

4.10 Land Use and Planning

4.10.1 Introduction

This section evaluates the potential for the proposed project, which includes the Housing Element Update (HEU), the Stanford Community Plan (SCP) update, and related rezonings (collectively, the “project”), to result in substantial adverse effects related to land use and planning. Below, the Environmental Setting portion of this section includes descriptions of existing conditions relevant to land use and planning. Further below, existing plans and policies relevant to land use and planning associated with implementation of the project are provided in the Regulatory Setting section. Finally, the impact discussion evaluates potential impacts to land use and planning that could result from implementation of the project in the context of existing conditions.

Notice of Preparation Comments

A Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the Draft EIR was circulated on August 8, 2022, and a scoping meeting was held on August 23, 2022. A revised NOP reflecting changes to the HEU’s list of opportunity sites was circulated on March 21, 2023. Both NOPs circulated for a period of 30 days, and the NOPs and the comments received during their respective comment periods can be found in **Appendix A** of this EIR.

Comments relevant to land use and planning were submitted in response to the first NOP circulated on August 8, 2022. Such comments included: concerns regarding the proposed HEU’s consistency with Countywide growth management policies, including policies that address the provision of urban services in rural areas; a request for the Draft EIR to identify specific proposed changes to County zoning designations and general plan designations, for which specific sites, the anticipated net effect to the number of housing units, and the resultant environmental impacts; a request for more detailed maps (at a larger scale) of all proposed housing opportunity sites, showing current city boundaries (city limits and city urban service areas) in the vicinity of the sites; and a request that the County evaluate a project alternative that plans for anticipated future growth solely within existing cities’ urban service areas. It should be noted, however, that the second NOP issued on March 21, 2023, and the revised list of HEU housing opportunity sites, do not include any sites that are not within an existing urban services area, so these issues will not be discussed further.

Information Sources

The primary sources of information referenced in this section included those listed below. Please note that a full list of references for this topic can be found at the end of this section.

- Santa Clara County General Plan (1994).
- Stanford University Community Plan (2000).

4.10.2 Environmental Setting

Project Location

Santa Clara County is located in the San Francisco Bay Area and encompasses 1,300 square miles. The County is located at the southern end of San Francisco Bay and is the Bay Area's most populous county, with 15 cities and nearly two million people. The present urban and rural landscape of Santa Clara County is diverse, comprising a complex social and economic setting that overlays a rich historic, multi-cultural, and natural environment. In the early 20th century, the area was promoted as the "Valley of the Heart's Delight" due to its natural beauty, including a significant number of orchards. Then in 1939, the first major technology company to be based in the area was founded. Today, the County is headquarters to approximately 6,000 high technology companies, some of which are the largest technology companies in the world.

While most of the urbanized areas in the County are under the jurisdiction of individual cities, the County maintains jurisdiction of 7,348 acres that are designated as Urban Service Areas and are planned for eventual annexation to a city's jurisdiction. Lands owned by Stanford University and subject to the County's Stanford Community Plan (SCP) comprise slightly over 4,000 acres, and the remaining 596,070 acres in the unincorporated County area comprise rural parts of the County. The County's regional location and boundaries are shown in Figure 3-1, in Chapter 3, *Project Description*.

As described in Chapter 3, *Project Description*, and discussed in this section, the HEU would identify sites appropriate for the development of multifamily housing, and the County would rezone those sites as necessary to meet the requirements of State law.

Table 3-2 in Chapter 3, *Project Description*, lists all the potential housing opportunity sites identified by the County and their proposed development densities, and Figure 3-2 in Chapter 3, *Project Description*, shows their locations.

Stanford Lands Under County Jurisdiction

Lands owned by Stanford University and subject to the County's SCP broadly consist of the Stanford central campus and the Stanford foothills within Santa Clara County. Stanford's central campus, including academic and academic support facilities and housing, is concentrated north of Junipero Serra Boulevard and located within Stanford's Academic Growth Boundary (see below under "Stanford Community Plan" for a discussion of the Academic Growth Boundary). The largely undeveloped Stanford lands within the foothills south of Junipero Serra Boulevard are located outside of Stanford's Academic Growth Boundary.

