

## **Introduction**

This section provides a discussion of the land use issues related to the proposed program. This section includes a review of existing conditions based on available literature and a summary of federal, state, and local policies and regulations related to land use. Analyses of the environmental impacts of the proposed roadway improvements are discussed, and where feasible, mitigation measures are recommended to minimize or avoid potentially significant impacts.

## **Approach and Methodology**

The land use section of this document is based on the following sources:

- *Monterey County General Plan* and Amendments,
- *Greater Monterey Peninsula Area Plan*, and
- *Carmel Valley Master Plan*.

As this is a Program EIR and the roadway improvements have not been designed yet, a more detailed land use impact analysis would be required for development of plans for individual projects under the proposed roadway improvements program.

Growth-inducing impacts and cumulative impacts related to land use are discussed in Chapter 4, *Other CEQA Analyses*.

## Environmental Setting

This section discusses existing conditions related to land use in the program area and relates these land use characteristics to significance criteria used to assess potential program impacts.

### Existing Land Uses

Monterey County encompasses 2,127,359 acres (3,322 square miles [U.S. Census Bureau 2000a]). Approximately one percent of Monterey County is developed with residential (0.7%), commercial (0.03%), and industrial (0.3%) uses. Most of this development is concentrated in the northern one-third of the County. Agriculture is the largest land use, representing almost 60% of the total land area. The second largest land use consists of public and quasi-public uses (about 28%) such as educational, transportation, and military facilities as well as religious, recreational/cultural, and community facilities. Major urban areas are Salinas, Monterey-Seaside, and Carmel-by-the Sea (Monterey County 1982a).

Carmel Valley is made up of three main population centers, or communities: (1) the “Lower Valley” at the west end of Carmel Valley Road near the intersection with SR 1; (2) “Mid-Valley” in the vicinity of Robinson Canyon Road; and (3) Carmel Valley Village. Figure 3.5-1 shows the *Monterey County General Plan* land use designations for Carmel Valley and the program area. Residential uses comprise about 65% of the land use in Carmel Valley, including all densities (Rural Residential and Urban Residential). While residential lands are generally dispersed, the medium-density and high-density residential designations generally tend to cluster around the three main population centers, where commercial services are available (Monterey County 1986). As depicted in Figure 3.5-1, rural residential and small-scale agricultural pursuits make up the majority of the land use configuration of the valley. Agriculture, including grazing and farming, comprises about 12 % of the land use in the valley. Other land uses include commercial (about 1%), which includes professional office, and visitor accommodation facilities. Resource conservation and recreational areas comprise about 7% of the land use in Carmel Valley, including four regional parks, three golf courses, and tennis facilities. There are no industrial lands in Carmel Valley. Only about one-fourth of the approximately 28,000 acres of Carmel Valley has been developed by the date of publication of the CVMP.

The Carmel Valley Road corridor currently traverses and provides access to all three of the established communities of Carmel Valley. More specifically, Table 3.5-1, below, describes the land use designations in the program area (also see Figure 3.5-1). In the “Lower Valley”, the program area traverses the main population center made up of light commercial, visitor-serving, and low- and medium-residential uses. Heading east, the Carmel Valley Road corridor borders mostly rural density residential, open space, agricultural, and public/quasi-public

lands. The program area near Carmel Valley Village includes mostly rural and low-density residential areas and resource conservation and open space designations.

## Future Land Uses

New residential development, and the establishment of new communities in Carmel Valley is limited due to the moratorium on any future development that would significantly degrade traffic level of service conditions in the CVMP area.

