orange

☐ Office of Planning and Research

FROM: City of Rancho Santa Margarita
Development Services Department
Planning Division
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688
Contact: Wendy Starks, AICP, Principal Planner
(949)-635-1807 | wstarks@cityofrsm.org

FILED
AUG 29 2024
HUGH NGUYEN, CLERK-RECORDER
BY: _____ DEPUTY

SUBJECT: Filing of Notice of Determination in compliance with Section 21108 or 21152 of the Public Resources Code

State Clearinghouse Number: SCH No: 2018041075; Previously Certified 2020 City of Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan EIR

Project Title: Housing Element Implementation and Rezoning Project

Project Applicant: City of Rancho Santa Margarita

Project Location: City of Rancho Santa Margarita, Orange County, California

Project Description: To comply with the adopted 2021-2029 Housing Element Programs, the City proposes an amendment to the General Plan Land Use Element, inclusive of the Land Use Map (Figure LU-1), a text amendment to the Rancho Santa Margarita Zoning Code, and an amendment to the Zoning Map.

This notice is to advise that the City of Rancho Santa Margarita (Lead Agency) has approved the Housing Element Implementation and Rezoning Project on August 28, 2024 and has made the following determinations regarding the above-described Project:

- The City concluded, based on substantial evidence, that the Housing Element Implementation and Rezoning Project (Project) would result in no new significant impacts that were not analyzed in the 2020 City of Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan FEIR (2020 General Plan FEIR), nor would the proposed Project cause a substantial increase in the severity of any previously identified significant impacts. The potential impacts associated with the proposed Project would either be the same or less than those described in the 2020 General Plan FEIR. In addition, there are no substantial changes to the circumstances under which the proposed Project would be undertaken that would result in new or more severe environmental impacts than previously addressed in the 2020 General Plan FEIR, nor has any new information regarding the potential for new or more severe significant environmental impacts been identified.

- The 2020 City of Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan EIR (SCH No. 2018041075) was previously prepared and certified by the City of Rancho Santa Margarita pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.

- An Addendum to the City of Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan EIR was prepared by the City of Rancho Santa Margarita and considered by the City Council prior to approving the Housing Element Implementation and Rezoning Project.

- No new Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) was adopted for this Project, as no new Mitigation Measures were required. The MMRP adopted for the 2020 City of Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan Final EIR remain in effect.

- A Statement of Overriding Considerations was adopted for the 2020 City of Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan Final EIR.

- Findings for the 2020 City of Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan Final EIR were previously made pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.

The environmental documentation and record of project approval may be examined during regular business hours at the City of Rancho Santa Margarita, Development Services Department, Planning Division, 22112 El Paseo, Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688.

Signature: Wendy Starks

Title: Principal Planner

Date: 8/29/24

FILED

AUG 29 2024

HUGH NGUYEN, CLERK-RECORDER

BY: VO DEPUTY

FILED

JUL 10 2025

HUGH NGUYEN, CLERK-RECORDER

BY: ID DEPUTY

HUGH NGUYEN
CLERK-RECORDER

BIRTH AND DEATH RECORDS
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAMES
MARRIAGE LICENSES/RECORDS
NOTARY REGISTRATION
ORANGE COUNTY ARCHIVES
PASSPORTS
PROPERTY RECORDS

CITYRSM'22MAR14PM 1:16

CITY OF RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA
22112 EL PASEO
RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA, CA 92688

FILED

AUG 29 2024

HUGH NGUYEN, CLERK-RECORDER

BY: _____ DEPUTY

Office of the Orange County Clerk-Recorder
Memorandum

SUBJECT: NOTICE OF DETERMINATION - EIR - PRIOR FILING

The attached notice was received, filed and a copy was posted on 02/10/2022

It remained posted for 30 (thirty) days.

Hugh Nguyen
Clerk - Recorder
In and for the County of Orange

By: Celeste Banda Deputy

Public Resource Code 21092.3

The notice required pursuant to Sections 21080.4 and 21092 for an environmental impact report shall be posted in the office of the County Clerk of each county *** in which the project will be located and shall remain posted for a period of 30 days. The notice required pursuant to Section 21092 for a negative declaration shall be so posted for a period of 20 days, unless otherwise required by law to be posted for 30 days. The County Clerk shall post notices within 24 hours of receipt.

Public Resource Code 21152

All notices filed pursuant to this section shall be available for public inspection, and shall be posted *** within 24 hours of receipt in the office of the County Clerk. Each notice shall remain posted for a period of 30 days. *** Thereafter, the clerk shall return the notice to the local lead agency *** within a notation of the period it was posted. The local lead agency shall retain the notice for not less than nine months.

Additions or changes by underline; deletions by ***

State of California - Department of Fish and Wildlife
2022 ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT FILING FEE CASH RECEIPT
DFW 753.5a (REV. 01/01/22) Previously DFG 753.5a

Print | Start Over | Save

RECEIPT NUMBER:
30 — 02/10/2022 — 0100

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE NUMBER *(If applicable)*
2018041075

SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON REVERSE. TYPE OR PRINT CLEARLY.

LEAD AGENCY	LEAD AGENCY EMAIL	DATE
CITY OF RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA		02/10/2022

COUNTY/STATE AGENCY OF FILING	DOCUMENT NUMBER
Orange	202285000101

PROJECT TITLE

2021-2029 HOUSING ELEMENT AND SAFETY ELEMENT UPDATE

PROJECT APPLICANT NAME	PROJECT APPLICANT EMAIL	PHONE NUMBER
CITY OF RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA		(949) 635-1807

PROJECT APPLICANT ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE
22112 EL PASEO	RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA	CA	92688

PROJECT APPLICANT *(Check appropriate box)*
☑ Local Public Agency ☐ School District ☐ Other Special District ☐ State Agency ☐ Private Entity

CHECK APPLICABLE FEES:

☐ Environmental Impact Report (EIR)	$3,539.25	$	0.00
☐ Mitigated/Negative Declaration (MND)(ND)	$2,548.00	$	0.00
☐ Certified Regulatory Program (CRP) document - payment due directly to CDFW	$1,203.25	$	0.00
☐ Exempt from fee			
☐ Notice of Exemption (attach)			
☐ CDFW No Effect Determination (attach)			
☑ Fee previously paid (attach previously issued cash receipt copy)			
☐ Water Right Application or Petition Fee (State Water Resources Control Board only)	$850.00	$	0.00
☐ County documentary handling fee		$	
☐ Other		$	

PAYMENT METHOD:
☐ Cash ☐ Credit ☐ Check ☐ Other

TOTAL RECEIVED $ 0.00

SIGNATURE	AGENCY OF FILING PRINTED NAME AND TITLE
X	DEPUTY CLERK, CLAUDIA FRANCO

FILED
AUG 29 2024
HUGH NGUYEN, CLERK-RECORDER
BY: _____ DEPUTY

ORIGINAL - PROJECT APPLICANT | COPY - CDFW/ASB | COPY - LEAD AGENCY | COPY - COUNTY CLERK | DFW 753.5a (Rev. 01/01/2022)

POSTED

FEB 10 2022

HUGH NGUYEN, CLERK-RECORDER

BY: _____ DEPUTY

FILED

FEB 10 2022

HUGH NGUYEN, CLERK-RECORDER

BY: _____ DEPUTY

NOTICE OF DETERMINATION
FOR AN ADDENDUM TO AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

TO: ☐ County Clerk
County of Orange

☐ Office of Planning and Research

Recorded in Official Records, Orange County
Hugh Nguyen, Clerk-Recorder
NO FEE
$R001355268375
202285000101 10:11 am 02/10/22
423 SC3A Z01
0.00 60.00 0.00 0.00 0.00 0.00 0.00 0.00

FROM: City of Rancho Santa Margarita
Development Services Department
Planning Division
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688
Contact: Wendy Starks, AICP, Principal Planner
(949)-635-1807 | wstarks@cityofrsm.org

SUBJECT: Filing of Notice of Determination in compliance with Section 21108 or 21152 of the Public Resources Code

State Clearinghouse Number: SCH No: 2018041075; Previously Certified 2020 City of Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan EIR

FILED

AUG 29 2024

HUGH NGUYEN, CLERK-RECORDER

BY: _____ DEPUTY

30-02/10/2022-0108

Project Title: 2021-2029 Housing Element and Safety Element Update

Project Applicant: City of Rancho Santa Margarita

Project Location: City of Rancho Santa Margarita, Orange County, California

Project Description: The City proposes an update to the 2021-2029 Housing Element and Safety Element. The Project involves minor changes/additions to the Housing Element in compliance with State Housing Element Law Government Code Sections 65580-65590.1, and minor changes/additions to the Safety Element to meet the requirements of California Government Code Section 65302(g).

This notice is to advise that the City of Rancho Santa Margarita (Lead Agency) has approved the 2021-2029 Housing Element and Safety Element Update on February 9, 2022 and has made the following determinations regarding the above-described Project:

- The City concluded, based on substantial evidence, that the 2021-2029 Housing Element and Safety Element Update Project (Project) would result in no new significant impacts that were not analyzed in the 2020 City of Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan FEIR (2020 General Plan FEIR), nor would the proposed Project cause a substantial increase in the severity of any previously identified significant impacts. The potential impacts associated with the proposed Project would either be the same or less than those described in the 2020 General Plan FEIR. In addition, there are no substantial changes to the circumstances under which the proposed Project would be undertaken that would result in new or more severe environmental impacts than previously addressed in the 2020 General Plan FEIR, nor has any new information regarding the potential for new or more severe significant environmental impacts been identified.

please see clerk for rest of filing

- The 2020 City of Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan EIR (SCH No. 2018041075) was previously prepared and certified by the City of Rancho Santa Margarita pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.
- An Addendum to the City of Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan EIR was prepared by the City of Rancho Santa Margarita and considered by the City Council prior to approving the 2021-2029 Housing Element and Safety Element Update Project.
- No new Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) was adopted for this Project, as no new Mitigation Measures were required. The MMRP adopted for the 2020 City of Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan Final EIR remain in effect.
- A Statement of Overriding Considerations was adopted for the 2020 City of Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan Final EIR.
- Findings for the 2020 City of Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan Final EIR were previously made pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.

The environmental documentation and record of project approval may be examined during regular business hours at the City of Rancho Santa Margarita, Development Services Department, Planning Division, 22112 El Paseo, Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688.

Signature: Wendy Stark

Title: PRINCIPAL PLANNER

Date: 2/10/2022

POSTED

FEB 10 2022

HUGH NGUYEN, CLERK-RECORDER

BY: _____ DEPUTY

FILED

FEB 10 2022

HUGH NGUYEN, CLERK-RECORDER

BY: _____ DEPUTY

Please see clerk for rest of filing.

