



## Chapter 2

# Environmental Setting

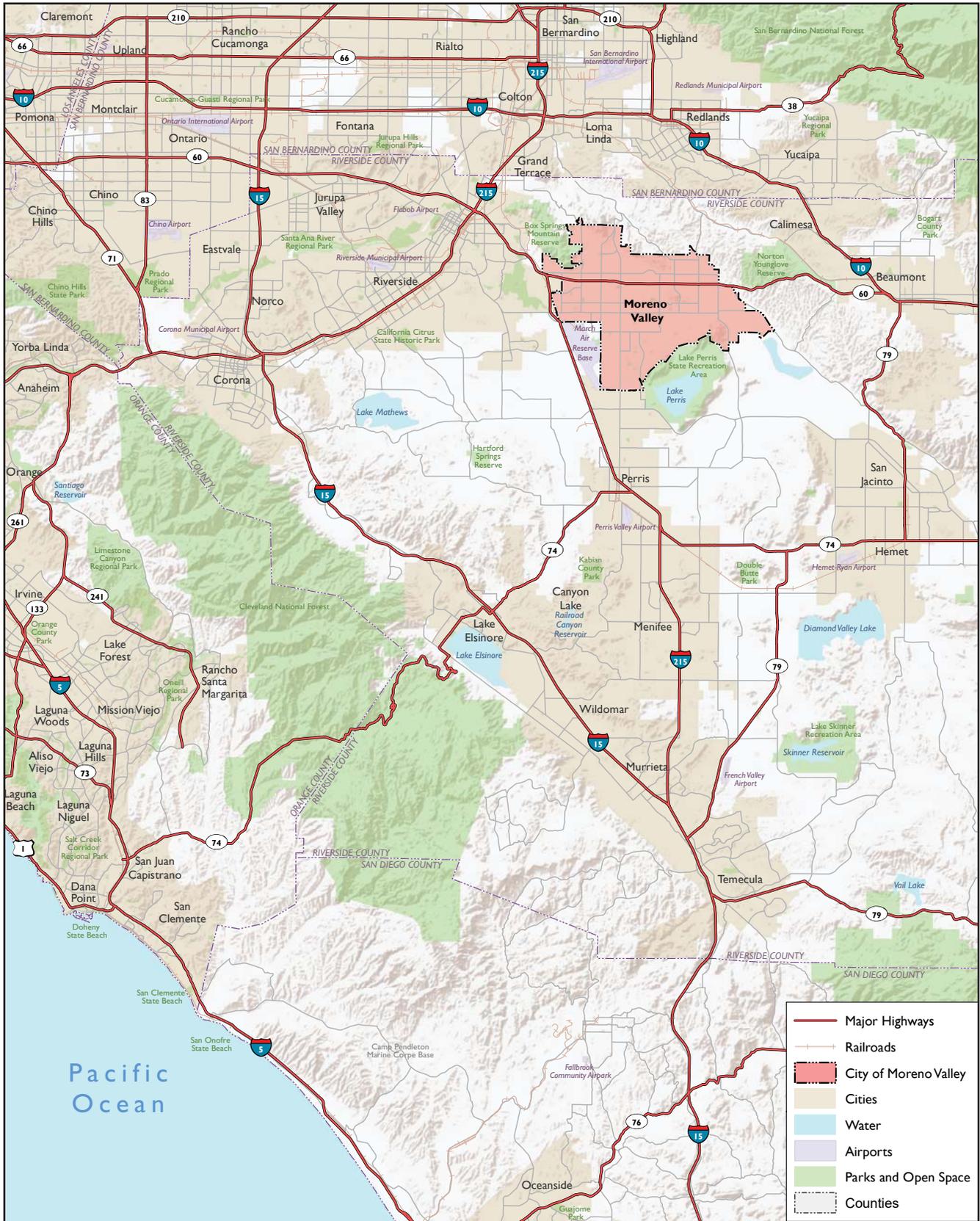
## 2.1 Planning Context

### 2.1.1 Project Location

The city of Moreno Valley (city) is located within the northwestern portion of Riverside County in the southern Inland Empire portion of the state of California. Moreno Valley is located approximately 63 miles east of downtown Los Angeles, 49 miles east of the city of Irvine, and 43 miles west of the city of Palm Springs. State Route 60 (SR-60), which runs in an east and west direction through the northern portion of Moreno Valley (east and west direction), and Interstate 215 (I-215), which runs in proximity to the westerly city limits (north and south direction), serve to connect the city to other communities throughout the southern California region. The city is accessible via public transportation by rail, through Metrolink located approximately one-half mile west of the city limits, and the city is accessible via aircraft at the Inland Port Airport located at the March Air Reserve Base (MARB), which is situated south and west of the city limits.

The city's picturesque valley setting is bounded to the north by the Box Springs Mountains, the Badlands to the east, and the mountains of the Lake Perris Recreation Area, Mystic Lake floodplain, and San Jacinto Wildlife Area to the south. The city is also bounded by MARB to the southwest and the city of Riverside to the west.

Moreno Valley is a diverse and growing community of approximately 207,000 people. It has a relatively young and dynamic majority Latino population. The city has seen significant employment growth in recent years, having created 20,000 new jobs locally since 2013. The city is currently home to approximately 4,500 businesses, including many Fortune 500 and international companies such as Amazon, Proctor & Gamble, Skechers USA, and Karma Automotive. Other important institutions established in the city include the Riverside University Health System Medical Center, a public teaching hospital, the Kaiser Permanente Hospital, and Moreno Valley College. Figure 2-1 presents Moreno Valley's regional location.



**FIGURE 2-1**  
Regional Location

Figure 2-2 presents the Planning Area, which includes land within the city limits and Moreno Valley's Sphere of Influence (SOI). The SOI is a plan for the probably physical boundaries and service area of the city. It encompasses the territory that is envisioned to be added to the city's ultimate service area through annexation. The Riverside Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) is vested with the authority to review and approve (or deny) any amendment to the city's SOI and annexations of new territory. In total, the Planning Area comprises a total of approximately 42,900 acres (67 square miles) of both incorporated and unincorporated land bearing relation to the city's future growth. The existing city limits encompass approximately 33,000 acres (51.6 square miles) of incorporated land, or 77 percent of the Planning Area. Existing development within the city limits include residential, commercial, and industrial developments, as well as public/community facilities, including parks, schools, utilities, church/religious facilities, and hospitals/care facilities. The city's SOI boundary incorporates a total of approximately 9,920 acres outside of the city limits (15.5 square miles) or 23 percent of the total land located in the Planning Area. The Planning Area for the Housing Element Update and the CAP, unless otherwise noted, is limited to the area within the city's current territorial boundaries.

