

## 4.14 POPULATION AND HOUSING

This section evaluates the potential population and housing impacts of the proposed Plan.

### 4.14.1 Existing Conditions

The following discussion describes the existing population, housing units, and jobs in the San Diego region and describes SANDAG's growth forecasting process.

### EXISTING POPULATION, HOUSING UNITS, AND EMPLOYMENT

Table 4.14-1 details the existing regional population, housing units, and jobs for the 18 incorporated cities and unincorporated county.

**Table 4.14-1 Existing Population, Housing Units, and Employment by Jurisdiction**

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>2022 Population</b>	<b>2022 Housing Units</b>	<b>2022 Jobs</b>
Carlsbad	115,585	48,104	79,382
Chula Vista	276,785	88,143	74,728
Coronado	22,277	9,665	31,257
Del Mar	3,929	2,629	3,799
El Cajon	105,638	36,590	43,824
Encinitas	61,515	26,665	26,140
Escondido	150,679	49,500	53,869
Imperial Beach	26,243	10,034	5,074
La Mesa	60,472	26,265	25,250
Lemon Grove	27,242	9,186	7,972
National City	61,471	17,776	38,802
Oceanside	173,048	67,676	48,112
Poway	48,759	16,782	33,786
San Diego	1,374,790	553,921	876,977
San Marcos	93,585	32,314	40,133
Santee	59,015	21,427	17,838
Solana Beach	12,812	6,528	9,255
Vista	100,291	33,663	39,015
Unincorporated	513,170	178,774	156,419
Region Total	3,287,306	1,235,642	1,611,632

Source: Data provided by SANDAG from the SANDAG 2025 Regional Plan Appendix F: Regional Growth Forecast, Sustainable Communities Land Use Pattern.

#### Population

The existing (2022) population of the San Diego region is 3,287,306. The city of San Diego is the most populous in the region with a population of 1,374,790, which is 42% of the regional total. The unincorporated county (513,170; 16%) and Chula Vista (276,785; 8%) have the second- and third-largest populations in the region, respectively. Approximately 66% of regional population is in these three jurisdictions. The cities of Oceanside (173,048; 5%) and Escondido (150,679; 5%) are the next most populated jurisdictions.

## Existing Housing Units/Affordable Housing

As of 2022, there are 1,235,642 existing housing units in the San Diego region. Similar to existing population distribution, approximately 66% of existing housing units are in the city of San Diego (553,921; 45%), the unincorporated county (178,774; 14%), and Chula Vista (88,143; 7%). After these three jurisdictions, the cities of Oceanside (67,676; 5%) and Escondido (49,500; 4%) account for the most housing units. Figure 4.14-1 and 4.14-2 identify the location of housing and employment for 2035 and 2050, respectively.

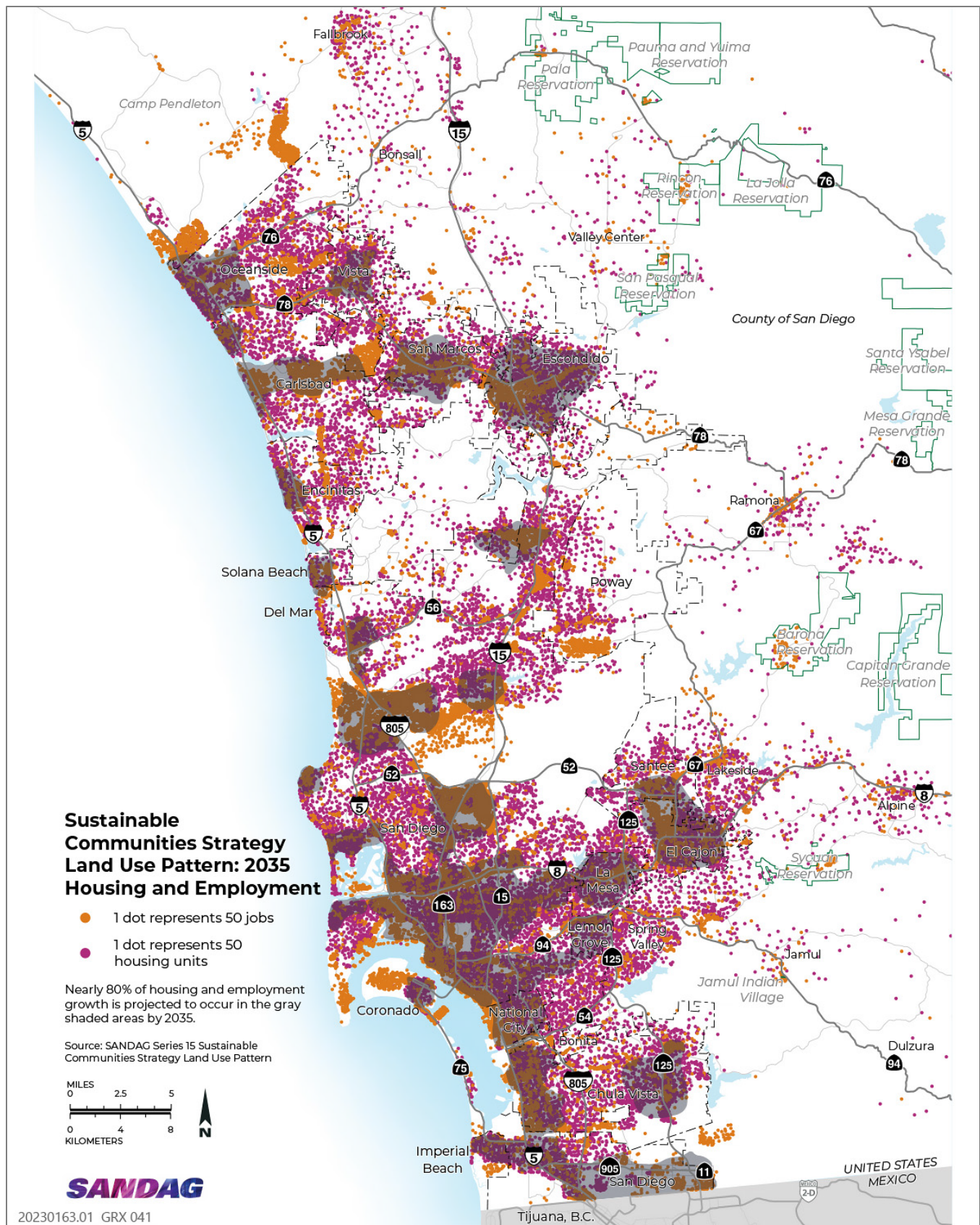
The state of California faces a persistent housing crisis, and San Diego County is no exception. Between 1950 and 2019, the housing supply has not kept pace with the growing population of the San Diego region, resulting in rising housing prices. More affordable housing is needed for extremely low-, very low-, low-, and middle-income households. Steps at the local, regional, and state levels are being taken to address the availability and affordability of housing. For example, cities in the San Diego region have taken steps to increase affordable housing by making the development process faster and easier (City of San Diego 2020). The State of California offers Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) funds, which SANDAG uses for the Housing Acceleration Program (HAP) to provide grants to local jurisdictions to fund planning and capital projects related to the acceleration of housing production in smart growth planning areas. These grants can be used to fund infrastructure improvements to increase housing density (SANDAG 2025a). At the local level, agencies, such as the San Diego Housing Commission, work with developers to build deed-restricted units. Deed-restricted units have maximum rent restrictions, often based on federal, state, or city programs that subsidize the development or operation of the units. Depending on the type of affordability program and subsidy, rental housing regulations on units often have a set time period for affordability, which can be as long as 55 years (San Diego Housing Commission 2020).

Housing affordability is the product of two factors: household incomes and housing costs. Housing is considered affordable if total housing costs are below 30% of total household pretax income. In most U.S. cities, housing costs have grown faster than household incomes over the last decade, leading to a growing affordability challenge for low- and middle-income households. San Diego follows this trend, with the increase in median household income between 2010 and 2018 (15% inflation-adjusted; \$69,200 to \$79,700) lagging rent growth (17% inflation-adjusted; \$1,450 to \$1,700). In the same period, median home values increased by 31% (inflation-adjusted), from \$469,300 to \$614,000. This caused many households with moderate income (81–120% of area median income [AMI]) and above-moderate income (more than 120% of AMI) who may have previously purchased a home to remain in the rental market. As more of these households with moderate incomes and above continue to remain in the rental market, either due to a lack of homeownership options or changing preferences, households with low incomes and below compete for the same rental housing units. This further reduces rental vacancy rates, drives up rents, and increases the housing cost burden on those at the lower end of the income spectrum (San Diego Housing Commission 2020).

According to the California Housing Partnership Corporation, 134,537 low-income renter households lack access to affordable homes. State and federal funding for housing production and preservation decreased by 13% to \$631 million. The burden is especially heavy on extremely low-income households, 81% of whom pay more than half their income on housing, compared to 2% of moderate-income households. In 2023, there were only 9,226 beds available for those experiencing homelessness. To afford the average rent of \$2,479, renters must earn \$47.67 per hour—2.8 times the city's minimum wage (CHPC 2024).