Orange County
Clerk-Recorder's Office
Hugh Nguyen

601 N. Ross Street
92701

County

Finalization: 20220000054377
2/10/22 10:11 am
423 SC3A

Item	Title	Count
1	Z01	1

NIR: Exempt or Previously Paid

Document ID	Amount
DOC# 202285000101	50.00

Time Recorded 10:11 am

Total	0.00

Payment Type	Amount
NO FEE	50.00
Amount Due	0.00

THANK YOU
PLEASE RETAIN THIS RECEIPT
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FILED

MAR 19 2020

ORANGE COUNTY CLERK-RECORDER DEPARTMENT

BY: _____ DEPUTY

Print Form

Notice of Determination

Appendix D

To:

☒ Office of Planning and Research

U.S. Mail: P.O. Box 3044, Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

Street Address: 1400 Tenth St., Rm 113, Sacramento, CA 95814

☒ County Clerk
County of: Orange
Address: 601 North Ross Street
Santa Ana, CA 92701

From:
Public Agency: City of Rancho Santa Margarita
Address: 22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688
Contact: Wendy Starks, Principal Planner
Phone: 949.635.1807

Lead Agency (if different from above):
Address: _____
Contact: _____
Phone: _____

SUBJECT: Filing of Notice of Determination in compliance with Section 21108 or 21152 of the Public Resources Code.

State Clearinghouse Number (if submitted to State Clearinghouse): 2018041076

Project Title: Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan Update

Project Applicant: City of Rancho Santa Margarita

Project Location (include county): Rancho Santa Margarita (citywide), County of Orange

Project Description:

The General Plan Update is a strategic update focused on five elements: Conservation/Open Space, Economic Development, Land Use, Noise, and Safety. The Circulation and Housing Elements were updated in 2013 and 2014 respectively; thus, no changes are proposed to these two elements. The purpose of the General Plan is to provide the City Council, Planning Commission, staff, and the entire community with a comprehensive and internally consistent plan to guide the City's decision-making and development processes through the General Plan planning period (2040). The work program includes an update of the General Plan baseline data, goals, and policies.

Based on the proposed land use designations, maximum density, and intensity permitted for each parcel, as well as the historical development patterns in the City with only a limited number of parcels being developed at the maximum density or intensity, the reasonably anticipated development potential of the proposed land use plan would increase development over existing (2018) conditions by 528 additional dwelling units and 3,088,014 additional square feet of non-residential uses.

This is to advise that the City of Rancho Santa Margarita has approved the above
(☒ Lead Agency or ☐ Responsible Agency)

described project on 3/11/2020 (date) and has made the following determinations regarding the above described project.

1. The project [☒ will ☐ will not] have a significant effect on the environment.
2. ☒ An Environmental Impact Report was prepared for this project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.
   ☐ A Negative Declaration was prepared for this project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.
3. Mitigation measures [☒ were ☐ were not] made a condition of the approval of the project.
4. A mitigation reporting or monitoring plan [☒ was ☐ was not] adopted for this project.
5. A statement of Overriding Considerations [☒ was ☐ was not] adopted for this project.
6. Findings [☒ were ☐ were not] made pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.

This is to certify that the final EIR with comments and responses and record of project approval, or the negative Declaration, is available to the General Public at:
City of Rancho Santa Margarita Planning Division, 22112 El Paseo, Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688

Signature (Public Agency): Wendy Starks Title: Principal Planner

Date: 3/12/20 Date Received fo

Authority cited: Sections 21083, Public Resources Code.
Reference Section 21000-21174, Public Resources Code.

Please see Clerk for restof filing

Recorded in Official Records, Orange County
Hugh Nguyen, Clerk-Recorder

***

Orange County
Clerk-Recorder's Office
Hugh Nguyen

601 N. Ross Street
92701

County

Finalization: 20200000118390
3/19/20 2:58 pm
41 231A

Item	Title	Count
1	202	1

EIR: Environmental Impact Report

Document ID	Amount
DOC# 202085000253	3393.25

Time Recorded 2:58 pm

Total	3393.25

Payment Type	Amount
Check tendered # 36535	3393.25

Amount Due 0.00

THANK YOU
PLEASE RETAIN THIS RECEIPT
FOR YOUR RECORDS
www.ocrecorder.com

POSTED

FEB 10 2022

HUGH NGUYEN, CLERK-RECORDER

BY: _____ DEPUTY

FILED

FEB 10 2022

HUGH NGUYEN, CLERK-RECORDER

BY: _____ DEPUTY

please see clerk for rest of filing.

State of California - Department of Fish and Wildlife

2020 ENVIRONMENTAL FILING FEE CASH RECEIPT

DFW 753.5a (Rev. 01/01/18) Previously DFG 753.5a

RECEIPT NUMBER:
30-2020-0246

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE NUMBER *(If applicable)*
2018041075

SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON REVERSE. TYPE OR PRINT CLEARLY.

LEAD AGENCY	LEAD AGENCY EMAIL	DATE
CITY OF RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA		03/19/2020

COUNTY/STATE AGENCY OF FILING	DOCUMENT NUMBER
Orange	202085000253

PROJECT TITLE
RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

PROJECT APPLICANT NAME	PROJECT APPLICANT EMAIL	PHONE NUMBER
CITY OF RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA		(949) 635-1807

PROJECT APPLICANT ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE
22112 EL PASEO	RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA	CA	92688

PROJECT APPLICANT *(Check appropriate box)*

☑ Local Public Agency ☐ School District ☐ Other Special District ☐ State Agency ☐ Private Entity

CHECK APPLICABLE FEES:

☑ Environmental Impact Report (EIR)	$3,343.25	$	3,343.25
☐ Mitigated/Negative Declaration (MND)(ND)	$2,406.75	$	0.00
☐ Certified Regulatory Program document (CRP)	$1,186.50	$	0.00
☐ Exempt from fee			
☐ Notice of Exemption (attach)			
☐ CDFW No Effect Determination (attach)			
☐ Fee previously paid (attach previously issued cash receipt copy)			
☐ Water Right Application or Petition Fee (State Water Resources Control Board only)	$850.00	$	0.00
☑ County documentary handling fee		$	50.00
☐ Other		$	

PAYMENT METHOD:

☐ Cash ☐ Credit ☑ Check ☐ Other TOTAL RECEIVED $ 3,393.25

SIGNATURE	AGENCY OF FILING PRINTED NAME AND TITLE
X Hazel L. Bennett	HAZEL L. BENNETT, DEPUTY

POSTED
FEB 10 2022
HUGH NGUYEN, CLERK-RECORDER
BY: _____ DEPUTY

FILED
FEB 10 2022
HUGH NGUYEN, CLERK-RECORDER
BY: _____ DEPUTY

ORIGINAL - PROJECT APPLICANT | COPY - CDFW/ASB | COPY - LEAD AGENCY | COPY - COUNTY CLERK | DFW 753.5a (Rev. 20181218)

Please see clerk for rest of filing.

Please see clerk for the rest of filing.

Addendum to the City of Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan Final Environmental Impact Report

2021-2029 Housing Element and Safety Element Update

December 2021

Prepared for:

City of Rancho Santa Margarita
Development Services Department
Planning Division
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688

Prepared by:

De Novo Planning Group
180 E. Main Street, Suite 108
Tustin, CA 92780

FILED
FEB 10 2022
HUGH NGUYEN, CLERK-RECORDER
BY: _____ DEPUTY

POSTED
FEB 10 2022
HUGH NGUYEN, CLERK-RECORDER
BY: _____ DEPUTY

Hugh Nguyen
Orange County Clerk-Recorder
601 N. Ross Street
Santa Ana, CA 92701

County

Finalization: 20240000237973
8/29/24 12:12 pm
390 SC4A

Item	Title	Count
1	201	1

EIR: Exempt or Previously Paid

Document ID	Amount
DOC# 202485000741	50.00

Time Recorded 12:12 pm

Total	0.00

Payment Type	Amount
NO FEE	50.00
Amount Due	0.00

THANK YOU
PLEASE RETAIN THIS RECEIPT
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www.ocrecorder.com

RESOLUTION NO. 25-07-09-03

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA, CALIFORNIA, ADOPTING THE THIRD ADDENDUM TO THE 2020 GENERAL PLAN FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT, AS PREVIOUSLY ADDENDED, FOR THE CIRCULATION ELEMENT UPDATE PROJECT, PURSUANT TO THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT

The City Council of the City of Rancho Santa Margarita, California, hereby finds, determines, declares, and resolves as follows:

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020, in connection with an update to the General Plan, the City prepared an Environmental Impact Report entitled "Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan Update Environmental Impact Report, November, 2019, State Clearinghouse No. 2018041075" ("General Plan FEIR") and, since that time the City has adopted TWO addenda to the General Plan FEIR; and

WHEREAS, the City of Rancho Santa Margarita has initiated the following action (the "Project"): General Plan Amendment GPA 25-001 to update the Circulation Element to reflect the current regulatory setting and provide additional clarity and direction and reflect the community's circulation needs; and

WHEREAS, in connection with the Project, and in order to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act, Public Resources Code Sections 21000, et seq. ("CEQA"), the City has determined that the proposed Project will not result in any new significant environmental impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant environmental impacts, and therefore has prepared an Addendum to the General Plan FEIR pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21166 and CEQA Guidelines Sections 15162 and 15164 (the "Second Addendum"); and

WHEREAS, on June 27, 2025, the City caused public notice to be given of the City Council's intention to consider adoption of the Third Addendum for the Project, and on July 9, 2025, the City Council held a public hearing on adoption of the Third Addendum; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has considered the Third Addendum along with the General Plan FEIR as previously addended, for the Project pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15164(d).

NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA, CALIFORNIA, DOES RESOLVE, DECLARE, DETERMINE, AND ORDER AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. The City Council has independently reviewed and considered the General Plan FEIR, as previously addended, including the impacts and mitigation measures identified therein (Exhibit 1) and the Third Addendum to the General Plan FEIR (Exhibit 2), and finds that no further environmental documentation is required because the Project would not result in any new significant impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant impacts. (Public Resources Code § 21166 and CEQA Guidelines §§ 15162 and 15164.)

SECTION 2. The Third Addendum attached hereto as Exhibit "2" is hereby adopted.

SECTION 3. The City Council finds that the above recitations are true and correct and constitute the findings of the City Council in this case.

SECTION 4. The Development Services Director is hereby directed and authorized to cause a Notice of Determination to be filed and posted pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21152(a) and CEQA Guidelines Section 15094(a) within five (5) days after the approval of the Project.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED THIS 9TH DAY OF JULY 2025.