Today, Moreno Valley is a community of approximately 208,000 residents (United States Census 2019), and the city's motto is "People, Pride, Progress." Among California's growing cities, Moreno Valley is the second most populous in Riverside County and growth can be attributed to the diverse range of quality housing options, which include higher-end executive homes, affordable single-family homes, condominiums, and apartments; a family-friendly lifestyle; good schools; and impressive quality-of-life amenities and growing job centers. The demographic profile of Moreno Valley consists primarily of young families. The majority of the city's population identify themselves as Hispanic/Latino (of any race). The average age in the city is also relatively young, with nearly 30 percent of the population under 18 years of age.

## **2.1.2 Current Adopted Moreno Valley General Plan**

Adopted in 2006, the existing Moreno Valley General Plan provides goals, objectives, policies, and programs that serve as a guide to the development of the future character of the city. Acting as the "constitution" for the physical development of the city, the General Plan forms the basis of decisions concerning the development of property. The current, adopted General Plan includes all the mandated elements required by California State law in 2006: Land Use, Circulation, Housing, Conservation, Open Space, Noise, and Safety. Certain mandatory elements are combined to minimize redundancy and an optional Economic Development Element was planned for but not completed. The existing 2006 General Plan is accompanied by a preamble that outlines the overall vision of development within Moreno Valley:

The City of Moreno Valley embraces the interests of its residents and strives to meet their needs by creating a sense of community. The commitment to this vision encourages attractive amenities and a full range of public services, while promoting a safe and healthy environment. It is the goal of the City to improve the quality of life by creating this "sense of place" and working together to encourage involvement and volunteerism while endeavoring to function in an effective, responsible, efficient and visionary manner.

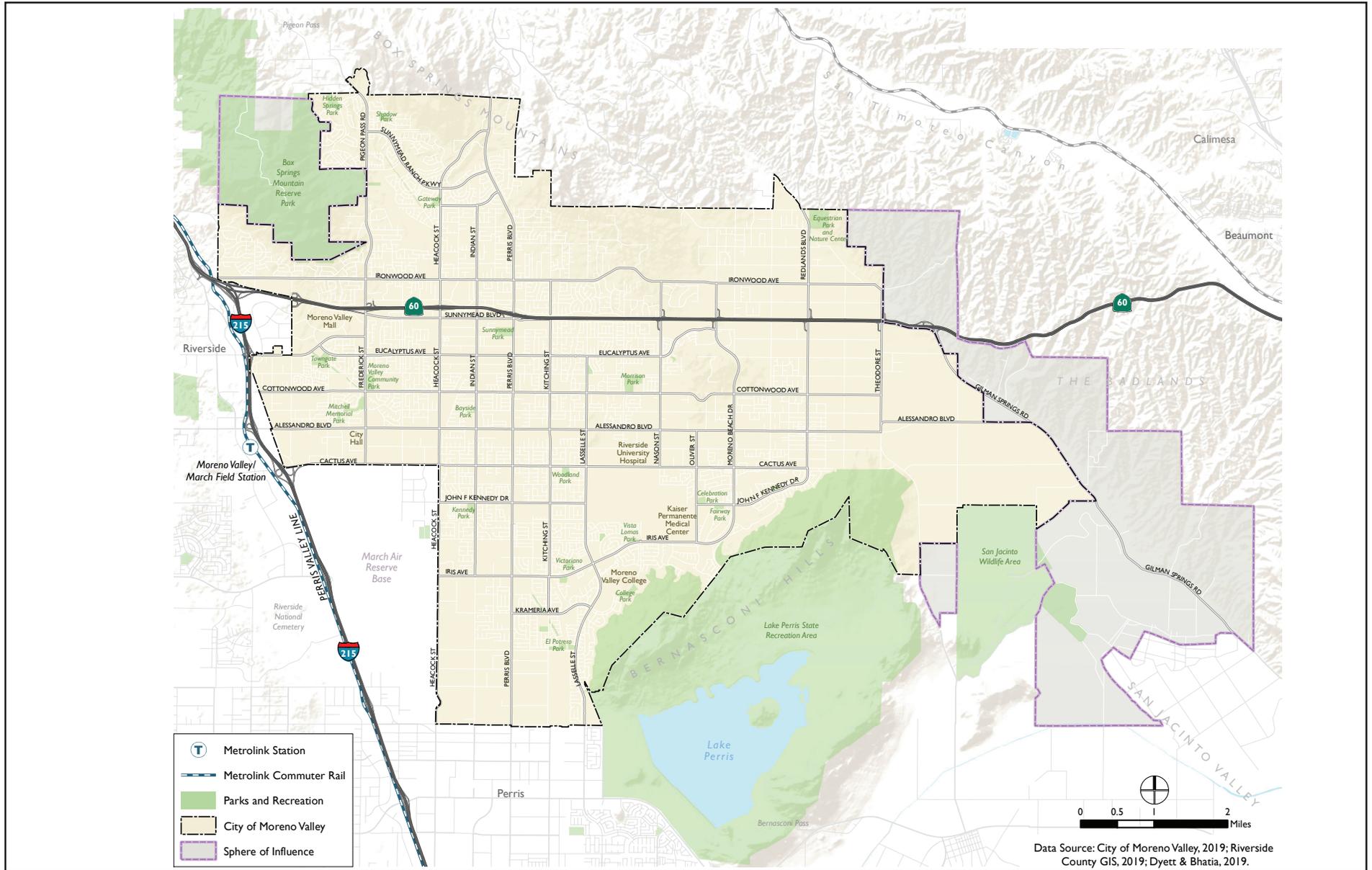


FIGURE 2-2  
Planning Area

In 2006, eight “ultimate goals” were identified for the existing General Plan, detailed below.

The ultimate goals of the General Plan are to achieve a community which . . .

1. Exhibits an orderly and balanced land use pattern that accommodates a range of residential, cultural, recreational, business and employment opportunities.
2. Is clean, attractive and free of blight and deteriorated conditions.
3. Provides public services and public facilities that are needed and desired by the community, including, but not limited to, a library(s) and library services.
4. Enjoys a healthy economic climate that benefits both residents and businesses.
5. Provides recreational amenities, recreation services and open space, including, but not limited to, parks, multi-use trails, community centers and open space.
6. Enjoys a circulation system that fosters traffic safety and the efficient movement of motor vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians.
7. Emphasizes public health and safety, including, but not limited to, police, fire, emergency and animal services and protection from floods and other hazards.
8. Recognizes the need to conserve natural resources while accommodating growth and development.