**Table 3.5-1. Land Use Designations and Distribution in the Program Area**

Land Use Designation	Primary Location in the Program Area	Land Use Designation Definition	Approximate Percentage of Carmel Valley
Commercial	“Lower Valley”, “Mid-Valley”, Carmel Valley Village.	Divided between Light Commercial, Heavy Commercial, and Visitor Accommodations/Professional Office.	1%
Residential	Generally the north program area; scattered throughout; clustered around the three population centers.	Divided into Rural Density; Low Density; Medium Density; and High Density residential.	65%
Agricultural	South of Carmel Valley Road between “Lower Valley” and “Mid-Valley”.	Sub-categories include Farmland, Permanent Grazing, and Rural Grazing.	12%
Resource Conservation	South of Carmel Valley Road near “Lower Valley”; northwest of Las Gazas Creek; northeast of Carmel Valley Village.	Included are watershed areas; riparian habitats; scenic resources; and lands, which are generally remote, have steep slopes, or are inaccessible.	7%
Public/Quasi Public	“Lower Valley”; south of Carmel Valley Road between “Mid-Valley” and Carmel Valley Village.	Encompasses publicly or privately owned uses such as schools; parks; regional parks; public works facilities; and hospitals that serve the public at large; and lands that are owned by a federal, state, or local public agencies.	15%
Industrial	Not Applicable	Categories include Agricultural Industrial, Light Industrial, and Heavy Industrial.	0%

Source: Monterey County n.d., 1982.

## Regulatory Setting

Land use and development in the program area is guided by the *Monterey County General Plan*, the *Greater Monterey Peninsula Area Plan*, and the *Carmel Valley Master Plan*. No federal lands are within the program area; however the Los Padres National Forest borders the program area to the south. The following discussion summarizes the relevant goals and policies from each of these plans as

they relate to the proposed roadway program. Farmlands and farmland protection policies are discussed in Section 3.6, *Agricultural Resources*.

## Development Plans in the Program Area

The *Monterey County General Plan* is a long-term comprehensive guide that addresses all aspects of future growth, development, and conservation within unincorporated Monterey County. New development in Monterey County must be in keeping with the plans and policies of the General Plan.

The *Greater Monterey Peninsula Area Plan* is part of the *Monterey County General Plan*. It is one of eight area plans for Monterey County that address local issues. The planning area is bordered by the North County, Greater Salinas, Toro, Cachagua, and Coast planning areas. Carmel Valley is within the Greater Monterey Peninsula Area planning area.

The *Carmel Valley Master Plan* is part of the *Monterey County General Plan* and is the specific planning document that governs the program area. It seeks to “accommodate[e] development pressures from a comprehensive standpoint” in order to preserve and enhance the rural and scenic qualities of Carmel Valley (Monterey County 1986). Table C-1. Carmel Valley Master Plan Policy Consistency Analysis, in Appendix C, includes all policies in the *Carmel Valley Master Plan* and a determination for the proposed program’s consistency with each policy, as well as rationale for why the proposed program would or would not be consistent with each policy.

## Monterey County Ordinances

Zoning is the primary tool for implementing the General Plan. The function of zoning is to translate the comprehensive, long-range, and relatively broad policies of the General Plan into single-purpose, short-range, and specific development standards for each piece of property in the County. Existing zoning officially designates the permitted uses and densities of all land in the County. Transportation corridors, streets, and roadways are considered generally compatible with all zoning designations because they provide accessibility to all land uses.

The proposed program would be subject to compliance with the County’s Erosion Control and Grading Ordinances (refer to Section 3.1, *Geology, Soils, and Seismicity* and Section 3.2 *Hydrology and Water Quality*), the Noise Pollution Ordinance (refer to Section 3.9, *Noise*), and energy policies (Monterey County 2006).

## Criteria for Determining Significance

In accordance with State CEQA Guidelines, applicable federal and state regulations, and local plans and policies, the proposed program would be considered to result in a significant impact if it would:

### A. Land Use Compatibility

Introduce new land uses into an area that could be considered to be incompatible with the surrounding land uses or with the general character of the area.

### B. Plan/Policy Consistency

Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to a general plan, specific plan, LCP, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. (Potential impacts resulting from inconsistencies with an adopted habitat conservation plan are addressed in Section 3.3, *Biological Resources*).

### C. Division of an Established Community

Physically divide an established community.

## Impacts and Mitigation Measures

### A. Land Use Compatibility

#### **Impact LU-1: Potential Conflicts in Compatibility of Proposed Roadway Improvements with Surrounding Land Uses (Less than Significant)**

Project-specific environmental review would be required at the point of specific project development.