L. ANTHONY BEALL, MAYOR

CERTIFICATE OF ATTESTATION AND ORIGINALITY

I, Amy Diaz, City Clerk of the City of Rancho Santa Margarita, California, hereby attest to and certify that the foregoing resolution is the original resolution adopted by the Rancho Santa Margarita City Council at its regular meeting held on the 9th day of July 2025, by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Baert, Figueroa, Holloway, Mayor Pro Tempore McGirr and Mayor Beall (5)

NOES: None (0)

ABSTAIN: None (0)

ABSENT: None (0)

AMY DIAZ, CITY CLERK

List of Exhibits:

Exhibit 1: General Plan EIR and Subsequent Addenda
Exhibit 2: Third Addendum to the General Plan EIR

EXHIBIT 1

GENERAL PLAN UPDATE EIR AND SUBSEQUENT ADDENDA, ON FILE AT THE CITY CLERK'S OFFICE AND AVAILABLE ONLINE:

2020 General Plan EIR: https://www.cityofrsm.org/527/General-Plan-2020

2020 General Plan EIR Addendum 1:
www.cityofrsm.org/DocumentCenter/View/8045/General-Plan-FEIR-Addendum-covering-Housing-and-Safety-Element-Update

2020 General Plan EIR Addendum 2:
www.cityofrsm.org/DocumentCenter/View/11680/2020-General-Plan-EIR-Addendum-2

EXHIBIT 2

THIRD ADDENDUM TO THE GENERAL PLAN EIR

Addendum to the City of Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan Final Environmental Impact Report for the Circulation Element Update

State Clearinghouse No. 2018041075

March 2025

Prepared for:

City of Rancho Santa Margarita
Development Services Department
Planning Division
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688

Prepared by:

De Novo Planning Group
180 E. Main Street, Suite 108
Tustin, CA 92780

ADDENDUM TO THE CITY OF RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA GENERAL PLAN FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE CIRCULATION ELEMENT UPDATE

State Clearinghouse No. 2018041075

LEAD AGENCY: CITY OF RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA
Development Services Department
Planning Division
22112 El Paseo
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688

PREPARED BY: DE NOVO PLANNING GROUP
180 E. Main Street, Suite 108
Tustin, California 92780

March 2025

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The City Council adopted the City's first General Plan in 2002. On January 8, 2014, the City Council adopted a comprehensive update to the General Plan Circulation Element. In 2016, the City initiated a General Plan Update to modernize the Conservation/Open Space, Economic Development, Land Use, Noise, and Safety Elements to address the continued vision for the City, to ensure that all elements are consistent with new State requirements for General Plans, and to ensure that the City's goals and policies remain appropriate for the next 15 to 20 years. On March 11, 2020, the City Council certified the Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan Final EIR (State Clearinghouse Number [SCH] No. 2018041075) (General Plan FEIR) and adopted the updated Conservation/Open Space, Economic Development, Land Use, Noise and Safety Elements of the Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan. Subsequently, on February 9, 2022, in compliance with State Housing Element Law Government Code Sections 65580-65590.1; and to meet the requirements of California Government Code Section 65302(g), the City Council adopted the 2021-2029 Housing Element and an update to its General Plan Safety Element (Safety Element), which included adoption of the Addendum to the City of Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan Final Environmental Impact Report for the 2021-2029 Housing Element and Safety Element Update (2022 Addendum). Most recently, on August 28, 2024, to comply with Housing Element Programs 1, 2, 11, 14, and 15, the City Council adopted an amendment to the General Plan Land Use Element, inclusive of the Land Use Map, a text amendment to Rancho Santa Margarita Zoning Code (RSMZC), and an amendment to the Zoning Map, which included adoption of the Addendum to the City of Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan Final Environmental Impact Report for the Housing Element Implementation and Rezoning Project (2024 Addendum).

The City now proposes the 20242025 Circulation Element (referenced herein as "Project" or "Circulation Element Update"). The Project involves a comprehensive update to the Circulation Element. The Circulation Element Update includes minor changes/additions to reflect the current regulatory setting, including recently adopted amendments to the General Plan Land Use Element, Housing Element, and Safety Element, revisions to goals and policies to provide additional clarity and direction, address more current transportation modes, identify opportunities for new bikeways, and to better reflect the community's circulation needs. This includes the addition of a new goal and policies, minor changes to existing goal and policies, and minor updates to the City's Circulation Plan; refer to Section 2.

1.2 CEQA REQUIREMENTS

The City of Rancho Santa Margarita is the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the Circulation Element Update.

The purpose of this document is to analyze the potential differences between the impacts identified in the General Plan FEIR, as previously addended, and those that would potentially be associated with the proposed Project.

As part of its decision-making process, the City is required to review and consider whether the proposed Project would create new significant impacts or significant impacts that would be substantially more severe than those disclosed in the 2020 General Plan FEIR as previously addended. (Public Resource Code § 21166; CEQA Guidelines § 15162.) If major revisions to the 2020 General Plan FEIR are not necessary and none of the conditions described in State CEQA Guidelines Section 15162 calling for the preparation of additional CEQA documentation has occurred, the City may adopt an Addendum to the 2020 General Plan FEIR to document its findings that no subsequent or supplemental CEQA document is required. (CEQA Guidelines § 15164.)

Specifically, after approving a project and prior to approving further discretionary action for that project, depending upon the situation, the lead agency must generally: (1) prepare a Subsequent EIR; (2) prepare a Supplemental EIR; (3) prepare a Subsequent Negative Declaration; (4) prepare an Addendum to the EIR or Negative Declaration; or (5) prepare no further documentation. (See State CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15162 – 15164.) State CEQA Guidelines Section 15162 states:

When an EIR has been certified or a negative declaration adopted for a project, no subsequent EIR shall be prepared for that project unless the lead agency determines, on the basis of substantial evidence in the light of the whole record, one or more of the following:

(1) Substantial changes are proposed in the project which will require major revisions of the previous EIR or negative declaration due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects;

(2) Substantial changes occur with respect to the circumstances under which the project is undertaken which will require major revisions of the previous EIR or Negative Declaration due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects; or

(3) New information of substantial importance, which was not known and could not have been known with the exercise of reasonable diligence at the time the previous EIR was certified as complete or the Negative Declaration was adopted, shows any of the following:

    (A) The project will have one or more significant effects not discussed in the previous EIR or negative declaration;

    (B) Significant effects previously examined will be substantially more severe than shown in the previous EIR;

    (C) Mitigation measures or alternatives previously found not to be feasible would in fact be feasible, and would substantially reduce one or more significant effects of

the project, but the project proponents decline to adopt the mitigation measure or alternative; or

(D) Mitigation measures or alternatives which are considerably different from those analyzed in the previous EIR would substantially reduce one or more significant effects on the environment, but the project proponents decline to adopt the mitigation measure or alternative.

Section 15164 of the State CEQA Guidelines explains when an Addendum to an EIR is appropriate. Per this section, where some changes or additions are necessary to the previously certified EIR, but none of the conditions described in Section 15162 calling for the preparation of a subsequent EIR (as described above) have occurred, then the lead agency is directed to prepare an Addendum to the certified EIR (State CEQA Guidelines, § 15164). Further, the Addendum should include a "brief explanation of the decision not to prepare a subsequent EIR pursuant to Section 15162," and that "explanation must be supported by substantial evidence" (State CEQA Guidelines, § 15164 [e]). The Addendum need not be circulated for public review but may simply be attached to the certified EIR (State CEQA Guidelines, § 15164 [c]).

1.3 INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE

The documents outlined below, which were utilized during preparation of this Addendum and are a matter of public record, are hereby incorporated by reference.

Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan

The City Council adopted the 2020 Update to the City of Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan on March 11, 2020. The General Plan is a comprehensive legal document that sets forth the City's long-range planning policies and serves as the guiding document for achieving the community's vision for the future. The General Plan identifies issues, goals, and policies to guide land use and development, and is organized into seven mandatory and optional "elements" in accordance with California Government Code Section 65302: Circulation, Conservation/Open Space, Economic Development, Housing, Land Use, Noise, and Safety. The 2020 Update included updates to the Conservation/Open Space, Economic Development, Land Use, Noise, and Safety Elements.

Land Use Element Table LU-3 in the 2020 General Plan presents the projected future development intensity and density based upon existing and historical development as well as anticipated development associated with the future land use opportunities described in the Land Use Element. Land Use Element Table LU-4 summarizes the net growth above existing conditions anticipated by the 2020 General Plan Update. Based upon assumed development intensities and densities identified in Table LU-3, a total of 18,294 dwelling units and approximately 9.1 million square feet of non-residential land uses, representing 528 additional dwelling units and 3,085,014 additional square feet of non-residential uses beyond 2020 existing conditions were anticipated by 2040.

All cities and counties in California are required to adopt a Housing Element and to update it at least every eight years. In 2022, the City adopted the 2021-2029 Housing Element and Safety Element Update. The 2021-2029 Housing Element was required to include an inventory of land suitable and available for residential development to meet the City's regional housing need allocation (RHNA) of 680 units by income level. Implementation of the 2021-2029 Housing Element would accommodate 182 *more* residential units and up to 1,091,985 *fewer* square feet of non-residential uses than the 2020 General Plan development assumptions (refer to the Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan Final EIR discussion below).

Updates to the Safety Element were also completed to meet the requirements of California Government Code Section 65302(g) (Section 65302) as updated by Senate Bills 1241, 379, 99, and 1035, and to incorporate the Rancho Santa Margarita Local Hazard Mitigation Plan by reference (pursuant to SB 379).

In 2024, the Land Use Element was amended to implement Housing Element Programs 1 and 14, provide overall internal consistency with the 2021-2029 Housing Element, provide updated existing and estimated development conditions, and provide minor text updates and revisions for clarification and accuracy purposes, such as corrected references to the Rancho Santa Margarita Zoning Code (RSMZC). The Land Use Map (Land Use Element Figure LU-1) was amended to change the land use designation on 12 sites, identified in the 2021-2029 Housing Element, with 10 sites changed from General Commercial to Mixed-Use and two sites changed from Business Park to Mixed-Use.

Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan Final EIR

The City Council certified the General Plan FEIR on March 11, 2020. The 2020 General Plan FEIR provided a description of potential environmental impacts of the 2020 General Plan Update and identified mitigation measures to avoid or reduce impacts to a less than significant level where feasible. The 2020 General Plan FEIR's analysis was based on the change between development under existing conditions and reasonably anticipated development identified in the 2020 General Plan Land Use Element (Land Use Element Table LU-3 and 2020 General Plan FEIR Table 3-3). The 2020 General Plan FEIR analyzed the environmental impacts resulting from anticipated growth of 528 additional dwelling units and 3,085,014 additional square feet of non-residential uses based upon the assumed development intensities and densities identified in the Land Use Element.