### **2.1.3 Prior Planning Initiatives**

Subsequent to the adoption of the existing 2006 General Plan, the City completed several major planning initiatives, which are summarized below.

#### **2.1.3.1 2014-21 Housing Element**

The Housing Element is a component of the General Plan which guides planning for housing to meet the current and projected needs of all households in the city. The Housing Element includes an assessment of housing needs and lays out goals, policies, and programs for the preservation, improvement, and development of housing to meet community needs. A critical part of the Housing Element is the inventory of housing opportunity sites and an analysis of the capacity of those sites to accommodate the City’s RHNA allocation as determined by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG).

In February 2014, the City adopted the Fifth Cycle Housing Element Update to cover the eight-year planning period from January 2014 through October 2021. Moreno Valley's RHNA allocation for the Fifth Cycle was 6,169 units of total new construction needed. Per the City's 2019 Annual Housing Element Progress Report, 332 moderate income level units (81-120 percent of area median income or AMI) and 1,363 above moderate income level units (more than 120 percent of AMI) have been built or permitted, for a grand total of 1,695 units at all RHNA income levels, which leaves a total of 4,474 units remaining under the City's RHNA allocation. The RHNA does not necessarily require development on any specific parcel, but rather allows communities to anticipate growth, so that collectively the community and the region can accommodate housing to meet the needs of all household income demographics in the community and the state.

### **2.1.3.2 World Logistics Center Specific Plan**

Adopted by the City in 2015, the World Logistics Center (WLC) Specific Plan covers 2,610 acres, which amounts to approximately 7.9 percent of land within the city limits. The WLC Specific Plan covers an area in the eastern portion of the city, bounded by SR-60 to the north, Cactus Avenue to the south, Redlands Boulevard to the west, and Gilman Springs Road to the east. The WLC Specific Plan envisions up to 40.6 million square feet of building area specifically designed to support the City's growing next generation of logistics and advanced manufacturing industries and related businesses. Approximately 2,383 acres (40.4 million square feet) are planned for Logistics Development (LD) and 37 acres (200,000 square feet) are planned for Light Logistics (LL), which also includes offices uses.

Development and occupancy of the WLC Specific Plan area is planned over a period of 15 years, from 2020 through 2035, although the actual development phasing and square footage buildout will be based on future market trends and conditions. The businesses within the WLC Specific Plan area are projected to create approximately 24,000 permanent new jobs within the city (20,307 direct jobs and 3,693 indirect jobs).

As of the compilation of this Draft EIR, although the WLC Specific Plan project has been approved by the City, no development has commenced due to pending legal proceedings, one of which challenges the June 2020 certification of the revised Final Environmental Impact Report prepared for the WLC Specific Plan and related entitlements.

### **2.1.3.3 Momentum MoVal Strategic Plan**

In 2016, the City adopted Momentum MoVal, the City's first Strategic Plan to guide the community's growth in a three- to five-year timeframe, commencing in 2016. The City's top priorities are grouped into six categories: Economic Development; Library; Public Safety; Infrastructure; Youth Programs; and Beautification, Community Engagement, and Quality of Life. Through the General Plan Update (GPU) process, the priorities identified in Momentum MoVal have been incorporated into the General Plan to guide the community's growth, with particular attention to land use, towards year 2040.

Momentum MoVal prioritizes the goal of establishing the city as an international model in logistics development while simultaneously promoting small business development and entrepreneurship. As such, Momentum MoVal determined that the quantity, location, and character of general/light industrial and commercial/office land uses would require consideration in the future planning documents. Furthermore, quality of life and community interaction can be enhanced through the creation of a downtown core that offers “Third Space” gathering opportunity outside of the workplace or home to encourage social exchange in a live, work, and play atmosphere.

### **2.1.3.4 Medical Centers Expansion**

The city has two major medical centers—the Riverside University Health System Medical Center and the Kaiser Permanente Moreno Valley Medical Center. Both medical centers have adopted and implemented expansion plans that have either been recently completed or are in-progress.

#### **a. Riverside University Health System Medical Center**

The approximately 80-acre Riverside University Health System Medical Center campus is located in the central portion of the city, bounded by Alessandro Boulevard to the north, Cactus Avenue to the south, Nason Street to the east, and Lasselle Street to the west. Expansion of the 439-bed medical center was completed in 2019. The expansion project occupies approximately 17.4 acres on the south side of the existing medical center campus, directly north of Cactus Avenue. The recently constructed expansion project includes a new 200,000-square-foot outpatient surgery center, imaging center, and a medical office building linked to the existing medical center.

#### **b. Kaiser Permanente Moreno Valley Medical Center**

The approximately 20-acre Kaiser Permanente Moreno Valley Medical Center campus is located in the south-central portion of the city, bounded by Cactus Avenue to the north, Iris Avenue to the south, Oliver Street to the east, and Nason Street to the west. About two-thirds of the campus is developed, including the existing 130,000-square-foot 100-bed hospital building, two medical office buildings totaling approximately 89,500 square feet, and a central utility plant.

In April 2020, the City certified an EIR and a Master Plot Plan to expand the existing medical center within the existing campus footprint. The approved expansion provides for the overall development and expansion of the existing hospital facility, consisting of 1,125,000 square feet of medical service facilities and ancillary uses to be constructed over three phases with a 20-year buildout. Phase 1, that began construction in 2020, would expand the diagnostic and treatment center at the existing hospital and construct a new energy center to contain all major mechanical equipment that would run the hospital facility. Phase 2 includes further expansion of the buildings from Phase 1 as well as the North and East Patient Bed Tower, Medical Office Building No. 3 construction, and parking structure improvements. Phase 3 includes expansion of the West and South Patient Bed Tower, construction of Medical Office

Building No. 4, and parking structure improvements. At ultimate project buildout, the state-of-the-art medical center campus would include an approximately 460-bed hospital, hospital support buildings, outpatient medical office buildings, an energy center, and surface/structured parking. Kaiser Permanente anticipates that the project would add approximately 4,000 new healthcare jobs.

### **2.1.3.5 Destination MoVal: Town Center**

In November 2019, the City took a major step in implementing Momentum MoVal with the release of a Request for Proposals entitled “Destination MoVal: Town Center” to transform an approximately 56-acre City-owned site near the center of the community. The site is located at the northwest corner of the intersection of Nason Street and Alessandro Boulevard, south of Cottonwood Avenue and east of Morrison Street. In October 2020, the City approved the sale of the site for development as a mixed-use master-planned Town Center, consisting of commercial, office, residential, and public uses. The project is a public-private partnership involving the City and the development firm, Lewis Acquisition Company.

