

### 3 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In order to provide a full evaluation of future impacts of the Chino General Plan, this Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) evaluates two closely related projects.

The first project is *Envision Chino – General Plan 2025*. As proposed, this would be a comprehensive update of the existing *City of Chino General Plan*. It would include a new General Plan structure, complete with new chapters and a limited number of new land use designations, goals, objectives, policies, and actions. *Envision Chino* proposes to guide future growth in the City through 2025. The new General Plan would retain two existing Specific Plans: College Park and The Preserve, which would continue to be incorporated by reference into the General Plan. The Majestic Spectrum, Eucalyptus Business Park, and East Chino Specific Plans, as well as the Subarea 1, Central Avenue, and Downtown Civic Center Master Plan sections of the current General Plan would cease to be in effect upon adoption of the General Plan. In addition to the *Envision Chino* General Plan itself, this project includes proposed revisions to the City’s Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances, which are consistent with and would implement the direction of the General Plan. In this EIR, this project, including the zoning and subdivision ordinance revisions, is referred to as the Proposed General Plan.

The second project evaluated in this EIR is similar to the Proposed General Plan, except that it would provide for more intensive development in limited areas of Chino. This project is referred to as the Focused Growth Plan. Under the terms of Chino’s Measure M, the portions of the Focused Growth Plan that differ from the Proposed General Plan would require approval in a city-wide vote before the Focused Growth Plan could be implemented. This is because the more intense development foreseen in the Focused Growth Plan includes residential densities beyond those established in the City’s General Plan in 1988, when Chino voters passed Measure M. Measure M requires a vote of the people for any such density increase. The changes foreseen in the Focused Growth Plan would most likely be implemented incrementally as private property-owners would undertake city-wide votes for the development allowed by the Focused Growth Plan.

This Draft EIR evaluates potential environmental impacts resulting from the adoption of *either* the Proposed General Plan or the Focused Growth Plan. Each of these two projects is evaluated separately and at the same level of detail. Throughout this EIR, the Proposed General Plan project is discussed first, followed by any additional information that applies only to the more intensive development associated with the Focused Growth Plan.

#### *A. Project Location and Setting*

Chino is located in the west end of San Bernardino County, within the Chino Valley. The City lies 37 miles east of Los Angeles and 31 miles west of San Bernardino. State Highway 71 runs diagonally along the City's southwestern border, while State Highway 60 bisects its northern portion. These highways are major regional north-south and west-east corridors, respectively. As shown in Figure 3-1, Chino is located in the Inland Empire, at the intersection of San Bernardino, Riverside, Los Angeles, and Orange Counties.

Since the late 19th century, Chino has experienced numerous transformations in its economy, population and land use pattern. The City of Chino was founded in 1887 by Richard Gird who laid out a set of pedestrian-scale blocks around a park, railroad depot and hotel. It was not until 1940 that Chino began to experience significant growth. Between 1940 and 1960, development in the City was focused around automobile accessibility, including construction of the Corona Expressway (71) and Riverside Freeway (91), connecting the City to the rest of Southern California's growing highway network. During this period, the California Institute for Men (CIM) was built in the southern portion of the City. In the 1980's, Chino's land use began to shift from agriculture to industrial and warehouse/distribution uses. Today Chino has a wide variety of land uses, including residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural.

