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CIRCULATION ELEMENT

E L C E N T R O G E N E R A L P L A N

INTRODUCTION

The City of El Centro is served by a diverse circulation system consisting of roadways, public transit, rail service, air, and pedestrian and bicycle trails. While the Interstate 8 freeway serves as the City's primary thoroughfare, Highway 86 and State Route 80 dissect El Centro at Imperial and Adams Avenue; with SR 80 turning into Evan Hewes Highway near the City's eastern boundary. Imperial County Transit provides public bus service along Highway 86 (4th Avenue), State Street, Highway 86 (Imperial Avenue) and a loop to the El Centro Regional Medical Center. Greyhound Bus provides additional intracity service with other fixed routes and charter. In addition to vehicular roadways, the San Diego & Arizona railroads approach El Centro from the west and merge into the Union Pacific railroad which extends north and south through the center of City. Douthitt Strip Airport, a private airstrip, is located in the eastern portion of the City near Evan Hewes Highway. The City's extensive network of bicycle trails offers an alternative to more conventional modes of transportation.

Whereas the City's planned land use development pattern is identified in the Land Use Element, the Circulation Element guides the continued development and improvement of both the existing and planned circulation system. Demand for local and regional circulation improvements and construction will increase as additional land is developed in the future. The Circulation Element establishes acceptable roadway service levels and identifies improvements required to maintain the service levels. The use of other modes of transportation such as transit, walking, bicycling and riding is promoted to reduce the demand for transportation system improvements and to improve air quality.

Purpose of the Circulation Element

The purpose of the Circulation Element is to provide a safe, efficient and adequate circulation system for the City. State planning law requires:

"...a circulation element consisting of the general location for proposed major thoroughfares, transportation routes, terminals and other local public utilities and facilities, all correlated with the land use element plan."

To meet this purpose, the Circulation Element addresses the circulation improvements needed to provide adequate capacity for future land uses. Additionally, a hierarchy of transportation routes with typical development standards described for each roadway is established in the element.

The State's 1998 General Plan Guidelines recommend that the circulation policies and plans should:

- Coordinate the transportation and circulation system with planned land uses;
- Promote the safe and efficient transport of goods and the safe and effective movement of all segments of the population;
- Make efficient use of existing transportation facilities; and
- Protect environmental quality and promote the wise and equitable use of economic and natural resources.

According to the Guidelines, the Circulation Element should address all facets of circulation including streets and highways, transportation corridors, public transit, railroads, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and commercial and general airports. The City of El Centro Circulation Element fulfills state requirements by including a plan to provide effective circulation facilities to support desired community development.

Scope and Content of the Circulation Element

Included in this element are goals and policies to improve overall circulation in the City of El Centro. A hierarchical roadway network is established for vehicle transportation, with designated roadway types and design standards. The roadway type is linked to anticipated traffic levels, and acceptable levels of service are established to determine when capacity improvements are necessary. Alternative transportation modes are also emphasized in this element to reduce dependency on the automobile and thereby improve environmental quality.

The Circulation Element has three sections: 1) Introduction; 2) Issues, Goals and Policies; and 3) the Circulation Plan. In the Issues, Goals and Policies section, major issues pertaining to the transportation system are identified, and related goals and policies are established. The goals are overall statements of the City's desires and include broad statements of purpose and direction.

The goals are statements of the City's desires and consist of broad statements of purpose and direction. The policies serve as guidelines for planning circulation improvements to accommodate anticipated population growth, maintaining acceptable service levels while development occurs, promoting alternative transportation modes, and coordinating with local and regional jurisdictions to phase regional transportation facilities. The Circulation Plan explains how the goals and policies will be achieved and implemented. Specific action programs for the Circulation Element are contained in the General Plan Implementation Program section of this element.

