

## 5. Environmental Analysis

### 5.9 POPULATION AND HOUSING

This section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) examines the potential for socioeconomic impacts of the proposed General Plan Update on the City of Westminster and its sphere of influence (SOI), including changes in population, employment, and demand for housing, particularly housing cost/rent ranges defined as “affordable.”

#### 5.9.1 Environmental Setting

##### 5.9.1.1 REGULATORY BACKGROUND

State and regional laws, regulations, plans, or guidelines that are potentially applicable to the proposed project are summarized below.

#### State Regulations

##### *California Housing Element Law*

California planning and zoning law requires each city and county to adopt a general plan for future growth (California Government Code § 65300). This plan must include a housing element that identifies housing needs for all economic segments and provides opportunities for housing development to meet that need. At the state level, the Housing and Community Development Department (HCD) estimates the relative share of California’s projected population growth that would occur in each county based on California Department of Finance population projections and historical growth trends. These figures are compiled by HCD in a Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) for each region of California. Where there is a regional council of governments, the HCD provides the RHNA to the council. The council of governments then assigns a share of the regional housing need to each of its cities and counties. The process of assigning shares gives cities and counties the opportunity to comment on the proposed allocations. HCD oversees the process to ensure that the council of governments distributes its share of the state’s projected housing need.

State law recognizes the vital role local governments play in the supply and affordability of housing. To that end, California Government Code requires that the housing element achieve legislative goals to:

- Identify adequate sites to facilitate and encourage the development, maintenance, and improvement of housing for households of all economic levels, including persons with disabilities.
- Remove, as legally feasible and appropriate, governmental constraints to the production, maintenance, and improvement of housing for persons of all incomes, including those with disabilities.
- Assist in the development of adequate housing to meet the needs of low and moderate income households.

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- Conserve and improve the condition of housing and neighborhoods, including existing affordable housing. Promote housing opportunities for all persons regardless of race, religion, sex, marital status, ancestry, national origin, color, familial status, or disability.
- Preserve for lower income households the publicly assisted multifamily housing developments in each community.

The State of California Housing Element laws (California Government Code §§ 65580–65589) require that each city and county identify and analyze existing and projected housing needs within its jurisdiction and prepare goals, policies, and programs to further the development, improvement, and preservation of housing for all economic segments of the community, commensurate with local housing needs.

### Regional Planning

#### *Southern California Association of Governments*

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is a council of governments representing Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura counties. SCAG is the federally recognized metropolitan planning organization for this region, which encompasses over 38,000 square miles. It serves as a forum for addressing regional issues concerning transportation, the economy, community development, and the environment. SCAG develops, refines, and maintains regional and small area socioeconomic forecasting/allocation models. The socioeconomic estimates and projections are used for federal- and state-mandated long-range planning efforts such as the Regional Transportation Plan /Sustainable Communities Strategy, the Air Quality Management Plan, the Federal Transportation Improvement Program, and the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (SCAG 2015).

#### *Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy*

On April 7, 2016, SCAG adopted the 2016–2040 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS), which places a greater emphasis than ever on sustainability and integrated planning. The 2016–2040 RTP/SCS vision encompasses three principles that collectively work as the key to the region’s future: mobility, accessibility, and sustainability. The 2016–2040 RTP/SCS includes a strong commitment to reduce emissions from transportation sources to comply with Senate Bill 375, improve public health, and meet the National Ambient Air Quality Standards. The 2016-2040 RTP/SCS includes seven performance measures:

- **Location Efficiency.** Improved land use and transportation coordination strategies impacting the movement of people and goods.
- **Mobility and Accessibility.** Our ability to reach desired destinations with relative ease and within a reasonable time, using reasonably available transportation choices.
- **Safety and Health.** For example, reducing pollution-related disease.

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- **Environmental Quality.** Measured as criteria pollutants and greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Economic Opportunity.** Job creation through transportation investments via the 2016 RTP/SCS.
- **Investment Effectiveness.** Benefits from plan expenditures that transportation users can experience directly.
- **Transportation System Sustainability.** How well our transportation system is able to maintain its overall performance over time in an equitable manner with minimum damage to the environment and without compromising the ability of future generations to address their transportation needs.