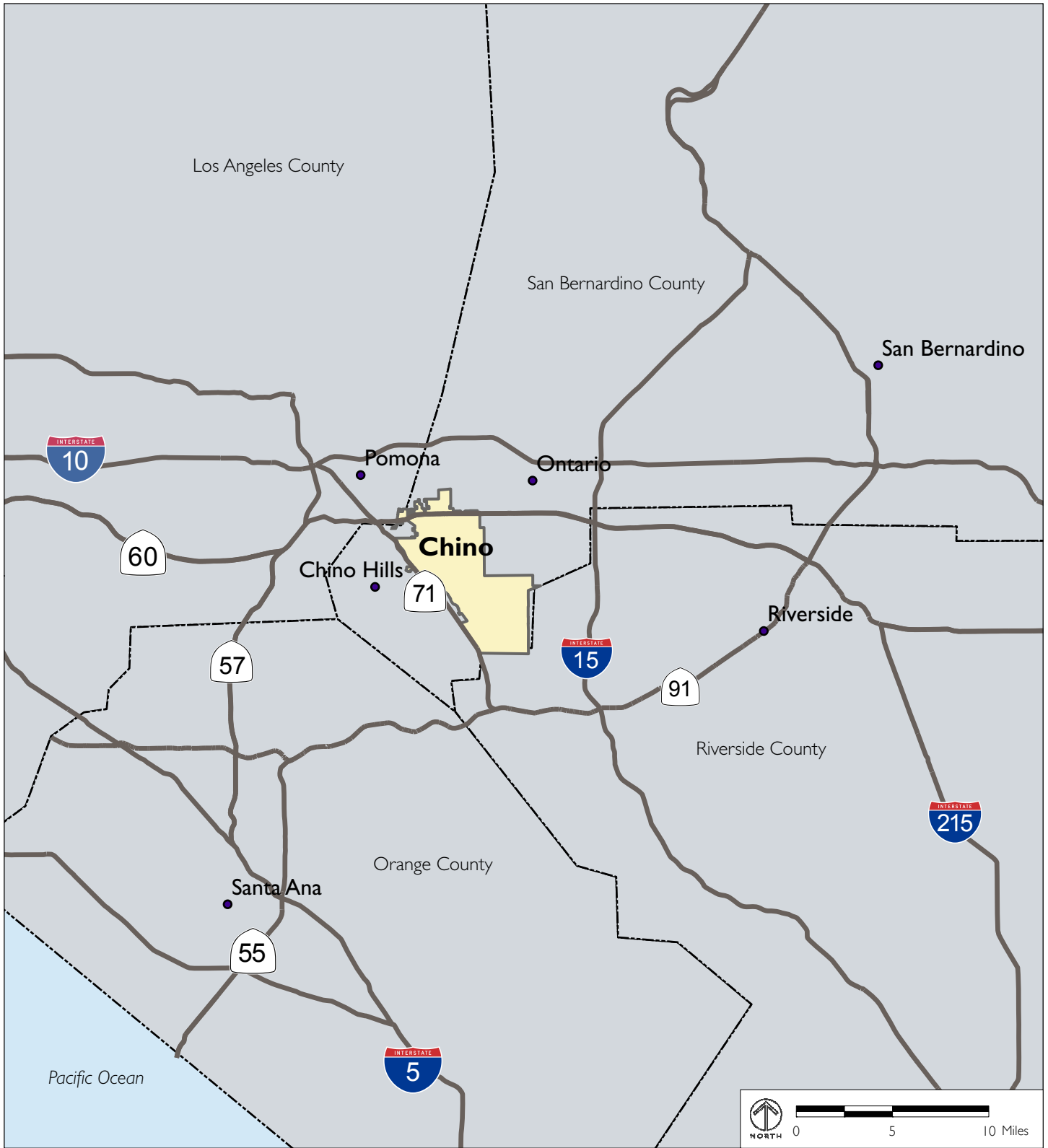


FIGURE 3-1  
REGIONAL LOCATION

Chino's population was estimated at 84,964 in 2009, including the institutionalized population.<sup>1</sup> The City's population increased approximately 25 percent between 2000 and 2009.<sup>2</sup> These figures include only the incorporated City of Chino, not the City's Sphere of Influence (SOI). Significant population increases are expected in the coming years, as described below in Section F, Development Under the Proposed General Plan and Focused Growth Plan. San Bernardino County, which had a population of approximately 2 million residents as of 2008, is projected to grow to over 2.7 million by 2025 and to over 3.6 million by 2050.<sup>3</sup> As of 2009, there were 21,291 housing units in Chino, of which 3.3 percent were unoccupied.<sup>4</sup>

When conducting a General Plan update, three geographies that have an impact on the future of the city are considered. These are the city limits, the SOI and the planning area. The city limit is the area within the existing city where the city government has direct regulatory land use authority. The SOI is the unincorporated land adjacent to the city's boundaries that might reasonably be expected to be within the city's boundaries in the future. The planning area is the area outside of both the city limits and the SOI whose development has an impact on the city but where the city has no direct regulatory control and will not annex in the future.

Chino covers approximately 29.5 square miles of relatively flat land, with residential, industrial, agricultural (as per page 3-2), and institutional land uses. The SOI contains another 2.5 square miles of flat land to the northwest of the

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<sup>1</sup> State of California, Department of Finance, *E-4 Population Estimates for Cities, Counties and the State, 2001-2009, with 2000 Benchmark*. Sacramento, California, May 2009.

<sup>2</sup> State of California, Department of Finance, *January 2009 Cities and Counties Ranked by Size, Numeric, and Percent Change*. Sacramento, California, May 2009.

<sup>3</sup> State of California, Department of Finance, *Population Projections for California and Its Counties 2000-2050*, Sacramento, California, July 2007.

<sup>4</sup> State of California, Department of Finance, *E-5 Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties and the State, 2001-2009, with 2000 Benchmark*. Sacramento, California, May 2009.

incorporated City, with residential, agricultural and open space uses being the most prevalent land use. Together, the City limits and SOI comprise the study area for the Proposed General Plan, Focused Growth Plan, and this EIR. The City limits and the SOI are shown in Figure 3-2.

Chino is constrained for the most part by neighboring municipalities: Ontario to the east, Montclair and Pomona to the north, Chino Hills to the west, and Riverside County to the south. Therefore, the Planning Area consists only of land within the City limits and SOI.

### *B. Project Objectives*

This section describes the objectives for the Proposed General Plan with an additional objective that would be met by the Focused Growth Plan. The objectives were developed as a result of the General Plan process and are closely related to the vision for the future described in the Vision Statement chapter of the General Plan.