For each environmental issue addressed in 2020 General Plan FEIR Section 5.0, Approach to Environmental Analysis, the assumptions for the project impact analyses were explained. The analyses were based on the project conditions that would result in the greatest impact for each environmental issue to ensure a "reasonable worst-case" evaluation of potential environmental impacts based on historical development patterns in the City. For instance, the 2020 General Plan Update's reasonably projected development capacity (i.e., 528 additional dwelling units and 3,085,014 additional square feet of non-residential uses by 2040) was assumed for traffic and other issue areas, although development ultimately may not actually occur at these levels of assumed

growth. The analysis of potential project impacts was based upon various assumptions regarding existing and future conditions in Rancho Santa Margarita, including historical development patterns, limited number of parcels being developed at the maximum density or intensity, and reasonably anticipated development.

The 2020 General Plan FEIR concluded that based on the General Plan growth assumptions, projected future development would result in less than significant impacts or less than significant impacts with the implementation of mitigation measures for all issue areas analyzed except for Air Quality (Violate Any Air Quality Standard or Contribute Substantially to an Existing or Projected Air Quality Violation) and Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Generation of GHG Emissions), which were determined to be significant and unavoidable.

Addendum to the Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan Final EIR

The City has since adopted two addenda to the General Plan FEIR: 2022 Addendum to the City of Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan Final Environmental Impact Report for the 2021-2029 Housing Element and Safety Element Update (2022 Addendum); and 2024 Addendum to the City of Rancho Santa Margarita General Plan Final Environmental Impact Report for the Housing Element Implementation and Rezoning Project (2024 Addendum). The 2022 Addendum and 2024 Addendum are incorporated here by reference.

2022 Addendum. The 2021-2029 Housing Element identified 15 sites in order to accommodate the City's remaining RHNA (640 units[1]) and introduced two new mechanisms to allow for residential development, to be created subsequent to Housing Element adoption. These mechanisms include a "Workforce Housing Overlay" to be applied to three sites within the Business Park district, totaling 38.43 acres and a "Mixed-Use" land use and zoning designation to be applied to 12 sites (13 parcels) in the City's central core, totaling 26.62 acres. The RHNA includes 40 ADUs, the potential for 344 units resulting from implementation of the Workforce Housing Overlay on the three sites, and the potential of 326 units on 12 sites resulting from implementation of the Mixed-Use designation/zone, that could result in 710 additional dwelling units overall, or 182 more dwelling units than analyzed in the 2020 General Plan FEIR. The 2022 Addendum evaluated the potential environmental impacts of the 182 additional dwelling units and associated reduction in non-residential development capacity of 1,091,985 square feet that could occur under implementation of the 2021-2029 Housing Element.

2024 Addendum. The adopted 2021-2029 Housing Element identified several programs, including Program 1 (RHNA/Shortfall), Program 2 (Adequate Sites Monitoring), Program 11 (Density Bonus), Program 14 (Zoning Code and General Plan Amendments), and, Program 15 (Development Review Procedures). Program 1 committed the City to amend the RSMZC to establish the Workforce Housing Overlay and amend the General Plan Land Use Element and RSMZC to establish the Mixed-Use land use designation and zoning district, and to amend the zoning map

[1] The 640 remaining units are a result of the City's total RHNA of 680 units less 40 ADUs.

to zone adequate candidate sites to meet its RHNA. Program 2 committed the City to formalize procedures to evaluate capacity and ensure adequate capacity is available for the remaining RHNA. Program 11 committed the City to implement density bonuses consistent with State law. Program 14 committed the City to adopt amendments to the RSMZC and General Plan to address recent changes to State law and create consistency with the 2021-2029 Housing Element. Program 15 committed the City to develop procedures to address streamlining requirements of Senate Bill (SB) 35 and objective development standard requirements of SB 330.

To comply with Housing Element Programs 1, 2, 11, 14, and 15, an amendment to the General Plan Land Use Element, inclusive of the Land Use Map (Figure LU-1), a text amendment to RSMZC, and an amendment to the Zoning Map were proposed. The 2024 Addendum evaluated the potential environmental impacts that could occur under implementation of these proposed amendments. The proposed amendments did not provide for any changes in the development potential beyond the change in development potential evaluated in the 2022 Addendum.

The phrase "General Plan FEIR" throughout this document means the General Plan FEIR as previously addended.

Rancho Santa Margarita Municipal Code (RSMMC)

The Rancho Santa Margarita Municipal Code (RSMMC) consists of all the ordinances of the City of Rancho Santa Margarita. The RSMMC is one of the City's primary tools to control land uses, in accordance with the General Plan programs and policies. The City's Zoning Ordinance, included in RSMMC Title 9, Planning and Zoning, is an implementing tool to: 1) achieve the goals and policies established in the General Plan; 2) serve the public health, safety, and general welfare of the City of Rancho Santa Margarita; and 3) provide the economic and social advantages resulting from an orderly planned use of land and resources. RSMMC Title 10, Buildings and Construction, adopts the 2022 California Building Standards Code, with amendments in consideration of the City's local climactic, geological, and topographical considerations. Other relevant RSMMC regulations include the following, among others: Title 5, Health and Sanitation; Title 7, Recreation, Parks and Facilities; and Title 11, Streets and Sidewalks.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

2.1 PROJECT LOCATION AND SETTING

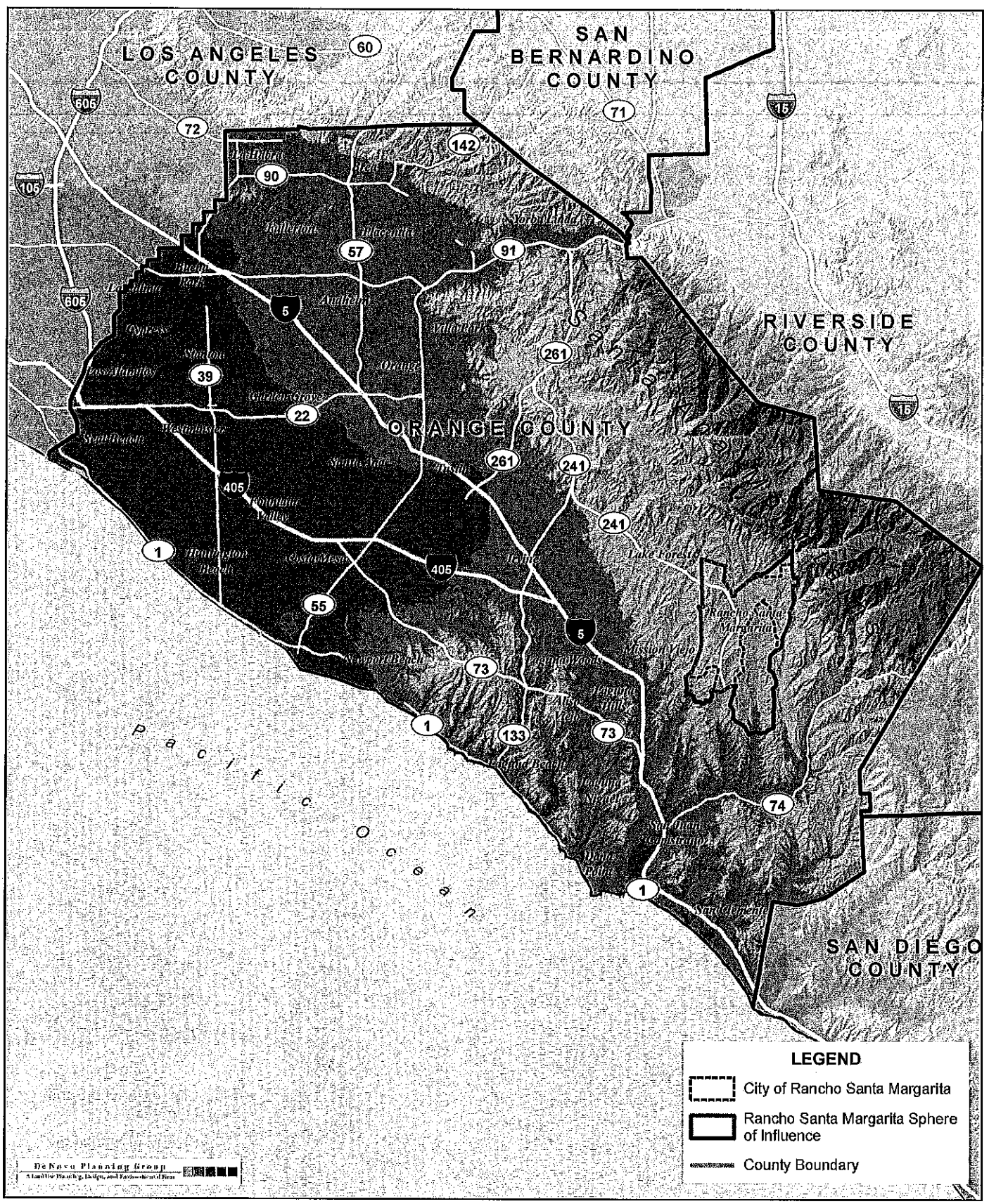
The City of Rancho Santa Margarita is located in eastern Orange County about 10 miles northeast of the Pacific Ocean, in the foothills of the Santa Ana Mountains. The community is bisected by the Foothill Transportation Corridor State Route 241 (SR-241), which extends to the north connecting with North County cities such as Yorba Linda and Anaheim, and to the south terminating at Oso Parkway. The cities of Mission Viejo and Lake Forest are located to the west, Cleveland National Forest is located to the east, and unincorporated Orange County is located to the north and south. Regional access to the City is provided via SR-241, SR-133, and Interstate 5; refer to Figure 1, Regional Location Map. The General Plan Study Area for Rancho Santa Margarita is comprised of 8,607 acres (13 square miles), of which 8,280 acres are located within the City's incorporated limits and 327 acres are located within the City's Sphere of Influence (SOI); refer to Figure 2, General Plan Study Area.

2.2 PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

In compliance with State law, the City of Rancho Santa Margarita has prepared an update to its Circulation Element to reflect the current regulatory setting, including recently adopted amendments to the General Plan Land Use Element, Housing Element, and Safety Element; revise goals and policies to provide additional clarity and direction; address more current transportation modes, identify opportunities for new bikeways; and to better reflect the community's circulation needs. The Circulation Element addresses these topical areas with goals and policies to provide and foster a balanced, multi-modal network for all roadway users.

