

3.7 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

This section provides a discussion of the potential greenhouse gas emissions impacts due to the Proposed Project implementation and build-out. The information in this section is based off of the Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions Impact Analysis (Appendix C) prepared by Vista Environmental in May 2020.

3.7.1 Introduction

Constituent gases of the Earth's atmosphere, called atmospheric greenhouse gases (GHGs), play a critical role in the Earth's radiation amount by trapping infrared radiation from the Earth's surface, which otherwise would have escaped to space. Prominent greenhouse gases contributing to this process include carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), ozone (O₃), water vapor, nitrous oxide (N₂O), and chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs). This phenomenon, known as the Greenhouse Effect, is responsible for maintaining a habitable climate. Anthropogenic (caused or produced by humans) emissions of these greenhouse gases in excess of natural ambient concentrations are responsible for the enhancement of the Greenhouse Effect and have led to a trend of unnatural warming of the Earth's natural climate, known as global warming or climate change. Emissions of gases that induce global warming are attributable to human activities associated with industrial/manufacturing, agriculture, utilities, transportation, and residential land uses. Emissions of CO₂ and N₂O are byproducts of fossil fuel combustion. Methane, a potent greenhouse gas, results from off-gassing associated with agricultural practices and landfills. Sinks of CO₂, where CO₂ is stored outside of the atmosphere, include uptake by vegetation and dissolution into the ocean. The following provides a description of each of the greenhouse gases and their global warming potential.

Water Vapor

Water vapor is the most abundant, important, and variable GHG in the atmosphere. Water vapor is not considered a pollutant; in the atmosphere it maintains a climate necessary for life. Changes in its concentration are primarily considered a result of climate feedbacks related to the warming of the atmosphere rather than a direct result of industrialization. The feedback loop in which water is involved is critically important to projecting future climate change. As the temperature of the atmosphere rises, more water is evaporated from ground storage (rivers, oceans, reservoirs, soil). Because the air is warmer, the relative humidity can be higher (in essence, the air is able to "hold" more water when it is warmer), leading to more water vapor in the atmosphere. As a GHG, the higher concentration of water vapor is then able to absorb more thermal indirect energy radiated from the Earth, thus further warming the atmosphere. The warmer atmosphere can then hold more water vapor and so on and so on. This is referred to as a "positive feedback loop." The extent to which this positive feedback loop will continue is unknown as there is also dynamics that put the positive feedback loop in check. As an example, when water vapor increases in the atmosphere, more of it will eventually also condense into clouds, which are more able to reflect incoming solar radiation (thus allowing less energy to reach the Earth's surface and heat it up).

Carbon Dioxide

The natural production and absorption of CO₂ is achieved through the terrestrial biosphere and the ocean. However, humankind has altered the natural carbon cycle by burning coal, oil, natural gas, and wood. Since the industrial revolution began in the mid-1700s, each of these activities has increased in scale and

distribution. CO₂ was the first GHG demonstrated to be increasing in atmospheric concentration with the first conclusive measurements being made in the last half of the 20th century. Prior to the industrial revolution, concentrations were fairly stable at 280 parts per million (ppm). The International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) indicates that concentrations were 379 ppm in 2005, an increase of more than 30 percent. Left unchecked, the IPCC projects that concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is projected to increase to a minimum of 540 ppm by 2100 as a direct result of anthropogenic sources. This could result in an average global temperature rise of at least two degrees Celsius or 3.6 degrees Fahrenheit.

Methane

CH₄ is an extremely effective absorber of radiation, although its atmospheric concentration is less than that of CO₂. Its lifetime in the atmosphere is brief (10 to 12 years), compared to some other GHGs (such as CO₂, N₂O, and Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs)). CH₄ has both natural and anthropogenic sources. It is released as part of the biological processes in low oxygen environments, such as in swamplands or in rice production (at the roots of the plants). Over the last 50 years, human activities such as growing rice, raising cattle, using natural gas, and mining coal have added to the atmospheric concentration of methane. Other anthropocentric sources include fossil-fuel combustion and biomass burning.

Nitrous Oxide

Concentrations of N₂O also began to rise at the beginning of the industrial revolution. In 1998, the global concentration of this GHG was documented at 314 parts per billion (ppb). N₂O is produced by microbial processes in soil and water, including those reactions which occur in fertilizer containing nitrogen. In addition to agricultural sources, some industrial processes (fossil fuel-fired power plants, nylon production, nitric acid production, and vehicle emissions) also contribute to its atmospheric load. N₂O is also commonly used as an aerosol spray propellant (i.e., in whipped cream bottles, in potato chip bags to keep chips fresh, and in rocket engines and race cars).

Chlorofluorocarbons

CFCs are gases formed synthetically by replacing all hydrogen atoms in methane or ethane (C₂H₆) with chlorine and/or fluorine atoms. CFCs are nontoxic, nonflammable, insoluble, and chemically unreactive in the troposphere (the level of air at the Earth's surface). CFCs have no natural source, but were first synthesized in 1928. They were used for refrigerants, aerosol propellants, and cleaning solvents. Due to the discovery that they are able to destroy stratospheric ozone, a global effort to halt their production was undertaken and in 1989 the European Community agreed to ban CFCs by 2000 and subsequent treaties banned CFCs worldwide by 2010. This effort was extremely successful, and the levels of the major CFCs are now remaining level or declining. However, their long atmospheric lifetimes mean that some of the CFCs will remain in the atmosphere for over 100 years.