The Circulation Element was created in a public forum with input from numerous interest groups, citizens, jurisdictions, and agencies. Extensive efforts were made to involve the public, including:

- Public workshops to receive initial comments and discuss circulation and transportation issues;
- Coordination with the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG);
- Coordination with the Imperial Valley Association of Governments;
- Coordination with the Imperial County Engineering Department;
- Coordination with CALTRANS and other related agencies.

Related Plans and Programs

There are several existing plans and programs prepared by various agencies that are directly applicable to the aims and objectives of the Circulation Element. Plans and programs related to the Circulation Element include the following:

Southern California Association of Governments Plans and Programs (SCAG)

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is responsible for the regional planning in Southern California. SCAG has prepared long range growth and development plans for the Southern California region since the early 1970s as part of the ongoing Development Guide Program. This program provides a framework for coordinating local and regional decisions regarding future development and growth. An important component of this process is the preparation of growth forecast policies at intervals ranging from three to five years. The adopted growth forecast policies become the basis for SCAG's functional plans (transportation, housing, air and water) for the region. The population totals and growth distribution are used in planning the future capacity of highways and transit systems.

The Growth Management Plan recommends ways to redirect the region's growth in order to minimize congestion and better protect the environment. While SCAG has no authority to mandate implementation of its Growth Management Plan, some of the Plan's principal goals (such as improved jobs/housing balance) are being implemented through county and city general plans;

Circulation Element of the Imperial County General Plan

The Circulation Element of the Imperial County General Plan contains the most recent information about the transportation needs of the County and the various modes available to meet the identified needs. A Circulation and Scenic Highways Plan is contained in the County Circulation Element to ensure adequate capacity on County roads and regional routes serving unincorporated areas of the County. To ensure that improvements to the County circulation system correspond with new development, the Circulation Element addresses the phasing of roadway improvements and financing alternatives.

City of El Centro Bicycle Plan

In 2000, the City of El Centro adopted a Bicycle Master Plan for use as a guideline for designing future bicycle facilities. The area that comprises El Centro is relatively small and it is anticipated that outside of the hottest summer months, bicycling will grow in popularity as an alternative mode of intra-city transportation.

Imperial County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan

The County of Imperial approved an amended Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan for all Imperial County airports in June of 1996. The Plan sets forth the criteria and policies that the Imperial County Land Use Commission use to assess the compatibility between the primary airports in the County and proposed land use development in the areas surrounding them. Airports affected by this plan located near El Centro are the Imperial County Airport and the Naval Air Facility at El Centro. Additionally, the Plan provides guidance for commission review of new airports and heliports proposed for construction in the County.

Imperial County Transit Vision Draft Report

An “Imperial County Transit Vision Draft Report” was released in January 2000 and prepared for the Imperial Valley Association of Government. The study evaluates existing public transportation services in Imperial County and the potential for increased ridership.

Relationship to Other General Plan Elements

In accordance with State planning law, the Circulation Element, although independent, must be consistent with the other General Plan elements. All elements of the General Plan are interrelated to a degree, and certain goals and policies of each element may also address issues that are the major subjects of other elements. The Circulation Element relates most closely to the Land Use, Noise, and Safety Elements.

Planned development identified in the Land Use Element is the basis for determining future road improvements; therefore the Land Use Element is directly linked to the Circulation Element. For example, the circulation policies and plans identify the improvements to the roadway system that will be required in order to serve traffic generated by the uses permitted in the Land Use Element. In addition, the Circulation Element promotes alternative transportation modes to minimize the regional impacts of planned local development.

The Noise Element contains policies and plans aimed to ease the adverse effects of noise on the community that are directly attributable to the future transportation plans contained in the Circulation Element. Noise exposure will be a key consideration when locating and designing new development along arterials and other transportation related noise sources. In addition, policies and plans contained in the Safety Element addressing transportation related hazards are complementary to policies and plans contained in the Circulation Element.



ISSUES, GOALS, AND POLICIES

The City of El Centro has a circulation system that includes vehicular, public transit, rail, air, bicycle and pedestrian components. An inter-dependent circulation system is created as the local system is tied to a larger regional circulation system. A safe and convenient circulation system is needed to support a variety of land uses in the community.