The Moreno Valley Town Center is intended to provide the city with an attractive new downtown intended to be a destination for residents and visitors, alike. The project envisions commercial uses, including entertainment, hospitality, restaurants, shops, and offices; 300-700 luxury residential units; a section for a civic use, such as an innovation library/technology center; a police substation; public gathering places to host art displays and outdoor music and entertainment; and an area for a major public amenity that would attract more visitors and commerce to Moreno Valley. The project would be designed utilizing interconnected plazas, urban niches, landscaped open space, walkable streets, and high-quality architectural features. The project is currently in design; environmental review and entitlement processing for the Moreno Valley Town Center Project has not yet begun.

### **2.1.4 MoVal 2040 Process**

The MoVal 2040 Project (project) was initiated in late 2019 with a series of meetings involving City staff and a professional urban planning consultant (Dyett & Bhatia) retained by the City, and the launching of a website for the project ([www.MoVal.org/2040](http://www.MoVal.org/2040)). The MoVal 2040 process includes four main phases, described below.

- **Phase 1** focused on identifying issues and opportunities to address during the update of the General Plan and culminated in the preparation of a “Vision and Guiding Principles” that describe shared values within the city and its aspirations for the city’s future.
- **Phase 2** explored different options for achieving the Vision and Guiding Principles. Several different alternatives for land use and circulation were evaluated and a preferred concept was identified.
- **Phase 3** involved the creation of a draft 2021 GPU based on the approved vision and concept from prior phases and completion of the environmental review process. Stakeholder interviews with affordable housing developers and advocates were

concurrently conducted to gather critical information from interested parties necessary for preparing inform preparation of the Housing Element Update. Preparation of the CAP commenced with a meeting with City staff and Moreno Valley Electric Utility. In Phase 3, drafts of the 2021 GPU, 2021-29 Housing Element, and CAP were submitted for administrative review by City staff.

- **Phase 4** involves noticed public review of the draft documents and formal hearings before the Planning Commission and City Council prior to adoption of the project.

Phase 1 of the 2021 GPU focused on community outreach to identify the most important issues to address within the General Plan and to establish a vision for the future of Moreno Valley. This phase included stakeholder interviews, six “pop-up” outreach events, a community-wide online survey, as well as five community workshops (four in-person workshops including an EIR scoping meeting and one virtual workshop). This phase generated input from nearly 700 Moreno Valley community members. Another critical component of Phase 1 was formation of the General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC). The GPAC served as an advisory body to the City Council and included representation from the perspective of residents, businesses, and other community stakeholders in the development of the 2021 GPU. This provided a public forum to ensure that a wide and diverse range of voices and interests were heard and considered in the process. Based on public input received by GPAC and staff recommendations, in February 2020, the City Council approved the Vision and Guiding Principles for the 2021 GPU.

Phase 2 focused on developing and exploring different land use, circulation, and design concepts for the 2021 GPU. These concepts were established based on input from community members and decision-makers, which provided different options by which the City could achieve the Vision and Guiding Principles. A second community-wide survey was conducted and multiple public meetings were held during this phase. The pros and cons of six different concepts were explored and refined with input from the community, GPAC, and Planning Commission. Between December 2019 and May 2020, close to 1,000 community members participated in the 2021 GPU process. In June 2020, the City Council approved the Preferred Plan Concept, which is now part of the proposed 2021 GPU.

During Phase 3, the GPAC reviewed key goals and provided guidance for the policy frameworks of the 2021 General Plan Update, which culminated in the preparation of drafts of the 2021 General Plan Update, 2021-29 Housing Element, and Climate Action Plan, which were submitted for administrative review by City staff.

Phase 4 consists of environmental review of the Draft 2021 GPU. This EIR has been prepared pursuant to CEQA to identify the significant environmental impacts of implementation of the project along with mitigation measures to address those impacts. This Draft EIR has been made available for public review and comment concurrently with the Draft 2021 General Plan Update, 2021-29 Housing Element, and Climate Action Plan. A Final EIR which will include responses to public comments received will be prepared and presented to the Planning Commission and City Council for their respective review and consideration prior to adoption of the project.

## 2.1.5 2040 Vision and Guiding Principles

The Vision and Guiding Principles below form the basis for the project's policies. These are expressions of the collective hopes and aspirations that members of the Moreno Valley community have for the city's future and they were developed based on the valuable and meaningful input shared by community members throughout the planning process.

### 2.1.5.1 Dynamic Economy

- **Diversify the local economy**, building on strengths in health care, education, and attracting new businesses.
- Create a **flexible land use framework** that facilitates job growth and livability.
- Create **well-paying jobs** for locals in Moreno Valley to reduce the need for long commutes.
- Ensure **adequate infrastructure** to support local job growth.
- Partner with business, industry and educational institutions on **training and workforce preparedness** programs.
- Promote **tourism and attract visitors**, leveraging natural assets like Lake Perris.
- Improve **socioeconomic conditions** for all Moreno Valley residents.

### 2.1.5.2 Vibrant Gathering Places

- Foster **Town Centers** as places for locals and visitors to shop, dine, do business, and have fun.
- Create **inviting gateways** into Moreno Valley from freeways and major roadways.
- Provide **sports, recreation, and cultural facilities** that provide a range of options for youth, families, and seniors and attract visitors to Moreno Valley.
- Design and program public spaces that reflect Moreno Valley's **cultural diversity**.

### 2.1.5.3 Community Identity

- Build local pride and a **strong sense of place**.
- Make Moreno Valley a **Destination City** with a modern, innovative brand and become a model community where people choose to **live, work, and play**.
- Provide **activities for youth and families** to build community bonds.
- Support churches, community groups, and non-profit organizations to deliver **community services**.

### 2.1.5.4 Livable Neighborhoods

- Recognize that **housing affordability** is critical so people can grow up and grow older in Moreno Valley.
- Provide housing adapted to our **future needs and lifestyles**.