Hydrofluorocarbons

HFCs are synthetic man-made chemicals that are used as a substitute for CFCs. Out of all the GHGs, they are one of three groups with the highest global warming potential. The HFCs with the largest measured atmospheric abundances are (in order), HFC-23 (CHF₃), HFC-134a (CF₃CH₂F), and HFC-152a (CH₃CHF₂). Prior to 1990, the only significant emissions were HFC-23. HFC-134a use is increasing due to its use as a refrigerant. Concentrations of HFC-23 and HFC-134a in the atmosphere are now about 10 parts per trillion

(ppt) each. Concentrations of HFC-152a are about 1 ppt. HFCs are manmade for applications such as automobile air conditioners and refrigerants.

Perfluorocarbons

Perfluorocarbons (PFCs) have stable molecular structures and do not break down through the chemical processes in the lower atmosphere. High-energy ultraviolet rays about 60 kilometers above Earth's surface are able to destroy the compounds. Because of this, PFCs have very long lifetimes, between 10,000 and 50,000 years. Two common PFCs are tetrafluoromethane (CF₄) and hexafluoroethane (C₂F₆). Concentrations of CF₄ in the atmosphere are over 70 ppt. The two main sources of PFCs are primary aluminum production and semiconductor manufacturing.

Sulfur Hexafluoride

Sulfur Hexafluoride (SF₆) is an inorganic, odorless, colorless, nontoxic, nonflammable gas. SF₆ has the highest global warming potential of any gas evaluated; 23,900 times that of CO₂. Concentrations in the 1990s were about 4 ppt. Sulfur hexafluoride is used for insulation in electric power transmission and distribution equipment, in the magnesium industry, in semiconductor manufacturing, and as a tracer gas for leak detection.

Aerosols

Aerosols are particles emitted into the air through burning biomass (plant material) and fossil fuels. Aerosols can warm the atmosphere by absorbing and emitting heat and can cool the atmosphere by reflecting light. Cloud formation can also be affected by aerosols. Sulfate aerosols are emitted when fuel containing sulfur is burned. Black carbon (or soot) is emitted during biomass burning due to the incomplete combustion of fossil fuels. Particulate matter regulation has been lowering aerosol concentrations in the United States; however, global concentrations are likely increasing.

3.7.2 Regulatory Setting

The regulatory setting related to global climate change is addressed through the efforts of various international, federal, state, regional, and local government agencies. These agencies work jointly, as well as individually, to reduce GHG emissions through legislation, regulations, planning, policy-making, education, and a variety of programs. The agencies responsible for global climate change regulations are discussed below.

International

In 1988, the United Nations established the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) to evaluate the impacts of global climate change and to develop strategies that nations could implement to curtail global climate change. In 1992, the United States joined other countries around the world in signing the United Nations' Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) agreement with the goal of controlling GHG emissions. The parties of the UNFCCC adopted the Kyoto Protocol, which set binding GHG reduction targets for 37 industrialized countries, the objective of reducing their collective GHG emissions by five percent below 1990 levels by 2012. The Kyoto Protocol has been ratified by 182 countries, but has not been ratified by the United States. It should be noted that Japan and Canada opted out of the Kyoto Protocol and the remaining developed countries that ratified the Kyoto Protocol have not met their Kyoto

targets. The Kyoto Protocol expired in 2012 and the amendment for the second commitment period from 2013 to 2020 has not yet entered into legal force. The Parties to the Kyoto Protocol negotiated the Paris Agreement in December 2015, agreeing to set a goal of limiting global warming to less than 2 degrees Celsius compared with pre-industrial levels. The Paris Agreement has been adopted by 195 nations with 147 ratifying it, including the United States by President Obama, who ratified it by Executive Order on September 3, 2016. On June 1, 2017, President Trump announced that the United States is withdrawing from the Paris Agreement, however the Paris Agreement is still legally binding by the other remaining nations.

Additionally, the Montreal Protocol was originally signed in 1987 and substantially amended in 1990 and 1992. The Montreal Protocol stipulates that the production and consumption of compounds that deplete ozone in the stratosphere—CFCs, halons, carbon tetrachloride, and methyl chloroform—were to be phased out, with the first three by the year 2000 and methyl chloroform by 2005.

Federal – United States Environmental Protection Agency

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is responsible for implementing federal policy to address global climate change. The Federal government administers a wide array of public-private partnerships to reduce U.S. GHG intensity. These programs focus on energy efficiency, renewable energy, methane, and other non-CO₂ gases, agricultural practices and implementation of technologies to achieve GHG reductions. EPA implements several voluntary programs that substantially contribute to the reduction of GHG emissions.

In *Massachusetts v. Environmental Protection Agency* (Docket No. 05–1120), argued November 29, 2006 and decided April 2, 2007, the U.S. Supreme Court held that not only did the EPA have authority to regulate greenhouse gases, but the EPA's reasons for not regulating this area did not fit the statutory requirements. As such, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the EPA should be required to regulate CO₂ and other greenhouse gases as pollutants under the federal Clean Air Act (CAA).