Chino's General Plan provides the fundamental basis for the City's land use and development policy, and represents the basic community values, ideals and aspirations that would govern development and conservation through 2025. The General Plan addresses all aspects of development including land use, community character, transportation, housing, public facilities, infrastructure, and open space, among other topics.

California Government Code Section 65300 requires that the General Plan be comprehensive and internally consistent and that it plan for the long-term. Although required to address the issues specified by State law, a General Plan may be organized in a way that best suits the local jurisdiction. According to State law, the Plan is to be clearly written, available to all those concerned with the community's development and easy to administer.



The General Plan focuses on providing opportunities for healthy, active lifestyles for Chino's residents. As obesity rates grow, public health professionals are becoming increasingly aware of the relationship of land use and transportation planning to public health. The General Plan focuses on planning for neighborhoods and circulation patterns that allow residents to walk, bike and take public transportation to meet their daily needs, and to access parks and healthy food choices.

The overall objectives of both the Proposed General Plan and the Focused Growth General Plan are to:

- ◆ Make Chino a healthy City by increasing residents' opportunities for physical activity, access to healthy food and access to health services.
- ◆ Guide future development to allow Chino to grow while maintaining its small town feel.
- ◆ Encourage the development of a variety of housing types.

The Focused Growth Plan also has one additional objective, which is to:

- ◆ Guide development, subject to a city-wide vote, along major corridors in Chino in order to increase walkability, support the use of public transportation, increase opportunities for economic revitalization, and provide neighborhood centers with local services and housing.

### *C. The General Plan Update Process*

The General Plan update process began in 2006 and will continue through 2010. During this period, a range of public input opportunities ensured that an updated General Plan would reflect the community's vision for Chino. The following outreach efforts were undertaken to involve Chino residents in the process.

## 1. Early Public Outreach and Involvement

Early in the planning process, the public provided initial input on the issues and concerns they felt should be considered during the General Plan update process. Two separate citizen steering committees, the General Plan Steering Committee and the Housing Element Steering Committee, commented on various Elements of the General Plan and at various stages of the General Plan update process. The public was encouraged to participate at General Plan Community Workshops and at community events.

### a. General Plan Community Workshops

The City conducted five “Envision Chino” community workshops to engage the community in interactive discussions on issues, concerns, and aspirations for the City. The meetings were conducted between March and May 2006, and covered a range of topics.

### b. Community Events

As part of the General Plan update, the City reached out to residents through the following community events during the summer and early fall of 2006:

- ◆ Summer outdoor concerts (total of three)
- ◆ The farmers market (total of four)
- ◆ Mexican Independence Day celebration
- ◆ Relay for Life

Additionally, community members were encouraged to participate through direct community outreach. A citywide mailing and outreach at grocery stores and youth sporting events helped publicize the General Plan process and community workshops (described below). In addition, workshop dates were posted on a “reader board” in the City and published in the *Chino Champion* newspaper. Subsequent meeting dates were publicized by notices in the *Chino Champion* and mailing to the list of people who had signed up from the first five community workshops.

The City reached out directly to the following citizen groups:

- ◆ Healthy Chino
- ◆ Kiwanis Club

- ◆ Rotary
- ◆ Soroptomists
- ◆ Congregations of several local churches

## **2. Special Study Area Meetings and Workshops**

The Chino General Plan Update included consideration of three Special Study Areas. These areas, A, B, and C, are shown in Figure 3-3. They were chosen as representative of places in Chino that might change during General Plan implementation. A series of meetings and workshops on the Special Study Areas, conducted in February 2007, served to build consensus among participants about future land uses for these areas. As land use alternatives were discussed, city-wide land use and policy concepts were developed that provided a basis for the development of city-wide land use and policy alternatives.

## **3. City-Wide Alternatives Meetings and Workshops**

Based on the discussion of the Special Study Areas, three city-wide land use alternatives were developed for the City of Chino. The result was three unique alternatives for the future of Chino. Alternative 1 focused on minimizing change to existing land uses. Alternative 2 focused future development into mixed-use neighborhoods along existing major corridors. Alternative 3 focused future development around neighborhood centers. The three city-wide alternatives were discussed at a community workshop in May of 2007. The Planning Commission and City Council heard the results of this workshop at meetings held in June and October of 2007.

## **4. Planning Commission Workshop**

A public workshop will be held on March 1, 2010 to allow the Planning Commission and members of the public to review the Proposed General Plan and Focused Growth Plan –and provide comments during the official, State-mandated review period.