### City of Westminster

#### 2013-2021 Housing Element

The City’s most recent housing element was adopted by City Council on January 22, 2014. For the 2013–2021 planning period, SCAG determined that Westminster’s RHNA allocation was two units. Consistent with state housing law, the 2014–2021 Housing Element demonstrates that the City can accommodate its RHNA allocation through the construction of planned residential projects and utilization of its inventory of appropriate housing sites. The Housing Element also identifies goals, policies, and programs designed to address the City’s overall housing needs.

#### 5.9.1.2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

##### Population

The population of the project area in 2015 is 92,167. The project area population is forecast to increase to 99,857 in 2040, for growth of 8.3 percent between 2015 and 2040. The forecast growth rate in the project area is slightly lower than the 9.8 percent growth estimated for Orange County during the same period.

**Table 5.9-1 Population Projections**

		2015 <sup>2,3</sup>	2040 <sup>1</sup>	Change, 2015–2040	Percent Change, 2015-2040
Project Area	City of Westminster	85,654	92,800	7,146	8.3%
	Sphere of Influence	6,514	7,057 <sup>4</sup>	543	8.3%
	Total	92,167	99,857	7,690	8.3%
Orange County		3,151,910	3,461,500	309,590	9.8%

<sup>1</sup> Source: Southern California Association of Governments 2016 RTP/SCS Demographics & Growth Forecast.

<sup>2</sup> 2015 estimates based on count of housing units per parcel; and estimated average household size of 3.4 persons and 2013 vacancy rate of 4.5 percent, both from the US Census Bureau American Community Survey.

<sup>3</sup> 2015 estimate for Orange County from California Department of Finance 2016.

<sup>4</sup> No estimate for the SOI for 2040 is available. SOI population in 2040 estimated by prorating the estimated 2015 SOI population by the ratio of the forecast 2040 City population to the estimated 2015 City population.

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### Housing

#### Housing Units

There are 27,559 housing units in the City of Westminster and 2,113 units in the SOI, for a total of 29,672 units in the planning area. Housing units are classified by type in Table 5.9-2.

#### Households

Households are equivalent to occupied housing units. There are 26,318 households in the City, 2,018 in the SOI, and 28,336 total in the project area. The average household size in the City in 2015 was estimated as 3.48 persons (CDF 2015). Households are classified by unit type in Table 5.9-2.

Households projections from the SCAG 2016 Growth Forecast, based on projections from Westminster’s current General Plan land use projections, are shown in Table 5.9-3. Households projections are not available for the SOI and are therefore prorated from projections for the City for 2040—based on the ratio of households in the City to those in the SOI in 2015. As shown, the number of households in the project area is forecast to grow slightly—by about 1.8 percent—between 2015 and 2040. Note that the number of households in Orange County is forecast to grow much more quickly—13.8 percent—in the same period.

**Table 5.9-2 Existing Housing and Households**

	Project Area <sup>1</sup>			Orange County <sup>2</sup>
	City of Westminster	Sphere of Influence	Total	
<b>Housing Units</b>				
Single-Family Residential	14,946	1,070	<b>16,016</b>	541,800
Multifamily Residential	8,498	805	<b>9,303</b>	365,324
Multifamily Townhome	1,414	0	<b>1,414</b>	128,785
Mobile Home	2,701	238	<b>2,939</b>	33,535
<b>Total</b>	<b>27,559</b>	<b>2,113</b>	<b>29,672</b>	1,069,450
<b>Households</b>				
Single-Family Residential	14,273	1,022	<b>15,295</b>	Not available
Multifamily Residential	8,116	769	<b>8,885</b>	Not available
Multifamily Townhome	1,350	0	<b>1,350</b>	Not available
Mobile Home	2,579	227	<b>2,806</b>	Not available
<b>Total</b>	<b>26,318</b>	<b>2,018</b>	<b>28,336</b>	1,012,422
<b>Overall Vacancy Rate</b>	4.5%	4.5%	4.5%	5.3%

Sources:

<sup>1</sup> City of Westminster 2015.