In response to the FY2008 Consolidations Appropriations Act (H.R. 2764; Public Law 110-161), EPA proposed a rule on March 10, 2009 that requires mandatory reporting of GHG emissions from large sources in the United States. On September 22, 2009, the Final Mandatory Reporting of GHG Rule was signed and published in the Federal Register on October 30, 2009. The rule became effective on December 29, 2009. This rule requires suppliers of fossil fuels or industrial GHGs, manufacturers of vehicles and engines, and facilities that emit 25,000 metric tons or more per year of GHG emissions to submit annual reports to EPA.

On December 7, 2009, the EPA Administrator signed two distinct findings under section 202(a) of the Clean Air Act. One is an endangerment finding that finds concentrations of the six GHGs in the atmosphere threaten the public health and welfare of current and future generations. The other is a cause or contribute finding, that finds emissions from new motor vehicles and new motor vehicle engines contribute to the GHG pollution which threatens public health and welfare. These actions did not impose any requirements on industry or other entities, however, since 2009 the EPA has been providing GHG emission standards for vehicles and other stationary sources of GHG emissions that are regulated by the EPA. On September 13, 2013 the EPA Administrator signed 40 CFR Part 60, that limits emissions from new sources to 1,100 pounds of CO₂ per MWh for fossil fuel-fired utility boilers and 1,000 pounds of CO₂ per MWh for large natural gas-fired combustion units.

On August 3, 2015, the EPA announced the Clean Power Plan, emissions guidelines for U.S. states to follow in developing plans to reduce GHG emissions from existing fossil fuel-fired power plants (Federal Register Vol. 80, No. 205, October 23, 2015). On February 9, 2016 the Supreme Court stayed implementation of the Clean Power Plan due to a legal challenge from 29 states and in April 2017, the Supreme Court put the case on a 60 day hold and directed both sides to make arguments for whether it should keep the case on hold indefinitely or close it and remand the issue to the EPA. On October 11, 2017, the EPA issued a formal proposal to repeal the Clean Power Plan and on June 19, 2019, the EPA issued the Affordable Clean Energy Rule that replaces the Clean Power Plan.

On September 27, 2019, the EPA and the National Highway Safety Administration published the Safer Affordable Fuel-Efficient (SAFE) Vehicles Rule for Model Years 2021-2026 Passenger Cars and Light Trucks (SAFE Vehicles Rule). Part One of the Rule revokes California's authority to set its own GHG emissions standards and zero-emission vehicle mandates in California, which results in one emission standard to be used nationally for all passenger cars and light trucks that is set by the EPA.

State

The California Air Resources Board (CARB) has the primary responsibility for implementing state policy to address global climate change, however there are State regulations related to global climate change that affect a variety of State agencies. CARB, which is a part of the California Environmental Protection Agency, is responsible for the coordination and administration of both the federal and state air pollution control programs within California. In this capacity, the CARB conducts research, sets California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS), compiles emission inventories, develops suggested control measures, provides oversight of local programs, and prepares the SIP. In addition, the CARB establishes emission standards for motor vehicles sold in California, consumer products (e.g. hairspray, aerosol paints, and barbecue lighter fluid), and various types of commercial equipment. It also sets fuel specifications to further reduce vehicular emissions.

In 2008, CARB approved a Climate Change Scoping Plan that proposes a "comprehensive set of actions designed to reduce overall carbon GHG emissions in California, improve our environment, reduce our dependence on oil, diversify our energy sources, save energy, create new jobs, and enhance public health" (CARB 2008). The Climate Change Scoping Plan has a range of GHG reduction actions which include direct regulations; alternative compliance mechanisms; monetary and non-monetary incentives; voluntary actions; market-based mechanisms such as a cap-and-trade system. In 2014, CARB approved the First Update to the Climate Change Scoping Plan (CARB, 2014) that identifies additional strategies moving beyond the 2020 targets to the year 2050. On December 14, 2017 CARB adopted the California's 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan, November 2017 (CARB, 2017) that provides specific statewide policies and measures to achieve the 2030 GHG reduction target of 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 and the aspirational 2050 GHG reduction target of 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. In addition, the State has passed the following laws directing CARB to develop actions to reduce GHG emissions, which are listed below in chronological order, with the most current first.

California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 24, Part 6

CCR Title 24, Part 6: California's Energy Efficiency Standards for Residential and Nonresidential Buildings (Title 24) were first established in 1978 in response to a legislative mandate to reduce California's energy consumption. The California Energy Commission (CEC) is the agency responsible for the standards that are updated periodically to allow consideration and possible incorporation of new energy efficiency

technologies and methods. In 2008 the State set an energy-use reduction goal of zero-net-energy use of all new homes by 2020 and the CEC was mandated to meet this goal through revisions to the Title 24, Part 6 regulations.