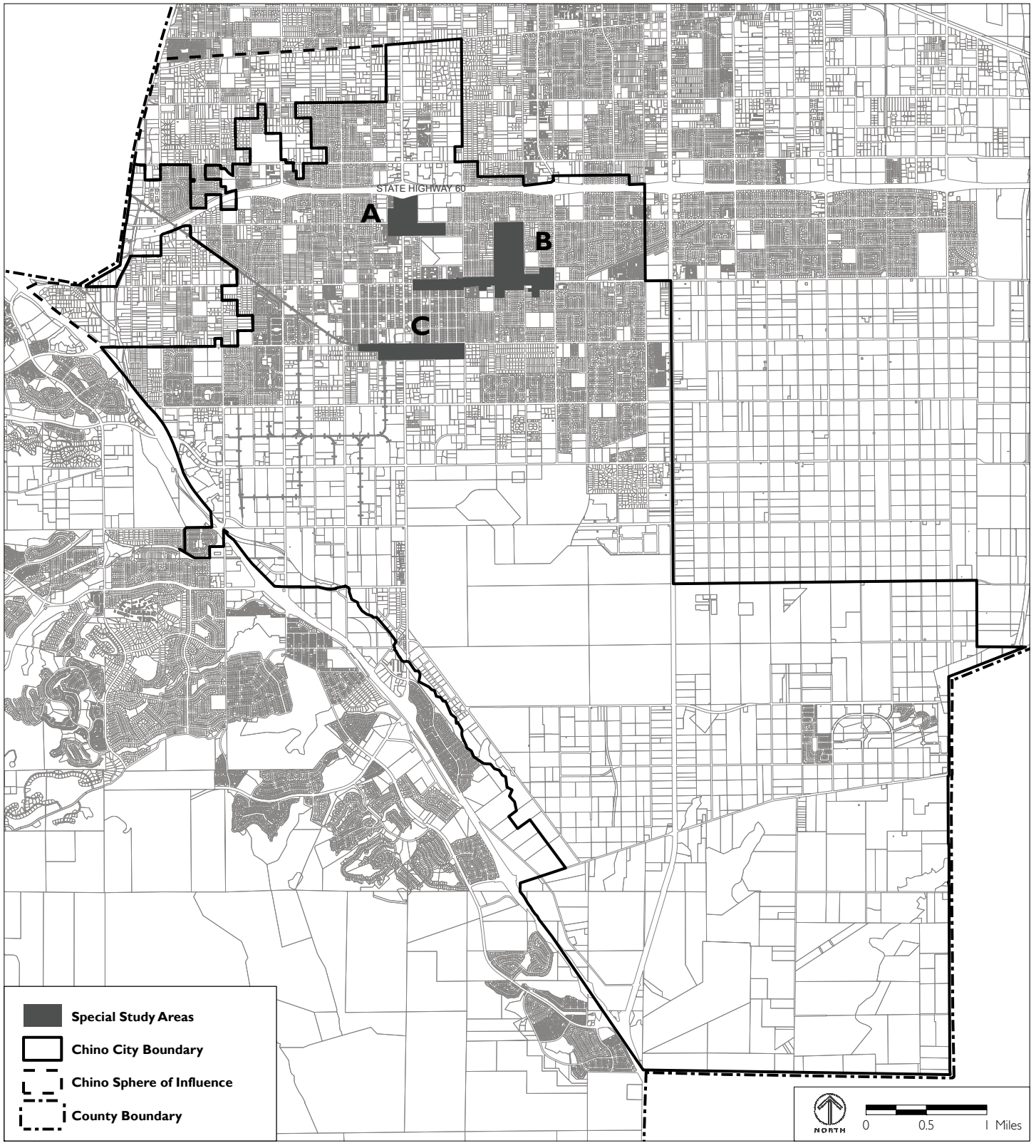


FIGURE 3-3  
SPECIAL STUDY AREAS

## 5. Public Review Period and Adoption

As required by State law, the Proposed General Plan and Focused Growth Plan will be circulated for a 45-day period along with the associated environmental review during the months of January, February, and March, officially starting on January 25, 2010 and ending on March 10, 2010. During this time, the public will be allowed to submit additional comments, which will be taken into consideration at the public hearings held before the Planning Commission and City Council. The City Council would adopt the General Plan after this public review period.

### *D. Organization of the General Plan*

Each element of the Proposed General Plan contains background information and a series of goals, objectives, policies and actions. The goals, objectives, policies, and actions provide guidance to the City on how to direct change and manage City resources over the next 20 years. The following provides a description of each and explains the relationship between each:

- ◆ A goal is a desired outcome sought by the City via implementation of its General Plan.
- ◆ An objective is a specific condition or end that serves as a concrete step toward attaining a goal. Objectives are intended to be clearly achievable and, when possible, measurable.
- ◆ A policy is a specific statement that guides decision-making to achieve an objective. Once adopted, policies are representative statements of City regulation that require no further implementation. The General Plan's policies establish the standards that will be used by City staff, the Planning Commission and City Council in their review of land development projects and in decision-making about City actions.
- ◆ An action is a program, implementation measure, procedure, –or technique intended to help to achieve a specified objective.

Policies and actions are at the same level of importance, and both are intended to implement objectives, which in turn implement goals. In most cases, objectives are supported by implementing both policies and actions. However, it is also possible for an objective to be implemented exclusively through either policies or actions.