## Employment

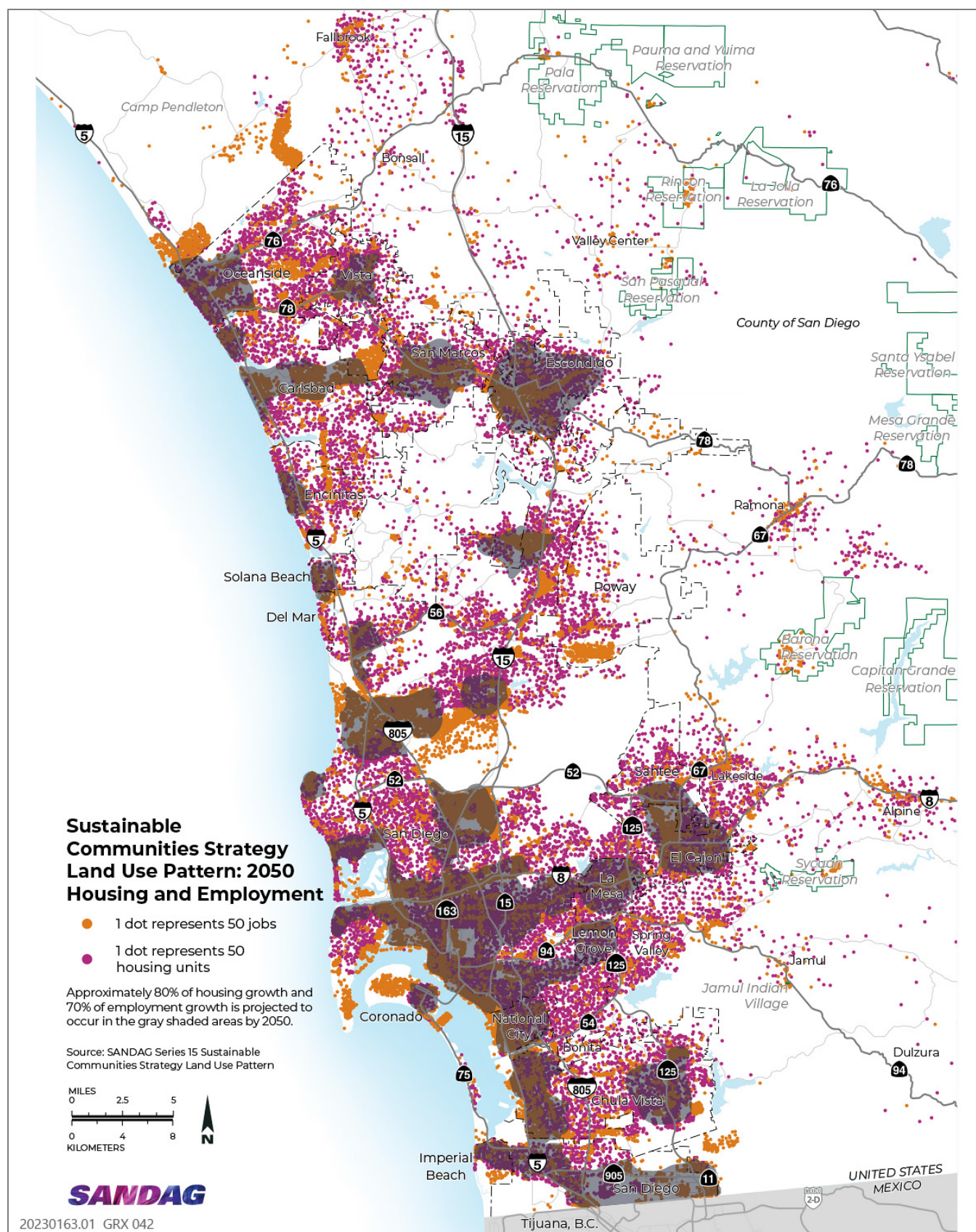
There are 1,611,632 existing (2022) jobs in the San Diego region. With 876,977 jobs, the jobs in city of San Diego account for 54% of regional employment. The next largest job centers are the unincorporated county (156,419; 10%), Carlsbad (79,382; 5%), and Chula Vista (74,728; 5%). According to the State of California Employment Development Department, the San Diego region had an unemployment rate of 4.4% and an available labor force of 1,671,000 (EDD 2025).



Source: Image produced and provided by SANDAG in 2025; adapted by Ascent in 2025.

**Figure 4.14-1 Projected 2035 Housing and Employment Density**





Source: Image produced and provided by SANDAG in 2025; adapted by Ascent in 2025.

**Figure 4.14-2 Projected 2050 Housing and Employment Density**

## SANDAG REGIONAL GROWTH FORECAST SUMMARY

SANDAG has prepared regional growth forecasts for the San Diego region since the 1970s. The SANDAG forecasts are intended to help policy- and decision-makers prepare for the future and are not an expression for or against growth. The forecasts are developed through a collaborative effort with experts in demography, housing, the economy, and other disciplines, with the close cooperation of local planning directors and their staffs.

The Series 15 Regional Growth Forecast (Series 15 Forecast) projects a slower population growth rate compared to previous forecasts. The population forecast also highlights the shift in the drivers of population growth. Historically, natural change (births minus deaths) was the primary contributor to regional population increases, but this trend has been slowing. As illustrated in Figure 2-2 in Chapter 2, "Project Description," both natural change and net migration (the difference between in-migrants and out-migrants) have been declining since 2010. By 2030, natural change is projected to drop below net migration, meaning that net migration will become the primary driver of population growth. These trends reflect broader national patterns of lower birth rates and aging populations. As regional employment rises, vacancy rates fall, and the state's population increases, net migration for the region is projected to climb through the mid-years of the forecast. Over time, as these trends slow, and with the state's population growth expected to turn negative, net migration is forecasted to decrease, ultimately turning negative by the forecast's horizon.

### Population Growth

From 2022 to 2050, the region is forecasted to have a population increase of 112,944 people—from 3,287,306 to 3,400,250, an increase of 3.4%. Table 4.14-2 shows existing population in 2022 and forecasted population growth for 2035 and 2050 for the region and the subregional allocation by jurisdiction based on the sustainable communities strategy (SCS) land use pattern.

**Table 4.14-2 Existing and Forecasted Population Growth by Jurisdiction**

Jurisdiction	Actual 2022	Projection 2035	Projection 2050	Change 2022–2050 Amount	Change 2022–2050 Percent
Carlsbad	115,585	120,002	116,776	1,191	1.0%
Chula Vista	276,785	307,392	324,927	48,142	17.4%
Coronado	22,277	21,904	21,222	-1,055	-4.7%
Del Mar	3,929	3,835	3,710	-219	-5.6%
El Cajon	105,638	102,051	99,223	-6,415	-6.1%
Encinitas	61,515	61,324	59,822	-1,693	-2.8%
Escondido	150,679	153,717	151,077	398	0.3%
Imperial Beach	26,243	25,688	25,351	-892	-3.4%
La Mesa	60,472	59,628	59,175	-1,297	-2.1%
Lemon Grove	27,242	26,739	26,263	-979	-3.6%
National City	61,471	62,437	61,574	103	0.2%
Oceanside	173,048	185,788	183,389	10,341	6.0%
Poway	48,759	51,059	48,545	-214	-0.4%
San Diego	1,374,790	1,434,871	1,440,765	65,975	4.8%
San Marcos	93,585	112,109	109,891	16,306	17.4%
Santee	59,015	61,513	62,824	3,809	6.5%
Solana Beach	12,812	12,467	12,142	-670	-5.2%
Vista	100,291	101,378	99,000	-1,291	-1.3%
Unincorporated	513,170	500,460	494,574	-18,596	-3.6%
Region Total	3,287,306	3,404,362	3,400,250	112,944	3.4%

Source: Data provided by SANDAG from the SANDAG 2025 Regional Plan Appendix F: Regional Growth Forecast, Sustainable Communities Land Use Pattern.

The highest population growth rate increases from 2022 to 2050 are forecasted to occur in the cities of Chula Vista (17.4%), San Marcos (17.4%), and Santee (6.5%). Approximately 41% of the population growth increase is forecasted for these three jurisdictions. Forecasted population growth rates in the cities of San Diego (4.8%) and Oceanside (6.0%) also would be higher than the regional average of 3.4%. Population growth rates are forecasted to be lower than the regional average in the north county coastal cities of Carlsbad (1.0%), Del Mar (-5.6%), Solana Beach (-5.2%), and Encinitas (-2.8%); the south county cities of Coronado (-4.7%), Imperial Beach (-3.4%), and National City (0.2%); the north county inland cities of Poway (-0.4%), Escondido (0.3%) and Vista (-1.3%); the east county cities of Lemon Grove (-3.6%), La Mesa (-2.1%), El Cajon (-6.1%), as well as the unincorporated county of San Diego (-3.6%).

## Housing Units

From 2022 to 2050, the number of housing units in the region is forecasted to increase by 202,819, from 1,235,642 to 1,438,461, an increase of 16.4%. Table 4.14-3 shows existing housing units in 2022 and forecasted housing units for 2035 and 2050 for the region and the subregional allocation by jurisdiction based on the SCS land use pattern. This table does not include civilian (e.g., dormitories) or military (e.g., barracks) group quarters.

The highest rates of housing unit increases would occur in the cities of San Marcos (32.2%), Chula Vista (29.9%), Oceanside (20.5%), San Diego (19.4%), and Santee (16.9%). These forecasted housing unit increases will be higher than the projected regional average of 16.4%. The rates of housing unit increases are forecasted to be lower than the regional average in the north county coastal cities of Carlsbad (12.7%), Encinitas (7.9%), Solana Beach (5.7%), and Del Mar (4.2%); the north county inland cities of Poway (11.5%), Vista (10.1%), and Escondido (12.5%); and the east county cities of El Cajon (4.6%), La Mesa (7.3%), and Lemon Grove (8.2%); the south county cities of Coronado (3.1%), Imperial Beach (8.4%), and National City (13.9%), as well as the unincorporated county (7.2%).