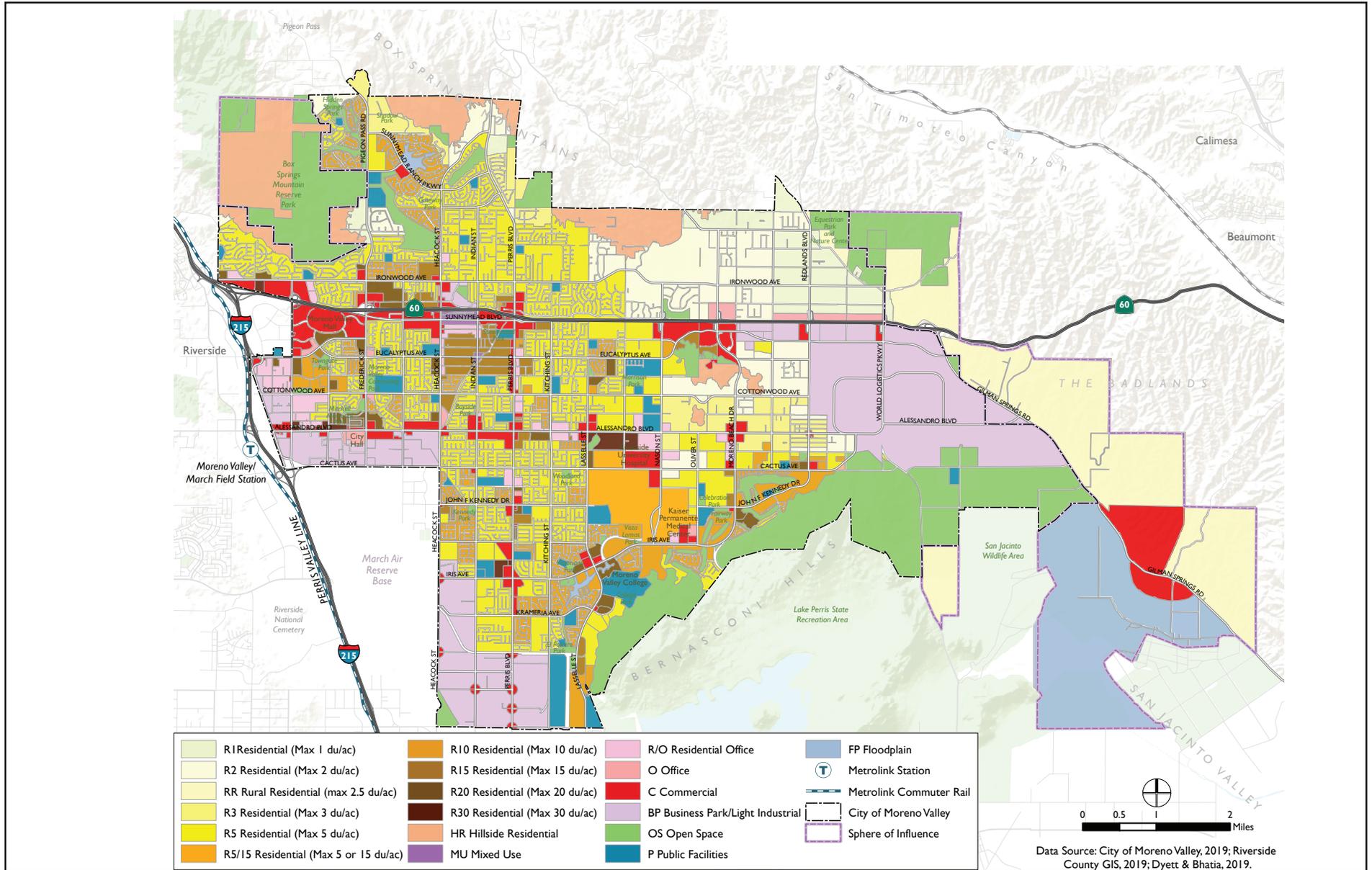
- Create opportunities for **neighborhood interaction**.
- Prioritize **safety** on roads, near schools, in public places, and in neighborhoods.
- Promote **active lifestyles** with trail connections, parcourses, and other recreational amenities.
- Prioritize clean air, water, fresh food, and **community health**.
- Maintain roads in good condition, improve traffic circulation, and plan for new technology that **optimizes mobility**.
- Ensure Moreno Valley is **livable and welcoming** for seniors, veterans, and other special needs groups.

## 2.2 Existing Physical Site Conditions

### 2.2.1 Land Use

Table 2-1 presents a summary of existing land uses based on 2019 data from the City and Riverside County. Figure 2-3 presents existing land uses within the Planning Area. Below is an overview of existing land use:

- **Residential** land uses account for nearly 32 percent (10,479 acres) of the land uses within the city limits, concentrated primarily in the western and central portions of the city where most development has historically occurred. Single-family housing accounts for the bulk of all residential uses within the city, while multi-family housing accounts for less than 3 percent. Established single-family neighborhoods include Hidden Springs, Sunnymead Ranch, and Moreno Valley Ranch. Single-family attached and multi-family housing is generally present in all residential neighborhoods, with the highest concentrations just south of the commercial stretch of Sunnymead Boulevard between Heacock Street and Perris Boulevard.
- **Commercial** land uses, including retail, office, and lodging, account for 2.3 percent (762 acres) of the land uses within the Planning Area, with no commercial uses located within the city's SOI. Within the city limits, commercial land uses account for 3 percent (994 acres) of citywide land use. Commercial uses are primarily concentrated in shopping centers such as the Moreno Valley Mall, TownGate Center, Moreno Valley Plaza, The District, Stoneridge Towne Center, Moreno Valley Auto Mall, Moreno Beach Plaza, Alessandro Plaza, and Sunnymead Towne Center. These areas include a mix of restaurants, retail stores, hotels, and personal services depending on the location. The Moreno Valley Mall and TownGate Highlands, Crossing, and Promenade at the western end of the city have the largest concentrations of commercial development.