The Proposed General Plan focuses primarily on the City, but it includes policies related to the City's SOI. These are anticipated to continue the current practice of permitting landowners in the unincorporated area to connect to the City's sewer service and become part of the City, but without requiring landowners to do so.

The Proposed General Plan is drafted to primarily reflect the land uses and policies foreseen in the Proposed General Plan project defined in this EIR. It also includes a section that shows the additional growth that would be allowed under the Focused Growth Plan.

#### *E. General Plan Elements*

The Proposed General Plan is the basic document whose adoption is the subject of this EIR. It should be reviewed in its entirety as a basis for understanding the exact scope of the project, and it is hereby incorporated by reference in its entirety into this project description.

As required by State law, the Proposed General Plan covers topics in seven required elements: Land Use, Circulation, Housing, Open Space, Noise, Safety, and Conservation. The Proposed General Plan also includes several non-required elements which the City of Chino has included to address local concerns. The specific elements described below are included in the Proposed General Plan.

##### **1. A Healthy City**

This General Plan focuses on increasing public health and health awareness in Chino. For that reason, the centerpiece of this General Plan is the Healthy

City Element. Although State law does not require a Healthy City Element in general plans, Chino has included this element in order to emphasize the importance of public health to the City and its residents.

This element contains a limited number of stand-alone goals, objectives, policies, and actions related to public health. Since the majority of the health-related goals, objectives, policies, and actions are incorporated throughout the other General Plan elements, the Healthy City Element also catalogues the health-related items found in other elements of the Proposed General Plan.

## **2. Land Use Element**

The State-required Land Use Element designates all lands within the City for specific uses such as housing, commerce, industry, and open space. The Land Use Element also provides development regulations for each land use category, and overall land use policies for the City.

## **3. Community Character Element**

The Community Character Element is not required by State law, but has been included in order to identify, protect, and enhance Chino's unique physical and visual resources. The Community Character Element provides information on visual and urban resources, natural setting, and cultural resources.

## **4. Transportation Element**

State law requires a Circulation or Transportation Element to specify the general location and extent of existing and proposed major streets and other transportation facilities. As required by law, all facilities in the Transportation Element are correlated to the land uses foreseen in the Land Use Element.

## **5. Economic Development Element**

While not required by State law, the Economic Development Element is included to facilitate and maintain a balanced mix of economic activity and to encourage the development of particular economic sectors in Chino. The

Economic Development Element contains goals, objectives, policies and actions to encourage the development of desired economic activities throughout the City, as well as ensure the fiscal vitality of the community.

#### **6. Open Space and Conservation Element**

This element combines two elements required by State law, the Open Space Element and the Conservation Element. It addresses the preservation of open space and the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources.

#### **7. Parks and Recreation Element**

The Parks and Recreation Element is not required by State law, but includes an important vision for parks and recreational opportunities in Chino. The element outlines park standards, facilities, trails, city-sponsored activities, and funding sources for future parks and facilities.

#### **8. Public Facilities and Services Element**

This optional element assesses the current state of public services and facilities within the City, including law enforcement, fire service, schools, libraries, government facilities, water, wastewater, stormwater drainage, solid waste, and utilities. It also covers a portion of the State-mandated circulation element. Goals, objectives, and policies focus on ensuring minimum service levels within Chino, with and without additional development.

#### **9. Air Quality Element**

The State does not require Chino to include an Air Quality Element in its General Plan. It is included, however, to outline goals, objectives, policies, and actions to mitigate the air pollution impacts of land use, the transportation system, and other activities that occur in Chino.

#### **10. Safety Element**

State law requires the General Plan to include a Safety Element. It provides goals, objectives, policies, and actions intended to protect the community from risks associated with the effects of flooding, seismic, and other geologic hazards and wildland fires.

## 11. Noise Element

The State requires a Noise Element as part of the General Plan to address noise problems in the community and analyze and quantify current and projected noise levels from a variety of sources. The Noise Element includes goals, objectives, policies, and actions to address current and foreseeable noise problems.

The Housing Element of the General Plan is not included in either the Proposed General Plan or Focused Growth Plan project descriptions because it has already been adopted by the City Council. The City's Housing Element was updated immediately prior to the rest of the plan and is bound as a separate document. Government Code Section 65588 requires Housing Elements to be updated at specific intervals and to include specific components such as analysis of the existing housing stock, analysis of existing and projected housing needs, and quantification of the number of housing units that will be developed, preserved, and improved through its policies and actions.

### *F. Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance Updates*

Along with the Proposed General Plan and Focused Growth Plan, this EIR evaluates the environmental impacts of proposed updates to the City of Chino's Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances. These are Titles 20 and 19 of the Chino Municipal Code, respectively. The Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances are proposed for adoption with the Proposed General Plan, but are also drafted in a way that they could be used to implement the Focused Growth Plan in the event of a successful Measure M vote.

The complete text of the draft Subdivision and Zoning Ordinances are available separately for review and are hereby incorporated into this project description by reference.