**Table 4.14-3 Existing and Forecasted Housing Growth by Jurisdiction**

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Actual 2022</b>	<b>Projection 2035</b>	<b>Projection 2050</b>	<b>Change 2022–2050 Amount</b>	<b>Change 2022–2050 Percent</b>
Carlsbad	48,104	53,283	54,228	6,124	12.7%
Chula Vista	88,143	103,242	114,473	26,330	29.9%
Coronado	9,665	9,821	9,969	304	3.1%
Del Mar	2,629	2,738	2,740	111	4.2%
El Cajon	36,590	37,475	38,280	1,690	4.6%
Encinitas	26,665	28,235	28,773	2,108	7.9%
Escondido	49,500	53,764	55,686	6,186	12.5%
Imperial Beach	10,034	10,489	10,877	843	8.4%
La Mesa	26,265	27,229	28,180	1,915	7.3%
Lemon Grove	9,186	9,602	9,939	753	8.2%
National City	17,776	19,414	20,238	2,462	13.9%
Oceanside	67,676	78,381	81,544	13,868	20.5%
Poway	16,782	18,711	18,711	1,929	11.5%
San Diego	553,921	627,668	661,533	107,612	19.4%
San Marcos	32,314	41,439	42,709	10,395	32.2%
Santee	21,427	23,476	25,055	3,628	16.9%
Solana Beach	6,528	6,801	6,897	369	5.7%
Vista	33,663	36,102	37,062	3,399	10.1%
Unincorporated	178,774	185,014	191,567	12,793	7.2%
<b>Region Total</b>	<b>1,235,642</b>	<b>1,372,884</b>	<b>1,438,461</b>	<b>202,819</b>	<b>16.4%</b>

Source: Data provided by SANDAG from the SANDAG 2025 Regional Plan Appendix F: Regional Growth Forecast, Sustainable Communities Land Use Pattern.

## Jobs

From 2022 to 2050, the number of jobs in the region is forecasted to increase by 170,757, from 1,611,632 jobs to 1,782,389 jobs, an increase of 10.6%. Table 4.14-4 shows existing jobs in 2022 and forecasted jobs for 2035 and 2050 for the region and the subregional allocation by jurisdiction based on the SCS land use pattern.

The highest rates of job increases would occur in the cities of Chula Vista (38%), Oceanside (35.7%), San Marcos (30.4%), Imperial Beach (49.9%), and Lemon Grove (18%), as well as the unincorporated county (11.5%). These forecasted job increases will be higher than the projected regional average of 10.6%. The rates of jobs increases are forecasted to be lower than the regional average in the City of San Diego (7.7%); the coastal cities of Carlsbad (7.5%), Encinitas (3.2%), Solana Beach (1.5%), Del Mar (1.3%); the north county cities of Poway (0.8%), Vista (6.8%) and Escondido (3.9%); the south county cities of Coronado (0.9%) and National City (8.2%); and the east county cities of El Cajon (10.2%), La Mesa (8.8%), and Santee (8.3%).

**Table 4.14-4 Existing and Forecasted Job Growth by Jurisdiction**

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Actual 2022</b>	<b>Projection 2035</b>	<b>Projection 2050</b>	<b>Change 2022–2050 Amount</b>	<b>Change 2022–2050 Percent</b>
Carlsbad	79,382	83,490	85,368	5,986	7.5%
Chula Vista	74,728	81,959	103,093	28,365	38.0%
Coronado	31,257	31,316	31,538	281	0.9%
Del Mar	3,799	3,849	3,849	50	1.3%
El Cajon	43,824	44,798	48,274	4,450	10.2%
Encinitas	26,140	26,285	26,986	846	3.2%
Escondido	53,869	55,489	55,971	2,102	3.9%
Imperial Beach	5,074	6,063	7,607	2,533	49.9%
La Mesa	25,250	25,582	27,466	2,216	8.8%
Lemon Grove	7,972	8,294	9,403	1,431	18.0%
National City	38,802	39,474	41,986	3,184	8.2%
Oceanside	48,112	56,098	65,275	17,163	35.7%
Poway	33,786	33,966	34,067	281	0.8%
San Diego	876,977	907,847	944,440	67,463	7.7%
San Marcos	40,133	48,045	52,315	12,182	30.4%
Santee	17,838	18,210	19,312	1,474	8.3%
Solana Beach	9,255	9,300	9,397	142	1.5%
Vista	39,015	39,506	41,650	2,635	6.8%
Unincorporated	156,419	159,358	174,392	17,973	11.5%
<b>Region Total</b>	<b>1,611,632</b>	<b>1,678,929</b>	<b>1,782,389</b>	<b>170,757</b>	<b>10.6%</b>

Source: Data provided by SANDAG from the SANDAG 2025 Regional Plan Appendix F: Regional Growth Forecast, Sustainable Communities Land Use Pattern.

## 4.14.2 Regulatory Setting

### FEDERAL LAWS, REGULATIONS, PLANS, AND POLICIES

#### Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies of 1970

The Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act (Uniform Act) (42 U.S. Code Section 4601 et seq.), passed in 1970 and amended in 1987, is intended to provide for uniform and equitable treatment for

persons displaced through federally funded or assisted transportation and redevelopment projects that require property acquisition. The act lays out rules for notification, relocation counseling, social services or assistance for disabled residents, and compensation for replacement housing and moving costs. The rules stipulate that replacement housing must be comparable to previous housing in terms of location, size, access to employment and public facilities, and must be “decent, safe, and sanitary.” The rules apply if federal funds are used in any phase of the program or project, even if the property acquisition itself is not federally funded. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) regulations implementing the Uniform Act are found at 49 Code of Federal Regulations Part 24.

### **Housing and Urban Development Regulations**

The Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 USC Section 5301 et seq.) and Section 8 of the Housing Act of 1937 establish federal guidelines for affordable housing and community development. These regulations provide funding mechanisms for housing assistance programs, support the development of low-income housing, and ensure equitable access to safe and sanitary living conditions. They also outline requirements for administering housing subsidies and grants to assist individuals and families in securing affordable housing options.

### **Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration Regulations**

Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration regulations, outlined in 23 CFR 771 and 49 CFR Part 622, establish procedures for evaluating the environmental impacts of transportation projects, including effects on population and housing. These regulations require an assessment of housing displacement, population shifts, and impacts on social services resulting from transportation infrastructure development, particularly in areas undergoing urban expansion or redevelopment.

## **STATE LAWS, REGULATIONS, PLANS, AND POLICIES**

### **State Housing Element Law**

State law requires that each city and county prepare and adopt a general plan for its jurisdiction that contains certain mandatory elements, including a housing element. (General plan requirements are described in Section 4.11, “Land Use and Planning.”) The housing element is a comprehensive assessment of current and forecasted housing needs for all economic segments of the community. Among other things, housing elements must assess the jurisdiction’s existing and forecasted housing needed, including the jurisdiction’s fair share of regional housing needs identified in the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA). They also must identify adequate sites to meet the needs of households at all income levels (Government Code Section 65580 et seq.).

### **California Relocation Assistance Act**

The California Relocation Assistance Act (Government Code Section 7260 et seq.) establishes uniform policies to provide for the fair and equitable treatment of people displaced from their homes or businesses as a direct result of state or local government projects or programs. The California Relocation Assistance Act requires that comparable replacement housing be made available to displaced people within a reasonable period of time prior to the displacement. Displaced people or businesses are assured payment for their acquired property at fair market value. Relocation assistance in the form of advisory assistance and financial benefits would be provided at the local level. This includes aid in finding a new home location, payments to help cover moving costs, and additional payments for certain other costs.

### **Jobs and Economic Improvement through Environmental Leadership Act of 2021 (Senate Bill 7)**

On May 20, 2021, Governor Gavin Newsom signed into law SB 7, which extends expedited California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) judicial review for small-scale housing developments. In 2011, AB 900 created an expedited judicial review process under CEQA for large, multi-benefit housing, clean energy, and manufacturing projects, provided that they met certain requirements, including provisions related to labor. SB 7 extends the provisions of AB 900 through the year 2025, and lowers the threshold for eligible housing projects. SB 7 provides benefits to projects that were previously certified under AB 900 but that did not receive project approvals by the prior deadline of January 1, 2021, and marks the first bill of the Senate’s 2021 “housing package”



that targets California's ongoing housing crisis, with an emphasis on minimization of greenhouse gases and boosting employment opportunities.

SB 7 reenacts AB 900 and adds (1) eligibility for infill housing development projects with investments between \$15 and \$100 million (the previous threshold was \$100 million and above); (2) a requirement of quantification and mitigation of the impacts of a project from the emissions of greenhouse gases with geographic restrictions for nonhousing development projects; (3) a revision of labor-related requirements for projects undertaken by both public agencies and private entities, adding "skilled and trained" workforce to the existing prevailing wage requirements; and (4) authorization for the governor to certify a project before the lead agency certifies the final EIR for the project or an alternative described in an EIR. SB 7 requires an applicant for certification of a project to (1) demonstrate that they are preparing the administrative record concurrently with the administrative process and (2) agree to pay the costs of both the trial court and court of appeal in hearing and deciding a case challenging a lead agency's action on a certified project.

### **Duplex Zoning Law (Senate Bill 9)**

On September 16, 2021, Governor Gavin Newsom signed into law SB 9, which requires, for qualifying parcels, ministerial approval of two-unit housing developments in single-family zoning districts and would allow single-family parcels to be subdivided into two lots. Taken together, these provisions could allow for development of up to four housing units on lots where only one unit is currently permitted. SB 9 requires applicants for lot splits under this law to confirm that they intend to occupy one of the housing units as their principal residence for a minimum of 3 years, unless the applicant is a community land trust or qualified nonprofit corporation. Under SB 9, a local agency retains discretion to deny a proposed housing project if it finds that the project would have an adverse health and safety or environmental impact that cannot be feasibly mitigated or avoided. Local agencies are also required to prohibit use of the units for short-term rentals of 30 days or less.

### **CEQA Streamlining for Upzoning (Senate Bill 10)**

Signed into law by Governor Newsom on September 16, 2021, SB 10 allows, but does not require, local agencies to avoid CEQA review when upzoning parcels to allow up to 10 units per parcel, at a height specified by local ordinance, if the parcel is located in a qualifying transit-rich area or an urban infill site. SB 10 does not provide new CEQA exemptions or streamlining for the projects that would be constructed on these upzoned parcels, but under existing law, certain CEQA exemptions or streamlining may be available on a case-by-case basis depending on project size, site conditions, and other factors. However, for larger residential or mixed-use projects with more than 10 units developed on one or more parcels upzoned pursuant to SB 10, the bill prohibits those projects from being approved ministerially or by right or from being exempt from CEQA with limited exceptions.