Circulation Element Organization

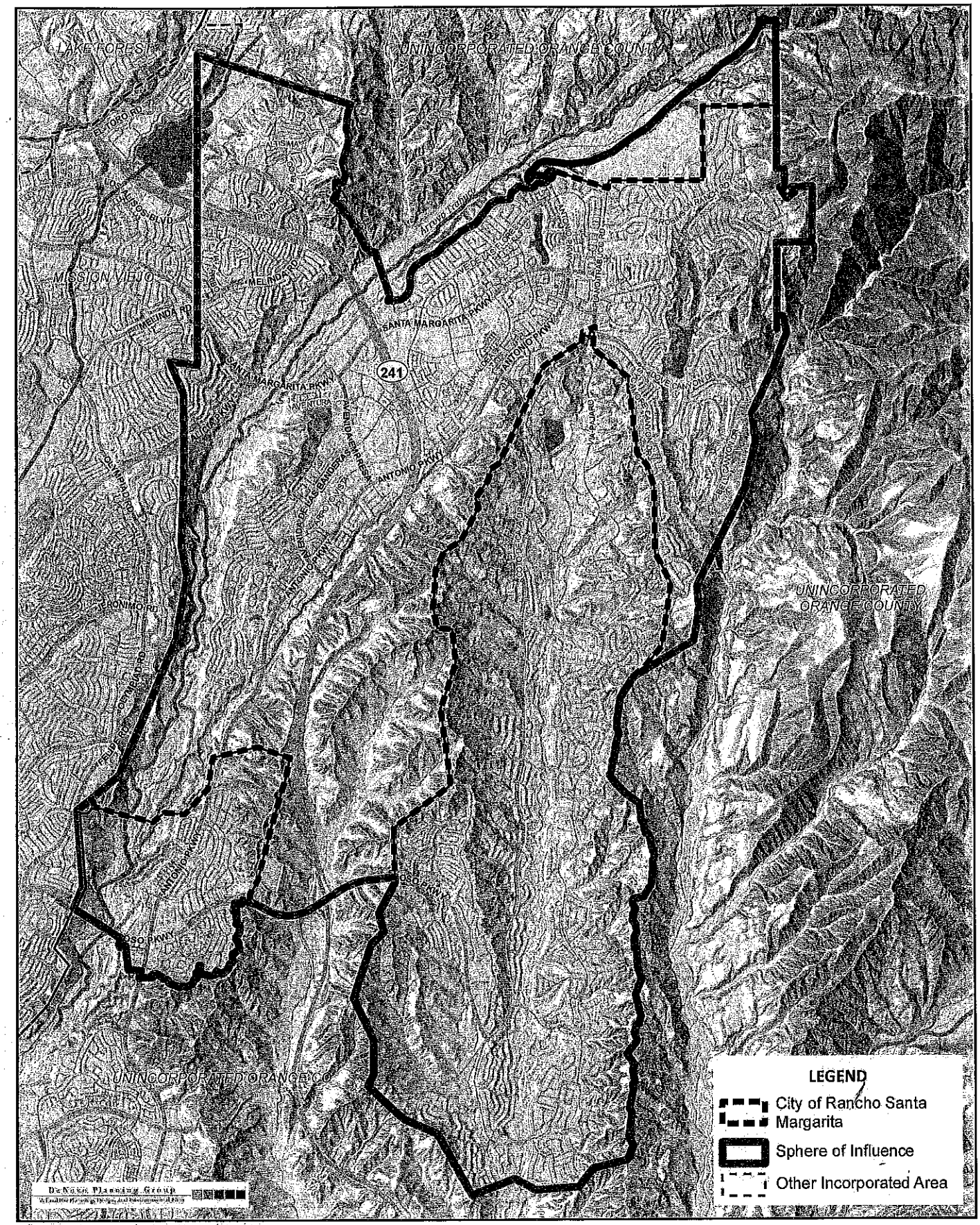
Similar to the existing Circulation Element adopted in 2014, the proposed Circulation Element Update includes an introduction to the Element, the Element's issues, goals, and policies, and the Circulation Plan. The Introduction provides an overview of the Circulation Element. The Issues, Goals, and Policies section identifies issues pertaining to circulation and transportation that could potentially affect the City and establishes related goals and policies. These goals are overall statements of the City's desires and consist of broad statements of purpose and direction pertaining to the community's circulation. The policies serve as guidelines for creating a balanced multi-modal transportation network. The Circulation Plan section explains how the circulation issues are addressed within the community and how the goals and policies will be achieved and implemented.



CITY OF RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA
CIRCULATION ELEMENT UPDATE
ADDENDUM TO THE GENERAL PLAN EIR

Sources: Orange County GIS; LAFCO; California State Geoportal. Map date: November 16, 2021.

Figure 1. Regional Location Map


LAKE FOREST
UNINCORPORATED ORANGE COUNTY
MISSION VIEJO
MELINDA RD
SANTA MARGARITA PKWY
241
ANTONIO PKWY
AVENIDA PRESA
CANYON RIDGE
CANYON CREST
CANYON HILLS
CROWN VALLEY
CORONADO
CORONADO RD
CORONADO PL
CORONADO DR
CORONADO CIR
CORONADO CT
CORONADO TER
CORONADO WAY
CORONADO CREST
CORONADO HILLS
CORONADO RIDGE
CORONADO CANYON
CORONADO VALLEY
CORONADO CROWN

Summary of Circulation Element Modifications

The proposed Circulation Element Update includes minor revisions to language, tables, and figures to update existing conditions and to better reflect the community's circulation needs relative to more recent updates to the Land Use and Housing Elements. It also includes modifications to existing goals and policies, and the addition of a new goal and related policies, as described further below. The changes proposed continue to emphasize providing a safe and efficient circulation system with greater emphasis on providing a circulation system that supports multi-modal transportation. The following summarizes the modifications to the 2025 Circulation Element, as compared to the existing (2014) Circulation Element. A summary matrix is provided at the end of this section providing a section-by-section comparison of the existing (2014) Circulation Element and the proposed 2025 Circulation Element.

Introduction

Minor changes/additions have been made to the Introduction section to reflect the current regulatory setting. Relevant regulations that have been updated since adoption of the existing (2014) Circulation Element include:

- Senate Bill (SB) 743, which went into effect on July 1, 2020, changed transportation impact analysis as part of CEQA compliance, replacing the determination of impacts based on roadway and intersection operating conditions with vehicle miles traveled (VMT). As discussed further below, the City's Transportation Study Guidelines provide guidance on how to prepare transportation studies in the City in compliance with SB 743.
- Assembly Bill (AB) 747, which went into effect January 1, 2022, requires cities to evaluate route capacity, safety, and viability under a range of emergency scenarios. The Circulation Element Update integrates policies related to evacuation routes from the Safety Element to comply with AB 747.
- SB 99, which went into effect January 1, 2022, requires cities to identify residential developments in hazard areas that do not have at least two emergency evacuation routes. The City's General Plan Safety Element was updated in 2022 to meet the requirements of SB 99.
- AB 1409, which went into effect January 1, 2022, requires cities to identify evacuation locations by policies in the Circulation Element, and the existing network. The Circulation Element Update integrates policies related to evacuation routes from the Safety Element to comply with AB 1409.
- The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Regional Council adopted Connect SoCal 2024 (2024 - 2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy [RTP/SCS]) on April 4, 2024. Connect SoCal 2024 is a long-range visioning document that builds upon and expands land use and transportation strategies established over several planning cycles to increase mobility options and achieve a more sustainable growth pattern in Southern California. Connect SoCal 2024 identifies Priority Development Areas (PDAs), which are areas within the SCAG region where future growth can be located to help the region reach mobility and environmental goals. PDAs include

Transit Priority Areas, Neighborhood Mobility Areas (NMAs), Livable Corridors and Spheres of Influence. NMAs focus on creating, improving, restoring, and enhancing safe and convenient connections to schools, shopping, services, places of worship, parks, greenways, and other destinations. The Circulation Element Update includes a new Figure (Circulation Element Figure CIR-1) to show the portion of Rancho Santa Margarita designated as an NMA.

Further, minor textual changes have occurred to update the description of the Circulation Element's relationship to other General Plan Elements.

Issues, Goals, and Policies

Proposed modifications to existing goals and policies provide additional clarity and direction and better reflect the community's circulation needs. Additionally, the Circulation Element Update includes several new policies, as well as a new goal. Notably, the Circulation Element Update adds a new Complete Streets goal (Goal 3) and policies to promote a safe and accessible circulation system that accommodates all user types.

Goal 3: Provide a safe and convenient transportation network accessible for all transportation modes and users.

- Policy 3.1: Apply Complete Streets principles to transportation improvements on City facilities to serve all types of travel (Circulation Element Figure CIR-3 displays the existing roadway functional classifications).
- Policy 3.2: Identify and address gaps in networks serving vehicles, bicyclists, pedestrians, transit users, and other users.
- Policy 3.3: Seek grants to establish a Safe Routes to School Program, encouraging parents and children to walk or bike to school.
- Policy 3.4: Consider the land use and design context of the surrounding areas when designing Complete Streets.
- Policy 3.5: Monitor and evaluate the development of new mobility technologies and the potential impacts on designing a transportation network that accommodates all modes and users.
- Policy 3.6: Plan for emerging autonomous vehicles and transportation network companies (TNCs) by designing spaces to allow for safe pick-up and drop-off.

New proposed policies include:

- Policy 1.6: Require new development projects to prepare transportation studies consistent with the City's Transportation Study Guidelines, implement appropriate measures to mitigate CEQA impacts and address non-CEQA effects to the transportation network.
- Policy 1.7: Require new development projects to accommodate vehicles (including emergency vehicles), pedestrians, and bicycles through the dedication of land for public improvements such as roadways, wider sidewalks and/or bicycle lanes, as appropriate and warranted by the project.