The Stanford campus within the Academic Growth Boundary includes a diverse mix of land uses, including classrooms, academic offices, laboratory space, athletic venues, museums, performance and arts venues, lands for outdoor learning, student housing, faculty/staff housing, support facilities, and open spaces.

The mostly undeveloped Stanford foothills include a mixture of grasslands, woodlands, and riparian areas. The Stanford foothills also support livestock grazing and other agricultural uses, academic facilities, a portion of the Stanford Golf Course, and public and private trails. Within unincorporated Santa Clara County, Interstate 280 (I-280) and Page Mill Road are the two major roads that divide the Stanford foothills.

There are three housing opportunity sites on Stanford lands. Two of the sites are on Quarry Road near El Camino Real in an area of commercial development on the northern edge of the Stanford campus. The two Quarry Road parcels flank the Stanford Health Care facility at 211 Quarry Road and are across the street from the Stanford Shopping Center. The third housing opportunity site on Stanford lands is located in Escondido Village, a graduate residential community between Campus Drive and Stanford Avenue.

In addition to the three housing opportunity sites on Stanford lands described above, Stanford lands under County jurisdiction also include an area adjacent to and southeast of Sand Hill Road that is currently occupied by sports fields and some vacant land. The location is within the West Campus Development District, not including that portion occupied by the Stanford Golf Course. This general area is part of the SCP update evaluated in this EIR and provides an alternative potential future school location in lieu of the general location in the eastern portion of Stanford lands outside of the Academic Growth Boundary that was previously identified in the existing SCP adopted in 2000. This new school location would be closer to existing housing and the proposed new housing sites identified in the HEU.

San José

San José is the largest city in Santa Clara County and one of the largest cities in the United States. Located in the center of the Santa Clara Valley on the southern shore of San Francisco Bay, San José covers an area of approximately 180 square miles and has an estimated population of 976,482 as of 2022 (State of California, Department of Finance, 2022).

As listed in Table 3-2 in Chapter 3, *Project Description* and shown on Figure 3-2 in Chapter 3, *Project Description*, the HEU identifies 21 housing opportunity sites in six areas of San José.

4.10.3 Regulatory Setting

Federal

No federal plans, policies, regulations, or laws related to land use and planning are applicable to the proposed implementation of the HEU.

State

Housing Elements

State law requires that housing elements be updated every eight years (California Government Code Section 65588). The housing element must identify residential sites adequate to accommodate a variety of housing types for all income levels and to meet the needs of special

population groups, such as the elderly, persons with disabilities, large families, farmworkers, families with female heads of households, and families and persons in the need for emergency shelter (California Government Code Section 65583).

Regional

Association of Bay Area Governments Regional Housing Needs Allocation

On December 16, 2021, the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) adopted its Final Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA), assigning Santa Clara County an allocation of 3,125 units, distributed among four income categories: very-low income, low income, moderate income, and above moderate income. This allocation represents the County's share of the region-wide housing need of 441,176 units.

Plan Bay Area

SB 375 requires all metropolitan regions in California to complete a sustainable community strategy (SCS) as part of a regional transportation plan. In the Bay Area, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and ABAG are jointly responsible for developing and adopting a SCS that integrates transportation, land use, and housing to meet GHG reduction targets set by the California Air Resources Board (CARB).

Plan Bay Area 2050, adopted in October 2021, serves as the SCS for the Bay Area, in accordance with SB 375. Plan Bay Area 2050 is comprised of 35 strategies across the elements of housing, the economy, transportation, and the environment. A core household and employment growth strategy of Plan Bay Area is "focused growth" in existing communities along the existing transportation network. Key to implementing this focused growth strategy are Priority Development Areas (PDAs) and Transit-Rich Areas (TRAs), as recommended and approved by local governments. As defined by the plan, PDAs are areas where new development will support the needs of residents and workers in a pedestrian-friendly environment served by transit. Plan Bay Area also recommends increasing non-auto travel mode share and reducing vehicle miles traveled per capita and per employee by promoting transit-oriented development, transit improvements, and active transportation modes such as walking and bicycling.