### **Affordable Housing And High Road Jobs Act (Assembly Bill 2011)**

AB 2011, the Affordable Housing and High Road Jobs Act, was signed in September 2022 and became effective on July 1, 2023. AB 2011 creates a CEQA-exempt, ministerial approval process for multi-family housing projects on sites within a zone in which office, retail or parking are the principally permitted use. AB 2011 contains different qualifying criteria depending on if the proposed housing project is 100% affordable or a mixed-income project. To qualify, construction workers must be paid prevailing wages. Other labor standards are applicable if the project is more than 50 units.

### **Middle Class Housing Act (Senate Bill 6)**

SB 6, the Middle Class Housing Act, was signed in September 2022 and became effective on July 1, 2023. Similar to AB 2011, SB 6 allows residential development on sites currently designated and zoned for office, retail or parking uses. Qualifying projects under SB 6, must be either all housing or a mixed-use development with at least 50% of the new construction dedicated to housing. Affordable housing is not required to qualify. The project must be located within an urbanized area or urban cluster with less than one-third of the site (or its immediate neighbors) dedicated to industrial uses. In addition, certain construction labor requirements must be met such as paying prevailing wages and utilizing skilled and trained workforce. SB 6 differs from AB 2011 in that it does not create a new approval process for such projects.

**Accessory Dwelling Units: Local Ordinances: Separate Sale or Conveyance (Assembly Bill 1033)**

AB 1033 was signed in October 2023 and became effective on January 1, 2024. AB 1033 allows local agencies, either by local ordinance or ministerial approval, to provide for the creation of accessory dwelling units (ADU) in areas zoned for residential use. In addition, AB 1033 authorizes a local agency to adopt an ordinance to allow for the separate conveyance of the primary dwelling unit and accessory dwelling unit or condominiums.

**Housing Accountability Act: Housing Disapprovals: Required Local Findings (Assembly Bill 1893)**

AB 1893 was signed in September 2024 and became effective January 1, 2025. AB 1893 makes significant revisions to the Housing Accountability Act. Most notably, the bill specified that a local agency may disapprove or conditionally approve a housing development project as long as the local agency makes written findings that on the date that the housing development project was deemed complete, the jurisdiction did not have an adopted revised housing element that was in compliance with the State law, and the housing development project is not a builder's remedy project as defined under SB 167.

In addition, AB 1893 revises the definitions included in SB 167 including the definition of "housing development project" to expand the scope of mixed-use developments that qualify under the definition, and to include farmworker housing. AB 1893 also revises the definition of "disapprove the housing development project" to include any instance in which a local agency takes a final administrative action of the application where the application is disapproved and that a local agency disapproves the project if it undertakes certain acts such as failing to cease a course of conduct that effectively disapproves the proposed housing development without taking final administrative action if certain conditions are met. The bill also revised the definition of the term "housing for very low, low-, or moderate-income households" to mean housing for lower income households, mixed-income households, or moderate -income households.

AB 1893 also prescribes requirements that apply to a housing development project that qualifies as a builder's remedy project. These requirements include that a builder's remedy project is deemed to be in compliance with applicable residential density standards and objective zoning standards, objective subdivision standards, and objective design review standards necessary for the streamlined, ministerial approval processes defined under AB 2011.

**Housing Development Approvals (Senate Bill 450)**

SB 450 was signed in September 2024 and became effective January 1, 2025. SB 450 aims to streamline elements of SB 9 by prohibiting a local agency from imposing objective zoning standards, objective design standards, and objective subdivision standards that do not apply uniformly to developments within the underlying zoning designation. In addition, SB 450 would remove the authorization of a local agency to deny a proposed housing development if the building official makes a written finding that the proposed development project would have a specific, adverse impact on the environment. In addition, SB 450 would require the local agency to consider and approve or deny the proposed housing development application within 60 days from the date the local agency receives the completed application and would deem the application approved after that time. Furthermore, it requires that a permitting agency, which denies a housing development application, provide a full set of comments identifying items that define and include guidance on how the application can be remedied.

**Assembly Bill 130**

AB 130 was signed in June 2025 and went into effect immediately. AB 130 makes numerous changes to California's housing laws including removing the sunset date on the five year limit on housing development projects established under SB 330, requiring that a local agency makes a determination whether the site of a housing development project is a historic site at the time the application is deemed complete, repealing the expiration provisions that were included in the Housing Crisis Act of 2019. In addition, AB 130 amends the Housing Accountability Act and Permit Streamlining Act to make elements of those laws permanent such as the rule that made housing development projects subject only to ordinances, policies, and standards that are in effect at the time when the preliminary application for the housing development project was submitted. AB 130 also revised the Permit Streamlining Act to cover any housing development project, regardless of whether the entitlement is ministerial or discretionary and established a new 60-day time limit to approve or disapprove ministerial projects.

Most notably, AB 130 included Public Resource Code Section 21080.66, which establishes a new statutory exemption for qualifying housing development projects that are 20 acres or less, or five acres or less in the case of a builder's remedy project site, and that:

- ▶ Are located in an incorporated city or urban area, and either previously developed or surrounded by urban uses,
- ▶ Are consistent with applicable local plans,
- ▶ Are at least half of the density that is deemed appropriate to accommodate lower-income households in the State Housing Element Law, as set forth in Gov. Code section 65583.2(c)(3)(B);
- ▶ Do not require demolition of a historic structure;
- ▶ Avoids hazardous sites and sensitive lands (e.g., prime farmland, wetlands, etc.);
- ▶ Do not include any transient lodging (e.g., hotel, motel, or bed and breakfast inn);
- ▶ Meet specific tribal consultation requirements and include mitigation for tribal cultural resources;
- ▶ Include a condition of approval requiring an environmental assessment for hazardous substance releases, with mitigation requirements based upon results;
- ▶ Comply with specific environmental hazard and air filtration standards if within 500 feet of a freeway;
- ▶ Comply with prevailing wage and other labor standards if over 85 feet or if 100% of units will be dedicated to lower-income households and with additional labor provisions for projects in San Francisco.

AB 130 also establishes a 30-day limit to approve or deny projects that qualify under the new exemption under Public Resource Code Section 21080.66.

### Senate Bill 131

SB 131 was signed in June 2025 and went into effect immediately. SB 131 expanded current CEQA exemptions including exemptions to projects that would provide sewer service to a disadvantaged community so long as the project would not affect wetland or sensitive habitats, and exemptions to linear broadband projects within the public right of way to include local streets or roads. This bill primarily amends CEQA to expand the types of exemptions under CEQA to include:

- ▶ Rezoning that implements actions included in an approved housing element, new agricultural employee housing projects and projects consisting exclusively of the repair or maintenance of an existing farmworker housing project,
- ▶ Community water projects that do not include construction and result in long term benefits to climate resiliency
- ▶ Wildfire risk reduction projects
- ▶ Any activity or approval necessary planning, design, site acquisition, construction, operation, or maintenance of public park or nonmotorized recreational trail facilities
- ▶ Development, construction, or operation of a heavy maintenance facility or other maintenance facility for electrically powered high-speed rail.
- ▶ Day care centers
- ▶ Federally qualified food banks
- ▶ A Nonprofit foodbank or food pantry
- ▶ Projects that consist exclusively of advanced manufacturing facilities.

## The Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008

The Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008 (SB 375) (Chapter 728, Statutes of 2008) requires metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) like SANDAG to prepare an SCS as part of the RTP. The SCS must identify areas in the region sufficient to accommodate the housing needs of the entire population, including all economic segments, over the RTP's planning period. This includes accounting for net migration into the region, population growth, household formation, and employment growth, as specified in Government Code Section 65080.

Under SB 375, the preparation of the RHNA is coordinated with the SCS. The RHNA must allocate housing units in a manner consistent with the development pattern outlined in the SCS (Government Code Section 65584.04[i]). The SCS is required to use the most recent planning assumptions, including local general plans and other relevant factors (Government Code Section 65080[b][2][B]).

For regions like San Diego, which are classified as "non-attainment" areas under the federal Clean Air Act due to air quality challenges, SB 375 mandates that the RTP be updated every 4 years. Regional housing needs assessments and housing element schedules are synchronized with every other RTP update, requiring housing elements to be updated every 8 years and submitted no later than 18 months after RTP adoption.

The preparation of SANDAG's 2021 Regional Plan, which integrates the RTP and SCS, coincided with cycle 6 of the RHNA (April 15, 2021, to April 15, 2029). This ensures alignment between regional transportation, housing, and climate strategies, promoting a sustainable development pattern that addresses housing needs while reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Cycle 7 of the RHNA will coincide with preparation of SANDAG's Regional Plan anticipated for adoption in 2029.

## California Building Standards Code

The minimum standards for structural design and construction in California are identified in the California Building Code (California Code of Regulations [CCR] Title 24). The 2022 triennial edition of Title 24 was published July 1, 2022, with an effective date of January 1, 2023. Information Bulletins 22-01 and 22-05 provide detailed information concerning changes to the 2022 publication. The 2022 California Building Standards Code contains the following 12 codes: Building, Residential, Electrical, Plumbing, Administrative, Mechanical, Energy, Historical Building, Fire, Existing Building, Green Building Standards (CALGreen), and the Reference Standards Code. These codes promote public health and safety and ensure that safe and decent housing is constructed in the San Diego region. The 2022 triennial edition remains in effect until the effective date of the 2025 triennial edition, which will become effective January 1, 2026.