The proposed Subdivision and Zoning Ordinances are implementation tools for the General Plan. The proposed ordinances are consistent with the amount and location of development designated in the Proposed General Plan

and analyzed in this EIR. If adopted, the ordinances would serve to control development allowed under the Proposed General Plan so that the Proposed General Plan's goals and policies are achieved.

The Zoning Ordinance Update differs from the existing Zoning Ordinance insofar as it breaks down the existing code into a more legible, user-friendly document. The Zoning Ordinance Update reduces the number of zoning districts by merging some existing districts into several general categories. For example, recreational uses are proposed to be categorized as General Recreation.

In addition, the Zoning Ordinance proposes the following new zoning districts:

- ◆ RD14, Residential
- ◆ MU20, Mixed Use
- ◆ MU30, Mixed Use
- ◆ CR, Commercial Regional
- ◆ OS1, Open Space Recreation
- ◆ OS2, Open Space Natural
- ◆ P, Public
- ◆ PS, Public School

The RD3, OS, and GS zoning districts and all Planned Development overlays are also proposed for deletion.

Other major changes to the proposed zoning code are listed below:

- ◆ The existing Central Avenue Specific Plan Overlay District would be removed.
- ◆ The Edison Easement Overlay District would be added to accommodate electrical transmission towers and active and passive recreation and open space areas.

- ◆ The Auto Mall Overlay District would be added to provide regulations for this area of the City to develop a prestigious center for automobile sales, services, and related uses.
- ◆ The East Chino Overlay District would be added to establish a distinctive, well-designed and high-quality environment which enhances the agricultural and rural heritage of the area. This District would carry forward some of the regulations of the East Chino Specific Plan, which would cease to be in effect if this project is approved.
- ◆ The Airport Overlay District would be added to regulate the use and development of all property located within the airport overflight area.
- ◆ The Downtown Neighborhood Overlay would be renamed Downtown Overlay and modified to clarify that the intent is to create a pedestrian-friendly Downtown area with high quality design.
- ◆ New standards for alternative energy structures, including free standing Solar and Wind energy structures, would be added.

The Subdivision Ordinance would be revised to reflect current State regulations as well as to provide enhanced design standards for subdivisions. The ordinance would also be re-organized for clarity. No other substantive changes to the Subdivision Ordinance are proposed.

*G. Development under the Proposed General Plan and the Focused Growth Plan*

This section describes projected development under the Proposed General Plan and the Focused Growth Plan project descriptions. Figures 3-4 and 3-5 show proposed land uses for each of the plans.

The Proposed General Plan would provide for growth in both the residential and non-residential sectors. The majority of new housing would occur in the College Park and The Preserve Specific Plan areas. The remainder would be accommodated on infill parcels throughout the City.

The Focused Growth Plan also would provide for growth in both the residential and non-residential sectors. In addition to new housing in the College Park and The Preserve Specific Plan areas, the plan would accommodate limited higher-intensity housing and mixed-use development along the Riverside Drive corridor, at the intersection of Walnut and Central Avenues, and immediately south of the Civic Center along Central Avenue.

Table 3-1 shows estimates of the growth that would occur under the Proposed General Plan and Focused Growth Plan. These estimates are based on buildout densities that are probable given allowable densities, economic forces, and likely development patterns.

For comparison, Table 3-1 also shows estimated development in Chino in 2007, as well as estimates of 2025 buildout under the City's current General Plan and according to Southern California Association of Government's (SCAG) estimates. The Proposed General Plan would result in approximately 165 additional residential units within Chino's city limits, beyond those anticipated in the current General Plan. The Focused Growth Plan would result in approximately 1,132 additional residential units, beyond those anticipated in the current General Plan.

Table 3-1 shows that the projections estimated by SCAG are significantly smaller than the estimations for the City's existing General Plan and the two projects included in this EIR. There are five reasons for this:

- ◆ SCAG's projections do not include the development of Edgewater, which was approved in 2009 and is included in the current General Plan, Proposed General Plan, and the Focused Growth Plan totals.
- ◆ SCAG's projections do not include additional development within an amendment to The Preserve Specific Plan that was adopted along with the Housing Element prior to this EIR.
- ◆ SCAG's projections do not include the additional industrial development that was approved in Sub Area 1 and analyzed as part of the Chino South Industrial Park EIR.