Prior to Plan Bay Area 2050, Plan Bay Area 2040, adopted in 2017, was the most recent regional transportation plan and sustainable community strategy for the Bay Area region. Plan Bay Area 2050 updates Plan Bay Area 2040 and is consistent with the current Regional Housing Needs Allocation cycle. However, since Plan Bay Area 2050 was adopted in late 2021, Plan Bay Area 2040 continues to serve as the basis for regional and county-wide transportation models until the models are updated. Updates to the models are anticipated within the next several years.

For a discussion of the project's consistency with the regional housing projections in Plan Bay Area, see Chapter 4.12, *Population and Housing*, of this Draft EIR. For a discussion of the proposed HEU's consistency with Plan Bay Area as it relates to greenhouse gas emissions, see Chapter 4.7, *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*, of this Draft EIR.

Local

Santa Clara County General Plan

The Santa Clara County General Plan is a comprehensive long-range general plan for the physical development of Santa Clara County (County of Santa Clara, 1994). The most fundamental policy of the General Plan pertains to countywide growth management and the accommodation of urban development. It stipulates that urban types and densities of development be located only within cities' urban service areas (areas planned for urbanization), in locations suitable for such development. Outside cities' urban service areas, only non-urban uses and development densities are allowed, to preserve natural resources, rural character, and minimize population exposure to significant natural hazards, such as landslides, earthquake faults, and wildfire. As a whole, the Countywide growth management policies (provided below) have historically been referred to as the "joint urban development policies," held in common by the cities, County, and County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO), which controls city formation and expansion. However, based on the 1985 Land Use Policy Agreement between the County, the City of Palo Alto and Stanford University, LAFCO and the County recognize the Stanford Community Plan area as an exception to the policy requiring urban level of development only within the cities' urban service areas.

Based on the urban development policies, the Land Use Plan and policies further define allowable land uses and development potential for all unincorporated lands. Inside urban service areas, the policy of the County General Plan is to defer to the policies of the applicable city's land-use plan in defining (a) allowable uses and (b) densities of development. Outside urban service areas, all lands are assigned a land use designation, or classification. Principal designations for privately-owned lands are Hillside, Ranchlands, Agriculture, and Rural Residential. Typical densities of development range from 20 to 160 acres per parcel, depending on the designation, for lots created by subdivision. General Plan policies related to land use and planning and relevant to implementation of the HEU are listed below.

Growth and Development

Policy C-GD 1: Most of the future urban growth of Santa Clara County should be accommodated within the existing urban areas, through infill development, rather than through expansion of the urbanized area into hillsides and resource areas.

Policy C-GD 2: Urban development shall occur only within cities' urban service areas (USAs) and under city jurisdiction. The County shall not allow urban development on unincorporated lands outside cities' urban service areas.

Policy C-GD 3: Urban service areas should generally include only those areas suited for urban development. Development of such areas should be:

- a. reasonably serviceable with public facilities and services;
- b. relatively free from risks associated with natural hazards;
- c. without substantial adverse environmental impact;
- d. not likely to create severe off-site impacts on surrounding areas; and

- e. without cumulative adverse impacts on the county's water supply watersheds or any other natural resource.

Policy C-GD 4: Development activity should minimize degradation of the natural environment and avoid diminishment of heritage resources.

Policy C-GD 6: Hazard and resource areas with the following characteristics shall be considered unsuited for urban development:

- a. flood potential, including areas designated as floodways, tidal zones, coastal high hazard areas and federal flood insurance rate zones by the National Flood Insurance Program;
- b. seismic and geologic hazards (see Safety chapter for complete description of types of seismic and geologic hazards);
- c. sanitary landfill sites;
- d. areas of soil creep, saturated soils, and areas where the water table is 3 feet or less below the surface;
- e. prime agricultural soils;
- f. bay wetlands;
- g. water supply watersheds;
- h. riparian corridors; and
- i. areas generally above 15% slope.