## LOCAL LAWS, REGULATIONS, PLANS, AND POLICIES

### Regional Housing Needs Assessment

State law requires the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to determine each region's housing need in an RHNA and requires regions, such as SANDAG, to adopt a regional housing needs allocation plan (Government Code Sections 65584[a],[b]). The intent of the RHNA process is to create a better balance of jobs and housing in communities, ensure the availability of decent affordable housing for all income groups, and achieve sustainability through long-term strategic land use planning. In July 2020, the SANDAG Board of Directors adopted the 6<sup>th</sup> Cycle RHNA Plan, which allocates housing units to jurisdictions based on each jurisdiction's share of transit and jobs in the region. It also includes an equity adjustment allocating a lower proportion of housing need to an income category when a jurisdiction already has a disproportionately high share of households in that income category compared to the regional share (SANDAG 2021). The RHNA for the sixth housing element cycle has two main components:

- ▶ **RHNA Determination**—HCD determination of the regionwide housing units needed during the housing element cycle
- ▶ **RHNA Plan**—The SANDAG plan to allocate the RHNA Determination housing units to each local jurisdiction by four income categories

In July 2018, SANDAG received the RHNA Determination from HCD, requiring that the region plan for 171,685 housing units during the sixth housing element cycle, which covers the years 2021 through 2029. The housing units are divided into four income categories shown in Table 4.14-5 below.

**Table 4.14-5 Housing Unit Needs in the San Diego Region Sixth Housing Element Cycle (2021–2029)**

Income Category	Housing Unit Need	Percentage
Very low	42,332	24.7
Low	26,627	15.5
Moderate	29,734	17.3
Above moderate	72,992	42.5
Total housing units	171,685	100

Source: SANDAG 2021.

Following adoption of the 6<sup>th</sup> Cycle RHNA Plan, jurisdictions in the region updated their housing elements to identify adequate sites to accommodate the RHNA allocations. Every jurisdiction in the San Diego region has since adopted a housing element approved by HCD. The adopted housing elements informed development of the proposed Plan's SCS land use pattern, setting forth a forecasted development pattern for the region. The SCS land use pattern identifies areas in the region sufficient to house the projection of regional housing need determined by HCD and includes general plan zoning assumptions for each jurisdiction that meet the housing unit allocations in the RHNA Plan.

### Housing Elements of Local Jurisdictions

Each city and the county has developed and must periodically update a housing element as part of its general plan per requirements of the State Housing Element Law. The RHNA Plan allocates housing needs in the four income categories to each of the cities and county to use in their housing element updates. The housing element is a comprehensive assessment of current and forecasted housing needs for all economic segments of the community. It includes an inventory of land suitable for residential development and a zoning analysis to demonstrate the jurisdiction's ability to accommodate its housing unit allocation; it also sets forth local housing policies and programs to implement those policies. The cities and county are required to update their housing elements to include RHNA Plan allocations every 8 years; updates can be required every 4 years if updated housing elements are not adopted by certain deadlines (Government Code Section 65588[e]). Many jurisdictions in the region are in their sixth cycle of housing element updates.

### Land Use Elements of Local Jurisdictions

Each local city and the county have developed a land use element as part of its general plan per requirements of State Planning and Zoning Law (Government Code Section 65000 et seq.). The land use element designates the general location and intensity of housing, business, industry, open space, education, public buildings and grounds, waste disposal facilities, and other land uses.

### Local Coastal Programs of Local Jurisdictions

Local jurisdictions in the Coastal Zone may prepare a local coastal program (LCP) for approval by the Coastal Commission. LCPs implement the goals, policies, and requirements of the Coastal Act, including those pertaining to housing, in a local jurisdiction.

In the San Diego region, several jurisdictions have developed LCPs, including:

- **City of San Diego:** The city's LCP encompasses multiple segments corresponding to its coastal communities, such as La Jolla, Pacific Beach, and Ocean Beach (California Coastal Commission 2016). Each segment includes specific land use plans and implementation ordinances tailored to the unique characteristics of the community and are included within their respective Community Plans.



- **County of San Diego:** The county's LCP covers the unincorporated areas within the coastal zone, notably the San Dieguito community, including San Dieguito Park. The LCP consists of a land use plan and an implementation plan, guiding development and protecting coastal resources in these areas (County of San Diego 2018).

These LCPs are essential tools for managing coastal development, ensuring public access, and protecting coastal resources in alignment with the California Coastal Act.

### 4.14.3 Significance Criteria

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines provides criteria for determining the significance of a project's environmental impacts in the form of initial study checklist questions. Unless otherwise noted, the significance criteria specifically developed for this EIR are based on the CEQA Guidelines Appendix G checklist questions. In some cases, SANDAG has combined checklist questions, edited their wording, or changed their location in the document in an effort to develop significance criteria that reflect the programmatic level of analysis in this EIR, and the unique characteristics of the proposed Plan.

Checklist questions for population and housing are provided in Section XIV of CEQA Guidelines Appendix G. To better focus the potential impacts associated with the proposed Plan, the CEQA Guidelines Appendix G questions have been combined and modified. Specifically, criteria (b) and (c) are combined since criteria (b) and (c) in CEQA Guidelines Appendix G relate to displacement of a substantial number of existing housing units and displacement of a substantial number of people. These two questions have been combined in this document (POP-2) because both focus on the need for construction of replacement housing as a result of substantial displacement. Therefore, Implementation of the proposed Plan would have a significant population and housing impact if it would:

- POP-1** Induce substantial unplanned population growth to areas of the region either directly (e.g., by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (e.g., by extending roads and other infrastructure).
- POP-2** Displace substantial numbers of people or housing units, which would necessitate the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

The analysis discloses impacts to population and housing. There is insufficient evidence to support a meaningful analysis of how the proposed Plan's population and housing impacts would be worsened by climate change. Therefore, a climate change analysis for population and housing is not included in this section.

### 4.14.4 Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

- POP-1** **INDUCE SUBSTANTIAL UNPLANNED POPULATION GROWTH TO AREAS OF THE REGION EITHER DIRECTLY (E.G., BY PROPOSING NEW HOMES AND BUSINESSES) OR INDIRECTLY (E.G., BY EXTENDING ROADS AND OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE).**

#### Analysis Methodology

This section analyzes whether substantial increases in unplanned population growth would be induced by the proposed Plan based on the Series 15 Regional Growth Forecast, SCS land use pattern, and proposed transportation network improvements and programs. Growth inducement is discussed further in Chapter 6, "Other Considerations Required by CEQA." The secondary impacts of the proposed Plan's population growth are the physical changes to the environment already analyzed in the other environmental issue area sections of this EIR (Sections 4.1 through 4.19); they are not addressed in this section.

Proposed projects related to the transportation network improvements and programs, including those that potentially could indirectly induce unplanned growth, can be found in Chapter 2, Project Description, are listed in Tables 2-7 to 2-11 and shown on Figures 2-15 to 2-18.

## Impact Analysis

### 2035

#### Regional Growth and Land Use Change

As shown in Table 2-1, in Section 2.0, "Project Description," of this Draft EIR, from 2022 to 2035, the region is forecasted have an increase of 117,056 people (4%), 137,242 housing units (11%), and 67,297 jobs (4%). The 2035 regional SCS land use pattern is shown in Figure 2-4. Approximately 93.3% of the forecasted regional population increases between 2022 and 2035 are in the cities of San Diego (51.3%), Chula Vista (26.1%), and San Marcos (15.8%). Those same three jurisdictions would accommodate approximately 71.4% of new housing units in the region between 2022 and 2035, while the cities of San Diego, San Marcos, and Oceanside would accommodate more than 69.5% of new jobs in the region between 2022 and 2035.

As discussed above and in Chapter 2, "Project Description," as regional employment rises, vacancy rates fall, and the state's population increases, net migration for the region is projected to climb through the mid-years of the forecast. Over time, as these trends slow, and with the state's population growth expected to turn negative, net migration is forecasted to decrease, ultimately turning negative by the forecast's horizon.

New development caused by regional growth and land use change would be in the form of new homes, services, commercial areas, industrial centers, schools, and civic uses. Additionally, the proposed Plan forecasts a general intensification of existing land uses in urban communities and along key transportation corridors consistent with jurisdiction general plans. By 2035, the land use components of the proposed Plan would induce population increases in the specific locations described above through policies and strategies that provide for the development of new housing units, job-supporting nonresidential land uses, and related improvements to public facilities and infrastructure.

As discussed above, Government Code Section 65080(b)(2)(B)(ii) requires that the RTP/SCS accommodate all the population of the region, including all economic segments of the population, over the course of the planning period of the regional transportation plan. In accordance with these requirements, the projected housing mix would help the region accommodate the projected housing needs over the life of the proposed Plan, especially housing needs for the lower income segments.

As mandated by State Housing Law as part of the periodic (every 8 years) process of updating local housing elements of general plans, SANDAG is responsible for the allocation of regional housing need to jurisdictions in the region. As discussed in Section 4.14.2, "Regulatory Setting," SANDAG adopted its sixth cycle RHNA Plan in July 2020. Every jurisdiction in the San Diego region has since adopted a housing element approved by HCD. The adopted housing elements informed development of the SCS land use pattern, setting forth a forecasted development pattern for the region. The SCS land use pattern identifies areas in the region sufficient to house the projection of regional housing need determined by HCD and includes general plan zoning assumptions for each jurisdiction that meet the housing unit allocations in the RHNA Plan.

Implementation of the proposed Plan's forecasted development pattern would accommodate the projected 11% future housing growth and 4% future employment growth in 2035 while remaining consistent with local plans. The proposed Plan would move the region toward more compact, mixed-use development with a variety of housing types leading to more opportunities for walking and biking, more transit use, and shorter auto trips. Overall, the proposed Plan accommodates anticipated growth consistent with local plans rather than inducing unplanned growth. Therefore, implementation of the proposed Plan would not induce unplanned growth in the region, resulting in a less than significant impact.

