

## I INTRODUCTION

This Environmental Impact Report (EIR) provides an assessment of the potential environmental consequences of adoption and implementation of the proposed Draft 2030 General Plan. This assessment is intended to inform the City of San Carlos decision-makers, other responsible agencies and the public-at-large of the nature of the Draft 2030 General Plan and its potential effects on the environment. This EIR was prepared in accordance with and in fulfillment of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements. The City of San Carlos is the Lead Agency for the project.

### *A. Proposed Action*

The proposed project, the Draft 2030 General Plan, is a comprehensive update of the 1992 San Carlos General Plan, except for the Circulation Element. A comprehensive update to the Circulation Element was not included in this Draft 2030 General Plan as this Element was adopted by the City Council in 2005 and amended in 2008, and is therefore not considered part of the project description for purposes of the environmental analysis. The 1992 San Carlos General Plan is the principal policy document for guiding future conservation and development in the city. Additionally, the City has three specific plans which would be integrated into the Draft 2030 General Plan. After adoption of the Draft 2030 General Plan, the 1994 West Side Specific Plan and the 1991 East San Carlos and Draft 2003 East San Carlos Specific Plans would no longer be in effect. The roles of the specific plans are discussed in Chapter 3, Project Description.

The Draft 2030 General Plan has a long-term planning horizon, addressing a 20-year time frame through 2030, yet it brings deliberate, overall direction to the day-to-day decisions of the City Council, its commissions and City staff. The proposed project is described in more detail in Chapter 3.

In conjunction with the Draft 2030 General Plan, the City prepared a Climate Action Plan (CAP). The CAP augments the objectives, goals, policies and actions of the Draft 2030 General Plan related to the reduction of green-

house gas emissions. The ultimate objective of the CAP is to reduce green-house gas emissions by 15 percent below 2005 levels by 2020.

*B. EIR Scope*

This document is a Program EIR that analyzes potential environmental impacts of the adoption of the proposed Draft 2030 General Plan and the CAP. The Draft 2030 General Plan and the CAP are interrelated documents and, as such, the potential environmental impacts from the plans will be evaluated under this Program EIR. Both documents focus on sustainability and the CAP augments the goals, policies and actions related to the reduction of GHG emissions in the Draft 2030 General Plan. The CAP was prepared in conjunction with the Draft 2030 General Plan. Furthermore, the CAP meets the requirement of Goal EM-7 and the associated goals and policies of the Environmental Management Element in the Draft 2030 General Plan which calls for a GHG emissions inventory and the preparation of a CAP.

As a Program EIR, it is not project-specific, and does not evaluate the impacts of specific projects that may be proposed under the Draft 2030 General Plan and the CAP. Such projects will require a separate environmental review to secure the necessary development permits. While subsequent environmental review may be tiered off this EIR, this EIR is not intended to address impacts of individual projects.

The scope of this EIR was established by the City of San Carlos through the Draft 2030 General Plan update process. The environmental issues addressed in this EIR include the following:

- ◆ 4.1 Aesthetics
- ◆ 4.2 Air Quality
- ◆ 4.3 Biological Resources
- ◆ 4.4 Cultural Resources
- ◆ 4.5 Geology, Soils and Seismic Hazards
- ◆ 4.6 Hazardous Materials
- ◆ 4.7 Hydrology and Water Quality

- ◆ 4.8 Land Use
- ◆ 4.9 Noise
- ◆ 4.10 Population and Housing
- ◆ 4.11 Public Services and Recreation
- ◆ 4.12 Transportation and Circulation
- ◆ 4.13 Utilities and Infrastructure
- ◆ 4.14 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

### *C. Report Organization*

This EIR is organized into the following chapters:

- ◆ **Chapter 1: Introduction.** Provides a preface and overview describing both the intended use of the document and the review and certification process of both the Draft 2030 General Plan and the EIR.
- ◆ **Chapter 2: Report Summary.** Summarizes environmental consequences that would result from the proposed project, describes recommended mitigation measures and indicates the level of significance of environmental impacts before and after mitigation. A Summary Table is also included for clarity.
- ◆ **Chapter 3: Project Description.** Describes the Draft 2030 General Plan in detail, including a summary of the chapters of the Draft 2030 General Plan and a listing of proposed land use designation changes. This chapter also describes the CAP.
- ◆ **Chapter 4: Environmental Evaluation.** Provides an analysis of the potential environmental impacts of the Draft 2030 General Plan and presents recommended mitigation measures, if required, to reduce their significance.
- ◆ **Chapter 5: Alternatives to the Proposed Project.** Considers three alternatives to the proposed project, including the CEQA-required “No Project Alternative.” The “No Project Alternative” is a continuation of the existing 1992 General Plan without updates and changes. There may

still be environmental impacts from this alternative, in some cases greater than under the proposed project.

- ◆ **Chapter 6: CEQA-Required Assessment Conclusions.** Discusses growth inducement, cumulative impacts, unavoidable significant effects and significant irreversible changes as a result of the project.

*D. Environmental Review Process*

The Draft EIR will be available for review by the public and interested parties, agencies and organizations for a period of at least 45 days, as required by State law. A public hearing on the Draft EIR will be held during the review period, during which oral comments are welcome. Written comments on the Draft EIR are also encouraged for incorporation into the Final EIR and should be submitted to:

Mr. Al Savay, Community Development Director  
City of San Carlos  
Community Development Department  
600 Elm Street  
San Carlos, CA 94070-3085  
Phone: (650) 802-4209  
Fax: (650) 595-6751  
Email: [asavay@cityofsancarlos.org](mailto:asavay@cityofsancarlos.org)