**FIGURE 2-3**  
Existing General Plan Land Use

- **Industrial** land uses, including light industrial and general industrial, represent 3.7 percent (1,584 acres) of the Planning Area and 4.8 percent of the citywide land use, with no industrial land uses located within the SOI. Industrial land uses in Moreno Valley are clustered around three main areas: (1) between Alessandro Boulevard and Cactus Avenue, and Heacock Street and Elsworth Street (including the area formerly known as Centerpointe Business Park), (2) Moreno Valley Industrial Area, and (3) the State Route 60 (SR-60) Business Park Area. These existing industrial land uses are sited near the periphery of the city, proximate to freeway network access.
- **Public and Community Facilities** land uses occupy approximately 4.1 percent (1,756 acres) of the Planning Area. Within the city limits, public and community facilities land uses account for 5.3 percent (1,752 acres) of citywide land use. This includes a variety of public or semi-public lands, such as hospitals/care facilities (e.g., Riverside University Health System Medical Center, Kaiser Permanente Medical Center), churches/religious facilities, schools/educational facilities (e.g., Moreno Valley Unified School District, Val Verde Unified School District, Moreno Valley College), branches of government, and utilities. Schools/education facilities comprise the majority of this existing land use category with 866 acres of land, followed by utilities with 505 acres of land. The varied land uses of this category are dispersed throughout the city with more locations in the western and southern portions of the city.
- **Parks and Recreation** land uses, including parks and recreation spaces, greenways and open space, conservation lands, and golf courses, comprise approximately 19.4 percent (8,317 acres) of the Planning Area. Approximately 40 percent of the SOI are conservation lands. In the city, parks and recreation land uses account for about 12.5 percent (4,100 acres) of citywide land, mostly conservation lands and greenways/open space. Moreno Valley has several parks such as Gateway Park, Sunnymead Park, Woodland Park, Kennedy Park, the Equestrian Park and Nature Center, and the Hound Town Dog Park. These parks and other recreation areas are dispersed throughout the city.
- **Agriculture** land accounts for less than 1 percent of land within the city limit and approximately 38 percent of land within the SOI, although there is very limited active agricultural production within the SOI.
- **Vacant** land accounts for 27 percent (8,902 acres) of the land within the city limit. Vacant land is primarily located in the eastern part of the city, both north and south of SR-60. There are several major approved/in-progress developments sited on vacant lands. Within the SOI, approximately 13.7 percent (1,362 acres) of land is vacant.

See Section 4.11, Land Use/Planning for a complete discussion of the existing land use setting of the Planning Area.

**Table 2-1  
Existing Land Uses in Planning Area**

Existing Land Use Category	City of Moreno Valley		Sphere of Influence		Total Planning Area	
	Acres	Percent	Acres	Percent	Acres	Percent
Residential	10,479.4	31.8%	337.4	3.4%	10,816.8	25.2%
Single-Family Residential	9,375.2	28.4%	59.8	0.6%	9,435.0	22.0%
Multi-Family Residential	621.8	1.9%	-	0.0%	621.8	1.4%
Duplex/Two-Family Residential	234.6	0.7%	-	0.0%	234.6	0.5%
Mobile Home Parks	146.0	0.4%	-	0.0%	146.0	0.3%
Condominium/Townhomes	70.7	0.2%	-	0.0%	70.7	0.2%
Ag Residential	31.0	0.1%	277.7	2.8%	308.6	0.7%
Commercial	993.7	3.0%	-	0.0%	993.7	2.3%
General/Retail Commercial	852.0	2.6%	-	0.0%	852.0	2.0%
Office	89.7	0.3%	-	0.0%	89.7	0.2%
Service Station	28.9	0.1%	-	0.0%	28.9	0.1%
Hotel/Motel/Lodging Commercial	23.0	0.1%	-	0.0%	23.0	0.1%
Industrial	1,583.6	4.8%	-	0.0%	1,583.6	3.7%
General Industrial	1,119.4	3.4%	-	0.0%	1,119.4	2.6%
Light Industrial	464.1	1.4%	-	0.0%	464.1	1.1%
Public & Community Facilities	1,752.4	5.3%	3.3	0.0%	1,755.7	4.1%
Schools/Educational Facilities	866.3	2.6%	-	0.0%	866.3	2.0%
Utilities	502.0	1.5%	3.3	0.0%	505.4	1.2%
Church/Religious Facilities	161.3	0.5%	-	0.0%	161.3	0.4%
Public Facilities	115.0	0.3%	-	0.0%	115.0	0.3%
Hospitals/Care Facilities	107.8	0.3%	-	0.0%	107.8	0.3%
Parks & Recreation	4,114.5	12.5%	4,217.4	42.5%	8,331.9	19.4%
Conserved Lands	2,702.8	8.2%	3,973.0	40.1%	6,675.7	15.6%
Greenways/Open Space	861.3	2.6%	-	0.0%	861.3	2.0%
Golf Course	273.8	0.8%	244.5	2.5%	518.3	1.2%
Park Facilities	276.7	0.8%	-	0.0%	276.7	0.6%
Agriculture	189.4	0.6%	3,779.2	38.1%	3,968.6	9.2%
Other	13,885.7	42.1%	1,582.3	16.0%	15,468.0	36.0%
Vacant	8,902.3	27.0%	1,361.8	13.7%	10,264.1	23.9%
Transportation/Roads/ Right-of-Way	4,983.4	15.1%	220.5	2.2%	5,203.9	12.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>32,997.0</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>9,919.8</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>42,916.7</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

SOURCE: Dyett & Bhatia 2020a.

## **2.2.2 Aesthetic/Topographical Features**

Moreno Valley is located in Riverside County in an east-west oriented valley bordered by the Box Springs Mountain Range to the north, the Badlands Mountain Range, also known as San Timoteo Badlands, to the northeast, and the Bernasconi Hills with Lake Perris to the southeast. Moreno Valley connects to the San Jacinto Valley in the southeast between the Badlands Mountain Range and Bernasconi Hills. To the west, lower hill ranges including Sycamore Canyon are located between the cities of Riverside and Perris. The Saddleback formation, which is part of the Santa Ana Mountain Range, lies further in the west beyond Lake Mathews.

Within the City, several hills and rock formations present natural landmarks, particularly on the east side between Moreno Beach Drive and Nason Street just south of SR-60, at Alessandro Boulevard and Lasselle Street, and along the northern edge of the City near Ironwood Avenue. The terrain gradually slopes from north to south, starting from the northern mountain range to the southern border of the city with an elevation change of approximately 300 feet between SR-60 and Iris Avenue. The nearest mountain ranges as well as the more distant San Bernardino Mountains, Santa Ana Mountains, and San Gabriel Mountains are visible from many locations in Moreno Valley, particularly higher elevations in the city.

Moreno Valley has a decentralized structure with commercial, retail, public and institutional uses distributed across the Planning Area, typically located along major arterials and at intersections of major arterials. Large-scale retail centers are concentrated along SR-60, with smaller neighborhood retail centers interspersed throughout the city fabric. Existing structures within the Planning Area consists primarily of auto-oriented low-density development. With the exception of medical facility buildings, most buildings in Moreno Valley are one or two stories high, with some multi-family buildings or hotels going up to four stories. Large distributions centers have building heights of up to 50-60 feet and building lengths generally between 600 and 900 feet.