#### Transportation Network Improvements and Programs

Major transportation network improvements by 2035 include new Managed Lanes and Managed Lane Connectors on SR 15, SR 52, SR 78, I-5, I-15, and I-805. The proposed Plan also includes Reversible Managed Lane improvements on SR-75, improvements to rural corridors on SR-67, SR 76, SR 79, SR 94, and I-8, as well as

interchange and arterial operational improvements on SR 94 and SR 125. In addition, the proposed Plan includes increased roadway and transit connections to the United States–Mexico border, as well as tolling equipment and Regional Border Management System investments on SR 11. Upgrades at certain locations on the Los Angeles–San Diego–San Luis Obispo (LOSSAN) Rail Corridor would be implemented during this period. Other major network improvements include grade separations at certain locations on the SPRINTER, Green line, Blue Line, and Orange Line. Double-tracking is also proposed on the SPRINTER.

Transportation improvements are informed by recent and historical data trends, as well as input from regional stakeholders, to address evolving travel demands and needs. The proposed Plan relies on data-driven insights to evaluate the best investments for meeting current and future regional needs. These needs include more transit options, more Flexible Fleet options, and more opportunities for biking, walking, and other forms of active transportation.

Although the Series 15 Forecast projects an aging population and a decrease in total population in the later years of the proposed Plan, housing shortages will continue to drive demand for housing and job opportunities. Although job growth is anticipated, many positions may be filled by commuters from outside the region. These demographic and economic shifts influence travel demands and inform the vision for the region’s future transportation system.

Data also reveals that approximately one-quarter of regional transit trips are linked to shopping, dining, or visiting attractions, whereas one-third of all travel in the region is dedicated to these activities. This underscores the importance of a well-connected transportation network to support the needs of all travelers, whether residents or visitors.

The planned transportation improvements and programs would help facilitate movement of people and goods and accessibility to improve the quality of life and sustain the economy as the region grows. The transportation improvements and programs emphasize more efficient use of the existing highway and arterial networks and an enhanced transit network that would facilitate greater mobility between communities and employment or commercial centers within the region. Enhanced mobility would support forecasted regional growth by increasing the accessibility to and from areas of the region that are forecasted to increase housing or employment development. Transportation strategies included in the proposed Plan would support increased density in existing urban areas by facilitating travel and would not be expected to induce unplanned population growth because these projects are growth accommodating and generally are aimed at improving the existing transportation networks. Transportation projects and transit improvements, although not adding new homes or businesses directly, have the potential to create demand for new development around transit stations. However, many communities foresee these types of development and plan for them accordingly.

Additionally, the integrated transportation investments and land use strategies in the proposed Plan would influence economic (jobs) and household growth in some areas and could remove some obstacles to growth in other parts of the region. Specifically, improved accessibility and connectivity potentially gained from transportation investments in the proposed Plan could facilitate population and economic growth in areas of the region that are currently not developed or underdeveloped, such as Complete Corridors and Flexible Fleets projects located in the East County and Rural Areas region of the Plan. Increased accessibility and connectivity to these areas could attract growth opportunities as residents look to relocate to more affordable areas outside of the urban core. Therefore, implementation of the proposed Plan in 2035 would indirectly induce unplanned growth in some areas of the San Diego region, resulting in a significant impact.

## 2035 Conclusion

Implementation of transportation network improvements, but not regional growth and land use change, would induce unplanned growth in some areas of the San Diego region. Therefore, this impact (POP-1) in the year 2035 is significant.

## 2050

### Regional Growth and Land Use Change

As shown in Table 2-1 in Section 2.0 "Project Description," of this Draft EIR, from 2036 to 2050, regional population is forecasted to decrease by 4,112 people (-0.1%). Housing is forecasted to increase by 65,577 units (4.8%), and employment is forecasted to increase by 103,460 jobs (6.2%). The 2050 regional SCS land use pattern is shown in Figure 2-5 in Chapter 2, "Project Description." The majority of the forecasted regional population decrease between 2036 and 2050 is attributed to the unincorporated county, and the cities of Carlsbad and El Cajon. Approximately 78.8% of new housing units are in the cities of San Diego (51.6%) and Chula Vista (17.1%) and the unincorporated county. Similarly, these same two jurisdictions contribute to approximately 70.3% of new jobs between 2036 and 2050.

Implementation of the proposed Plan's forecasted development pattern would accommodate the projected 4.8% future total housing growth and 6.2% future employment growth in 2050 while remaining consistent with local plans. Similar to the 2035 analysis, regional growth and development in the region would be more compact, mixed-use development with a variety of housing types leading to more opportunities for walking and biking, more transit use, and shorter auto trips. Overall the proposed Plan accommodates anticipated growth consistent with local plans rather than inducing unplanned growth. Therefore, implementation of the proposed Plan would not induce unplanned growth in the region, resulting in a less than significant impact.

### Transportation Network Improvements and Programs

Major transportation network improvements by 2050 include new Managed Lanes and Managed Lane Connectors on SR 52, SR 56, SR 75, SR 94, SR 125, SR 163, I-15, and I-805. In addition, the proposed Plan includes increased roadway and transit connections to the United States–Mexico border, as well as expansion of and improvements to existing port of entry facilities. Upgrades at certain locations on the LOSSAN Rail Corridor would continue during this period. Grade separations on the SPRINTER, Blue Line, Green Line, and Orange Line, as well as double-tracking on the SPRINTER would also continue during this period.

Between 2036 and 2050, most transportation network improvements would affect existing transportation facilities. The location and timing of transportation network improvements and programs identified in the proposed Plan would accommodate forecasted regional growth in population in the specific locations described in this section where the development of new housing units and jobs-supporting nonresidential land uses would occur.

The planned network improvements and programs would help facilitate movement of people and goods and accessibility to improve the quality of life and sustain the economy as the region grows. The transportation network improvements and programs emphasize more efficient use of the existing highway and arterial networks, and an enhanced transit network that would facilitate greater mobility between communities and employment or commercial centers in the region. Enhanced mobility would support forecasted regional growth by increasing the accessibility to and from areas of the region that are forecasted to increase housing or employment development. In areas where transit improvements are implemented in addition to roadway improvements, greater intensity of growth can be accommodated. Specifically, improved accessibility and connectivity potentially gained from transportation investments in the proposed Plan could facilitate population and economic growth in areas of the region that are currently not developed or are underdeveloped, such as Complete Corridors and Flexible Fleets projects located in the East County and Rural Areas region of the Plan. Increased accessibility and connectivity to these areas could attract growth opportunities as residents look to relocate to more affordable areas outside of the urban core. Therefore, implementation of the proposed Plan through 2050 would indirectly induce unplanned growth in some areas of the San Diego region, resulting in a significant impact.

### 2050 Conclusion

Implementation of the transportation network improvements, but not regional growth and land use change, would induce unplanned growth in some areas of the San Diego region. Therefore, this impact (POP-1) in the year 2050 is significant.

## MITIGATION MEASURES

### **POP-1 INDUCE SUBSTANTIAL UNPLANNED POPULATION GROWTH TO AREAS OF THE REGION EITHER DIRECTLY (E.G., BY PROPOSING NEW HOMES AND BUSINESSES) OR INDIRECTLY (E.G., BY EXTENDING ROADS AND OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE).**

2035, 2050

#### **POP-1a Coordinate with Local Jurisdictions to Reduce Substantial Unplanned Population Growth.**

Implementation of the proposed Plan through 2050 would indirectly induce unplanned population growth in areas of the region that are currently not developed or are underdeveloped. SANDAG shall, and other transportation project sponsors can and should:

- ▶ implement early coordination with local jurisdictions to anticipate and plan for substantial unplanned growth impacts resulting from transportation network improvements
- ▶ work with local jurisdictions to identify opportunities to develop housing as part of transportation projects.

## SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

2035, 2050

Consistent with the discussion above, impacts related to induced substantial unplanned population growth under the proposed Plan would be significant and unavoidable. The coordination measures required under POP-1a would require SANDAG, and encourage other transportation project sponsors, to support local jurisdictions in efforts to prepare for anticipated substantial unplanned growth resulting from transportation network improvements through early coordination and identification of opportunities to develop housing as part of transportation projects.

While these measures would reduce the proposed Plan's indirect impacts associated with substantial unplanned growth on local housing infrastructure, there may still be transportation projects where such early coordination is not feasible. Finally, SANDAG cannot require implementing agencies other than SANDAG to adopt mitigation measures where SANDAG is not the lead agency, and it is ultimately the responsibility and jurisdiction of the implementing agency to determine and adopt project-specific mitigation. Thus, the project's impacts on substantial unplanned population growth under the proposed Plan would remain significant and unavoidable after mitigation.

### **POP-2 DISPLACE SUBSTANTIAL NUMBERS OF PEOPLE OR HOUSING UNITS, WHICH WOULD NECESSITATE THE CONSTRUCTION OF REPLACEMENT HOUSING ELSEWHERE.**

#### **Analysis Methodology**

This analysis examines whether forecasted regional growth and land use change and planned transportation network improvements would physically displace a substantial number of people or housing units, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. The significance of the impact is determined by the degree to which new housing units are needed elsewhere, the construction of which would have the potential to result in a significant physical impact on the environment. Because the degree to which displacement occurs is based on a variety of factors, such as details of actual development project proposals; economic factors, including land costs; and other inputs, the analysis does not quantify numbers of people or housing units that would be displaced but instead focuses on the potential for substantial displacement to occur with implementation of the proposed Plan.

For regional growth, the "Impact Analysis" section below analyzes forecasted development patterns throughout the region as represented in the proposed Plan, including new growth in existing urbanized areas. The regional growth and land use changes forecasted for each horizon year are used to describe how the proposed Plan may shape future development patterns that, as a consequence of the proposed Plan's implementation, would result in the construction of replacement housing elsewhere to offset the displacement of people and housing that could



occur under the proposed Plan. The analysis also includes a qualitative discussion that describes how the forecasted growth and land use changes under the proposed Plan may affect the affordable housing stock.