Four major issues are addressed by the goals, policies, and plans of the Circulation Element. These major issues include: 1) providing a suitable system of City roadways that meets the needs of the community; 2) providing a public transportation network that gives El Centro residents access to various locations within the City and throughout the region; 3) ensuring adequate bicycle and pedestrian access throughout the community; and 4) supporting regional serving airports and railways.

Primary Circulation System

A well-designed local roadway system provides safe and convenient access to activities in the community. As well as providing access to all sections of the community, the roadway system should reflect the ideals of the community.

Circulation Goal 1: Provide a system of roadways that meet the needs of the community.

Policy 1.1: Provide and maintain a circulation system that is in balance with the land uses in El Centro by implementing the Circulation Master Plan.

Policy 1.2: Improve El Centro circulation system roadways in concert with land development to ensure sufficient levels of service.

Policy 1.3: Review new development proposals to ensure that the proposed development provides adequate parking and would not increase traffic on roadways and intersections to a level of service (LOS) worse than "C" unless the project will provide overriding socio/economic benefits to the City.

Policy 1.5: Work with adjacent jurisdiction and transportation agencies to identify necessary improvements to the regional roadway system to ensure adequate regional access to and from El Centro.

Policy 1.6: Coordinate improvements to the local circulation system with other major transportation improvement programs.

Policy 1.7: Enforce minimum design standards for streets as established in the General Plan and City ordinances.

Policy 1.8: Encourage site planning and subdivision design that best utilizes available traffic capacity on abutting streets through design techniques such as lot orientation, limitations on intersecting streets, and driveway locations and spacing.

Policy 1.9: Beautify the City's major thoroughfares and entrances to the business loop through a streetscape improvement program that includes activities such as tree planting and landscaping.

Public Transportation

Public transportation is an important factor in the provision of alternative means of transportation. It offers an alternative to the use of automobiles and helps reduce air pollution and road congestion.

Circulation Goal 2: Promote a public transportation network that allows for convenient access to major destinations, both within El Centro as well as within the region.

Policy 2.1: Coordinate with the Imperial Valley Association of Governments (IVAG) to ensure that adequate bus service, including a fixed route public transit system, is available for all segments of the community.

Policy 2.2: Encourage the increased use and expansion of public transportation opportunities.

Policy 2.3: Provide for the location of necessary transit infrastructure, such as bus stops, in major activity centers.

Policy 2.4: Support ridesharing services and other similar alternative modes of transportation.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Network

Non-vehicular modes of transportation offer an alternative option to the traditional use of automobiles. These modes of transportation, such as bicycling and walking, help to reduce roadway congestion and air pollution and provide recreational opportunities for the City's residents.

Circulation Goal 3: Provide for adequate bicycle and pedestrian access throughout the community.

Policy 3.1: Provide and maintain a system of pedestrian and bicycle accessways that link residential areas with parks, scenic areas, schools, libraries, civic center, major employment and retail centers, and other areas of congregation within El Centro and the surrounding area.

Policy 3.2: Continue to improve the accessibility of public facilities and commercial centers to improve access and mobility of the elderly and the disabled.

Policy 3.3: Encourage the incorporation of bicycle facilities, such as bike lockers and showers at workplaces, and bicycle racks on buses, to facilitate bicycle travel.

Policy 3.4: Maintain the pedestrian and bicycle system, including improving the road surface and sidewalk, to reduce the safety hazard associated with drainage grates, manholes, potholes, and uneven surfaces.

Airports and Railways

Airports and railways provide essential functions for cities and regions. Efficient movement of people and goods in and out of El Centro is fundamental to the economic vitality of the City and Imperial County.

Circulation Goal 4: Continue to utilize regional airports and railways to facilitate economic development as well as the movement of people and establish El Centro as a regional hub of commerce and travel.

Policy 4.1: Coordinate with the County of Imperial and plan for the expansion of the Imperial County Airport to encourage inter-regional travel and commerce.