The Title 24 standards are updated on a three-year schedule and since 2008 the standards have been incrementally moving to the 2020 goal of the zero-net-energy use. Currently the 2019 Title 24 standards are in effect and have been designed so that the average new home built in California will now use zero-net-energy. Single-family homes built with 2019 standards will use about 7 percent less energy due to energy efficiency measures versus those built under the 2016 standards. The 2019 standards also now require that all single-family homes to have rooftop solar photovoltaic systems and when the solar systems are factored in, homes built under the 2019 standards will use about 53 percent less energy than homes built under the prior 2016 standards. In addition to requiring rooftop solar systems, the 2019 standards also encourage the use of battery storage and heat pump water heaters, require the more widespread use of LED lighting, as well as improve the building's thermal envelope through high performance attics, walls and windows. The 2019 standards also require improvements to ventilation systems by requiring highly efficient air filters to trap hazardous air particulates as well as improvements to kitchen ventilation systems. (Vista 2020)

California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 24, Part 11

CCR Title 24, Part 11: California Green Building Standards (CalGreen) was developed in response to continued efforts to reduce GHG emissions associated with energy consumption. The CalGreen Building Standards are also updated every three years and the current version is the 2019 California Green Building Standards Code, which became effective on January 1, 2020.

The CALGreen Code contains requirements for construction site selection; storm water control during construction; construction waste reduction; indoor water use reduction; material selection; natural resource conservation; site irrigation conservation; and more. The code provides for design options allowing the designer to determine how best to achieve compliance for a given site or building condition. The code also requires building commissioning, which is a process for verifying that all building systems (e.g., heating and cooling equipment and lighting systems) are functioning at their maximum efficiency.

The CALGreen Code provides standards for bicycle parking, carpool/vanpool/electric vehicle spaces, light and glare reduction, grading and paving, energy efficient appliances, renewable energy, graywater systems, water efficient plumbing fixtures, recycling and recycled materials, pollutant controls (including moisture control and indoor air quality), acoustical controls, storm water management, building design, insulation, flooring, and framing, among others. Implementation of the CALGreen Code measures reduces energy consumption and vehicle trips and encourages the use of alternative-fuel vehicles, which reduces pollutant emissions.

Some of the notable changes in the 2019 CALGreen Code over the current 2016 CALGreen Code include: an alignment of building code engineering requirements with the national standards that include anchorage requirements for solar panels, provides design requirements for buildings in tsunami zones, increases Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value (MERV) for air filters from 8 to 13, increased electric vehicle charging requirements in parking areas, and sets minimum requirements for use of shade trees.

Senate Bill 100

Senate Bill 100 (SB 100) was adopted September 2018 and requires that by December 1, 2045 that 100 percent of retail sales of electricity to be generated from renewable or zero-carbon emission sources of electricity. SB 100 supersedes the renewable energy requirements set by SB 350, SB 1078, SB 107, and SB X1-2. However, the interim renewable energy thresholds from the prior Bills of 44 percent by December 31, 2024, 52 percent by December 31, 2027, and 60 percent by December 31, 2030, will remain in effect.

Executive Order B-48-18 and Assembly Bill 2127

The California Governor issued Executive Order B-48-18 on January 26, 2018 that orders all state entities to work with the private sector to put at least five million zero-emission vehicles on California roads by 2030 and to install 200 hydrogen fueling stations and 250,000 electric vehicle chargers by 2025. Currently there are approximately 350,000 electric vehicles operating in California, which represents approximately 1.5 percent of the 24 million vehicles total currently operating in California. Implementation of Executive Order B-48-18 would result in approximately 20 percent of all vehicles in California to be zero emission electric vehicles. Assembly Bill 2127 (AB 2127) was codified into statute on September 13, 2018 and requires that the California Energy Commission working with the State Air Resources Board prepare biannual assessments of the statewide electric vehicle charging infrastructure needed to support the levels of zero emission vehicle adoption required for the State to meet its goals of putting at least 5 million zero-emission vehicles on California roads by 2030.

Executive Order B-30-15, Senate Bill 32 and Assembly Bill 197

The California Governor issued Executive Order B-30-15 on April 29, 2015 that aims to reduce California's GHG emissions 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. This executive order aligns California's GHG reduction targets with those of other international governments, such as the European Union that set the same target for 2030 in October 2014. This target will make it possible to reach the ultimate goal of reducing GHG emissions 80 percent under 1990 levels by 2050 that is based on scientifically established levels needed in the U.S.A to limit global warming below 2 degrees Celsius – the warming threshold at which scientists say there will likely be major climate disruptions such as super droughts and rising sea levels. Assembly Bill 197 (AB 197) (September 8, 2016) and Senate Bill 32 (SB 32) (September 8, 2016) codified into statute the GHG emissions reduction targets of at least 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 as detailed in Executive Order B-30-15. AB 197 also requires additional GHG emissions reporting that is broken down to sub-county levels and requires CARB to consider the social costs of emissions impacting disadvantaged communities.