Temporary land use impacts associated with construction activities of various roadway improvements may occur. Roadway improvement activities could include site grading, excavation, construction staging, and erection of structures (e.g. proposed grade separation at Laureles Grade/Carmel Valley Road). These activities could involve the movement of heavy construction equipment, truck traffic, grading activities, construction noise, and air emissions within proximity

to residential and other sensitive uses, creating a temporary incompatibility with existing uses. However, upon completion of construction activities, temporary conflicts with surrounding uses would cease. (Construction impacts specifically related to nuisance effects [i.e., air quality, noise, traffic, and aesthetics] are addressed in those respective sections of this EIR).

The proposed roadway improvements include shoulder widening, installation of paved turnouts, new signage, roadway extension and signalization, and additions of passing lanes, turning lanes and upgrading bicycle lanes. At the program level, the proposed improvements would be compatible with adjacent land uses, based on the current General Plan designations in the program area. The majority of the proposed roadway improvements would occur within existing transportation rights-of-way in areas that are largely residential, commercial, agricultural, and public/quasi public. The proposed improvements are considered to be minor upgrades and modifications that would not change the rural nature of the Carmel Valley Road corridor and would not be incompatible with the existing land uses that are currently in proximity to transportation corridors, streets, and roadways.

The proposed grade separation at Laureles Grade and Carmel Valley Road could require right-of-way acquisition in excess of what would normally be taken for other roadway improvements, such as shoulder widening or passing lane additions. However, this grade separation would occur in a predominantly developed area that would not be inconsistent with the existing configuration of land uses. Furthermore, this right-of-way acquisition, if necessary, would be the single project requiring new road right-of-way under the proposed program within the 12-mile Carmel Valley Road corridor and it would not detract from or substantially change the rural character of the area. Additionally, project-specific environmental review would be required prior to project approval that would assess the compatibility of an individual project under the proposed program with existing land uses and character.

Since the proposed program would not introduce new land uses into an area that would be considered incompatible with the surrounding land uses, and would not alter the rural character of the area, this impact is considered **less-than-significant**. No mitigation is required.

## B. Plan/Policy Consistency

### Impact LU-2: Conflicts with Land Use Plans, Policies, or Regulations (Less than Significant)

Appendix C of this EIR provides an analysis of the consistency of the proposed roadway improvement program with regard to all CVMP land use policies. The CVMP includes numerous policies that address development and transportation issues such as land use, retaining the rural character of the region, traffic improvement recommendations, natural resources including biological resources, geology and soils, hydrology and water quality, and traffic constraints.

In general, the proposed program would be consistent with the CVMP policies. Proposed roadway improvements have the potential to degrade geotechnical, biological, hydrological, water quality, aesthetic and cultural resources, and air quality and noise in the program area primarily during construction. However, as discussed in Sections 3.1 – 3.12 of this EIR, mitigation measures have been provided that would minimize or avoid potential impacts of the proposed program on these resources and thus, ensure that the proposed program does not conflict with the CVMP.

Prior to commencement of any project construction, subsequent project-specific environmental analysis would be conducted to assess whether any individual project would be inconsistent with applicable federal, state, and local plans, policies, and ordinances. Therefore, this impact is considered **less-than-significant**. No mitigation is required.

## C. Division of an Established Community

### Impact LU-3: Potential Division of an Established Community (Less than Significant)

Most of the proposed roadway improvements would occur between but not in the middle of three major population centers that are considered communities in Carmel Valley: “Lower Valley”, “Mid-Valley”, and Carmel Valley Village. The majority of the proposed roadway improvements are considered to be minor upgrades and modifications such as shoulder widening, installation of paved turnouts, new signage, roadway extension and signalization, and additions of passing lanes, turning lanes and upgrading of bicycle lanes. None of these proposed improvements would bisect or divide any of the abovementioned communities as these road improvements would take place within existing transportation rights-of-way or require minor right-of-way takes of adjacent land within the roadway corridor. The proposed grade separation at Laureles Grade and Carmel Valley Road is expected to occur within the existing intersection right-of-way and possibly within an additional right-of-way acquisition area. This improvement would change the grade and elevation of a section of the roadway, but it would remain in the general vicinity of the existing roadway and would not be a structure that would physically divide the surrounding residential neighborhood, which are already divided by Carmel Valley Road. The proposed program would not include any new roads. Furthermore, the proposed program would not degrade access to any of the communities, but would instead improve access and traffic conditions. This impact is considered **less-than-significant**. No mitigation is required.