## **2.2.3 Air Quality and Climate Conditions**

The Planning Area is located approximately 40 miles northeast of the Pacific Ocean, within Riverside County between the Santa Ana Mountains and the San Jacinto Mountains. Air quality in the county is influenced by both topographical and meteorological conditions. The Planning Area, like other inland valley areas in southern California, has a Mediterranean climate characterized by warm, dry summers and mild, wet winters. The March Field climate monitoring station (ID 045326) is located immediately southwest of the Planning Area and the Perris climate monitoring station (ID 046816) is located approximately five miles south of the Planning Area. Based on measurements taken at these climate monitoring stations, the average annual precipitation is 8 to 10 inches, falling primarily from November to April (Western Regional Climate Center 2020). Overall annual temperatures in the Planning Area average about 62 degrees Fahrenheit (°F), winter low temperatures average about 36°F, and summer high temperatures average about 93°F.

The Planning Area is located within the South Coast Air Basin (Basin), which is under the jurisdiction of the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). The 6,745-square-mile Basin encompasses Orange County and the non-desert portions of Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino counties, and is bound by the Pacific Ocean to the west, the San Gabriel, San Bernardino, and San Jacinto mountains to the north and east, respectively, and San Diego County to the south. The Basin is designated as in attainment or unclassifiable attainment (expected to be meeting the standard despite a lack of monitoring data) for all federal air quality standards except 8-hour ozone and 2.5-micron particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) standards. The Basin is designated as in nonattainment for state air quality standards for 8-hour ozone and PM<sub>2.5</sub>, and additionally is in nonattainment of state 10-micron particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>) standards. See Section 4.3, Air Quality for a complete discussion of the existing air quality setting of the Planning Area.

## **2.2.4 Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources**

Native American Indians were the first inhabitants of the Moreno Valley area. They hunted game, gathered seeds, and left evidence in rocks that they used to grind seeds. Early settlers traveled through the area from northern Mexico to various California Mission settlements along a trail charted by Juan Bautista de Anza in 1774. The trail passed through the San Jacinto Valley, the Perris Valley, and southwest Moreno Valley. Moreno Valley and the rest of California became part of the United States in 1850. The Moreno Valley area began to develop in the late 1880s with the establishment of the Alessandro and Moreno settlements. The community of Moreno was built around the intersection of Redlands Boulevard and Alessandro Boulevard. The community of Alessandro was located within the limits of present-day MARB.

Urban development began after the establishment of the March Air Force base in 1927, and the unincorporated communities of Sunnymead, Moreno, and Edgemont grew up around the base. From 1957 to 1989, the present-day Moreno Valley Mall was the site of the Riverside International Raceway, a motorsports racetrack and road course considered one of the finest in the country in its day.

The area experienced a period of rapid population growth between 1970 and 1992, fueled by the construction of new homes and businesses. During that period, the population went from approximately 19,000 residents to over 118,000. In 1984, the communities of Edgemont, Sunnymead, and Moreno came together to form the city of Moreno Valley and the first General Plan was adopted in 1986 to guide future growth and development.

The records search completed for the Planning Area identified a total of 110 historic-era resources, 227 prehistoric resources, and 12 multi-component (prehistoric and historic) resources. The records search also identified 25 built environment resources. Historic-era site types include adobe buildings, canals/aqueducts, cisterns, wells, foundations, walls, trash scatters, farms/ranches, highway, military property, single-family property, and multi-family property. Prehistoric sites include bedrock milling features, cairns, rock shelters, lithic scatters, ground stone scatters, ceramic scatters, and rock art. See Section 4.5, Cultural and

Tribal Cultural Resources for a complete discussion of the existing cultural setting of the Planning Area.

### **2.2.5 Geology and Soils**

The city lies in the northern portion of the Peninsular Ranges Physiographic Province of California, at the eastern margin of a structural block known as the Perris Block. This structural block is a mass of granitic rock, generally bound by the San Jacinto Fault, the Elsinore Fault, and the Santa Ana River. The geologic and seismic setting of Moreno Valley is dominated by the proximity of the Holocene-active San Jacinto Fault, which traverses the city's eastern boundaries. The potential for major earthquake damage to Moreno Valley is from activity along this fault zone (City of Moreno Valley 2006a).

The city is located within the seismically active southern California region. Earthquakes resulting from fault movement can result in surface rupture along an active or potentially active fault. The San Jacinto Fault Zone, which has been categorized as an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone, traverses the northeastern boundary of the city. The San Jacinto Fault Zone is composed of several parallel faults that together constitute the zone.

The majority of the city is classified as having low or moderate potential for liquefaction susceptibility. Small amounts of land within the western and southern portion of the city are classified as having high potential for liquefaction susceptibility, and a small amount of land along the southern border is classified as having very high potential for liquefaction susceptibility. However, geotechnical analysis completed for recent site-specific projects located within the area identified as having a high liquefaction potential north of Cactus Avenue did not identify any soils within the proposed footprints with high potential for liquefaction. The majority of the city is relatively flat and has been assigned a landslide susceptibility class of 0 (No Risk) by the California Geological Survey. However, some areas within the northern, northeastern, and southeastern portions of the city and within the SOI have been assigned landslide susceptibility classes ranging from V (Moderate Risk) to X (High Risk). Some areas within the central portion of the city have also been assigned a landslide susceptibility classes ranging from V (Moderate Risk) to X (High Risk). See Section 4.7, Geology/Soils for a complete discussion of the existing geologic setting of the Planning Area.

### **2.2.6 Hydraulic Conditions**

The city is located within the Santa Ana River and the San Jacinto River watersheds. The Santa Ana River is the largest river in the south coast region, with a length of 100 miles and approximately 2,700 square miles of watershed area. The river exits the San Bernardino Mountains and continues westward to the Prado Dam, through the Santa Ana River Canyon, and then flows to the ocean. In addition to being a major flood control facility, the river also serves as a means by which groundwater basins are recharged and provides important wildlife habitat. The San Jacinto River drains approximately 540 square miles to the Railroad Canyon Reservoir (Canyon Lake) which discharges into Lake Elsinore, which

discharges into a tributary of the Santa Ana River. Discharges from the two lakes are very rare.

Surface water quality in the Planning Area is regulated by the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) Region 8. The Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board Basin Plan (Basin Plan) (California Water Boards, Santa Ana – Region 8 2008) establishes water quality standards for all the ground and surface waters of the region. The Santa Ana RWQCB does not identify any water bodies within the Planning Area or which the Planning Area drains into as currently lists on the 303(d) list. The Planning Area lies within the San Jacinto groundwater basin. See Section 4.10, Hydrology/Water Quality for a complete discussion of the existing hydrological setting of the Planning Area.