Policy 4.2: Review development proposals within areas affected by the operation of local airports and railways to ensure land use compatibility, protect the public safety, and allow for continued aviation and rail operations.

Policy 4.3: Continue to pursue a joint use agreement with the U.S. Navy to allow commercial jet service at the Naval Air Facility.

Policy 4.4: Encourage passenger rail service between El Centro and Calexico and San Diego.

Related Goals and Policies

The goals and policies described in the Circulation Element are related to and support subjects included within other General Plan elements. In turn, many goals and policies from other elements directly or indirectly support the goals and policies of the Circulation Element. These supporting goals and policies are identified in Table C-1.

**Table C-1
Related Goals and Policies by Element**

General Plan Elements	Circulation Issue Area			
	Primary Circulation System	Public Transportation	Pedestrian and Bicycle Network	Airports and Railways
Land Use	1.1, 1.4, 1.11, 1.12, 1.13, 3.3	1.1, 1.11, 1.13, 2.2, 2.3, 3.3	1.1, 1.13	1.2, 2.1, 2.4
Economic Development	1.1, 1.3	1.1, 1.3		1.1, 1.3, 2.1
Housing				
Circulation				
Public Facilities				
Conservation/Open Space	5.1, 5.2, 5.3	5.1, 5.2, 5.3	3.3, 5.3	
Safety	1.3, 5.1, 5.2, 5.6	1.3	5.2, 5.3	1.3, 5.1, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6
Noise	1.1, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3	1.1		1.1, 2.1, 2.3, 2.6, 2.7, 2.8



CIRCULATION PLAN

El Centro is supported by a diverse circulation system with vehicle, rail, transit, air, pedestrian, and bicycle linkage. The local system connects with the larger regional system and the operation of the two systems is interdependent. Established in this section is the City's Circulation Plan. The Plan summarizes the approach to ensure safe and convenient operation of the circulation system and identifies improvements required to accommodate traffic from planned development.

Vehicular transportation is the primary mode of travel and a Circulation Master Plan is established with hierarchical roadway designations, physical design standards for the roadway designations, and service standards. The Circulation Master Plan includes regional arterials and anticipated regional traffic levels. The use of alternative modes of transportation is promoted to reduce dependency on automobile transportation. The Circulation Master Plan is shown in Figure C-1.

The Circulation Plan is based on issues, goals, and policies identified in the previous section. The Circulation Element Implementation Program, which is part of the General Plan Implementation Program is an extension of the Circulation Plan and contains specific programs to coordinate planned development with vehicular and non-vehicular circulation improvements.

Primary Circulation System

Road Classifications

Roadway classification is the process by which streets and highways are grouped into classes, or systems, according to the type of service they are intended to provide. Fundamental to this process is the recognition that individual streets and highways do not operate independently. Rather, most travel involves movement through a network of roads. The City of El Centro has adopted a classification system which includes a primary and secondary system, as described below. Examples of roadway cross sections for new roadways are provided in Figure C-2. Existing roadway constructed prior to adoption of these cross sections may have different dimensions.

The County of Imperial uses somewhat different roadway cross-sections than the City. New roadway segments within the City limits and within unincorporated areas anticipated to be annexed into the City should be built to the City's standards. In transition areas between City and County lands, cooperation between the City and County is needed in order to achieve a functional roadway system.

Primary Circulation System

- **Freeways** are controlled access routes that provide for major intra and interregional travel. They are corridors that accommodate trips at highest speeds with access only from selected links to the network, consistent with the population and network densities of the areas they traverse.
- **Arterial Streets** are intended to provide for the movement of through-traffic between major traffic generators such as the Civic Center, the Central Business District and other commercial centers, and distribute traffic from freeways to less important arterials serving residential areas directly. Insofar as possible, direct vehicle access to abutting properties should, on these arterials, be at limited intervals. The City of El Centro currently has two designations of arterials: four-lane and two-lane.
- **Collector Streets** collect and distribute traffic to and from major highways and local streets. Collector streets also serve secondary traffic generators such as shopping and business centers, schools, parks and high density or large-scale residential areas.