For transportation network improvements, the analysis describes how transportation projects may require new right-of-way (ROW) acquisitions that contribute to the physical displacement of people and housing units. Displacement of housing was assessed qualitatively by considering the possibility of major transportation projects to impact surrounding land uses and community development. Highway and transit/rail extensions and major interchange projects were assumed to have a higher potential to result in the physical displacement of people and housing units because they would involve the creation of new roadways. Highway widening and other projects along established transportation ROWs were assumed to have a lower potential to physically displace people and housing units.

A 500-foot potential impact zone was drawn around the freeway, rail, and transit projects in the proposed Plan Area to compute the number of acres that could be affected by the construction and operation of major transportation projects under the proposed Plan. Table 4.14-6 shows the results of the analysis with the potential acreage of these affected areas within the region.

**Table 4.14-6 Potential Displacement of Existing Residential and Commercial Land Uses by Transportation Projects (in acres)**

Land Use	2035	2050
Developed	0	0
Agriculture	0	0
Commercial and office	4	24
Education and institutions	0	0
Heavy and light industry	1	2
Military	0	0
Mixed use	30	81
Mobile homes	347	479
Multifamily residential	1,176	1,898
Open space parks	0	0
Recreation	0	0
Single-family residential	2,855	4,600
Transportation, communications, utilities	2	0
Under construction	0	0
Spaced rural residential	880	1,777
Vacant	0	0
Water	0	0
Total	5,295	8,861

Source: SANDAG 2025b.

Transportation improvements that would potentially occur under the proposed Plan for each horizon year are compared with the existing transportation facilities and existing development (i.e., population and housing locations) to determine if implementation of the proposed Plan would necessitate the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. Similar to the analysis for regional growth, a qualitative discussion is provided to describe how the transportation network improvements under the proposed Plan may affect the affordable housing stock.

## Impact Analysis

### 2035

#### Regional Growth and Land Use Change

As shown in Table 2-1, in Section 2.0, “Project Description,” of this Draft EIR, from 2022 to 2035, the region is forecasted have an increase of 117,056 people (4%), 137,242 housing units (11%), and 67,297 jobs (4%). The 2035 regional SCS land use pattern is shown in Figure 2-4. Approximately 93.3% of the forecasted regional population increases between 2022 and 2035 are in the cities of San Diego (51.3%), Chula Vista (26.1%), and San Marcos (15.8%). Those same three jurisdictions would accommodate approximately 71.4% of new housing units in the region between 2022 and 2035, while the cities of San Diego, San Marcos, and Oceanside would accommodate more than 69.5% of new jobs in the region between 2022 and 2035. The SCS land use growth pattern indicates there would be an adequate number of residential units planned to meet the forecasted demand, taking into account localized displacement of some households within the region.

Existing laws are in place to provide assistance to relocated households and businesses. As described in Section 4.14.2, “Regulatory Setting,” under the Federal Uniform Act and California Relocation Assistance Act, public agencies must provide relocation assistance when an action by an agency displaces residences.<sup>1</sup> Construction of replacement housing outside the region would, however, be unlikely, because adopted land use plans have sufficient capacity to accommodate forecasted population and housing growth.

The intensification of development forecasted between 2022 and 2035 could lead to the redevelopment of existing properties containing lower-density residential uses. These projects may be exempted from further CEQA review if they qualify under SB 10 or AB 2011. Existing structures would be replaced with higher-density housing or mixed-use commercial structures, leading to substantial displacement of people or housing units, including affordable housing units, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. Thus, regional growth and land use change could cause the displacement of a substantial number of people and housing units, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere, resulting in a significant impact.

#### Transportation Network Improvements and Programs

Major transportation network improvements by 2035 include new Managed Lanes and Managed Lane Connectors on SR 15, SR 52, SR 78, I-5, I-15, and I-805. The proposed Plan also includes Reversible Managed Lane improvements on SR-75, improvements to rural corridors on SR-67, SR 76, SR 79, SR 94, and I-8, as well as interchange and arterial operational improvements on SR 94 and SR 125. In addition, the proposed Plan includes increased roadway and transit connections to the United States–Mexico border, as well as tolling equipment and Regional Border Management System investments on SR 11. Upgrades at certain locations on the LOSSAN Rail Corridor would be implemented during this period. Other major network improvements include grade separations at certain locations on the SPRINTER, Green line, Blue Line, and Orange Line. Double-tracking is also proposed on the SPRINTER.

Most transportation network improvements from 2035 to 2050 are investments in active transportation, complete corridors, and public transit located in established communities, such as the addition of managed lanes along Interstate I-5, I-15 and State Route 52, as well as operational improvements along State Routes and Interstates in the project area. Active transportation projects and improvements to regional arterials, would primarily be the installation of new bikeways and upgrades to existing bikeways along or within existing transportation alignments. Public transit projects would focus on existing bus route service improvements and light rail improvements such as the planned grade separation for the Orange light rail line between El Cajon and Downtown San Diego.

The proposed Plan’s improvements to existing transportation facilities would likely involve temporary and permanent ROW acquisition. Highway and transit/rail extensions and major interchange projects would have a

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<sup>1</sup> California Relocation Assistance Act applies to projects undertaken by the lead agency and/or in which a developer is working on behalf of the public agency beyond the need for regulatory approval or permitting (Government Code Section 7260[A]).

higher potential to result in the physical displacement of people and housing units because they would involve the creation of new roadways. These improvements are unlikely to involve acquisitions of property that would displace substantial numbers of people or housing units. However, it cannot be guaranteed that all future transportation improvements would avoid acquisition of properties that would result in substantial displacement of people or housing units, including affordable housing units. Individual transportation network improvements would undergo separate environmental review under CEQA and NEPA where applicable. The corresponding project-specific environmental documentation would identify significant impacts with regard to displacement of people or housing units, and identify mitigation measures to avoid or lessen the substantial displacement of people or housing units.

Additionally, existing laws are in place to provide assistance to relocated households and businesses. As described in Section 4.14.2, "Regulatory Setting," the Federal Uniform Act and California Relocation Assistance Act require public agencies to provide relocation assistance when an action by the agency displaces residences or businesses. Construction of replacement housing outside the region would be unlikely because adopted land use plans have sufficient capacity to accommodate forecasted population and housing growth. Nevertheless, it cannot be concluded that all project-level displacement of people or housing units associated with planned rail extensions would be avoided or substantially lessened.

As shown in Table 4.14-6 above, 5,258 acres of residential land uses could be affected by planned transportation improvements by 2035. Therefore, transportation network improvements could displace substantial numbers of existing residences, which would necessitate the construction of replacement housing elsewhere, resulting in a significant impact.

### 2035 Conclusion

Between 2022 and 2035, development associated with regional growth and land use change and planned transportation network improvements could displace a substantial number of people and existing housing units, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. Therefore, this impact (POP-2) in the year 2035 is significant.

## 2050

### Regional Growth and Land Use Change

As shown in Table 2-1 in Section 2.0 "Project Description," of this Draft EIR, from 2036 to 2050, the region is forecasted to decrease by 4,112 people (-0.1%), increase by 65,577 housing units (4.8%), and increase by 103,460 jobs (6.2%). The 2050 regional SCS land use pattern is shown in Figure 2-5. The majority of the forecasted regional population decrease between 2036 and 2050 is attributed to the unincorporated jurisdictions, the City of Carlsbad, and the City of El Cajon. Approximately 78.8% of new housing units would be developed in the City of San Diego (51.6%), City of Chula Vista (17.1%), and unincorporated jurisdictions. Similarly, these same three jurisdictions would accommodate approximately 70.3% of new jobs between 2036 and 2050. The projected land use strategy in 2050 would accommodate 65,577 housing units and 103,460 jobs between 2036 and 2050, which would be consistent with population and employment growth projections in the San Diego region. As stated in the 2035 analysis, the SCS land use growth pattern indicates that there is an adequate number of residential units to meet the forecasted demand, taking into account localized displacement of some households within the region. Thus, implementation of the proposed Plan would not result in displacement at the regional scale, and impacts at the regional level would be less than significant.

Existing laws are in place to provide assistance to relocated households and businesses. As described in Section 4.14.2, "Regulatory Setting," under the Federal Uniform Act and California Relocation Assistance Act, public agencies must provide relocation assistance when an action by the agency displaces residences.<sup>2</sup> Construction of

<sup>2</sup> California Relocation Assistance Act applies to projects undertaken by the lead agency and/or in which a developer is working on behalf of the public agency beyond the need for regulatory approval or permitting (Government Code Section 7260[A]).

replacement housing outside the region would, however, be unlikely, as adopted land use plans have sufficient capacity to accommodate forecasted population and housing growth.

Similar to the discussion for the year 2035, the intensification of development forecasted for 2050 would lead to the redevelopment of existing properties containing lower-density residential uses. These projects may be exempted from further CEQA review if they qualify under SB 10 or AB 2011. Existing structures would be replaced with higher-density housing or commercial structures and would lead to substantial displacement of people or housing units, including affordable housing units, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. Thus, regional growth and land use change could cause the displacement of a substantial number of people and housing units, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere, a significant impact.

#### Transportation Network Improvements and Programs

Most transportation network improvements from 2035 to 2050 are investments in active transportation, complete corridors, and public transit located in established communities, such as the addition of managed lanes along Interstate I-5 through the coastal cities of Encinitas, Carlsbad, and Oceanside; and operational improvements along State Routes in the project area, including the signalization of highway ramps. Active transportation projects and improvements to regional arterials, would primarily be upgrades to existing bikeways along or within existing transportation alignments. Public transit projects would focus on rail improvements including grade separations throughout the Plan area.