Executive Order B-29-15

The California Governor issued Executive Order B-29-15 on April 1, 2015 and directed the State Water Resources Control Board to impose restrictions to achieve a statewide 25% reduction in urban water usage and directed the Department of Water Resources to replace 50 million square feet of lawn with drought tolerant landscaping through an update to the State's Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance. The Ordinance also requires installation of more efficient irrigation systems, promotion of greywater usage and onsite stormwater capture, and limits the turf planted in new residential landscapes to 25 percent of the total area and restricts turf from being planted in median strips or in parkways unless the parkway is next to a parking strip and a flat surface is required to enter and exit vehicles. Executive Order B-29-15 would reduce GHG emissions associated with the energy used to transport and filter water.

Assembly Bill 341 and Senate Bills 939 and 1374

Senate Bill 939 (SB 939) requires that each jurisdiction in California to divert at least 50 percent of its waste away from landfills, whether through waste reduction, recycling or other means. Senate Bill 1374 (SB 1374) requires the California Integrated Waste Management Board to adopt a model ordinance by March 1, 2004 suitable for adoption by any local agency to require 50 to 75 percent diversion of construction and demolition of waste materials from landfills. Assembly Bill 341 (AB 341) was adopted in 2011 and builds upon the waste reduction measures of SB 939 and 1374, and sets a new target of a 75 percent reduction in solid waste generated by the year 2020.

Senate Bill 375

Senate Bill 375 (SB 375) was adopted September 2008 in order to support the State's climate action goals to reduce GHG emissions through coordinated regional transportation planning efforts, regional GHG emission reduction targets, and land use and housing allocation. SB 375 requires CARB to set regional targets for GHG emissions reductions from passenger vehicle use. In 2010, CARB established targets for 2020 and 2035 for each Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) within the State. It was up to each MPO to adopt a sustainable communities strategy (SCS) that will prescribe land use allocation in that MPOs Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) to meet CARB's 2020 and 2035 GHG emission reduction targets. These reduction targets are required to be updated every eight years and the most current targets are detailed at: <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/our-work/programs/sustainable-communities-program/regional-plan-targets>, which provides GHG emissions reduction targets for SCAG of 8 percent by 2020 and 19 percent by 2035.

The 2016-2040 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS), adopted by SCAG April 2016 provides a 2020 GHG emission reduction target of 8 percent and a 2035 GHG emission reduction target of 18 percent. SCAG will need to develop additional strategies in its next revision of the RTP/SCS in order to meet CARB's new 19 percent GHG emission reduction target for 2035. CARB is also charged with reviewing SCAG's RTP/SCS for consistency with its assigned targets.

City and County land use policies, including General Plans, are not required to be consistent with the RTP and associated SCS. However, new provisions of CEQA incentivize, through streamlining and other provisions, qualified projects that are consistent with an approved SCS and categorized as "transit priority projects."

Assembly Bill 1109

California Assembly Bill 1109 (AB 1109) was adopted October 2007, also known as the Lighting Efficiency and Toxics Reduction Act, prohibits the manufacturing of lights after January 1, 2010 that contain levels of hazardous substances prohibited by the European Union pursuant to the RoHS Directive. AB 1109 also requires reductions in energy usage for lighting and is structured to reduce lighting electrical consumption by: (1) At least 50 percent reduction from 2007 levels for indoor residential lighting; and (2) At least 25 percent reduction from 2007 levels for indoor commercial and all outdoor lighting by 2018. AB 1109 would reduce GHG emissions through reducing the amount of electricity required to be generated by fossil fuels in California.

Executive Order S-1-07

Executive Order S-1-07 was issued in 2007 and proclaims that the transportation sector is the main source of GHG emissions in the State, since it generates more than 40 percent of the State's GHG emissions. It establishes a goal to reduce the carbon intensity of transportation fuels sold in the State by at least ten percent by 2020. This Executive Order also directs CARB to determine whether this Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS) could be adopted as a discrete early-action measure as part of the effort to meet the mandates in AB 32.

In 2009 CARB approved the proposed regulation to implement the LCFS. The standard was challenged in the courts, but has been in effect since 2011 and was re-approved by the CARB in 2015. The LCFS is anticipated to reduce GHG emissions by about 16 MMT per year by 2020. The LCFS is designed to provide a framework that uses market mechanisms to spur the steady introduction of lower carbon fuels. The framework establishes performance standards that fuel producers and importers must meet annually. Reformulated gasoline mixed with corn-derived ethanol and low-sulfur diesel fuel represent the baseline fuels. Lower carbon fuels may be ethanol, biodiesel, renewable diesel, or blends of these fuels with gasoline or diesel. Compressed natural gas and liquefied natural gas also may be low-carbon fuels. Hydrogen and electricity, when used in fuel cells or electric vehicles, are also considered as low-carbon fuels.

Senate Bill 97

Senate Bill 97 (SB 97) was adopted August 2007 and acknowledges that climate change is a prominent environmental issue that requires analysis under CEQA. SB 97 directed the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR), which is part of the State Natural Resources Agency, to prepare, develop, and transmit to CARB guidelines for the feasible mitigation of GHG emissions or the effects of GHG emissions, as required by CEQA, by July 1, 2009. The Natural Resources Agency was required to certify and adopt those guidelines by January 1, 2010.