Policy C-GD 7: Urban expansion should be planned on a staged, orderly basis, consistent with applicable plans (e.g. city, County, countywide plans) and the availability of needed urban services and facilities. The discouragement of expansion of cities' Urban Service Areas should be recommended to the LAFCO.

Policy C-GD 8: Proposals to annex lands or expand a city's urban service area boundaries shall be approved only if:

- a. the city, special districts and affected school districts have the ability to provide all needed public services and facilities to the area within five years and without lessening existing levels of service;
- b. the existing supply of land within the city's USA accommodates no more than five years of planned growth;
- c. the area proposed for urban development is contiguous to existing urbanized areas.

Policy C-GD 11: Unincorporated lands intended for urbanization should be annexed to cities at a time consistent with cities' development schedules.

Policy C-GD 12: Annexation outside of Urban Service Areas shall not be permitted.

Policy: U-LM 1: Urban unincorporated areas within city Urban Service Areas should eventually be annexed into the city.

Stanford Community Plan

The SCP was adopted in 2000 as a component of the Santa Clara County General Plan. The SCP augments the County General Plan and articulates the goals, strategies, and policies for Stanford lands in the tributary of Santa Clara County.

The Academic Growth Boundary (AGB) is the primary mechanism for promoting compact urban development and resource conservation on the Stanford campus and defines the allowable development for areas within and outside the AGB. In general, all uses associated with the educational and residential function of the campus are directed inside the AGB (i.e., within the central campus), while areas outside the AGB (i.e., within the foothills) are reserved for open space and academic activities that require the foothill setting for their basic functioning.

Under the SCP a four-fifths vote of the County Board of Supervisors is required to alter the AGB. Such an alteration may only be triggered if Stanford reaches 17.3 million square feet of academic and support facilities and student housing. This amount of square footage represents the 12.3 million square feet of academic and student housing facilities that existed in 2000, plus an additional five million square feet of growth estimated by multiplying Stanford's historic growth rate of 200,000 square feet per year by 25 years. The Academic Growth Boundary will continue to remain in place unless amended by a majority vote of the Board of Supervisors. Some of the applicable policies from the existing SCP Growth and Development chapter are listed below.

Policy SCP-GD 1: Establish and maintain an Academic Growth Boundary (AGB) as shown on Figure 1.3. Direct future development on Stanford lands within the AGB, consistent with the Community Plan land use designations.

Policy SCP-GD 2: Retain the location of the Academic Growth Boundary as shown in Figure 1.3 for at least 25 years, and until the building area of academic and support facilities and student housing reaches 17,300,000 square feet.

Policy SCP-GD 3: Allow modification of the location of the Academic Growth Boundary within 25 years of its initial approval only upon a four-fifths vote of the Board of Supervisors.

Policy SCP-GD 4: The design and intensity of growth within the Academic Growth Boundary should facilitate transit usage. There should be a mixture of uses to allow for a high degree of pedestrian and bike trips. The location of uses should facilitate non-auto trips.

Policy SCP-GD 5: The design and intensity of development outside the Academic Growth Boundary should be very low intensity supporting academic field research, research needing remote locations, agricultural and recreational uses.

Policy SCP-GD 6: Incremental additional development within the Academic Growth Boundary may only be permitted through a General Use Permit approved by the County.

2000 General Use Permit

The most recent General Use Permit was approved in 2000 and is the implementation document that permits additional academic facilities and housing units and establishes conditions of approval for development of Stanford lands in unincorporated Santa Clara County, consistent with the goals, strategies, and policies of the SCP. Key functions of the 2000 General Use Permit

are to establish the allowed land uses, specify the quantity of new academic and academic support space and related infrastructure that may be constructed; specify the quantity of housing units and student beds that may be constructed; and identify conditions of approval that apply to new construction and campus operations to minimize effects to the surrounding community and environment.