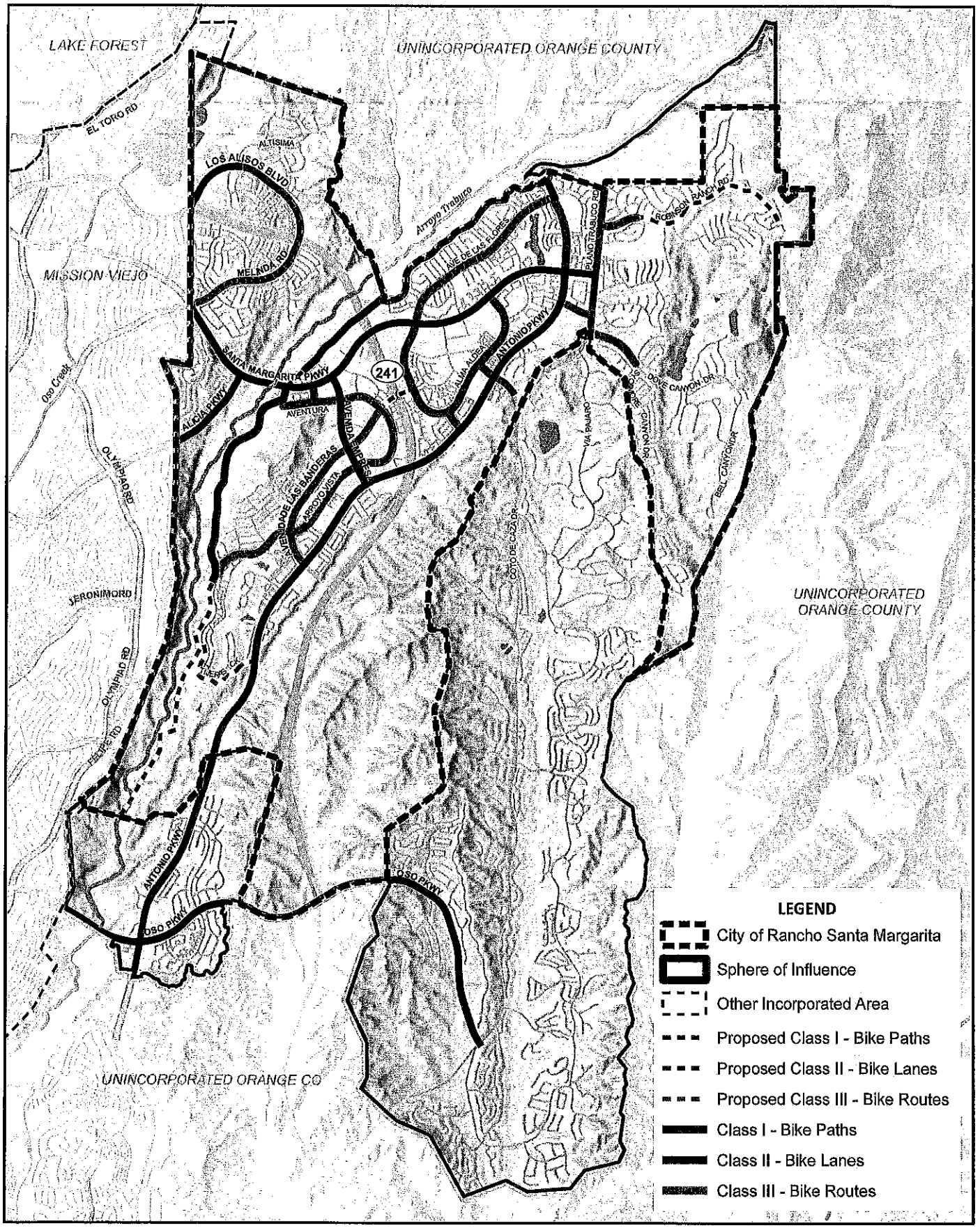
- Policy 1.8: Coordinate with public school districts and private schools to minimize queueing and parking impacts on public streets and in residential areas.
- Policy 1.9: Incorporate necessary improvements and maintenance to evacuation routes consistent with the Safety Element, and according to applicable requirements identified in regional and local plans.
- Policy 2.3: Work with regional partners to plan for emerging transportation modes and technologies.
- Policy 4.1: Support roadway design principles that create a safe, pleasant, and comfortable experience for bicyclists and pedestrians.
- Policy 4.3: Design land development projects to provide safe and attractive bicycle and pedestrian facilities, such as secure bicycle parking, pedestrian-scale lighting, and landscaping.
- Policy 4.4: Require new developments to make improvements to provide connectivity and accessibility to a mix of uses such as schools, parks, work, and shopping destinations that meet residents' daily needs.
- Policy 4.5: Seek funding for projects to implement bikeway facilities recommended in regional plans.
- Policy 4.6: Promote the installation of pedestrian and bicycle amenities in appropriate locations, in order to enhance non-automobile forms of transportation.
- Policy 4.8 Plan for emerging travel modes such as e-bikes, considering applicable regulations, infrastructure, education and enforcement needs to promote safety, accessibility and enjoyment for all users within the City.
- Policy 5.5: Encourage the development of Transportation Demand Management plans for all developments or facility expansions pursuant to the City's Transportation Study Guidelines, to encourage ride-sharing and other improvements, thereby reducing vehicle trips.

Circulation Plan

Minor changes/additions to the Circulation Plan are proposed to reflect the current regulatory setting, including recently adopted amendments to the General Plan Land Use Element, Housing Element, and Safety Element. Goals and policies have been revised to provide additional clarity and direction, and to better reflect the community's circulation needs. The updated Circulation Plan was developed in accordance with implementation of the City's General Plan based on the development capacity identified in Table LU-3 of the 2024 General Plan Land Use Element, including the sites identified as suitable for housing development in the 2021-2029 Housing Element. However, no changes have been made to the roadway functional classifications comprising the City's local circulation system. That is, no new roadways, elimination of roadways, or changes in roadway capacities are proposed as part of the Circulation Element Update. Revisions to the Circulation Plan generally include an expanded discussion of new modes of travel, the local bicycle and pedestrian network, and regional public transportation system. For example, the updated Circulation Plan adds a section on e-bikes, complete streets, and includes proposed bicycle facilities alongside the City's existing bicycle network; refer to Figure 3, Existing and

Proposed Bikeway Facilities. The proposed bicycle facilities would not result in modifications to the existing roadway classification system.

The updated Circulation Plan also incorporates a discussion on the City's Transportation Study Guidelines, which have been established to detail the requirements for conducting the VMT analysis portion of the CEQA transportation impact analysis and for conducting Level of Service (LOS) analysis, site access assessments, and other transportation analyses for non-CEQA purposes. The Transportation Study Guidelines guide the preparation of transportation studies that are normally required as part of the application review and processing of land development projects.



Sources: Kittelson & Associates; Orange County GIS; USGS; LAFCO. Map date: February 7, 2025.

CITY OF RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA
CIRCULATION ELEMENT UPDATE
ADDENDUM TO THE GENERAL PLAN EIR

Figure 3. Existing and Proposed Bikeway Facilities

Existing (2014) Circulation Element	Proposed 2025 Circulation Element Update	Summary of Changes
Introduction • Introductory paragraphs describe the City's circulation system and contents of the Element	**Introduction** • Introductory paragraph outlining the City's overall goals for the circulation system	Minor text changes to provide clarity and better reflect the community's circulation needs.
Purpose of the Circulation Element • Purpose and brief overview of the Element, including State planning law requirements	*Purpose of the Circulation Element* • Purpose of Element and overview of topical areas covered	Minor text changes to provide clarity and better reflect the community's circulation needs.
Scope and Content of the Circulation Element • Scope and content of the Circulation Element; Principles the Circulation Element focuses on; and how to read goals, policies, and actions	*Scope and Content of the Circulation Element* • Description of State planning law requirements; Scope and content of the Circulation Element; and how to read goals, policies, and actions	Minor text changes to provide clarity and better reflect the community's circulation needs.
Related Plans and Programs • Description of regulatory setting, including: o *California Assembly Bill 32 (2006) and Senate Bill 375 (2008)* o *AB 1358 California Complete Streets Act of 2008* o *The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)* o *Orange County Congestion Management Program (CMP)*	*Related Plans and Programs* • Description of regulatory setting, including: o *California Assembly Bill (AB) 32 (2006)* o *California Senate Bill (SB) 32 (2016)* o *SB 375 (2008)* o *SB 743 (2013)* o *AB 1358 California Complete Streets Act (2008)*	Includes relevant regulations that have been updated since adoption of the Existing (2014) Circulation Element, including: • Senate Bill (SB) 743, which went into effect on July 1, 2020, changed transportation impact analysis as part of CEQA compliance, replacing the determination of impacts based on roadway and intersection operating conditions to vehicle miles traveled (VMT).

Existing (2014) Circulation Element	Proposed 2025 Circulation Element Update	Summary of Changes
○ *Orange County Master Plan of Arterial Highways* ○ *OCTA Commuter Bikeways Strategic Plan* ○ *Orange County Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS)*	○ *Office of Planning and Research (OPR), California Government Code Section 65302(b)* ○ *AB 747 (2022)* ○ *SB 99 (2022)* ○ *AB 1409 (2022)* ○ *Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)'s Connect SoCal (2020 – 2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy)* ○ *Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) Congestion Management Program (CMP)* ○ *OCTA Master Plan of Arterial Highways (MPAH)* ○ *OCTA Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)*	• Assembly Bill (AB) 747, which went into effect January 1, 2022, requires cities to evaluate route capacity, safety, and viability under a range of emergency scenarios. • SB 99, which went into effect January 1, 2022, requires cities to identify residential developments in hazard areas that do not have at least two emergency evacuation routes. The Safety Element was updated/adopted in 2022 to address SB 99. • AB 1409, which went into effect January 1, 2022, requires cities to identify evacuation locations by policies in the Circulation Element, and the existing network. • The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Regional Council adopted Connect SoCal 2024 (2024 - 2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable

Existing (2014) Circulation Element	Proposed 2025 Circulation Element Update	Summary of Changes
		Communities Strategy [RTP/SCS]) on April 4, 2024. o Connect SoCal 2024 is a long-range visioning document which identifies Priority Development Areas (PDAs), and Neighborhood Mobility Areas (NMAs) within the SCAG region where future growth would help the region reach mobility and environmental goals. PDAs include transit. o New Figure (Figure CIR-1) identifies the NMA in Rancho Santa Margarita.
Relationship to Other General Plan Elements • Describes how other General Plan Elements are consistent with and complementary to the Circulation Element	*Relationship to Other General Plan Elements* • Describes how other General Plan Elements are consistent with and complementary to the Circulation Element	Minor text changes to describe updates made to other General Plan Elements since adoption of the 2014 Circulation Element.
Issues, Goals, and Policies • Introduces goals and policies	**Issues, Goals, and Policies** • Introduces goals and policies	Minor text changes to provide clarity and better reflect the community's

Existing (2014) Circulation Element	Proposed 2025 Circulation Element Update	Summary of Changes
		circulation needs, including to reflect updated goals.
Local Circulation System (Goal 1)	*Local Circulation System (Goal 1)*	Text changes to Goal 1 and related policies. Addition of four new policies. • Text change to Goal 1: Added emphasis on safety and the need to move people and goods while reducing emphasis on traffic and congestion. • Text change to Policy 1.1: Simplified the introduction and explained the range of users. • Text change to Policy 1.2: Added emphasis on maintaining sufficient LOS consistent with performance standards and the Transportation Study Guidelines. • Text change to Policy 1.3: Specified the type of transportation improvement programs. • Text change to Policy 1.4; minor changes, related to word choice. • Text change to Policy 1.5: Specified the type of traffic management approaches.