Pursuant to the requirements of SB 97 as stated above, on December 30, 2009 the Natural Resources Agency adopted amendments to the State CEQA guidelines that addresses GHG emissions. The CEQA Guidelines Amendments changed 14 sections of the CEQA Guidelines and incorporated GHG language throughout the Guidelines. However, no GHG emissions thresholds of significance were provided and no specific mitigation measures were identified. The GHG emission reduction amendments went into effect on March 18, 2010 and are summarized below:

- Climate Action Plans and other greenhouse gas reduction plans can be used to determine whether a project has significant impacts, based upon its compliance with the plan.
- Local governments are encouraged to quantify the GHG emissions of proposed projects, noting that they have the freedom to select the models and methodologies that best meet their needs and circumstances. The section also recommends consideration of several qualitative factors that may be used in the determination of significance, such as the extent to which the given project complies with state, regional, or local GHG reduction plans and policies. OPR does not set or dictate specific thresholds of significance. Consistent with existing CEQA Guidelines, OPR encourages local governments to develop and publish their own thresholds of significance for GHG impacts assessment.

- When creating their own thresholds of significance, local governments may consider the thresholds of significance adopted or recommended by other public agencies, or recommended by experts.
- New amendments include guidelines for determining methods to mitigate the effects of GHG emissions in Appendix F of the CEQA Guidelines.
- OPR is clear to state that “to qualify as mitigation, specific measures from an existing plan must be identified and incorporated into the project; general compliance with a plan, by itself, is not mitigation.”
- OPR’s emphasizes the advantages of analyzing GHG impacts on an institutional, programmatic level. OPR therefore approves tiering of environmental analyses and highlights some benefits of such an approach.
- Environmental impact reports must specifically consider a project's energy use and energy efficiency potential.

Assembly Bill 32

In 2006, the California State Legislature adopted AB 32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006. AB 32 requires CARB, to adopt rules and regulations that would achieve GHG emissions equivalent to statewide levels in 1990 by 2020 through an enforceable statewide emission cap which will be phased in starting in 2012. Emission reductions shall include carbon sequestration projects that would remove carbon from the atmosphere and utilize best management practices that are technologically feasible and cost effective.

In 2007 CARB released the calculated Year 1990 GHG emissions of 431 million metric tons of CO₂e (MMTCO₂e). The 2020 target of 431 MMTCO₂e requires the reduction of 78 MMTCO₂e, or approximately 16 percent from the State’s projected 2020 business as usual emissions of 509 MMTCO₂e (CARB, 2014). Under AB 32, CARB was required to adopt regulations by January 1, 2011 to achieve reductions in GHGs to meet the 1990 cap by 2020. Early measures CARB took to lower GHG emissions included requiring operators of the largest industrial facilities that emit 25,000 metric tons of CO₂ in a calendar year to submit verification of GHG emissions by December 1, 2010. The CARB Board also approved nine discrete early action measures that include regulations affecting landfills, motor vehicle fuels, refrigerants in cars, port operations and other sources, all of which became enforceable on or before January 1, 2010.

CARB’s Scoping Plan that was adopted in 2009, proposes a variety of measures including: strengthening energy efficiency and building standards; targeted fees on water and energy use; a market-based cap-and-trade system; achieving a 33 percent renewable energy mix; and a fee regulation to fund the program. The 2014 update to the Scoping Plan identifies strategies moving beyond the 2020 targets to the year 2050.

The Cap and Trade Program established under the Scoping Plan sets a statewide limit on sources responsible for 85 percent of California’s GHG emissions, and has established a market for long-term investment in energy efficiency and cleaner fuels since 2012.

Executive Order S-3-05

In 2005 the California Governor issued Executive Order S 3-05, GHG Emission, which established the following reduction targets:

- 2010: Reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 2000 levels;
- 2020: Reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels;
- 2050: Reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels.

The Executive Order directed the secretary of the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) to coordinate a multi-agency effort to reduce GHG emissions to the target levels. To comply with the Executive Order, the secretary of CalEPA created the California Climate Action Team (CAT), made up of members from various state agencies and commissions. The team released its first report in March 2006. The report proposed to achieve the targets by building on the voluntary actions of businesses, local governments, and communities and through State incentive and regulatory programs. The State achieved its first goal of reducing GHG emissions to 2000 levels by 2010.

Assembly Bill 1493

California Assembly Bill 1493 (also known as the Pavley Bill, in reference to its author Fran Pavley) was enacted on July 22, 2002 and required CARB to develop and adopt regulations that reduce GHGs emitted by passenger vehicles and light duty trucks. In 2004, CARB approved the “Pavley I” regulations limiting the amount of GHGs that may be released from new passenger automobiles that are being phased in between model years 2009 through 2016. These regulations will reduce GHG emissions by 30 percent from 2002 levels by 2016. The second set of regulations “Pavley II” is currently in development and will be phased in between model years 2017 through 2025 and will reduce emissions by 45 percent by the year 2020 as compared to the 2002 fleet. The Pavley II standards are being developed by linking the GHG emissions and formerly separate toxic tailpipe emissions standards previously known as the “LEV III” (third stage of the Low Emission Vehicle standards) into a single regulatory framework. The new rules reduce emissions from gasoline-powered cars as well as promote zero-emissions auto technologies such as electricity and hydrogen, and through increasing the infrastructure for fueling hydrogen vehicles. In 2009, the U.S. EPA granted California the authority to implement the GHG standards for passenger cars, pickup trucks and sport utility vehicles. In September 2009, the Pavley I regulations were adopted by CARB.