The 2000 General Use Permit divides Stanford lands into ten development districts in which the distribution of development within the campus is estimated. Nine of the development districts are located within the Academic Growth Boundary: Campus Center, Quarry; Arboretum; Department of Athletics, Physical Education, and Recreation (DAPER) and Administrative; East Campus; San Juan; Lagunita; Lathrop; and West Campus. The tenth district includes lands outside the Academic Growth Boundary in the Foothills Development District.

1985 Land Use Policy Agreement

In recognition of Stanford's multi-jurisdictional setting, the County of Santa Clara, the City of Palo Alto, and Stanford entered into a three-party agreement entitled the "1985 Land Use Policy Agreement." The agreement defines what land uses may remain in the unincorporated County and what uses must be annexed to Palo Alto; affords Palo Alto review opportunities for Stanford projects on the unincorporated County lands; and recognizes that Stanford's lands are held in perpetual trust for educational purposes. The agreement calls for maintenance of an informational document known as the Protocol, which outlines adopted land use designations, regulations, restrictions, and review and referral procedures for land use and development on the Stanford campus.

County of Santa Clara Zoning Ordinance

The County of Santa Clara Zoning Ordinance implements the Santa Clara County General Plan and regulates land use and development within the unincorporated areas of Santa Clara County. The current County zoning districts for HEU housing opportunity sites are listed in Table 3-2 in Chapter 3, *Project Description*. Descriptions of the County zoning districts applicable to the proposed project are included below.

Exclusive Agriculture (A)

The purpose of the Exclusive Agriculture district, also known as the A district, is to preserve and encourage the long-term viability of agriculture and agricultural lands, recognizing the vital contributions agriculture makes to the economy and quality of life within the county. The intent of this district is to reserve those lands most suitable for agricultural production for agricultural and appropriate related uses. This zoning district will provide stability for ongoing agricultural operations and provide for new uses necessary to support a viable local agriculture industry. This district is also intended to retain in open space uses those lands which may be suitable for future urbanization until such time as they are included within a city's urban service area and public facilities and services can be economically provided, consistent with community plans and objectives. This district is meant to apply to all portions of the county designated as Agriculture: Large-Scale, Agriculture: Medium-Scale, and Open Space Reserve in the general plan. Of the 21

housing opportunity sites in San José listed in Chapter 3 of this Draft EIR, *Project Description*, only two are zoned as the A district, and both are located on the former Pleasant Hills Golf Course in the eastern portion of San José.

General Commercial (CG)

The purpose of the General Commercial district, also known as the CG district, is to provide, at readily accessible locations, a wide variety of retail, service, and administrative establishments that are required to serve a large trading area population. The CG district is intended to be applied within urban service areas to commercial areas designated in a corresponding manner by the applicable city general plan.

Neighborhood Commercial (CN)

The purpose of the Neighborhood Commercial district, also known as the CN district, is to accommodate, at convenient locations, those limited commercial uses which are necessary to meet basic shopping and service needs of persons residing in surrounding areas. The CN district is intended to be applied within urban service areas to commercial areas designated in a corresponding manner by the applicable city general plan.

General Use Special Purpose Base District (A1)

The purpose of the A1 district is to provide a flexible base zoning district that allows general residential and agricultural uses and provides opportunities through the Use Permit process for other uses and developments that are appropriate for a particular location, consistent with the objectives, goals and policies of the general plan. The A1 zoning district applied to Stanford lands requires that a Use Permit, i.e., the General Use Permit, be granted for development and operation of academic activities. Allowable uses within the A1 district include agriculture, commercial, residential, schools, colleges and vocational schools, recycling, and retail with a Use Permit. SCP Policy SCP-LU-3 and 2000 General Use Permit Condition of Approval F.2.c allow high-density housing for faculty and staff at a density of more than 15 units per acre if such housing is compatible with surrounding building densities and designs.