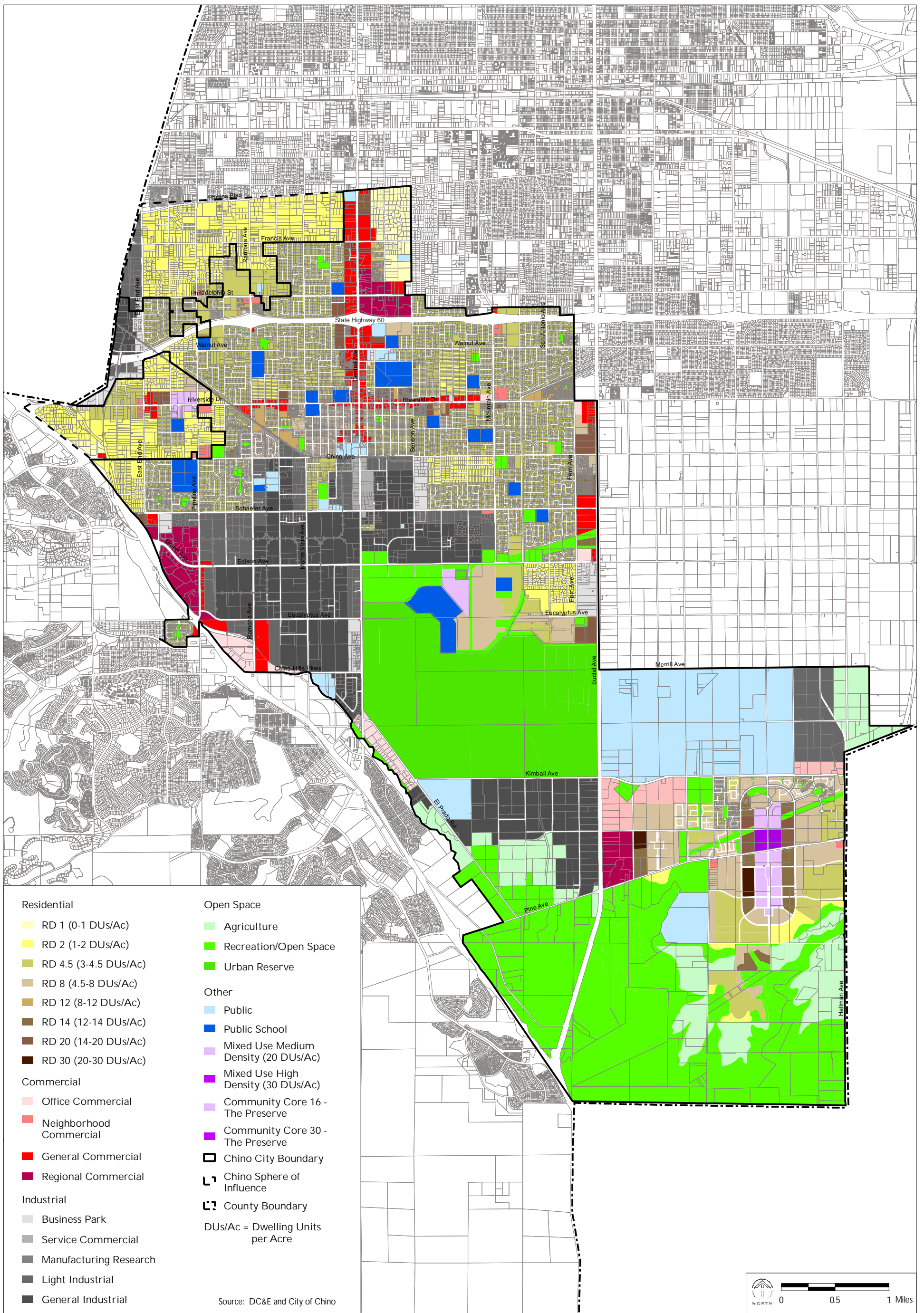


FIGURE 3-4  
PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN LAND USE MAP