## 2.2.7 Noise

Moreno Valley is subject to typical urban noises such as noise generated by traffic, heavy machinery, and day-to-day outdoor activities. The city also has several transportation-related noise sources, including airport noise, railroad operations, major arterials, Interstate 215 (I-215) and SR-60. Noise sources that are not directly related to transportation include noise from commercial and industrial centers, construction, and property maintenance activities.

Ambient noise levels were measured within the Planning Area to provide a characterization of the variability of noise and to assist in determining constraints and opportunities for future development. Ten 15-minute daytime noise level measurements were conducted throughout the Planning Area that identified average measured noise levels ranging from 60.1 A-weighted decibels one-hour equivalent sound level [dB(A)  $L_{eq}$ ] to 74.8 dB(A)  $L_{eq}$ .

MARB is a joint-use civilian and military facility located southwest of the Planning Area. MARB is bordered by the city to the east/northeast, city of Riverside to the northwest, the city of Perris to the south, and unincorporated Riverside County to the west. The Airport Influence Area (AIA) extends up to 9 miles north, west, and east of the main runway and 14 miles to the south, and covers land within unincorporated Riverside County and the cities of Menifee, Moreno Valley, Perris, and Riverside. Land uses in the immediate vicinity of MARB generally consist of public/institutional uses to the west, office/business park and industrial uses to the northwest, office/business park and commercial uses to the north, open space and residential uses to the northeast, open space, business park, and industrial uses to the southeast, and open space, agricultural uses, office/business park, industrial, and residential to the south. See Section 4.13, Noise for a complete discussion of the existing noise setting of the Planning Area.

## 2.2.8 Transportation

The city is connected regionally by SR-60 and I-215. SR-60 bisects the city and provides east-west connectivity to surrounding metropolitan areas. I-215 borders the city on the west and provides north-south connectivity. According to the existing 2006 General Plan, there are five basic functional systems that make up the local roadway system: divided major arterials, divided arterials, arterials, minor arterials, and collector streets. The classification of streets

is based on a functional hierarchy defined by the number of travel lanes, roadway width (curb to curb), right-of-way (public property line to public property line), and traffic volumes. The network of streets provides connectivity within the city and to neighboring communities. Pedestrian facilities in Moreno Valley consist of sidewalks and crosswalks, along with multi-use trails. Most residential and commercial developments provide sidewalks on public streets and internal circulation. Areas with no existing sidewalks are mainly located in undeveloped areas or in a more rural area in the eastern portion of the city and along the city boundary.

The Riverside Transit Agency (RTA) provides the majority of public transportation within the Planning Area via fixed route and paratransit bus services. RTA provides routes within the city that connect to major destinations such as the Moreno Valley/March Field Metrolink Station, Perris Station Transit Center, University of California, Riverside (UCR), and Moreno Valley Mall. Major Moreno Valley bus routes include Routes 11, 16, 18, 19, 19A, 20, and 31. In addition, RTA has one commuter link express bus route within the city. Route 208 connects the cities of Temecula, Murrieta, Perris, Moreno Valley, and Riverside. Commuter link express bus routes provide peak hour services for commuters in the morning and evening on weekdays. Route 31 also provides connections to Beaumont, Banning, Hemet, and San Jacinto and passengers can transfer in Beaumont to Sunline Route 10 for service to the Coachella Valley. RTA also provides Dial-A-Ride services for seniors and persons with disabilities.

Metrolink is a commuter rail program operated by the Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA), providing service from outlying suburban communities to employment centers such as Burbank, Irvine, and downtown Los Angeles. For Moreno Valley, the Moreno Valley/March Field Metrolink Station is located less than one-half mile west of the city limits. The 91/Perris Valley Line train services Metrolink stations in the cities of Perris, Riverside, Corona, Fullerton, Buena Park, Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs, and Los Angeles. See Section 4.16, Transportation for a complete discussion of the existing transportation setting of the Planning Area.

### **2.2.9 Utility and Services**

Water service in Moreno Valley is provided by two agencies. Eastern Municipal Water District (EMWD) supplies most of the city, except for a 430-acre area on the west side which is served by Box Springs Mutual Water Company. Wastewater service in Moreno Valley is provided by two agencies. EMWD provides collection and treatment for most of the city, while the Edgemont Community Services District serves a 430-acre area in the western part of the city that includes the Edgemont neighborhood.

Southern California Edison (SCE) and the Moreno Valley Electric Utility (MVU) provide electricity to the city. SoCalGas provides the city with natural gas service. SoCalGas' service territory encompasses approximately 20,000 square miles and more than 500 communities. The City provides trash, recycling, and special waste handling services to residents and businesses through a exclusive franchise agreement with Waste Management. No other haulers are authorized to operate within the city. The majority of solid waste generated within the city is disposed of at Badlands Sanitary Landfill, located north of SR-60 and west

of Interstate 10 off Ironwood Avenue. Two other landfills within the county of Riverside have the capacity to serve the city; however, a majority of waste is brought to the Badlands Sanitary landfill. See Section 4.17, Utilities/Service Systems for a complete discussion of the existing providers serving the Planning Area.

### **2.2.10 Vegetation**

The majority of land within the city consists of Developed/Disturbed Land. Natural vegetation is primarily located in the eastern portion of the city, as well as along the southeastern and northern boundaries of the city. Undeveloped lands within the city are typically comprised of disturbed lands and non-native grasses due to the prior history of cultivation. Small pockets of riparian vegetation occur within urban canyons and native habitats and species that once inhabited the area are largely limited to areas around the fringes of the city where lands are in proximity to surrounding conserved natural areas. A number of nearby natural areas exist adjacent to the city. The San Jacinto Wildlife Area, located at the southeast corner of the Planning Area, is a 12,000-acre wildlife preserve noted for its diversity of migratory birds. Other conserved lands surrounding the city include the Lake Perris Recreation Area located adjacent to the southern city limits, and the Box Springs Mountain Reserve Park located northwest of the city limits. See Section 4.4, Biological Resources for a complete discussion of the existing vegetation setting of the Planning Area.

### **2.2.11 Wildlife**

Varied topography and landforms including Box Springs Mountain in the north and the Badlands east of the city provide for a diversity of wildlife species. Mammals such as mule deer can be found in the Box Springs Mountains and in the Badlands. Large carnivores, such as coyotes, bobcats, badgers, and gray fox, have been found in the undeveloped portions of the city. Opossums, raccoons, skunks, cottontail rabbits, and rodent species are common to the Planning Area. A wide variety of reptiles are found in the Planning Area. Owls, hawks, and other birds of prey can be seen at various times throughout the year or during migration periods. See Section 4.4, Biological Resources for a complete discussion of the existing wildlife setting of the Planning Area.