R1 (One-Family Residence)

The purpose of the One-Family Residence district, also known as the R1 district, is to provide for single-family dwellings, and for the orderly and efficient arrangement of dwellings, yards, accessory buildings, and other residential site improvements.

R1-n2 – Residential (Burbank)

The purpose of the -n Neighborhood Preservation combining districts is to provide neighborhood-specific development standards for certain urban unincorporated areas (unincorporated lands within a city's urban service area). Where necessary and appropriate, they augment the base zoning district regulations to better address a particular area's historic development patterns and characteristics, significant and problematic discrepancies between the standards of the County and the adjoining city, and unique area-specific development issues. More fundamentally, they

are intended to provide effective, practical, and appropriate development standards to maintain and improve the quality of residential neighborhoods. These districts are also intended to implement the policies of the Santa Clara County General Plan regarding development within, and the annexation of, urban unincorporated areas.

As specified in Section 3.40.040 of the County Zoning Ordinance, in recognition of the eclectic and historical character of housing within the central Burbank area, the following specific standards and requirements shall apply to all dwellings in zoning districts that contain the "-n2" combining designation.

- A. **Front Yard Setbacks.** Front yard setbacks shall be 20 feet.
- B. **Floor Area Ratio.** Floor area ratio (FAR) shall not exceed 0.50. Floor area ratio calculations must be noted on building permit site plans. These computations must be verified, stamped, and signed by either a licensed architect, registered civil engineer, or licensed land surveyor. A cumulative total of 800 square feet for all accessory dwelling units on a lot shall not count toward floor area.

R1-6 (One-Family Residence)

The R1-6 district is a lot-size and setbacks combining district as defined in Chapter 3.10 of the County Zoning Ordinance. The R1-6 designation applies a 6,000-square-foot-minimum lot area and 25-foot-minimum front and rear setbacks and 6-foot-minimum side setbacks to the R1 (One-Family Residence) base district.

R1-8 (One-Family Residence)

The R1-8 district is a lot-size and setbacks combining district as defined in Chapter 3.10 of the County Zoning Ordinance. The R1-8 designation applies an 8,000-square-foot-minimum lot area and 25-foot-minimum front and rear setbacks and 8-foot-minimum side setbacks to the R1 (One-Family Residence) base district.

Architecture and Site Approval

Architecture and Site Approval (ASA) is required as specified in the County Zoning Ordinance and sections C12-350.1 through C12-350.7 of the County Ordinance Code. ASA is typically required in conjunction with commercial, institutional, office, industrial or multiple family residential uses. The purpose of ASA is to maintain the character and integrity of zoning districts by promoting quality development in harmony with the surrounding area, through consideration of all aspects of site configuration and design, and to generally promote the public health, safety and welfare. The procedure commonly augments the Use Permit process by providing a means for establishing detailed conditions on proposed developments.

4.10.4 Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Significance Thresholds

The thresholds used to determine the significance of impacts related to land use and planning are based on Appendix G of the *CEQA Guidelines*. Implementation of the project would have a significant impact on the environment if it would:

- Physically divide an established community.
- Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

Methodology and Assumptions

The analysis of potential impacts related to land use and planning in this EIR evaluates the potential for the project to result in substantial adverse effects related to land use and planning, including physical division of an established community and the potential for implementation of the project to conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

State law requires the County to update the Housing Element of the County General Plan for the 6th cycle, while making any changes to other elements of the General Plan needed to maintain internal consistency and comply with State law, as well as undertaking related changes to the County's zoning ordinance. To comply with these State mandates, the County is proposing to update its Housing Element 2023-2031 via the HEU, which is the subject of this Draft EIR. Since the HEU also includes housing opportunity sites on Stanford University lands within unincorporated Santa Clara County, an update to the SCP is also proposed as part of the HEU, as described in Chapter 3, *Project Description*, of this Draft EIR. The County also proposes to undertake changes to the County's Zoning Ordinance that are needed to reflect the updated Housing Element and to maintain consistency with the General Plan, as necessary under the law.