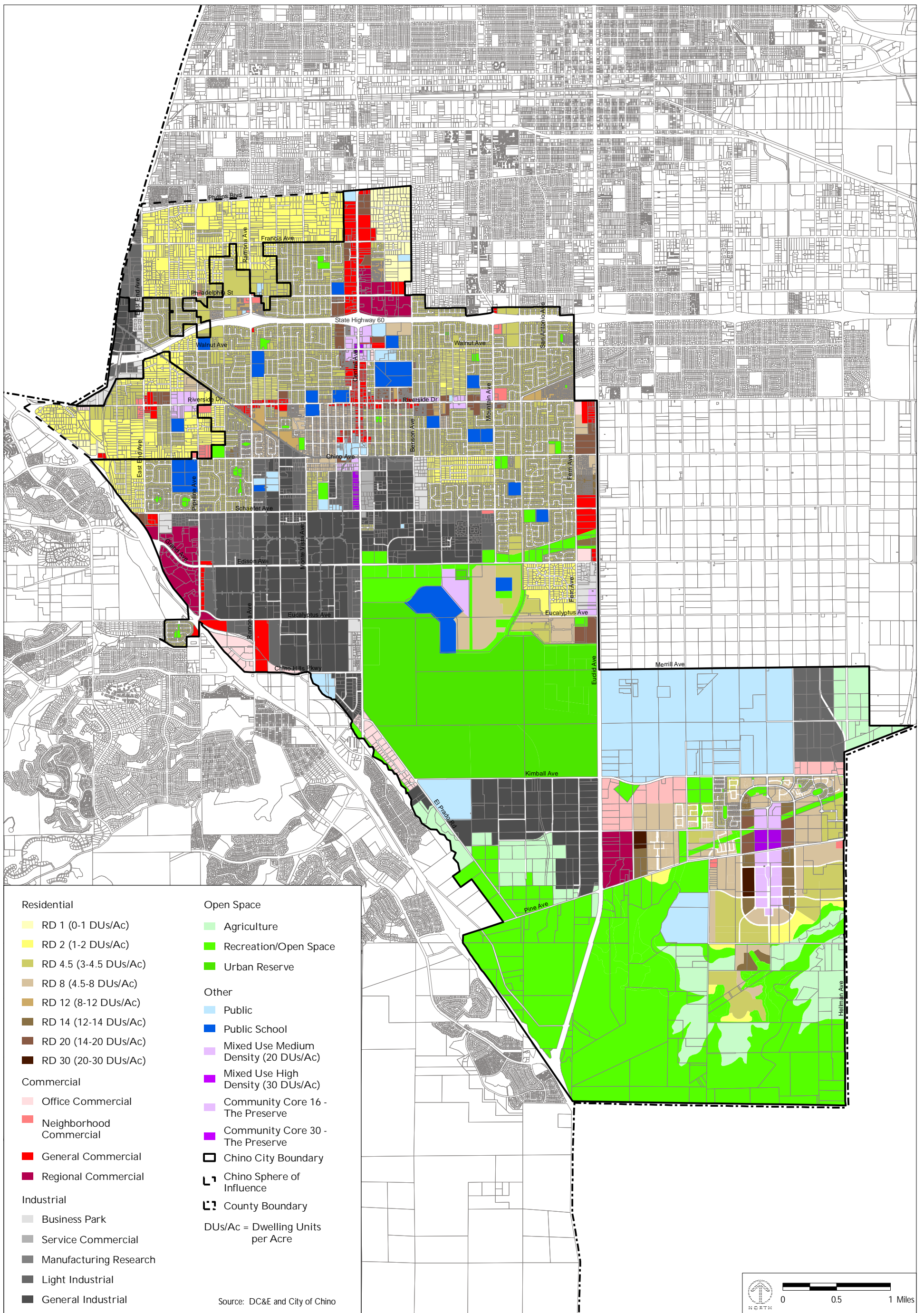


FIGURE 3-5  
FOCUSED GROWTH MAP



TABLE 3-1 **ESTIMATED DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE GENERAL PLAN AND FOCUSED GROWTH PLAN**

	Existing Conditions (2007)	SCAG 2025 Estimate	Current General Plan (2025)	Proposed General Plan (2025)	Focused Growth Plan (2025)
Housing Units	23,012	25,818	38,649	38,814	39,781
Population	84,964	100,142	140,864	141,067	143,556
Jobs	50,187	59,060	79,462	83,255	81,633

Note: All figures include the City’s SOI, except for the SCAG figures, for which the SOI is not included.

- ◆ SCAG’s projections do not include the areas within Chino’s SOI, while the existing General Plan, the Proposed General Plan, and the Focused Growth Plan incorporate existing and anticipated development in the SOI.
- ◆ SCAG’s projections do not take into account other increases in land use intensity throughout the City as presented in the Proposed General Plan and Focused Growth Plan land use maps.

The population numbers in Table 3-1 include Chino’s institutionalized population. There are currently 9,159 people institutionalized in Chino within the CIM, the California Institute for Women (CIW), and the Herman G. Stark Youth Correctional Facility. This number is projected to increase to approximately 18,420 by 2025. Chino’s institutionalized population is not considered in the impact discussion for certain sections of this EIR, such as traffic, schools, library services, and parks. This is because the institutionalized population does not place any demand on these services, relying instead on services within the institutions.

### *H. Intended Uses of the General Plan*

As mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, this EIR is intended to review potential environmental impacts of the adoption and implementation of the Proposed General Plan and the Focused Growth Plan, and to determine corresponding mitigation measures, as necessary. Subsequent projects would be reviewed by the City for consistency with the General Plan and this EIR, and project-level environmental review would be conducted as required by CEQA. Projects successive to this EIR could include the following, provided they are consistent with one or both of the two projects analyzed in this EIR:

- ◆ Specific Plan approvals.
- ◆ Property rezonings.
- ◆ Land annexations.
- ◆ Development Plan approvals, such as tentative maps, variances, special conditional use permits, site approvals, and other land use permits.
- ◆ Development Agreement approvals.
- ◆ Facility and Service Master Plan and Financing Plan approvals.
- ◆ Approval and funding of major projects.
- ◆ Municipal Bond issuances.
- ◆ Issuance of permits and other approvals necessary for implementation of the Proposed General Plan or Focused Growth Plan.
- ◆ Property acquisition by purchase or eminent domain.
- ◆ Permit issuances and other approvals necessary for public and private development projects.
- ◆ Subsequent updates and amendments to the Chino SOI, including pre-zoning.
- ◆ Placement of Measure M votes on the ballot by the Chino City Council.