<sup>2</sup> California Department of Finance 2015.

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**Table 5.9-3 Households Projections**

	2015	2040	Change, 2015-2040	Percent Change, 2015-2040
City of Westminster	26,318	26,800	482	1.8%
SOI	2,018	2,055	37	1.8%
Project Area Total	28,336	28,855	519	1.8%
Orange County	1,012,422	1,152,300	139,878	13.8%

Sources: California Department of Finance 2015; Southern California Association of Governments 2016.

### Vacancy

The vacancy rate in the City and in the project area is 4.5 percent. That is slightly lower than the vacancy rate of 5.3 percent for Orange County.

### City of Westminster 2014 Housing Element Quantified Objectives

Quantified objectives from the City's 2014-2021 Housing Element are shown in Table 5.9-4. Implementation actions in the housing element are forecast to result in the construction of 497 housing units; however, the City's RHNA allocation is only 2 units.

**Table 5.9-4 Quantified Objectives, City of Westminster 2014 Housing Element**

Program	Very Low	Low	Moderate	Above Moderate	Total
<b>New Construction</b>					
Constructed	37	0	0	242	279
Approved	2	20	0	0	20
Vacant	0	25	50	123	198
Underutilized	0	0	0	0	0
Total	39	45	50	365	497
RHNA	1	1	0	0	2
Difference	+38	+44	+50	+365	+495
<b>Rehabilitation</b>					
	34	280	41	0	355
<b>Assistance<sup>1</sup></b>					
	1	14	20	0	35

Source: Willdan 2014.

<sup>1</sup> Assistance consists mostly of loans to low- and moderate-income first-time home buyers.

### Employment

#### Existing Employment

In 2014—the latest year for which employment data are available—there were approximately 22,857 jobs in the City of Westminster and 542 jobs in the SOI, for a total of 23,399 jobs in the project area. The same year

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City residents held an estimated 37,475 jobs and SOI residents held 4,001 jobs, for a total of 41,476 employed persons in the project area. Jobs in the project area and jobs of project area residents are categorized by industrial sector in Table 5.9-5.

In 2015, there were approximately 22,452 jobs in the City of Westminster and 786 jobs in the SOI, for a total of 23,237 jobs in the project area. Total employment of City of Westminster residents in December 2015 was estimated at 40,800 (EDD 2016).

**Table 5.9-5 Employment by Industrial Sector – City of Westminster and Midway City**

Industrial Sector	Jobs in the Project Area				Jobs of Project Area Residents			
	City of Westminster	Midway City	Project Area		City of Westminster	Midway City	Project Area	
			Total	Percent of Total			Total	Percent of Total
Agriculture, Mining, Oil and Gas Extraction	61	30	78	0.3	298	41	506	1.1
Manufacturing, Construction, and Utilities	2,407	77	2,176	9.5	7,209	733	8,222	18.5
Wholesale Trade, Retail Trade, Transportation and Warehousing	6,639	79	6,773	29.2	7,102	775	8,370	18.8
Information, Finance and Insurance, and Real Estate	1,414	7	1,338	5.9	2,695	279	3,564	8.0
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	808	0	1,280	5.6	2,473	263	3,106	7.0
Management of Companies; and Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation, and Public Administration	1,194	46	1,189	5.2	4,054	435	4,933	11.1
Educational Services, Health Care, and Social Assistance	6,931	273	6,835	29.9	7,786	802	8,865	19.9
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation; Accommodation and Food Services; and Other Services	3,403	30	3,260	14.3	5,858	673	6,912	15.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>22,857</b>	<b>542</b>	<b>23,399</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>37,475</b>	<b>4,001</b>	<b>41,476</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: USCB 2015.

### Employment Projections

Employment projections for 2040 are shown below in Table 5.9-6. Projections for the SOI are not available and are prorated from projections for the City for 2040—based on the ratios of jobs and employed persons

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in the City to those in the SOI in 2014. Employment in the project area is forecast to increase by 15.5 percent between 2014 and 2040, slower than the corresponding rate of 23.9 percent for Orange County.