Because these zoning and policy changes are part of the project being analyzed, the analysis does not consider inconsistency with existing plan policies or codes to necessarily be indicative of significant physical environmental impacts. Adverse physical effects on the environment that could result from implementation of the HEU, including the changes to zoning and General Plan land use designations addressed in this chapter, are evaluated and disclosed in technical sections throughout this Draft EIR.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impacts

Impact LU-1: Implementation of the proposed project would not physically divide an established community. (*No Impact*)

Housing Element Update

As described in Chapter 3, *Project Description*, the proposed HEU would adopt an updated Housing Element for the period from January 2023 to January 2031 in accordance with State law. The updated Housing Element would include goals, objectives, policies, and implementation programs that address the maintenance, preservation, improvement, and development of housing in unincorporated Santa Clara County. In addition, the HEU would identify sites appropriate for the development of multifamily housing, and the County would rezone those sites as necessary to meet the requirements of State law. Table 3-2 in Chapter 3, *Project Description*, lists all the potential housing opportunity sites identified by the County and their proposed development densities, and Figure 3-2 in Chapter 3, *Project Description*, shows their locations.

Because the County has been assigned a large RHNA for the 6th Cycle, the County has been compelled to consider a wider range of sites than it has during past cycles. First, in accordance with the County's General Plan and the County's longstanding commitment to concentrate development in urban areas, only the urban unincorporated areas are intended to receive urban services and infrastructure. These areas are intended to eventually be annexed to their surrounding city and for that reason the County's General Plan leaves the planning for these areas to the relevant city, and therefore planning for these areas is typically covered in the relevant city's general plan. However, the County has identified several sites that are in the Urban Services Area (USA), particularly in the USAs in the City of San José that have remained unincorporated and undeveloped, including some sites listed by the City of San José in its 4th RHNA cycle. The County is including those sites and is considering using those sites to meet its 6th Cycle RHNA requirement, along with proposing the requisite changes to the County's General Plan to allow for their use. Second, the County is considering reusing sites on the Stanford Campus listed by the County in its 4th RHNA cycle that have not yet been developed.

While implementation of the HEU would result in the development of new housing at higher densities than currently exist in many areas, these changes would not alter the physical layout such that movement within or across the sites would be obstructed. The HEU also does not propose any roadways, such as freeways, that would divide established communities or isolate individual neighborhoods within the communities. Consequently, implementation of the HEU would have **no impact** related to the division of an established community.

Mitigation: None required.

Stanford Community Plan

As described in Chapter 3, *Project Description*, since the HEU also includes housing opportunity sites on Stanford University lands within unincorporated Santa Clara County, an update to the

SCP is also proposed as part of the HEU. The SCP update would facilitate the development of remaining net new academic, academic support, and residential uses authorized under the existing 2000 General Use Permit; however, the SCP update would not increase the amount of net new development authorized under the existing 2000 General Use Permit.

Academic and academic support and housing development under the SCP update would be constructed on contiguous Stanford land located entirely within the Stanford General Use Permit boundary. Specifically, this development would occur on vacant land, infill sites, and redevelopment sites located within the Academic Growth Boundary. The SCP update would not include any permanent physical barriers or obstacles to circulation that would impede movement across existing public rights-of-way that cross Stanford lands or restrict existing patterns of movement between the Stanford land and adjacent neighborhoods. Therefore, the SCP update would have **no impact** regarding physically dividing an established community.

Mitigation: None required.

Impact LU-2: Implementation of the proposed project would not cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with a land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. (*Less than Significant Impact*)

Housing Element Update

As noted earlier, the proposed HEU would adopt an updated Housing Element in accordance with State law. The updated Housing Element would include goals, objectives, policies, and implementation programs that address the maintenance, preservation, improvement, and development of housing in unincorporated Santa Clara County. In addition, the HEU would identify sites appropriate for the development of multifamily housing, and the County would rezone those sites as necessary to meet the requirements of State law. Table 3-2 in Chapter 3, *Project Description*, lists all the potential housing opportunity sites identified by the County and their proposed development densities, and Figure 3-2 in Chapter 3, *Project Description*, shows their locations. The County also proposes to undertake changes to the County's Zoning Ordinance that are needed to reflect the updated Housing Element and to maintain consistency with the General Plan and proposes to rezone housing opportunity sites and the zoning districts identified in the Housing Element for those sites.