Regional – Southern California

The SCAQMD is the agency principally responsible for comprehensive air pollution control in the South Coast Air Basin. To that end, as a regional agency, the SCAQMD works directly with the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), county transportation commissions, and local governments and cooperates actively with all federal and state agencies.

South Coast Air Quality Management District

SCAQMD develops rules and regulations, establishes permitting requirements for stationary sources, inspects emission sources, and enforces such measures through educational programs or fines, when necessary. SCAQMD is directly responsible for reducing emissions from stationary, mobile, and indirect

sources. The SCAQMD is also responsible for GHG emissions for projects where it is the lead agency. However, for other projects in the SCAB where it is not the lead agency, it is limited to providing resources to other lead agencies in order to assist them in determining GHG emission thresholds and GHG reduction measures. In order to assist local agencies with direction on GHG emissions, the SCAQMD organized a working group and adopted Rules 2700, 2701, and 2702, which are described below.

SCAQMD Working Group

Since neither CARB nor the OPR has developed GHG emissions threshold, the SCAQMD formed a Working Group to develop significance thresholds related to GHG emissions. At the September 28, 2010 Working Group meeting, the SCAQMD released its most current version of the draft GHG emissions thresholds, which recommends a tiered approach that either provides a quantitative annual thresholds of 3,500 MTCO₂e for residential uses, 1,400 MTCO₂e for commercial uses, and 3,000 MTCO₂e for mixed uses. An alternative annual threshold of 3,000 MTCO₂e for all land use types is also proposed.

Southern California Association of Governments

The SCAG is the regional planning agency for Los Angeles, Orange, Ventura, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Imperial Counties and addresses regional issues relating to transportation, the economy, community development and the environment. SCAG is the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the majority of the southern California region and is the largest MPO in the nation. With respect to air quality planning, SCAG has prepared the 2016-2040 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS), adopted April 2016 and the 2015 Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP), adopted October 2013, which addresses regional development and growth forecasts. Although the RTP/SCS and FTIP are primarily planning documents for future transportation projects a key component of these plans are to integrate land use planning with transportation planning that promotes higher density infill development in close proximity to existing transit service. These plans form the basis for the land use and transportation components of the AQMP, which are utilized in the preparation of air quality forecasts and in the consistency analysis included in the AQMP. The RTP/SCS, FTIP, and AQMP are based on projections originating within the City and County General Plans.

Local – City of San Juan Capistrano

Local jurisdictions, such as the City of San Juan Capistrano, have the authority and responsibility to reduce GHG emissions through their police power and decision-making authority. Specifically, the City is responsible for the assessment and mitigation of GHG emissions resulting from its land use decisions. In accordance with CEQA requirements and the CEQA review process, the City assesses the global climate change potential of new development projects, requires mitigation of potentially significant global climate change impacts by conditioning discretionary permits, and monitors and enforces implementation of such mitigation.

The City does not have any plans, polices, regulations, significance thresholds, or laws addressing climate change at this time. In April 2018, the City Council passed Resolution No. 18-04-17-04, which supports findings that human activities are key contributor to climate change, as well as acknowledges that if left unaddressed, the consequences of climate change will adversely impact the public, especially the most vulnerable populations.

3.7.3 Existing Environmental Setting

According to the Carbon Dioxide Information Analysis Center¹ 9,855 million metric tons (MMT) of CO₂ equivalent (CO₂e) emissions were created globally in the year 2014. According to the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Global Greenhouse Gas Emissions Data² the breakdown of global GHG emissions by sector consists of: 25 percent from electricity and heat production; 21 percent from industry; 24 percent from agriculture, forestry and other land use activities; 14 percent from transportation; 6 percent from building energy use; and 10 percent from all other sources of energy use.

According to Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks 1990-2016, prepared by EPA, in 2016 total U.S. GHG emissions were 6,511.3 million metric tons (MMT) of CO₂ equivalent (CO₂e) emissions. Total U.S. emissions have increased by 2.4 percent between 1990 and 2016 and GHG emissions decreased by 1.9 percent between 2015 and 2016. The recent decrease in GHG emissions was a result of multiple factors, including substitution from coal to natural gas in the electricity sector and from a warmer winter and a slow-down in the economy in 2016. However, according to the Rhodium Group US Emissions Estimates website³ the preliminary estimates for 2018 show that GHG emissions have increased by 3.4 percent, which is primarily a result from a strong economy that required the use of more transportation fuels and power generation.

According to the CARB GHG Current California Emission Inventory Data⁴ the State of California created 429.4 MMTCO₂e in 2016. The breakdown of California GHG emissions by sector consists of: 41 percent from transportation; 23 percent from industrial; 16 percent from electricity generation; 8 percent from agriculture; 7 percent from residential buildings; 5 percent from commercial buildings; and 1 percent from other uses of energy. In 2016, GHG emissions were 12 MMTCO₂e lower than 2015 levels, which represent a 6 percent year-over-year decline.