Existing (2014) Circulation Element	Proposed 2025 Circulation Element Update	Summary of Changes
		• Addition of Policy 1.6: New policy to reflect implementation of Transportation Study Guidelines and new requirements. • Addition of Policy 1.7: New policy to require dedication of land for public improvements to accommodate transportation needs. • Addition of Policy 1.8: New policy to help improve school safety. • Addition of Policy 1.9: New policy to facilitate future evacuation planning – incorporate improvements and maintenance to evacuation routes consistent with the Safety Element and consistent with local and regional plans.
Regional Circulation System (Goal 2)	*Regional Circulation System (Goal 2)*	Text changes to Goal 2 and related policies. Addition of one new policy. • Text change to Goal 2: Removed mention of economic well-being of the community, as this goal addresses overall

Existing (2014) Circulation Element	Proposed 2025 Circulation Element Update	Summary of Changes
		regional movements, not just economic development. • Text change to Policy 2.1: Added specific agencies and groups for coordination. • Text change to Policy 2.3 (renumbered as Policy 2.5): Focused policy on coordination and review, instead of details on potential new facilities. • Text change to Policy 2.4: Made policy more succinct by removing mention of specific issues to reduce. • Addition of new Policy 2.3: New policy to ensure coordination with regional partners to plan for emerging transportation modes and technologies.
Public Transportation System (Goal 3)	*Complete Streets (Goal 3)*	Addition of new goal and six related policies related to Complete Streets. • Addition of Goal 3: Added new Complete Streets goal to promote and encourage all user types. • Addition of Policy 3.1: New policy to apply Complete Streets

Existing (2014) Circulation Element	Proposed 2025 Circulation Element Update	Summary of Changes
		principles to improvements to serve all modes of travel. • Addition of Policy 3.2: New policy to identify and address gaps in the transportation network. • Addition of Policy 3.3: New policy to encourage grant funding opportunities to improve school safety. • Addition of Policy 3.4: New policy to assist in designing Complete Streets. • Addition of Policy 3.5: New policy to recognize implementation challenges with new technologies. • Addition of Policy 3.6: New policy to address the need for emerging autonomous vehicles and transportation networks by designing spaces with pick-up and drop-off.
Trails Network (Goal 4)	*Bicycle and Pedestrian System (Goal 4)*	Text changes to Goal 4 and related policies. One policy was removed. Addition of six new policies. • Text change to Goal 4: Goal is renamed "Bicycle and

Existing (2014) Circulation Element	Proposed 2025 Circulation Element Update	Summary of Changes
		Pedestrian System"; removed reference to City to reflect consideration of larger area. • Text change to Policy 4.1 (renumbered as Policy 4.2): Made policy more succinct and more broadly applicable. • Policy 4.2 removed and replaced with new policies to provide additional details on specific active transportation design and implementation elements. • Addition of Policy 4.1: Added specification about roadway design elements to support bikes and pedestrians. • Addition of Policy 4.3: Added bike and pedestrian amenity requirements for new developments. • Addition of Policy 4.4: Added land use connectivity requirements for new developments. • Addition of Policy 4.6: Provided additional specification as to the appropriate type of amenities.

Existing (2014) Circulation Element	Proposed 2025 Circulation Element Update	Summary of Changes
		• Policy 4.3: Renumbered as Policy 4.7. • Addition of Policy 4.5: New policy to encourage funding opportunities for bicycle projects. • Addition of Policy 4.8: New policy to recognize challenges with new technologies such as e-bikes.
--	*Public Transportation System (Goal 5)*	Goal 3 of Existing (2014) Circulation Element is renumbered as Goal 5 in the proposed Circulation Element Update. Text changes to policies and addition of one new policy. • Text change to Policy 3.1 (renumbered as Policy 5.1): Reworded to reflect City's limited influence with respect to public transportation decisions. • Policy 3.2: Renumbered as Policy 5.2. • Policy 3.3 removed and replaced with a similar policy (Policy 2.3). • Text change to Policy 3.4 (renumbered as Policy 5.3):

Existing (2014) Circulation Element	Proposed 2025 Circulation Element Update	Summary of Changes
		Added specification about the type of systems to be addressed. • Policy 3.4: Renumbered as Policy 5.4. • Addition of Policy 5.5: New policy to promote use of transportation demand management (TDM) to reduce impacts of vehicles.
Related Goals and Policies • Identifies goals and policies from other General Plan Elements that directly or indirectly support the goals and policies of the Circulation Element	*Related Goals and Policies* • Identifies goals and policies from other General Plan Elements that directly or indirectly support the goals and policies of the Circulation Element	Minor text changes and updated Table C-1 (which identifies related goals and policies from other General Plan Elements) to be consistent with updates made to other General Plan Elements since adoption of the Existing (2014) Circulation Element.
Circulation Plan • Describes the local and regional circulation system; identifies vehicular transportation as primary mode of travel, introduces Arterial Highway Plan, and alternative transportation modes; identifies that Circulation Plan is based on issues, goals, and policies of the Circulation Element, and introduces Circulation Element Implementation Program (Appendix A).	**Circulation Plan** • Describes the local and regional circulation system; identifies vehicular transportation as primary mode of travel, introduces Arterial Highway Plan, and alternative transportation modes; identifies that Circulation Plan is based on issues, goals, and policies of the Circulation Element, and introduces Circulation	Minor text changes to reflect word choice; no changes to content.

Existing (2014) Circulation Element	Proposed 2025 Circulation Element Update	Summary of Changes
	Element Implementation Program (Appendix A).	
Local Circulation System • Defines roadway functional classifications (Major Arterial, Primary Arterials, Secondary Arterials, and Collectors)	*Local Circulation System* • Defines roadway functional classifications (Major Arterial, Primary Arterials, Secondary Arterials, and Collectors)	Minor text changes for clarity purposes; no changes to roadway functional classifications. The Circulation Element Update incorporates a discussion on the City's Transportation Study Guidelines, which are established to determine methods of analysis for new development projects.
Performance Criteria	*Performance Criteria*	Minor text changes for clarity purposes.
Relationship to Land Use	*Relationship to Land Use*	Text changes to clarify that the Circulation Element Update was developed in accordance with implementation of the City's General Plan based on the development capacity identified in Table LU-3 of the 2024 General Plan Land Use Element, including the sites identified as suitable for housing development in the 2021-2029 Housing Element.
General Plan Circulation System	*General Plan Circulation System*	Minor text changes for clarity purposes.
Truck Traffic	*Truck Traffic*	Minor text changes; clarified the only designated truck route in the City is Foothill Transportation Corridor (SR-241).
Neighborhood Traffic Safety	*Neighborhood Traffic Safety*	Minor text changes for clarity purposes.

Existing (2014) Circulation Element	Proposed 2025 Circulation Element Update	Summary of Changes
Regional Circulation System	*Regional Circulation System*	Minor text changes for clarity purposes and to update text based on changes to regional roadways (i.e., completion of SR-241).
--	*Complete Streets*	Added new section on Complete Streets to accommodate a variety of transportation modes and users.
Public Transportation and Trails Network	*Bicycle and Pedestrian System* *Public Transportation System*	The "Public Transportation and Trails Network" was renamed and separated into two subsections. The new "Bicycle and Pedestrian System" expands the discussion of bicycle and pedestrian facilities and modes of travel, including e-bikes. Similarly, the new "Public Transportation System" expands the discussion of local and regional transit service.
Transportation System and Demand Management	--	Section has been removed. The topic of transportation demand management (TDM) strategies is now addressed in Goal 5 of the Circulation Element Update, including the addition of Policy 5.5.
Transportation Financing	--	Section has been removed.
Figures • Figure C-1: Rancho Santa Margarita Layered Transportation Networks	**Figures**	Figure C-1, which provided a graphic representation of the City's layered transportation networks, was replaced

Existing (2014) Circulation Element	Proposed 2025 Circulation Element Update	Summary of Changes
• Figure C-2: Typical Roadway Cross-Sections • Figure C-3: General Plan Roadway Network • Figure C-4: Potential Transit Network • Figure C-5: Bikeway Network • Figure C-6: Pedestrian Network	• Figure CIR-1: Connect SoCal 2024 Neighborhood Mobility Area (NMA) • Figure CIR-2: Typical Roadway Cross-Sections • Figure CIR-3: Roadway Functional Classifications • Figure CIR- 4: Pedestrian Network • Figure CIR-5: Existing and Proposed Bikeway Facilities • Figure CIR-6: Existing Bus Routes	with Neighborhood Mobility Areas identified in Connect SoCal 2024. Figure C-3 was renamed "Roadway Functional Classifications." No changes were made to these classifications. Figure C-4 was renamed "Existing Bus Routes" and renumbered to CIR-6. This figure was updated to reflect existing transit routes provided by Orange County Transportation Authority. Figure C-5 was updated to include proposed bikeway facilities. Figure C-6 was renumbered CIR-4; no changes were made to the pedestrian network.
Tables • Table C-1: Related Goals and Policies by Element • Table C-2: Roadway Classifications and Daily Capacities • Table C-3: Circulation System Performance Criteria • Table C-4: Peak Hour Level of Service Ranges • Table C-6: Bikeway Classification Descriptions	**Tables** • Table CIR-1: Circulation-Related Goals and Policies by Element • Table CIR-2: Roadway Classifications and Daily Capacities • Table CIR-3: Peak Hour Level of Service Ranges	Table C-3 was removed. Table C-6 was removed; information from this table is retained in the Circulation Element Update but has been updated/reformatted.

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3 ENVIRONMENTAL APPROACH AND ANALYSIS

This analysis has been prepared to determine whether the proposed Project would result in any new significant impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant impacts in the 2020 certified General Plan FEIR. Based on substantial evidence, the City has concluded that the proposed Project does not meet the criteria for preparing a subsequent or supplemental EIR under Public Resources Code Section 21166 or CEQA Guidelines Section 15162.

The scope of the City's review of the proposed Project is limited by provisions set forth in CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines. This review is limited to evaluating whether the proposed Circulation Element Update Project would trigger further environmental analysis beyond the 2020 General Plan FEIR. This analysis also reviews new information, if any, of substantial importance that was not known and could not have been known with the exercise of reasonable due diligence at the time the 2020 General Plan FEIR was certified. This evaluation includes a determination as to whether the changes proposed by the proposed Project would result in any new significant impacts or a substantial increase in a previously identified significant impacts.

This analysis assesses the potential impacts associated with the proposed Circulation Element Update. This analysis provides the City with the factual basis for determining whether any changes in the proposed Project, any changes in circumstances, or any new information since the 2020 FEIR was certified would require additional environmental review or preparation of a Subsequent EIR or Supplemental EIR.

Transportation

The Project proposes an update to the existing (2014) Circulation Element to support State and regional transportation efforts to provide for a safe, efficient, and adequate multi-modal circulation system, and to reflect the current regulatory setting, including recently adopted amendments to the General Plan Land Use Element, Housing Element, and Safety Element. As discussed in Section 1, Introduction, the General Plan FEIR evaluated the potential environmental impacts that could occur under implementation of the recently adopted amendments to the General Plan Land Use Element, Housing Element, and Safety Element. The proposed Circulation Element Update would not result in any modifications to existing land use designations or modify any existing roadways or roadway classifications or authorize for any specific circulation system projects or improvements. The Circulation Element Update continues to identify key issues related to circulation and provides goals and policies to regulate existing and future circulation conditions throughout the City.