Secondary Circulation System

The secondary circulation system includes local streets for both residential and business use, as well as alternative modes of transportation which do not rely on private automobiles.

- **Local Streets** provide for direct access to property by local traffic. They are usually constructed by landowners as abutting land is developed.
- **Alleys** make up a significant portion of existing local streets. The City contains approximately twenty-two miles of alleys. At one time alleys were required with all residential, commercial, and industrial development including single-family home construction. Although alleys are no longer required in new low-density residential projects, the City will focus on maintaining the existing alley network.

Phasing and construction of needed improvements identified in the Circulation Master Plan will be achieved through a variety methods including the adoption and implementation of a capital improvement program, and coordination with the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), Caltrans, Imperial County Local Transportation Authority, the County of Imperial, and other regional transportation agencies. In addition, the City will develop a financing plan to facilitate the development of necessary transportation system improvements that identifies available funding sources and requires proposed development projects to construct and/or fund necessary traffic improvements, such as traffic signals and roadway improvements, resulting from the proposed project. These improvements should include alternative means of transportation in addition to improvements associated with automobile usage.

Figure C-1
Street Master Plan

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Figure C-2
Street Cross Sections

Performance Criteria

The goal the Circulation Element will be to provide a roadway system with adequate capacity and acceptable levels of service (LOS) to accommodate projected travel demands associated with the buildout of the Land Use Element. This can be accomplished by establishing minimum service levels for the designated street and conventional state highway system. Strategies that result in improvements to the transportation system, coupled with local job creation, will allow County residents to have access to a wide range of job opportunities within reasonable commute times.

The performance criteria used for evaluating volumes and capacities on the City Street System are based on Average Daily Traffic (ADT) data and the classification system described previously. El Centro's current system of LOS evaluation criteria is described in Table C-2. Level of service C is considered acceptable.

**Table C-2
Circulation System Performance Criteria**

Roadway Classification	Number of Lanes	A	B	C	D	E
Freeway	4	30,000	40,000	50,000	60,000	70,000
Four Lane Arterial	4	14,800	24,700	29,600	33,400	37,000
Two Lane Arterial	2	2,000	4,500	7,700	11,800	17,500
Collector	2	1,900	4,100	7,100	10,900	16,200
Residential Street	2	*	*	1,500	*	*
Residential or Cul-de-Sac Loop Street	2	*	*	200	*	*

*Note: Levels of service are not applied to residential streets since their primary purpose is to serve abutting lots, not carry through traffic, Levels of Service, normally apply to roads carrying through traffic between major trip generators and attractors.

The City will utilize the LOS criteria outlined above (Table C-2) to determine the significance of potential impacts as a result of development proposals. Those projects resulting in significant impacts to the transportation system will be required to mitigate such impacts through physical improvements and/or impact fees.

Relationship to Land Use

Future traffic volumes and highway capacity are directly related to future land use. Different types of land uses have differing effects on the street system in terms of the number of trips that are generated. Table C-3 indicates the expected trip generation of selected land uses that are identified in the Land Use Element.

**Table C-3
Land Use and Trip Generation Summary**

Land Use	Daily Trip Generation		
	Daily Trips Per Acre	Daily Trips per Dwelling Unit	Daily Trips per 1,000 Square Feet
<i>Residential</i>			
Rural	12	12	N/A
Low Density	45	10	N/A
Medium Density	68	8	N/A
High-Medium Density	96	6	N/A
<i>Commercial</i>			
Neighborhood Commercial	1,200	N/A	120
Office Commercial	300	N/A	20
Heavy Commercial	200	N/A	16
Tourist Commercial	300	N/A	N/A
Downtown Commercial	400	N/A	40
<i>Industrial</i>			
General Industrial	50	N/A	4
Light Manufacturing	50	N/A	4
General Manufacturing	60	N/A	5
Planned Industrial	90	N/A	8
<i>Community Facilities</i>			
Civic	450	N/A	30
Public	150	N/A	10

Source VRPA Technologies, 2003.