3.7.4 Impacts and Mitigation

Impact 3.7-1: Would the Project generate GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?

Implementation of the Proposed Project may generate GHG emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment. The Proposed Project would consist of the operation of the proposed land uses as detailed above in Table 3-2 of Section 3.5.1. Operational activities would result in GHG emissions of: (1) Area sources that include emissions from landscaping equipment; (2) Energy usage that include natural gas and electrical appliances; and (3) mobile sources that include emissions from automobile and truck trips generated by the proposed land uses.

The Project's GHG emissions have been calculated with the CalEEMod model based on the construction and operational parameters detailed in Appendix C. The GHG emissions forecast assumes that several State GHG reduction measures will be implemented by 2040, including the following actions:

¹ https://cdiac.ess-dive.lbl.gov/trends/emis/tre_glob_2014.html

² <https://www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/global-greenhouse-gas-emissions-data>

³ <https://rhg.com/research/preliminary-us-emissions-estimates-for-2018/>

⁴ <https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/inventory/data/data.htm>

- Implementation of the Renewable Portfolio Standard, which requires electricity providers to increase the portion of energy that comes from renewable sources to 60 percent by 2030 and zero-carbon sources by 2045;
- Implement of the most current Title 24 Part 6 and Part 11 building energy use standards;
- Reduction of indoor and outdoor commercial lighting energy usage as detailed in AB 1109;
- Implementation of light and heavy-duty vehicle fleet regulations, including Pavley standards as well as the future Safer Affordable Fuel-Efficient (SAFE) Vehicles Rules from the EPA; and
- Adoption of Complete Streets standards to expand pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.

In addition, to the above GHG reduction measures, the Project location that includes an Amtrak/Metrolink Station and existing sidewalks on most of the HTC Area roadways were accounted for in the GHG emissions forecast. All input parameters utilized in the calculation of the GHG emissions forecast is detailed in Appendix C and a summary of the results is shown below in Table 3-8. The CalEEMod model run annual printouts are provided in Appendix C.

Table 3-8– Project Related Greenhouse Gas Annual Emissions Forecast for Buildout Year 2040

Category	Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Metric Tons per Year)			
	CO ₂	CH ₄	N ₂ O	CO ₂ e
Area Sources ¹	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.01
Energy Usage ²	1,604.51	0.05	0.02	1,611.80
Mobile Sources ³	5,187.67	0.20	0.00	5,192.62
Solid Waste ⁴	45.30	2.68	0.00	112.22
Water and Wastewater ⁵	94.50	0.74	0.02	118.33
Construction ⁶	41.42	0.01	0.00	41.56
Total Emissions	6,973.42	3.67	0.04	7,076.54
HTC Areas Service Population ⁷				5,715
MTCO₂e per Service Population				1.24
Threshold of Significance (Metric Tons CO₂e per Service Population)				4.0
Exceeds Threshold?				No

Notes:

¹ Area sources consist of GHG emissions from consumer products, architectural coatings, and landscaping equipment.

² Energy usage consists of GHG emissions from electricity and natural gas usage.

³ Mobile sources consist of GHG emissions from vehicles.

⁴ Waste includes the CO₂ and CH₄ emissions created from the solid waste placed in landfills.

⁵ Water includes GHG emissions from electricity used for transport of water and processing of wastewater.

⁶ Construction emissions amortized over 30 years as recommended in the SCAQMD GHG Working Group on November 19, 2009.

⁷ Service population obtained from TranspoGroup, 2020.

Source: CalEEMod Version 2016.3.2.

The data provided in Table 3-8 shows that implementation of all potential development within the HTC Area with adoption of the Project would create 7,076.54 MTCO₂e per year, which is equivalent to 1.24 MTCO₂e per year per service population. According to the threshold of significance detailed above in Section 8.5, a cumulative global climate change impact would occur if the GHG emissions exceed 4.0 MTCO₂e per year per service population for the year 2040. Therefore, a less than significant generation of greenhouse gas emissions would occur from construction and operation of the Proposed Project.

Impact 3.7-2: Would the Project conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs?

The Proposed Project would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions. The proposed project would consist of removing inconsistencies that currently exist between the HTCMP, General Plan and FBC. The proposed revisions to the HTCMP have the potential to result in slightly higher densities of non-residential land uses within the HTC area, while removing the residential component within the HTC area.

As detailed above, the Proposed Project is anticipated to create 7,076.54 MTCO₂e per year, which is equivalent to 1.24 MTCO₂e per year per service population, which is well below the 4.0 MTCO₂e per service population for the year 2040 that was determined through linear interpolation of the 2017 Scoping Plan goals of 6 MTCO₂e per service population for the year 2030 and 2 MTCO₂e per service population for the year 2050. Utilization of the thresholds provided in the Scoping Plan represent the rate of GHG emission reductions necessary for the City to achieve its fair share of statewide GHG emission reductions necessary to meet the State's long-term GHG emissions reduction targets. It should also be noted that the entire HTC area is within walking distance of the San Juan Capistrano Metrolink/Amtrak Station, the Project would conform to the goals provided in the RTP/SCS that include Goal 8: Encourage land use and growth patterns that facilitate transit and active transportation. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are necessary.