**Table 5.9-6 Employment Projections**

	2014	2040	Change, 2013–2040	Percent Change 2013–2040
City of Westminster	22,857	26,400	3,543	15.5%
SOI	542	626	84	15.5%
Project Area Total	23,399	27,026	3,627	15.5%
Orange County	1,532,325	1,898,900	285,049	23.9%

Sources: US Census Bureau 2016; Southern California Association of Governments 2016.

### *Unemployment*

The unemployment rate in the City of Westminster in November 2015 was estimated as 5.8 percent (EDD 2016).

### **Jobs-Housing Balance**

The jobs-housing ratio is a general measure of the total number of jobs and housing units in a defined geographic area, without regard to economic constraints or individual preferences. The balance of jobs and housing in an area—in terms of the total number of jobs and housing units as well as the type of jobs versus the price of housing—has implications for mobility, air quality, and the distribution of tax revenues. The jobs/housing ratio is one indicator of a project’s effect on growth and quality of life in the project area. SCAG applies the jobs-housing ratio at the regional and subregional levels to analyze the fit between jobs, housing, and infrastructure. A major focus of SCAG’s regional planning efforts has been to improve this balance. SCAG defines the jobs-housing balance as follows:

Jobs and housing are in balance when an area has enough employment opportunities for most of the people who live there and enough housing opportunities for most of the people who work there. The region as a whole is, by definition, balanced.... Job-rich subregions have ratios greater than the regional average; housing-rich subregions have ratios lower than the regional average.

Ideally, job-housing balance would... assure not only a numerical match of jobs and housing but also an economic match in type of jobs and housing.

Jobs-housing goals and ratios are advisory only. No ideal jobs-housing ratio is adopted in state, regional, or City policies. However, SCAG considers an area balanced when the jobs-housing ratio is 1.36—communities with more than 1.36 jobs per dwelling unit are considered jobs-rich, and those with fewer than 1.36 are considered housing-rich. A job-housing imbalance can indicate potential air quality and traffic problems associated with commuting.

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Jobs-housing balance applies to regions and not to small geographic areas and/or small populations. The jobs-housing balance is not applicable to Midway City, and the estimates below are for the entire project area.

As shown below in Table 5.9-7, the project area was housing-rich in 2012, with a jobs-housing ratio of 0.88, and is forecast to become slightly less housing-rich by 2040, with a jobs-housing ratio of 0.94. Orange County, by contrast, was slightly jobs-rich in 2012, with a jobs-housing ratio of 1.53, and is estimated to become slightly more jobs-rich (1.65) by 2040.

**Table 5.9-7 Jobs-Housing Balance**

Jurisdiction	Year	Employment <sup>1</sup>	Households <sup>1</sup>	Jobs-Housing Ratio
Project Area <sup>2</sup>	2012	24,774	28,209	0.88
	2040	27,026	28,855	0.94
Orange County	2012	1,526,500	999,500	1.53
	2040	1,898,900	1,152,300	1.65

<sup>1</sup> Source: SCAG 2016.

<sup>2</sup> Employment and households projections for the SOI for 2012 were not available. The employment estimate for 2012 for the SOI included in the project area employment estimate for 2012 was prorated using SOI employment in 2014 and the ratio of employment in the City in 2012 to that in 2014. The 2012 households estimate for the SOI was calculated similarly, except using 2015 housing counts for the City and SOI. Employment and households estimates for the SOI in 2040 were prorated in a similar manner.

### 5.9.2 Thresholds of Significance

According to Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if the project would:

- P-1 Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure).
- P-2 Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.
- P-3 Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

The Initial Study, included as Appendix A, substantiates that impacts associated with the following thresholds would be less than significant:

- Threshold P-2
- Threshold P-3

These impacts will not be addressed in the following analysis.



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### 5.9.3 Environmental Impacts

The following impact analysis addresses thresholds of significance for which the Initial Study disclosed potentially significant impacts. The applicable thresholds are identified in brackets after the impact statement.

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**Impact 5.9-1: Implementation of the General Plan Updated would result in population growth in the project area. [Threshold P-1]**

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*Impact Analysis:*

Buildout of the General Plan Update is forecast to cause a net increase in the population of the project area to 118,463, that is, 26,296 greater than the 2015 population of 92,167. The current regional estimate is that the population of the project area will increase to 99,857 by 2040. Thus, General Plan buildout would exceed population forecasts by 18,606 persons or about 19 percent of the regional estimate.