The updated Circulation Element identifies regulatory requirements that have gone into effect since the existing (2014) Circulation Element was adopted, including SB 743. SB 743 promotes the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, the development of multi-modal transportation networks, and a diversity of land uses. Previously, CEQA transportation analyses of individual projects focused on the determination of impacts in terms of roadway capacity and vehicles. SB 743

changed transportation impact analysis as part of CEQA compliance, replacing the determination of impacts based on roadway and intersection operating conditions to vehicle miles traveled (VMT).

The Circulation Element Update includes a new policy (Policy 1.6) which requires new development projects to prepare transportation studies consistent with the City's Transportation Study Guidelines. The updated Circulation Plan incorporates a discussion of the City's Transportation Study Guidelines, which have been established to detail the requirements for conducting the VMT analysis portion of the CEQA transportation impact analysis and for conducting LOS analysis, site access assessments, and other transportation analyses for non-CEQA purposes. The Transportation Study Guidelines are to be used in the preparation of transportation studies that are normally required as part of the application review and processing of land development projects.

The Transportation Study Guidelines include a chapter that discusses the requirements for conducting a VMT-based transportation impact analysis of a development project to fulfill CEQA requirements including the process to aid in determining if a detailed VMT analysis is needed. The Transportation Study Guidelines also include a chapter that discusses the requirements for the non-CEQA transportation assessment. The City of Rancho Santa Margarita has adopted vehicle LOS standards for City roadways and intersections. These standards are contained within the General Plan Circulation Element and therefore apply to new development projects. The LOS performance standards remain unchanged from the current (2014) Circulation Element. While the Transportation Study Guidelines identify when an LOS analysis of local facilities will be required and how the assessment must be carried out, neither the Circulation Element nor the Transportation Study Guidelines identify or recommend any specific improvements or remedies in the event a minimum LOS performance standard is not maintained. The Circulation Element Update does not propose or provide for site-specific development. Future development projects would be reviewed relative to the Transportation Study Guidelines to ensure compliance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 subdivision (b). If a project does not meet the requirements for VMT screening, an analysis of VMT impacts would be required. If a project would result in significant VMT impacts, mitigation measures would be required to reduce or eliminate the impact. Thus, the Circulation Element Update would support implementation and compliance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 subdivision (b).

As noted above, the proposed Circulation Element Update would not modify any existing roadways or roadway classifications. Existing evacuation routes would remain unchanged. The Circulation Element Update includes the addition of a new policy (Policy 1.9) to facilitate future evacuation planning. Policy 1.9 would incorporate necessary improvements and maintenance to evacuation routes consistent with the Safety Element, which was previously updated.

The Project would not result in new significant transportation impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant impacts.

Air Quality

The Project proposes an update to the existing (2014) Circulation Element to support State and regional transportation efforts to provide for a safe, efficient, and adequate multi-modal circulation system, and to reflect the current regulatory setting, including recently adopted amendments to the General Plan Land Use Element, Housing Element, and Safety Element. As discussed in Section 1, Introduction, the General Plan FEIR evaluated the potential environmental impacts that could occur under implementation of the recently adopted amendments to the General Plan Land Use Element, Housing Element, and Safety Element. The proposed Circulation Element Update would not result in any modifications to existing land use designations or modify any existing roadways or roadway classifications or allow for any specific circulation system projects or improvements.

The changes proposed continue to emphasize providing a safe and efficient circulation system with greater emphasis on providing a circulation system that supports multi-modal transportation, which would contribute to reduced automobile trips and VMT, supporting improved air quality within the South Coast Air Basin (SCAB). Proposed policies provide for a safe circulation system that facilitates the efficient flow of traffic and goods; a local circulation system that is integrated with the larger regional transportation system; a safe and convenient transportation network accessible for all transportation modes and users; extensive public bikeway and community pedestrian networks that facilitate and encourage non-vehicular travel; and a network that promotes the increased use of multi-modal transportation. Integration of the local circulation system into the larger regional transportation system would provide for local connections to existing regional trails and encourage a transportation network that balances traffic flow and multi-modal needs. Increased and improved opportunities for multi-modal transportation that results in fewer vehicular trips both locally and regionally, further contributes to state and regional air quality goals.

Any future circulation improvement projects, consistent with the General Plan Circulation Element Update, would undergo environmental review on a project-by-project basis and would be reviewed for consistency with policies, programs, and the established regulatory framework aimed at reducing potential air quality impacts. If necessary, mitigation would be recommended to reduce potential impacts to a less than significant level.

The Project would not result in new significant air quality impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant impacts.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The proposed Circulation Element Update would not result in any modifications to existing land use designations or modify any existing roadways or roadway classifications or allow for any specific circulation system projects or improvements. As discussed above, the changes proposed continue to emphasize providing a safe and efficient circulation system with greater emphasis on providing a circulation system that supports multi-modal transportation, which would contribute

to reduced automobile trips and VMT, resulting in reduced greenhouse gas emissions. Proposed policies provide for a safe circulation system that facilitates the efficient flow of traffic and goods; a local circulation system that is integrated with the larger regional transportation system; a safe and convenient transportation network accessible for all transportation modes and users; extensive public bikeway and community pedestrian networks that facilitate and encourage non-vehicular travel; and a network that promotes the increased use of multi-modal transportation. Integration of the local circulation system into the larger regional transportation system would provide for local connections to existing regional trails and encourage a transportation network that balances traffic flow and multi-modal needs. Increased and improved opportunities for multi-modal transportation that results in fewer vehicular trips both locally and regionally, further contributes to state and regional greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals.

Additionally, as discussed in the Transportation discussion above, the Circulation Element Update includes a new policy (Policy 1.6) which requires new development projects to prepare transportation studies consistent with the City's Transportation Study Guidelines. The Transportation Study Guidelines include a chapter that discusses the requirements for conducting a VMT-based transportation impact analysis of a development project to fulfill CEQA requirements including the process to aid in determining if a detailed VMT analysis is needed. Future development projects would be reviewed relative to the Transportation Study Guidelines to ensure compliance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 subdivision (b). If a project does not meet the requirements for VMT screening, an analysis of VMT impacts would be required. If a project would result in significant VMT impacts, mitigation measures would be required to reduce or eliminate the impact. Thus, the Circulation Element Update would support the reduction of VMT through the analysis of future development projects and the implementation of mitigation measures, if necessary. Reduced VMT provide for reduced GHG emissions associated with individual development projects.

The Project would not result in new significant greenhouse gas emissions impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant impacts.

Remaining Environmental Issue Areas

The proposed Circulation Element Update would not result in any impacts associated with the following environmental issue areas:

- Aesthetics
- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology and Soils
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources

- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Wildfire

As discussed in Section 2, Description of the Proposed Project, the proposed Circulation Element Update includes minor revisions to language, tables, and figures to update existing conditions and to better reflect the community's circulation needs relative to more recent updates to the Land Use and Housing Elements. As discussed in Section 1, Introduction, the potential environmental impacts associated with the more recent updates to the Land Use Element, Housing Element and Safety Element were previously evaluated in the General Plan FEIR. The proposed Circulation Element Update would not result in any modifications to existing land use designations or modify any existing roadways or roadway classifications or modify any General Plan policies or programs specific to any of the above listed environmental issue areas. The changes proposed to the Circulation Element continue to emphasize providing a safe and efficient circulation system with greater emphasis on providing a circulation system that supports multi-modal transportation.

No specific circulation system projects or improvements with the potential for physical changes to the environment are proposed as part of the Circulation Element Update. Potential future circulation improvement projects, consistent with the General Plan Circulation Element Update, would undergo environmental review on a project-by-project basis and would be reviewed for consistency with policies, programs, and the established regulatory framework aimed at reducing potential direct or indirect environmental impacts. If necessary, mitigation would be recommended to reduce potential impacts to a less than significant level.

The Project would not result in new significant environmental impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant impacts. (Public Resources Code § 21166; CEQA Guidelines § 15162.)

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4 ADDENDUM FINDING

As detailed herein, on the basis of substantial evidence in the light of the whole record, a Subsequent or Supplemental EIR is not required for the proposed Circulation Element Update because none of the criteria requiring such a document under Public Resources Code Section 21166 or State CEQA Guidelines section 15162 are met.

The Circulation Element Update would result in no new significant impacts that were not analyzed in the 2020 General Plan FEIR, nor would the proposed Project cause a substantial increase in the severity of any previously identified significant impacts. The potential impacts associated with the proposed Project would either be the same or less than those described in the 2020 General Plan FEIR. In addition, there are no substantial changes to the circumstances under which the proposed Project would be undertaken that would result in new or more severe environmental impacts than previously addressed in the 2020 General Plan FEIR, nor has any new information regarding the potential for new or more severe significant environmental impacts been identified. Therefore, in accordance with Section 15164 of the State CEQA Guidelines, this Addendum to the previously certified 2020 General Plan FEIR has been prepared for the proposed Circulation Element Update. In taking action on any of the Project, the decision-making body must consider the whole of the data presented in the 2020 General Plan FEIR and this Addendum.

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State of California - Department of Fish and Wildlife

2025 ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT FILING FEE

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CITY OF RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA		07/10/2025

COUNTY/STATE AGENCY OF FILING	DOCUMENT NUMBER
Orange	202585000661

PROJECT TITLE

2025 CIRCULATION ELEMENT UPDATE

PROJECT APPLICANT NAME	PROJECT APPLICANT EMAIL	PHONE NUMBER
CITY OF RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA		(949) 635-1807

PROJECT APPLICANT ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE
22112 EL PASEO	RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA	CA	92688

PROJECT APPLICANT *(Check appropriate box)*

☑ Local Public Agency ☐ School District ☐ Other Special District ☐ State Agency ☐ Private Entity

CHECK APPLICABLE FEES:

☐ Environmental Impact Report (EIR)	$4,123.50	$	0.00
☐ Mitigated/Negative Declaration (MND)(ND)	$2,968.75	$	0.00
☐ Certified Regulatory Program (CRP) document - payment due directly to CDFW	$1,401.75	$	0.00

☐ Exempt from fee

- ☐ Notice of Exemption (attach)
- ☐ CDFW No Effect Determination (attach)

☑ Fee previously paid (attach previously issued cash receipt copy)

☐ Water Right Application or Petition Fee (State Water Resources Control Board only)	$850.00	$	0.00
☐ County documentary handling fee		$	
☐ Other		$	

PAYMENT METHOD:

☐ Cash ☐ Credit ☐ Check ☐ Other **TOTAL RECEIVED** $ 0.00

SIGNATURE	AGENCY OF FILING PRINTED NAME AND TITLE
X Isabel Dominguez	ISABEL DOMINGUEZ; DEPUTY CLERK

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