Implementation of the HEU would have a significant environmental impact if it would cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. Physical environmental impacts resulting from implementation of the HEU are discussed in the applicable environmental resource sections in this Draft EIR.

Implementation of the HEU would result in changes to existing land use designations and zoning in several areas, and those changes would result in the allowance of higher density residential

development than that which is currently allowed. As part of the HEU's adoption, existing land use designations and zoning that do not conform to the densities identified in the HEU would be amended to reflect the new General Plan. Also, the HEU would explain the County's RHNA requirements and include policies necessary to advance the County's housing program notwithstanding potentially competing policies. With adoption of the HEU and conforming changes to the General Plan land use designations and zoning, the HEU would therefore be consistent with applicable general plan designations and zoning, as amended, and the impact would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation: None required.

Stanford Community Plan

As described in Chapter 3, *Project Description*, the SCP update recommends a coordinated approach to housing and circulation policy and implementation measures. This approach is intended to result in Stanford University providing the housing needed to accommodate future growth of academic and academic support uses directly on campus or other contiguous Stanford land-grant lands. The SCP update would facilitate the development of remaining net new academic, academic support, and residential uses authorized under the existing 2000 General Use Permit; the SCP update would not increase the amount of net new development authorized under the existing 2000 General Use Permit. Adoption of changes regarding proposed new development as well as approval of amendments to the SCP would ensure that implementation of the proposed SCP update would have a **less-than-significant impact** regarding consistency with land use plans and policies adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

Mitigation: None required.

Cumulative Impacts

This section presents an analysis of the cumulative effects of the project in combination with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects that could cause cumulatively considerable impacts. Significant cumulative impacts related to land use and planning could occur if the incremental impacts of the project combined with the incremental impacts of one or more of the cumulative projects or cumulative development projections included in the project description and described in Section 4.0.3, *Cumulative Impacts*. The geographic scope for cumulative effects related to land use is Santa Clara County.

Impact LU-3: Implementation of the proposed project, when combined with other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable projects, would not physically divide an established community. (*Less than Significant Impact*)

While implementation of the project would result in the development of new housing at higher densities than currently exist in many areas, these changes, or changes that would occur as a result of cumulative development, would not alter the physical layout such that movement within or across the sites would be obstructed. For instance, neither the project nor cumulative projects

would include physical obstructions (e.g., freeways or other impenetrable linear features) that would divide established communities or isolate individual neighborhoods within the communities. Consequently, the cumulative impact would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation: None required.

Impact LU-4: Implementation of the proposed project, when combined with other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable projects, would not cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. (*Less than Significant Impact*)

As discussed under Impact LU-2, implementation of the project would not result in a significant impact with respect to conflicts with land use plans or policies because the proposed project would include zoning and plan amendments needed to ensure consistency. As such, implementation of the project would not contribute to a cumulative effect due to a conflict with a land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. Consequently, the cumulative impact would be **less than significant**.

Mitigation: None required.

4.10.5 References

- County of Santa Clara. 1994. *County of Santa Clara General Plan*. Available online: <https://plandev.sccgov.org/ordinances-codes/general-plan>. Accessed September 15, 2022.
- County of Santa Clara. 2000. *Stanford University Community Plan*. Available online: https://stgenpln.blob.core.windows.net/document/SU_CP.pdf. Accessed September 15, 2022.
- State of California, Department of Finance (DOF). 2022. E-5 Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties and the State — January 1, 2021-2022. May 2022. Available online: <https://dof.ca.gov/Forecasting/Demographics/Estimates/estimates-e5-2010-2021/>. Accessed October 31, 2022.

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