Buildout of the General Plan Update is estimated to involve construction of a net increase of 6,812 housing units in the project area for a total of 36,484 units. This is a substantial increase in the current regional projection of 519 households in the project area by 2040 (SCAG 2016).<sup>1</sup> Approximately 56 percent of the increase in units is planned in areas to be designated for residential uses under the General Plan Update, with the remaining 44 percent planned in areas to be designated Mixed Use.

At General Plan buildout, employment in the project area is projected to be 39,407, that is, a net increase of 16,008, or about 68 percent, above the 23,399 jobs in the project area in 2014. This increase in employment is greater than the forecast increase of 3,627 jobs in the project area forecast over the 2014-2040 period.

#### Relationship between Jobs and Housing

##### *Westminster Jobs-Housing Ratio*

At General Plan Update buildout, the jobs-housing balance in the project area is forecast to be 1.08 (see Table 5.9-8), substantially less housing-rich than existing conditions and the current 2040 forecast. This would be a favorable impact of General Plan Update implementation. Such a favorable impact would be anticipated to cause a small reduction in the average length of commute trips entering and leaving Westminster and, thus, a small reduction in the number of vehicle miles traveled for such trips.

**Table 5.9-8 Project Area Jobs-Housing Balance**

Scenario	Employment <sup>1</sup>	Households <sup>1</sup>	Jobs-Housing Ratio
2012 Estimate	24,774	28,209	0.88
2040 Existing Forecast	27,026	28,855	0.94
General Plan Buildout	39,407	36,484	1.08

<sup>1</sup> Source: SCAG 2016.

<sup>1</sup> The number of households in the Sphere of Influence was prorated from the number of households in the City based on population, since no estimate of households within the SOI was available.

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### *Orange County Jobs-Housing Ratio*

Orange County’s forecast jobs-housing ratio, when adjusted for the difference between General Plan buildout projections and existing 2040 forecasts for employment and housing within the project area, would remain at 1.65 (see Table 5.9-9), the same as the existing 2040 forecast. General Plan Update implementation would have no impact on the forecast jobs-housing ratio for Orange County in 2040.

**Table 5.9-9 Orange County Jobs-Housing Balance**

Scenario	Employment <sup>1</sup>	Households <sup>1</sup>	Jobs-Housing Ratio
Orange County: 2012 Estimate	1,526,500	999,500	1.53
Orange County: 2040 Existing Forecast	1,898,900	1,152,300	1.65
Orange County: 2040 Existing Forecast plus Net Change for project area, General Plan Buildout minus 2040 Existing Forecast	1,915,070	1,159,112	1.65

<sup>1</sup> Source: SCAG 2016.

### *General Plan Policies Related to Jobs-Housing Balance*

Policies in the proposed General Plan Update address the relationship between local employment and housing. Land Use Policy LU-2.5 coordinates residential and nonresidential planning and development with regional, county, and other local agencies to further regional and subregional goals for jobs-housing balance. Policies 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.7, 2.8, and 2.9 directly and indirectly promote the creation of new jobs for City residents. These policies promote the location of jobs and housing near each other and provide an opportunity for residents the option to live near work or daily services.

### **Consistency with SCAG’s 2016 RTP/SCS**

General Plan Update implementation would be consistent with applicable goals of the 2016 RTP/SCS goals, as described in Table 5.7-1 in Section 5.7, *Land Use and Planning*, of this DEIR. Additionally, as discussed in Section 5.7, nearly the entire project area is identified as a high quality transit area (HQTA) in the 2016–2040 RTP/SCS, including corridors that follow the routes of I-405, Beach Boulevard, Bolsa Avenue, and Westminster Avenue (SCAG 2016). An HQTA is a walkable transit village or corridor that is within one-half-mile of a well-serviced transit corridor. The purpose of identifying these areas is to balance employment, housing, and services on a regional level to reduce vehicle miles traveled, reduce air pollutant emissions, enhance livability, expand prosperity, and increase sustainability in the SCAG region.