General Plan Circulation System

The circulation goals and policies emphasize the need for a circulation system capable of serving both existing and future traffic. The location, design and constituent modes of the circulation system have major impacts on air quality, noise, community appearance and other environmental resources. The El Centro Circulation Master Plan depicted in Figure C-1 delineates the planned circulation system including primary roadway segments with the freeways, arterial streets and collector street designations. The plan accommodates anticipated traffic levels and the hierarchical roadway classification system is implemented to avoid community impacts.

El Dorado Colonia Circulation System

The Land Use Element identifies the El Dorado Colonia as an area that would benefit from redevelopment and new development activities. A new development, a street system must be in place to serve this new development Figure C-3 provides a conceptual illustration of an appropriate street system for this area. The proposed street system assumes residential development and conforms to the grid street pattern that is prevalent in other parts of the Planning Area. Other circulation patterns may serve this area affectively.

Ross Avenue Traffic Calming

The segment of Ross Avenue from La Brucherie Road to Fourth Street performs a dual role in terms of serving east-west through traffic and providing direct access for residential units located on Ross Avenue. While this roadway has the capacity to accommodate existing and future traffic levels, there are safety and quality of life concerns in the areas where direct residential access is provided. There are a variety of traffic calming techniques that could be used to discourage through traffic along Ross Avenue, such as barriers, turn prohibitions, speed humps, and other devices that would serve to slow through traffic. A detailed study of this issue analyzing various traffic calming techniques, their impact on through traffic, and the potential for adverse traffic impacts along parallel streets should be performed prior to implementing any traffic calming measures on Ross Avenue.

Future East-West Railroad Crossings

Although additional east-west railroad crossings may be needed in the future, it is not anticipated that they will be needed prior to 2025.

Figure C-3
El dorado colonia street system

Regional Transportation

El Centro and the Imperial County region have experienced great success during the last century providing agricultural products to the rest of the nation and parts of the world. This would not have been possible without an efficient regional transportation system. The system must link localities with outside commerce centers and regional transportation hubs. In addition, the regional circulation system must meet the needs of local residents.

Interstate 8 bisects El Centro and provides the major access route to other regional highways and freeways throughout California. The Union Pacific railroad extends through the City and is intersected with the San Diego and Arizona railroad tying into the City's industrial areas to the east. Air transportation is available at the Imperial County and Brawley airports, located north of the City.

Since many local roadways, such as Interstate 8, are used by regional traffic traveling through the City, the community is interested in reducing the negative impacts to local residents from vehicles traveling on I-8. To avoid adverse impacts from regional traffic, the City will continue to coordinate transportation improvements and address circulation issues with the County of Imperial, other cities in the County, Caltrans, and the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG).

Goods Movement

The efficient movement of goods in and through Imperial County is vital to the local economy. The ability of the City of El Centro, as well as the entire region, to compete domestically and internationally on an economic basis requires an efficient and cost-effective method for distributing and receiving products. This can be accomplished through planning, design, construction, and maintenance of the regional and local street and highway system.

Truck Traffic

Although the City of El Centro does not currently designate truck routes, generally the majority of truck travel occurs on Interstate 8 and State Route 86. In addition, local traffic on truck arterial roads is significant, especially in the eastern and southeastern portions of the City where the major industrial development is located. In addition, heavy industrial uses are located along the Union Pacific Railroad.

Public Transportation

Promotion of alternative modes of transportation such as public transit and bicycling is a key component of the Circulation Plan. Usage of alternative modes of transportation will produce a number of benefits for the community including reduced traffic, less need for costly roadway improvement projects and improved air quality.

Public Transit

Services in Imperial Valley and the City of El Centro include: Greyhound Bus providing intracity service with fixed routes and charter; EOC/Salton Senior Transportation; Valley Transit System; Imperial County Transit, and Imperial Valley Transit Authority.