Between 2036 and 2050, most or all of the proposed Plan's transportation network improvements would be implemented. As discussed in the 2035 analysis, highway and transit/rail extensions and major interchange projects were assumed to have a higher potential to result in the physical displacement of people and housing units because they would involve the creation of new roadways. It cannot be guaranteed that all proposed improvements would avoid acquisition of residential properties that would result in substantial displacement of people or housing units, including affordable housing units. Individual transportation network improvements would undergo separate environmental review under CEQA and NEPA where applicable. The corresponding project-specific environmental documentation would identify significant impacts with regard to displacement of people or housing units, including affordable housing, and mitigation measures to avoid or lessen the substantial displacement of people or housing units.

As described in Section 4.14.2, "Regulatory Setting," the Federal Uniform Act and California Relocation Assistance Act require public agencies to provide relocation assistance when an action by the agency displaces residences or businesses. Although existing laws are in place to provide assistance to relocated households and businesses, it cannot be concluded that all project-level displacement of people or housing units associated with planned rail extensions and proposed new streetcars would be avoided or substantially lessened.

As shown in Table 4.14-6 above, 8,754 acres of residential land uses could be affected by planned transportation improvements by 2050. Therefore, transportation network improvements could displace substantial numbers of existing residences, which would necessitate the construction of replacement housing elsewhere, resulting in a significant impact.

#### 2050 Conclusion

Between 2036 and 2050, development associated with regional growth and land use change and planned transportation network improvements could displace a substantial number of people and existing housing units, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. Therefore, this impact (POP-2) in the year 2050 is significant.

## MITIGATION MEASURES

### POP-2 DISPLACE SUBSTANTIAL NUMBERS OF PEOPLE OR HOUSING UNITS, WHICH WOULD NECESSITATE THE CONSTRUCTION OF REPLACEMENT HOUSING ELSEWHERE.

2035, 2050

#### **POP-2a Design Development Projects to Reduce Displacement.**

During planning, design, and project-level CEQA review of land development projects, the County of San Diego, cities, and other local jurisdictions can and should develop design strategies to avoid or reduce substantial displacement of people or housing units, including affordable housing units, where consistent with overall goals to promote housing growth, including the provision of affordable housing. For development projects that would displace people or housing units, alternative designs to retain existing housing on-site, alternative project site locations and provision of replacement housing as a mitigation measure can and should be evaluated. While displacement should be considered during project evaluations, avoidance or reduction of displacement should not be employed where it would undermine achievement of housing goals, including the development of transit-oriented development and the provision of affordable housing.

#### **POP-2b Design Transportation Network Improvement Projects to Reduce Displacement.**

SANDAG shall, and other transportation project sponsors can and should, identify feasible project alignments during planning, design, and project-level CEQA review that avoid or reduce permanent property acquisitions that would result in the substantial displacement of people or housing units. Where avoidance is not feasible, measures to reduce substantial displacement should be considered including, but not limited to, the following:

- ▶ selecting alignments within existing public ROWs
- ▶ designing sections above- or below-grade to avoid property acquisition that would cause displacement of people or housing units, including affordable housing
- ▶ selecting alignments in properties that result in the least amount of displacement; for example, acquiring vacant or undeveloped portions of property rather than portions occupied by housing units
- ▶ working with local jurisdictions to identify opportunities to develop housing as part of transportation projects.

## SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

2035, 2050

Implementation of Mitigation Measures POP-2a and POP-2b would reduce the displacement of people and housing units. However, there is no guarantee that significant displacement impacts would be reduced to less-than-significant levels for all projects. Therefore, displacement resulting from regional growth and land use change and transportation network improvements is a significant and unavoidable impact of implementing the proposed Plan.

### 4.14.5 Cumulative Impacts Analysis

#### **C-POP-1 MAKE A CUMULATIVELY CONSIDERABLE CONTRIBUTION TO ADVERSE EFFECTS RELATED TO POPULATION AND HOUSING**

The area of geographic consideration for cumulative impacts is the Southern California and Northern Baja region. Large-scale land use change and the effectiveness of the transportation system influence the regional development pattern that dictates the location, timing, and amount of resulting population and housing increases or decreases across the region as a whole. If growth is not accommodated in one specific area, it would likely be accommodated at another locale within the general area. Thus, the entire region needs to be considered when addressing population and housing.



A projection approach is used for the cumulative analysis of population and housing impacts because growth, land use change, and transportation network improvements across the region can substantially impact and modify population and housing by supporting and facilitating the addition or displacement of homes and population on a large scale. A significant cumulative impact on population and housing would occur if the proposed Plan would result in incremental effects that are considered cumulatively significant when considered in combination with the effects of population and housing impact projections identified in adopted plans. Significant cumulative impacts related to population and housing would occur if the proposed Plan and other planning documents would induce substantial increases in unplanned population growth or contribute to displacement of a substantial number of existing people or housing units, which would necessitate the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

This cumulative impact assessment considers and relies on the impact analysis in this EIR for the proposed Plan; SCAG Connect SoCal 2024 EIR (SCAG 2024); and the California-Baja California Border Master Plan (Caltrans and SIDURT 2021). Information on population forecasts and transportation network improvements was compiled from the documents listed in Section 4.0, *Environmental Impact Analysis*. Table 4-1 shows these population forecasts for 2035 and 2050. Information on planned residential development and land use changes in Southern California is also available in adopted land use plans for individual cities and counties.

### **Impacts of the Proposed Plan**

Implementation of planned transportation network improvements would induce unplanned growth in some areas of the San Diego region in 2035 and 2050. This is considered a significant impact (Impact POP-1). By 2035 and 2050, the proposed Plan's regional growth and land use change would have the potential to displace a substantial number of residences, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. Transportation network improvements, such as new rail extensions, would also have the potential to displace a substantial number of people and existing housing units. Therefore, impacts related to the displacement of a substantial number of people and existing housing units, necessitating the construction of replacement elsewhere is significant in 2035 and 2050 (Impact POP-2).

### **Impacts of Projections in Adopted Plans**

According to the EIR prepared for the SCAG Connect SoCal 2024, Connect SoCal 2024 would facilitate population growth in some areas of the SCAG region. The SCAG Connect SoCal 2024 also found that transportation network improvements would displace a substantial number of existing homes due to ROW acquisitions. The Connect SoCal 2024 would influence the pattern of growth in the region through transportation investments and land use strategies that would contribute to a cumulatively considerable increase in population outside the region. These impacts were found significant and unavoidable (SCAG 2024).

The California-Baja California Border Master Plan is a binational comprehensive approach to coordinate planning and delivery of projects at land ports of entry (POEs) and transportation infrastructure serving those POEs in the California-Baja California region. The projects included in the Master Plan would support and facilitate current and projected cross-border travel demand and economic activity as populations on both sides of the border are forecasted to increase. Thus, the Master Plan would induce population growth and economic development.

Adopted land use plans for local jurisdictions in Southern California and Northern Baja would induce population growth through policy changes and zoning amendments that encourage and facilitate increased residential and employment growth. Some of this growth, particularly in currently built-out locations, would be driven by redevelopment in existing urban areas as communities increase their housing and commercial densities. For redevelopment to occur, existing housing and population would likely be displaced.

## **Cumulative Impacts and Impact Conclusions**

### **2035**

Implementation of the transportation network improvements associated with the proposed Plan by 2035 would induce substantial unplanned population growth. Implementation of the regional growth and land use change and transportation network improvements would also displace a substantial number of existing homes and

population. In addition, population and housing impacts were also identified in other land use plans would contribute to substantial unplanned population growth and displacement of homes or population. The combination of the direct population and housing impacts from the proposed Plan and these adopted plans would result in significant cumulative population and housing impacts in the Southern California and Northern Baja region by 2035. Because cumulative population and housing impacts throughout the Southern California and Northern Baja region by 2035 would be significant and because the proposed Plan's incremental impacts are significant, the proposed Plan's incremental population and housing impacts are also cumulatively considerable and thus significant (Impact C-POP-1).

### 2050

As discussed in the 2035 analysis, implementation of the transportation network improvements associated with the proposed Plan would induce substantial unplanned population growth. Implementation of the regional growth and land use change and transportation network improvements would also displace a substantial number of existing homes and population. While the analysis of the SCAG 2020-2045 RTP/SCS does not extend to 2050, regional population growth and associated impacts would continue through this timeframe, as would impacts of growth in Northern Baja.

Although currently adopted land use plans rarely extend to 2050, local infrastructure improvement projects, policy changes, and zoning amendments that support residential and employment growth would induce population growth beyond their timeframes. Policy changes and zoning amendments that allow and encourage higher-density residential and employment uses would likely continue to displace existing homes and population. When considered along with the direct population and housing impacts from the proposed Plan and these projects and adopted plans, the incremental impacts would result in significant cumulative population and housing impacts in the Southern California and Northern Baja region by 2050.

Because cumulative population and housing impacts throughout the Southern California and Northern Baja region by 2050 would be significant and because the proposed Plan's incremental impacts are significant, the proposed Plan's incremental population and housing impacts are also cumulatively considerable (Impact C-POP-1).

## MITIGATION MEASURES

### **C-POP-1      MAKE A CUMULATIVELY CONSIDERABLE CONTRIBUTION TO ADVERSE EFFECTS RELATED TO POPULATION AND HOUSING**

Therefore, Mitigation Measure POP-1a calls for collaboration between transportation project sponsors and affected local jurisdictions on transportation network improvements to reduce substantial unplanned growth. Even with implementation of mitigation, substantial unplanned growth impacts would be significant and unavoidable.

Mitigation Measures POP-2a and POP-2b call for project designs that reduce displacement. Even with implementation of mitigation, displacement impacts would be significant and unavoidable.

Therefore, the proposed Plan's incremental contributions to cumulative population and housing impacts in years 2035 and 2050 would remain cumulatively considerable post-mitigation.

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