The General Plan Update is consistent with the HQTA map because it encourages an intensified mix of uses in six distinct activity centers and along the City’s major corridors to reduce vehicle miles traveled. Buildout of the General Plan Update would increase livability by providing higher density housing and commercial opportunities along corridors where a range of transportation modes are available. The proposed General Plan is consistent with SCAG’s vision for the area and proposed implementation of the HQTA goals because

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it accommodates population growth in the SCAG region, encourages growth in existing and emerging centers and along major transportation corridors, encourages mixed-use opportunities, and promotes employment opportunities in the housing-rich region.

### 5.9.4 Relevant General Plan Policies

#### Housing Element (Adopted)

##### **Goal 1: Identify adequate sites to meet Westminster's current and projected housing needs.**

- Policy 1.1: Identify adequate sites to accommodate a variety of dwelling unit types and affordability levels to provide housing for all household types, lifestyles, and income levels.
- Policy 1.2: Pursue opportunities to construct housing beyond the RHNA
- Policy 1.3: Identify City resources to acquire or subsidize potential housing development opportunities

##### **Goal 2: Assist in the development of affordable and market-rate housing.**

- Policy 2.1: Increase housing opportunities and choices for lower and moderate-income Westminster households, as funding is available.
- Policy 2.2: Support innovative public, private, and nonprofit efforts in the development and financing of affordable housing, particularly for lower and moderate income and/or special needs households.

##### **Goal 3: Remove governmental constraints to the maintenance, improvement, and development of housing.**

- Policy 3.1: Remove regulatory constraints as necessary to provide quality housing that meets the needs of Westminster residents.
- Policy 3.2: Incentivize the development of affordable housing, as funding is available, to facilitate the development of housing for the City's lower and moderate income households.

##### **Goal 4: Conserve and improve the condition of the existing housing stock.**

- Policy 4.1: Protect the quality of Westminster neighborhoods through the conservation and rehabilitation of the existing market rate and affordable housing stock.
- Policy 4.2: Promote financial and technical assistance to Westminster households to maintain and improve their homes.

##### **Goal 5: Promote equal housing opportunities for all persons.**

- Policy 5.1: Provide a regulatory environment in which housing opportunity is equal for all.

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- Policy 5.2: Create a continuum of care for Westminster’s homeless population, including provisions for emergency shelter, transition housing, and permanent supportive housing.
- Policy 5.3: Improve quality of life for disabled persons by facilitating relief from regulatory barriers to housing that meets their particular needs.
- Policy 5.4: Encourage the inclusion of universal design features in new housing.

#### **Goal 6: Preserve the assisted affordable housing stock.**

- Policy 6.1: Protect the quality and quantity of the City’s affordable housing developments through code enforcement efforts.
- Policy 6.2: Maintain affordable housing opportunities by monitoring the existing stock for potential risks of conversion to market rate.
- Policy 6.3: Regulate the conversion of relatively affordable housing types to other forms of housing through reporting requirements and monitoring the potential loss of affordable housing.

#### **Land Use Element**

- Goal LU-2: Managing Future Growth
  - LU-2.1: Places to Live
  - LU-2.2: Places to Work
  - LU-2.3: Places Supporting the Quality of Life
  - LU-2.4: Centers of Activity
  - LU-2.5: Balancing Jobs and Housing
  - LU-2.7: Uses to Meet Daily Needs
  - LU-2.8: Development Flexibility
  - LU-2.9: Developable Parcels

### **5.9.5 Existing Regulations and Standard Conditions**

#### **State**

- California Housing Code Sections 65580 to 65589: Housing Element Requirements

#### **Southern California Association of Governments**

- 2016-2040 RTP/SCS

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### City of Westminster

- 2013-2021 Housing Element

### 5.9.6 Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Upon implementation of regulatory requirements and standard conditions of approval, the following impacts would be less than significant: 5.9-1.

### 5.9.7 Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

### 5.9.8 Level of Significance After Mitigation

No significant adverse impacts related to population and housing were identified, and no mitigation is necessary.

### 5.9.9 References

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