Community Systems

There are various specialized services, primarily only for those people that are enrolled in their programs, such as: IVC Transit; Association for Retarded Citizens; Work Training Center; MediVan; IV Blind Center; EOC Senior Nutrition; Clinica de Salud; and Calexico Senior Transportation. Other public access to transportation include: Dial-a-Ride, Desert Cab Company, City Cab Company and Yellow Cab.

Paratransit Service

The City supports reliable, efficient and effective countywide paratransit service by encouraging development of service systems that satisfy the transit needs of the elderly and physically handicapped. Paratransit services are transportation services such as car pooling, van pooling, taxi service, and dial-a-ride programs.

Fixed Route Transit Service

The Imperial County Transit provides bus service along 4th Avenue (SR 86), State Street, Imperial Avenue (SR 86) and a loop to the El Centro Regional Medical Center on Ross Avenue and Aurora Street. (see Figure C-4)

In an effort to improve transit service and increase ridership, the City will require that transit facilities be constructed along with major new development and rehabilitation projects. Additionally, the City will work with Imperial Valley Transit to expand transit routes and special transit services to meet the community's expanding needs.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Network

Continuing the promotion of alternative modes of transportation, the Circulation Plan promotes and encourages the development and use of a network of pedestrian and bicycle routes. The City's pedestrian network is mainly associated with sidewalks on existing roads as shown in Figure C-1. The City will identify areas within the existing community that would benefit from improved pedestrian facilities and future development and redevelopment will be required to incorporate pedestrian connections with major destinations.

Bicycling is a highly feasible alternative to vehicle transportation within the City of El Centro. With the exception of the hottest summer months, the climate within the city and the relative short distances between activity centers and residences, make bicycling increasingly attractive.

The City of El Centro has adopted the Caltrans classifications of bicycle facilities (Class I, Class II, and Class III). Class I bikeways are “bike paths” separated completely from the roadway and designated for the exclusive use of bicyclists and pedestrians. Class II bikeways are “bike lanes” within the roadway designated for the use of bicyclists. Class III bikeways are “bike routes” which provide signs and a travel lane shared with pedestrians and vehicles.

The current system of bicycle facilities is depicted in Figure C-4 and is described in detail in the “City of El Centro Bicycle Master Plan”. In addition to the Bicycle Master Plan, the City recently completed a “Citywide Bikeway System Design Report”. The City will continue to implement and update the plans as appropriate.

Airports and Railways

Airports

Commercial air service to Imperial Valley is provided through the Imperial County Airport. The airport provides for scheduled airline service and private air travel. The airport located just north of the City of El Centro, is accessible by State Route 86, and in large part is surrounded by residential and industrial development. Additionally, Doughtitt Strip, a private airstrip located in the eastern portion of El Centro is accessible by State Route 80 (see Figure C-5).

To ensure public safety, the City will continue to coordinate with the County of Imperial Airport Land Use Commission and review proposed development projects within the area impacted by airport operations.

Railroads

Two rail lines serve El Centro. The Union Pacific Railroad main line enters the eastern border near Winterhaven and then bears northwest and leaves Imperial County just east of the Salton Sea. This is the railroad that serves Los Angeles and points northward in California. There is a major branch line from this main line at Niland that provides rail service to Calipatria, Brawley, Imperial, El Centro, Calexico, and Mexico. This line is used extensively for agricultural shipments. Minor spurs provide service to Westmoreland and the area north of Holtville. A San Diego and Arizona route links El Centro to San Diego, but is not currently in operation beyond Plaster City because of flooding damage, but feasibility studies have been undertaken to bring it back into operation (see Figure C-5).

The City will coordinate with rail service providers and developers to ensure new development and nearby railways incorporate appropriate safety and noise reduction features into project design.

Figure C-4
El Centro Transit and Bicycle Routes

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FIGURE C-5
Airports and Railways